CHAPTER IV

MRS. ANNIE BESANT AS A JOURNALIST

“No Journalist can be regarded as great or even for that matter of the front rank if he or she is not able to claim with a clear conscience that he has made his or her the Servant of things he cared for and believed in.” He or she must never shrink from his obligation to serve true without fear, to admonish the people, expose the demagogue, to chide the wayward and embolden the faint hearted in a word, to provide sound comment on public life. In all its aspects – that should be her or his task and the source of her or his power”. Mrs. Annie Besant role as Journalist stand to this comment in real sense. The early writings of the Mrs. Annie Besant are found in the bulk of Theosophical Literature. (See Appendix-III-Theosophical).

The Theosophical Society used the print media very effectively to reach people and to spread the message of Theosophy throughout the world. The official journal of the Theosophical Society, “The Theosophist” appeared in October 1879.¹ Lucifer was another important Journal of the Theosophical Society, which was published from London. Between 1883 and 1893 the numbers of publications in India under the auspices of the Theosophical Society were about 155, which include the Theosophic Thinker, The Theosophical Gleanings, Thinker, Brahma Bodhini, Arya Bala

¹ Howard Murphet, When Daylight Comes, USA, 1975, p. 57.
Bhodini etc. The Theosophic Thinker was started in the month of February 1893 with the special aim of popularizing Theosophy. All these bears the imprints of Mrs. Annie Besant’s writings.

The early journalistic activity of Mrs. Annie Besant in India was concerned with spiritualism. She wrote on subjects like Brahmavida, dangers of Materialism, Vedas, Upanishad, Bhagawat Gita, Hinduism, esoteric subjects, Theosophy etc. We can also find her writings in the Central Hindu College Magazine, Amirta Bazar Patrika, The Prasnottara, The Indian Theosophist and The Theosophy in India. The religious writings of Mrs. Annie Besant had given back the Indians their religion in a pure form and at the same time her writings also gave a blow to the materialism of the west. Her work of Hindu revivalism was supported by publication of her writings. The lectures of Mrs. Annie Besant were also published in the press.

Many people think of Mrs. Annie Besant to-day as she raised the status of the Indian people than that of the other great pioneers of the Indian Freedom Movement. Fewer still recall her name, think of ‘New India’ though for several years that Newspaper under her editorship was the leading nationalist daily in the Country. 

---

2 The Theosophic Thinker, January 4, 1896.
Mrs. Annie Besant as a journalist and her work is the only one aspect of her total achievement, a fragment, albeit a significant and a vital one but still a fragment of a larger life. If we begin to study what a political leader has done by way of journalism, her work acquires value only in the larger context of her work elsewhere. To attempt anything like a true assessment of Mrs. Annie Besant’s work as a journalist, one has to bear this in mind and look at it from different points of view.

There was first of all the inmate and continuous relationship between her journalist work and political work. Her newspaper articles and other works reflected the different phases of her political campaigning both within the Congress and outside, its ups and downs, its achievements and failures. Then there was her theosophical background from which was derived her profound faith in India’s high destiny and her conviction that India had a special mission to fulfill in the World. Lastly but by no means least relevant to an understanding of her political attitude in different situations was her early career in England as a fighter against blind prejudice, bigotry and social injustice.4

Mrs. Annie Besant’s career in journalism synchronies very closely with politics. The year 1914 was the year when she began taking active part in Indian Politics. It was also the very same year she entered in Indian

4. Ibid., p.3.
journalism. The period of her life from 1914 onwards was the period of her greatest glory, for not only did she feel she was fighting for her own motherland by her journalistic work but also she was the greatest Indian of them all in many ways but she was said to be working under esoteric orders.\(^5\)

The first publication was in 1873, August 30\(^{th}\), the first article under the name of "Ajax", appeared in the ‘National Reformer’ in 20 pages.\(^6\) From this first pamphlet to the date of issue of her Bibliography, 326 works were enumerated of which she was the author and 24 of more which she was the joint author.\(^7\) (See Appendix-II) In all her writings she conveyed her deep understanding of the eternal laws of the nature. She taught Indian journalists how to write some articles, based on truth, denouncing the action of the government. A pamphlet which shows Mrs. Besant’s early interest in the welfare of Indians was written in 1879 bearing the little “The Story of Afghanistan”, or why the Tory government gags the Indian press.\(^8\)

In order to spread the views of the HRM, she started the two journals namely ‘New India’- a Daily and ‘Commonweal’ – a weekly. These two papers formed the battery of the Home Rule Movement.\(^9\)

---

NEW INDIA

Mrs. Annie Besant originally purchased the Madras standard printing works from Mr. K. Prabhakaran Tampa in 1914, and also the right of printing and publishing the “Madras Standard” which was published from that press. Madras Standard was the oldest daily which was founded in 1841 was going down hill for a long time. After purchasing, Mrs. Annie Besant changed it to suit her political needs under the appropriate name “New India”. From 1,100 copies in July 1914 the New India increased to 5,000 in August and it became the National Champion of Swaraj.

Mrs. Annie Besant was the registered keeper of the press at which these papers were printed. These papers became armaments in her battle for Indian Home Rule, her paper ‘New India’ was not obsessed by politics to the exclusion of other subjects of human interests. It was fearless and independent but thoroughly sober and well balanced.

For Mrs. Annie Besant ‘New India’ was a deeply loved child and if she had to leave it a while, she arranged to receive the most constant news as its well being. The paper and the printing press had besides Mrs. Annie

12. Ibid., p.560.
Besant a band of able staff, who were fashioned by her into journalists, reporters advertising agents, sub editors and business officials.\textsuperscript{13}

Mrs. Annie Besant was one of the greatest journalists. Her paper ‘New India’ trained several distinguished journalists like Sri. B. Shiva Rao. It was Mrs. Annie Besant who through her paper taught Indian journalists how to write strong articles, based on truth, denouncing the action of the government.

Mrs. Annie Besant had been treated with marked consideration in respect of her Newspaper. When she registered herself as the publisher and printer of the “Madras Standard” the Chief Presidency Magistrate dispensed with security. When she changed the name of the paper to ‘New India’ and had to make a fresh declaration, she was so again excused from furnishing security. Thus she has been warned twice.\textsuperscript{14}

On December 2, 1914, she furnished the statement before the Chief Presidency C.B.N. Pely, stating that she was the registered keeper of New India printing works.\textsuperscript{15} New India succeeded in creating a wide spread belief that British Rule was cruel and oppressive. Mrs. Annie Besant wrote

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, p.575.
\textsuperscript{14} Home Rule Files, Mrs.Besant and New India 7(b)
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
continuously and commenced an intensive campaign claiming Home Rule for India through New India thus:16

O English Nation! Great free and proud cannot you see, cannot you understand? cannot you realize that your Indian Brothers feel now as you would feel if a foreigner rule in your land? That to be a stranger in your own country, an alien in your own land, with no right, save those given by grace of a government not your own. Your inferiority taken for granted, your capacities weighed in alien scales, and measured by the wand of another nation. You could not bear such a state, such an outlook India is patient, as you would not be. She does not want to break the link. She wants to remain part of the Empire, but an equal part, self – governing community standing on a level with a self-governing Dominions – you boast of an Empire, your Empire as an Empire of the free “History records the answer that you gave”.

Thus her paper ‘New India’ was a fiery Champion of Home Rule for India. Mrs. Annie Besant’s fortnight attacks on the government of the day enhanced the popularity of the paper. Her paper made its own way,

substantial contribution to further the cause of India's struggle for freedom. It was a nationalist press and paper supporting the nationalist demands.\textsuperscript{17}

In her paper she wrote a series of articles on Self-Government and announced her intention to lead a political campaign in favour of 'Swaraj'. Supporting the cause of India she said, "The fate of British Empire hangs on the fate of India and therefore it is but wisdom and prudence to keep India contended by granting Home Rule to her". She also wrote "India was a tremendous reservoir of man power, far greater than America and Home Rule, India was an asset to the Empire in the struggle against German militarism" in the wake of the First World War.\textsuperscript{18}

The Year 1916-1919 was the busiest and the most rewarding in the life of her papers and in the political career. She clearly explained in her paper thus: "Safety of life, limb and property is the duty to secure where governments are made. Without such safety, society cannot secure". All the vicissitudes of her career was faithfully reflected in New India. For though as we have seen, Mrs. Annie Besant wrote frequently in other journals, also which she was connected, it was 'New India' the principal vehicle for her political opinions. Its rise was as meteoric as her own and its decline as steep. As an editor and journalist, she was a superb artist. New India

\textsuperscript{17} Jagadish Sharma, \textit{Encyclopedia of India's Struggle for Freedom}, New Delhi, 1971, p.164.  
\textsuperscript{18} Annie Besant, \textit{Builder of India}, Madras, 1916, p.76.
published articles to the glory of Indian culture, political movements in
different Nations, exploitation of British Imperialism and the necessity of
the Home Rule agitation. Mrs. Annie Besant’s systematic work and bold
writings in New India and her impressive speeches paved the way for
political awakening in the country. New India represents a political party,
but seek to advance India’s interests uncircumscribed by any party, creed or
rules.

"Without Fear and without favour" was New India’s motto and the
supreme object was to free India within an Indo-British Commonwealth of
Nations. ‘New India’ was a non party journal seeking to work for India’s
reconstruction. New India carried articles on Self-Government for India.
The Brahma Samaj, The Arya Samaj, The Theosophical Society, The
Ramakrishna Mission are the religious progenitors of New India. It also
published the text of Mrs. Annie Besant’s speeches and reported her
activities. It also carried articles of prominent leaders of the day. It
reported that the attainment of Home Rule to India will pave the way for
economic regeneration.

On March 13, 1915, Mrs. Annie Besant published the first series of
articles on ‘Self-Government’. The first four articles contained an outline of

20. Home Rule File 7(b) Metro Politian Police, p. 258
proposals for constitutional agitation towards English forms of government for India. The fifth article was a virulent attack on the judges of the High Court and in particular upon the civilian judges. It was not an attack on their capacity but upon their character and independence.22

In her New India, Mrs. Annie Besant referred to the aspiration of the people of India to have Home Rule. Her papers and other works dealt with the social movements of the period. She had requested the public to join the nearest HRL and work in it for Home Rule.23 Her paper New India became very popular in Madras and had a circulation of 10,500 copies which was higher than that of any other paper in Madras at that time.24

As her paper New India adopted rather a hostile attitude towards the governments, it had to suffer a lot in course of time. One of the major troubles given to her was that to deposit Rs.2000/- as the security amount as the magistrate may think of fit of require.25 Thus the career of Mrs. Annie Besant as a journalist faced number of hurdles and difficulties. Of course, she sailed in the troubled waters to highlight her as a true journalist and writer. In addition to this trouble of depositing more money for New India she was also asked to deposit a sum of Rs.5000/- for keeping the Vasantha

Press at TS.Adyar, Madras – where number of her writing works, pamphlets and journals were at work.\textsuperscript{26}

The demand of security from Mrs. Annie Besant by the Presidency Magistrate without assigning any reason for it leads to a lot of protests both from public and press against the action of the government.\textsuperscript{27} The editors and the public consider the actions of the government as unjustifiable and harmful to the best interest of journalism. All the people of India felt that she was serving the empire by her enthusiasm in the labour of love for India.\textsuperscript{28}

Regarding the Press Act of 1910, Mrs. Annie Besant showed how severe it was. She also declared that the whole Indian criminal law needs Revision.\textsuperscript{29} The Press Act of 1910 was active and especially obnoxious because it was applied partially against Pro-Indian but not against Anti-Indian papers, used against mussalman, used against New India and not against any other papers.\textsuperscript{30}

Mrs. Annie Besant was able to maintain this paper till June 1917 (the internment order was passed on June 16, 1917). The immediate result was the temporary cessation of New India on June 18, 1917. In the meantime, in response to a message received from Arya, an active Home Rule member,

\begin{flushright}
27. \textit{Home Rule Files}, Mrs Besant and New India 7(b)
\end{flushright}

\flushright{165}
three Bombay journalists, K.T.Telang, the editor of Young India, B.G.Horniman, the editor of the Bombay Chronicle, and N.C.Kelkar, the editor of the Kesari and the Mahratha, arrived in Madras on 19, June. It was to K.T.Telang that Mrs. Annie Besant disposed New India, both the paper and the press who desired to be its editor and proprietor and was prepared to deposit Rs.2000/- under the provision of the Press Act. The Magistrate granted the application. Thenceforth New India appeared under the new Editorship.31 K.T.Telang reported that he would continue the work of Mrs. Annie Besant and will not hesitate to criticise the anti-Indian policies of the government.32

K.T.Telang pointed out that ‘New India’ at his time of purchase had captured a unique place in the country. He also stated that due to her dynamic approach, the total contribution of New India amounted to Rs.2,03,000 and that it had come from the Madras Presidency.33 He also insisted that so far New India adopted a standard formula. It had a Swadeshi vow and a daily prayer of the HRM. The paper also repeatedly pointed out that the people who are made to undergo imprisonment unjustly should be released.34

32. Ibid., June 26, 1917, MNNPR, p.2042.
34. Home Rule File No.3 (Judicial Department) July 17, 1917 Annexure No,2781/W-1, p.63.
K.T.Telang made it clear that he would maintain the policy of tone of New India unchanged. This observation of K.T.Telang made Government of Madras to believe that New India has passed into the hands of the protagonists of the Home Rule agitation.\textsuperscript{35} New India stands as it had always stood with its founder. New India which was started by Mrs. Annie Besant essentially a propagandist paper dedicated to the cause of Home Rule for India. Lord Pentland the then Governor of Madras called it a daily politically broad sheet rather than a Newspaper.

**COMMONWEAL**

In November 1913, she took first step towards the elaboration of a plan which was to put into her own hands an instrument of enormous importance to her future work for the helping of India. She decided to publish a weekly paper. She plunged into her new scheme with characteristic energy and six weeks of hard work saw in it the birth of “Commonweal”. The term “Commonweal” as named by Mrs. Annie Besant have some reasons. Since this term though may sound a little archaic, it is to bring the concentrated experience of past ages to bear on the political difficulties of the present day. This term too takes us far back, for it has been associated with the projects of the Kentish Peasants who agitated once again for Better Government.\textsuperscript{36} They aimed not merely at the redress of their own particular

\textsuperscript{35} Fortnightly Report (Confidential), July 2, 1917.
grievances, but at the ‘Commonweal’ of the nation as a whole.\textsuperscript{37} To set the problems to deal in a clearer light, so as to have the best hope of solving them practically and making still further advances in promoting and, fostering the Commonweal, they took more steps. This inspired Mrs. Annie Besant to name her paper as “Commonweal”.\textsuperscript{38}

This paper’s first issue was published on January 2, 1914.\textsuperscript{39} This paper was to further all schemes for the building up of complete Self-Government from village councils, through district and municipal boards and provincial legislative assemblies to a National Parliament, equal in its powers to the legislative bodies of the Self-Governing colonies, by whatever name these may be called, also the direct representation of India in the Imperial Parliament when that body shall contain representatives of the Self-Governing states of the Empire.

This paper consists and contains the lives of Indian thought, of Indian hopes and struggles, successes and failures. She also wrote a good deal in many working class journals besides Commonweal, namely, Link Justice and Our Corner. Her paper ‘Commonweal’ was printed in the Vasantha Press at Adyar. In order to preserve that press for Theosophical work, she

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{37} \textit{Ibid.}, p.3.
\item \textsuperscript{38} \textit{Ibid.}, p.4.
\item \textsuperscript{39} \textit{Adyar Bulletin}, Vol. III, p.402.
\end{itemize}
announced in 1914, her intention of transferring the printing of the ‘Commonweal’ to the New India Printing Press.\(^{40}\)

This paper ‘Commonweal’ was started by her to embody the fourfold ideal and articles with the caption of “Our Policy” to set it forth. This editorial policy regards the four great functions of human life—belonging to the spirit, the Mind, the emotions and the body as being different expressions of one’s life and as therefore closely inter-related. One of the first things she did was to clear off “all the coarse advertisements,” the newspaper to her not just a money spinner, it is a sacred Trust.\(^{41}\) She herself defined that her papers “New India” and “Commonweal” was destined to range the battle for Home Rule.\(^{42}\)

She also believed that from England will come the practical sciences that yoke the forces of Nature to the service of man, the energy and accuracy which turn commerce into an art, the imperial power of organisation and the genius for applying principle to practice. Hence she is unique, since she only uses peaceful persuasion; she achieves her work by calling the powers of faith within men. She was almost a lone voice in the early part of the 20\(^{th}\)

\(^{40}\) Confidential file (Judicial department) April 18, 1916.
\(^{41}\) Mary Graham, \textit{AB as Statesman, Warrior and Orator}, p.2.
\(^{42}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p.4.
century, but quickly won many leading English and Indian men and women
to her side by this paper. 43

Since she had for years worked in England on a journal “The
National Reformer,” as a joint Editor, she thought of taking a new
responsibility of re-finding the people for which she needed a daily and a
weekly paper, by which of course she meant for her political work.

By this paper she wants to bring Great Britain and India close
together, by making known in Great Britain something of the Indian
National Movement and of the men who would influence from India the
destinies of the Empire. 44 The first two pages contained editorial notes and
the rest of the paper dealt with current politics, foreign and local. These
notes usually contained references to or summaries of the principal political
articles.

The paper ‘Commonweal’ printed articles on political and religious
topics. It also had drawn a comparison between the Self-Governing colonies
and India, alleging that in India love of liberty had become sedition and
patriotism had become treason. The paper insisted for the imperative
necessity of Self-Governing powers for India at once lest she shouldered in a

43. Ibid., p.12.
44. Saroja Sundararajan op.cit., p.93.
few years times incur the unthinkable degradation of being subordinated to an imperial council comprising representatives of council.45

This paper ‘Commonweal’ argued that the demand of the Indians for Self-Government within the British Empire was a just and righteous demand. It encouraged the people to demand Home Rule bravely and cheerfully. It had pointed out that demanding Home Rule was a Holy cause and that therefore victory is assured, triumph is certain.46 It dealt with strength and unity among the Indian people, and it stressed the people to have courage.

Mrs. Annie Besant tirelessly wrote in her paper that India must have Self-Government after the war on the same footing as Canada, Australia, New Zealand and other Countries; must have governed by her own men freely elected by herself; have her own army and navy, by her own taxes; frame her own budget; educate her people in her own way- in fine must become a sovereign nation within her own border; owing a national allegiance to the British Crown.47 Though done a lot to it was not able to carry on the editorship and proprietorship of the paper ‘Commonweal’ and the Vasantha Press, it was transferred to Ranga Reddy and he too carried it

with coinage and boldness. In writing about the conditions and position of the people, the two papers roused the feeling of Nationalism and Patriotism in the minds of the Indian people. Her papers helped her a lot to propagate the HRM. No wonder, it is right to say that these two papers had been the torch bearers for the HRM.

OTHER WORKS OF MRS. ANNIE BESANT

Out of her numerous works few of highly informative and instructive are mentioned here. Her full works are given in detail in appendix. (See Appendix-II). “No words of mine”, Mrs. Annie Besant says in her Autobiography, “can tell how much I owe to Ms. Marriyat, not only of knowledge, but of that love of knowledge which had remained with me ever since a constant spar to study”. With Ms. Marriyat, Mrs. Annie Besant from her early days travelled far and wide, to France and Germany, during which she learnt to read and write the languages of those countries and laid the foundation for that independence of thought and action for which she afterwards became famous.

Her first Free Thought Essay was “On the duty of Jesus of Nazareth”. She wrote this in the monthly pamphlet of Mr. Scott. By this writing, she

49. Besant’s Diary of Principal Events, (1847, 1933) Vide Appendix, p.3.
50. Speeches and Writings of Mrs.Besant, p.2.
51. Ibid., p.7.
made a small but valuable income to bring up her children. Then as there began her phase of doubt, which resulted in her finally leaving the Christian faith, she became an Atheist. Then, in between 1873 and 1877, she wrote the book “The Path to Atheism”.

She wrote in 1878, a book which ought to be better known that it is entitled “England, India and Afghanistan”. In this book she exposed the misgovernment of India and the folly of the Imperialist policy of Lord Beaconsfield as applied to that country and its neighbours in Afghanistan.\(^5\)

It was at this time Mrs. Annie Besant was fascinated by India and wrote a very striking series of tales for children, “Young Folks Library,” published in 1885. In the first story, “Ganga and the River maid,” she gives a description of India, this even before she saw India. Also she wrote stories about Hypatia and Bruno (she knew nothing at the time of mystery behind these two martyrs, that they were their own past incarnations) two characters who have left an unforgettable message to humanity. She also wrote one pamphlet at this time namely “The Natural History of the Christian Devil.” She could be very charming in her satire of the Christian traditions; this facet of the diamond is something very attractive.\(^5\)

---

\(^5\) Besant’s Diary of Principal Events (1847-1933), p.7.
\(^5\) Ibid.
Of many works, perhaps the one that will last longest is the most fascinating book "A Study in Consciousness," for in it there is a depth of Philosophical presentation that will fascinate many a generation to come. Of course from this work she can be described more as an artist then as a lecturer of the professional type, because she does not survey any subject in its entirety, but gives a definite presentation of it from some one angle, which she selects as a painter does when painting a landscape. While she gave wisdom she gives it in an exquisite setting. This book was used in some Universities as text book.

Another one of her major contributions, "Esoteric Christianity", has been considered a historical document, but beyond that, it is a prophetic utterance that has helped to mould and revive the thought of Western Christianity.

In 1877 her famous work "The Law of Population," which was the famous Defence of Birth Control, its consequences, and it's bearing upon Human Conduct and Morals. She wrote this as a consequence of the prosecution of herself and Charles Bradlaugh for circulating the tract referred. At a later time, this was translated into German, Italian, French, Swedish and Dutch and was widely circulated in India.

54. C.P.Ramaswami Aiyer, op.cit., p.57.
55. Bibliography of Annie Besant, p.15.
Thus her convention lectures on the great religions of the world were compiled in a wonderful book entitled “Seven Great Religions”, through which the reader may get acquainted with the core teachings of each one, having at the end of the book, the sensation that one may follow any religion – each with its proper and unique perfume – that all of them talk about the same subject, pointing to the possibility of discovering the divinity enshrined in each human being, and ever present in all sentiment form of life. They all convey the same message in different words and offered through different channels. The petty fundamentalism imposed under the name of religious teaching is nothing but the craving of self centered narrow minds waiting to create ignorant slaves.\(^56\)

Then when she came into Theosophy, she has narrated everything in her Autobiography. At that time there were only a few books of Theosophical literature, ‘Isis Unveiled’, ‘The Occult World’, ‘Esoteric Buddhism’ and ‘The Secrete Doctrine’. It was she who did something which nobody else would have done. She took the truths of Theosophy from these books and presented them in public addresses, full of idealism and beauty. That is the remarkable gift which she had and she gave beautiful settings for all these wonderful truths. We find her always giving to her Theosophical work which never existed before.\(^57\)

\(^{56}\) Ibid., p.16.
\(^{57}\) Besant’s Diary of Principal Events (1847-1933), p.9.
One brilliant contribution of Mrs. Annie Besant was her "History of the Great French Revolution" up to the death of Robespierre. There are many histories of the French Revolution, but this work was written by her from the standpoint of the people. Usually historians denounce the blood-thirstiness of the terror, but they do not sufficiently stress the terrible sufferings of the masses which made this revolution inevitable for it was a revolution of hunger. (It was this she feared in India, and so when the time was ready she entered Indian Politics as leader). Certainly the last pages of the chapter of hers on Robespierre describing his end leave a profound impression on the readers mind.58 Her work "The Political Status of Women" is worth mentioning since, she had clearly stated until women are educated, they could not fight for their right.59

We may also mentioned that the important and basic text for the study of Hinduism is "The Bhagavat Gita" and the first edition of this Great World Scripture with her English translation was published in 1905, being the outcome of joint work with Dr. Bhagavan Das, a learned writer and some devoted members of the Theosophical Society.60

Then in her works such as "Education as a National Duty" and the "Education of Indian Girls", she has clearly explained the necessity of

58. Ibid., p.11.
59. Ibid., p.25.
60. The Theosophist.
different kinds of education such as religious and moral education, literary education, scientific education, artistic education and physical education. She also stressed that Indian greatness will not return until Indian womanhood obtains a larger, a freer and a fuller life, for largely in the hands of Indian women lie the redemption of India. The battle for the education of girls was the first beginning of her writings and she prayed that may Ishvara bless those who are the vanguard and all beneficent powers enlighten their minds and make strong their hearts.61

She emphasised that women must be educated as that is her fundamental need. The treasures of philosophy, literature, science, art must be thrown open to her like that of man.62

Her dynamic works like “How India Wrought for Freedom,” “The Future of Young India,” “Self-Government for India” kindled the Indians and took them to the path of Freedom Movement.

Of course, her super oratory, and matchless literary gifts enabled her to reach the foremost rank in politics in an incredibly short time. She stirred the country by the spoken as well as written word as scarcely anyone else could do.63 Undoubtedly, her contribution in widening the horizon of the National Movement was a significant phenomenon in Indian politics. Her

---

message for Home Rule through her writings reached the remotest regions of India. She was one of the greatest orators of the world, because she speaks what she believes and acts according to what she speaks...........

Once Rabindranath Tagore stated, "...... Mrs. Besant the only European lady who has shown the Indians sorrow, through her writings and speeches, thus sacrificed all that she could.64

Mrs. Annie Besant could be rightly called as an awakener. She did awaken all by her excellent quality of writings as a journalist. She by her constant writings encouraged the whole world (ie) Indian people to fight for political battle through means but thoroughly constitutional in character. By her unequalled loftiness of her speech and writings, by her amazing capability for organization and by the singular power of her dynamic personality, she succeeded in making Self-Government the central and immediate objective of Indian politics. She had the good fortune to receive the fullest co-operation in her undertaking from equally forceful and determined Indian people. None could deny that she build a 'New India' by her writings and speeches.

64. New India, October 2, 1918.