CHAPTER 1

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The Twentieth Century opened with a growing restlessness among the Indian nationalists. The Indian National Congress, the conglomerate of the politically conscious Indians of all hues, was being slowly taken over by the radical elements who had lost faith in the policy of mendicancy of the earlier years. The Curzonian attitudes and policies accelerated the process which culminated in the Surat Congress. The British Government had to recognise the need of some conciliatory measures. The Morley-Minto Reforms was the result.

The Indian Councils Act, 1909, was, however, disappointing and could not satisfy the political aspirations of the nationalists. The Act expanded the legislatures but it did not change their essential characteristics; they essentially remained enlarged Executive Councils. In fact they were 'still regarded as darbars rather than as parliament'.¹ They had no control on the executive. The non-official majorities in the Provincial legislatures were ineffective because the nominated members could always be relied upon to vote with the official block in support of the government. The new

powers of the legislatures were practically neutralised by the restrictions imposed on their exercise. The worst feature of the Reforms was the introduction of communal electorates. The aim of the whole exercise was to strengthen the vested interests, the faithful allies of imperialism and to stem the rising tide of growing nationalism in India.

The years between the inauguration of the Reforms of 1909 and the outbreak of the first World War were marked by a quiet tone of political life of India. The activities of the Congress remained similar to those of the period before 1905, i.e. holding its annual sessions and passing the usual resolutions on all important political and economic questions. The outbreak of the World War in 1914 started a new chain of events in India. Britain appealed to India for whole-hearted co-operation in their crusade against German militarism. India responded magnificently to the appeal and went all out to support the British cause. Tilak and Gandhi addressed similar appeals to the nation. As a result, India contributed generously in men and money. From the opening months of the war, the pronouncements of British statesman raised high hope in the minds of Indian nationalists. The British Prime Minister described Indians as 'the joint and equal custodians of one common interest and future'. The War, it was asserted, was being fought for the defence of the

2. Ibid., p.52.
two principles, national liberty and democracy. The principles of self-determination was enunciated and Lyoyd George proclaimed that it would be applied in tropical countries also. Woodrow Wilson also spoke of the right of self-determination of the national. His idealism was transparent in his Fourteen Points and the nationalists took them at their face value. Indians were enthusiasmd by such pronouncements. They belived that, at the end of the war, a new era of constitutional progress would dawn.

It was under such conditions that the declaration of 20 August 1917 was made in Parliament. The Secretary of State told the House of Commons that 'the policy of His Majesty's Government is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administra-
tion and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India, as an integral part of the British empire'. He further told the House of Commons that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be the judges of the time and measures of each advance and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred and by the extent to which it is found that
confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility'.

In accordance with the statement contained in the Declaration, Montague visited India in November 1917 and had consultations with the officers and interviews with Indians. He along with Chelmsford submitted to the Parliament, a joint Report which was published in July 1918. Some committees were appointed to work out the details of the principles enumerated in the Report. The British Parliament, after considering these recommendations, passed the Government of India Act 1919 on 23 December 1919.

The Government of India Act of 1919 partially introduced the principle of responsible government to a very limited extend, in the provincial sphere. The Act made great changes in the composition and functions of the provincial legislatures. The Provincial Legislative Council was to consist of the members of the Executive Council of the Governor, as well as elected and nominated members. The size of the legislature was enlarged. Representation was given to various communities and interests.

The Act provided for a dyarchical system of government in the provinces. The subjects of provincial administration were divided into two parts. One comprised

3. The Report on Indian Constitution Reform, 1918, p. 1
of 'Reserved Subject' such as Police, Justice, Jail, Finance, Irrigation, Land Revenue and Public Works. It was administered by the Governor and his Executive Council. This section of the provincial government was put beyond the control of the provincial legislature. The second part of the provincial list was called the 'Transferred Subject' and it included Agriculture, Education, Local Self-Government, Medical Administration, Public Health and Sanitation, Excise and Co-operation. It was to be administered by the Governor and his Ministers. The Ministers were selected by the Governor from among the elected members of the legislature and were responsible to the provincial legislature which could vote their salaries and compel their resignation.

The legislatures were given the powers of moving and passing resolutions and cut-motions, of asking questions and supplementary questions, of moving votes of censure against the government and of discussing important matters through adjournment motions and motions of communication. The provincial legislature was given the powers to discuss the budgets; they could reject or accept it.

The Governor was the pivot of the provincial administration. He could disregard the advice tendered to him by a Minister. Besides, like the Governor General, he exercised vast executive, legislative and financial powers. Thus, the system was halfway house between a wholly bureaucratic government and one fully accountable
to the people through their chosen representatives. Naturally, therefore, it did not give satisfaction to any party.

When the reforms proposals were first made and the Act was on the anvil, Indian opinion, though seriously critical in its attitude, was not yet hostile. The nationalists, criticised many of its provisions, especially the inadequacy of the measure of responsible government granted to the provinces. They, however, were still prepared to work the reforms scheme in May 1919. By May 1920, the whole aspect of things had altered. Within a year, the political atmosphere of India had undergone a complete change. Goodwill and friendliness which had animated the discussion following the Report had vanished.

The most important cause of the popular upsurge was the passing of the Rowlatt Bills. After the end of World War, the British authorities realised that the government would need extensive power to put down the revolutionary movements in India. They, therefore, appointed a Sedition Committee, under the Presidency of Sidney Rowlatt in 1917, to enquire into the extent and nature of the revolutionary movements in the country and to suggest suitable legislation, necessary to enable the government to deal effectively with them. The Rowlatt Committee endorsed the government's plea for special legislation and recommended the enactment of two bills for suppression of revolutionary movements. In
February 1919, the two bills were introduced in the Legislative Council. They were Indian Criminal Law Amendment Bill and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill, and were commonly called the Rowlatt Bills. They sought to confer extraordinary powers of arrest and search and of trial according to a procedure which was tantamount to denial of justice.

The whole of India rose against these bills. As C.Y. Chintamani said, 'A wave of anger greeted them from all over India and even the Moderates joined in this and opposed the measures with all their might. Indeed, there was universal opposition on the part of Indians of all shades of opinion'. He further remarked that the Bills were 'opposed by every single non-official member, elected and nominated alike of the Council, but the government were unrelenting and unbending'.

On seeing the Rowlatt Committee's Report, Gandhiji said, 'Its recommendations startled me'. This was the beginning of the transformation from a loyal citizen of the British Empire into an extreme rebel. As a result Gandhiji expressed, 'The British Empire today

6. Ibid.
represents Satanism and they who love God can afford to have no love for Satan.' Gandhiji had already started representing the conscience of India and the revolt in his mind was the starting point of the process which culminated in the end of the Raj in 1947.

Gandhiji implored the Viceroy from his sick-bed not to give his assent to the Rowlatt Bills, but he did not heed. Therefore, on 24 February 1919, Gandhiji declared that if these Bills became law, he would start Satyagraha. He drafted a pledge which committed those who followed him and were convinced 'that the bills were unjust, subversive of all principles of liberty and justice and destructive of the elementary rights of an individual, to refuse civilly to obey those laws in the event of those bills becoming law and until they were withdrawn.'

The whole country rose like one man against this unwarranted encroachment on the ordinary rights of free citizens. A strong opponent of Non-Co-operation programme, M.A. Jinnah, admonished the government in these words: 'The passage of the bill will create a discontent and agitation the like of which has never been witnessed before.' The Indian Press was unanimous in expressing its indignation at the proposed measure. It was, in fact,

8. Tarachand, Ibid., p.6. Gandhiji described the Bills as 'the aggravated symptoms of the deep-seated disease'.
according to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, 'the beginning of an agitation throughout the country the like of which had never been witnessed'. Innumerable meetings were held in all parts of the vast peninsula and in the Council itself not one single Indian was found to support its draconian provisions even with a silent vote. But all this was of no avail and the government with the help of official block passed one of the Bills into an Act in the third week of March 1919.

Immediately thereafter Gandhiji called upon the people to observe 6 April 1919 as a day of 'humiliation and prayer'. A hartal was organised in protest against the repressive law enacted by the government of India. It was to be the day on which India opened the non-violent struggle against British imperialism.

The response to the call was amazing. It was the first demonstration in which all, rich and poor, high and low, educated or uneducated, village folk and town


14. The Hindu (Madras), 28 November 1919, p.1
people took part. It was observed with remarkable success in Madhya Pradesh also.  

In the meantime there took place another appalling event, the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar, on 13 April 1919 which further embittered the Indian patriots. At Jallianwala Bagh, General Dyer opened fire on an unarmed crowd of 15,000 people in which nearly five to six hundred people were killed outright and three times the number were wounded. According to one description: 'having deployed his troops, General Dyer at once gave orders to fire. He gave no notice to the large crowd there assembled, and allowed no time for any one to get away. He continued a controlled fire on the dense crowd facing him in the enclosure, a crowd which according to his own estimate numbered five thousand persons. Continuous fire was directed wherever the crowd was densest. In the course of ten minutes 1,650 round of ammunition were fired, and even then the firing was only brought to an end because the supply of ammunition was on the point of exhaustion.'


16. Spear, Percival, A History of India, Vol.II, p.191. Great Britain : 1970. According to Percival Spear 379 people were killed in this firing and over 1200 were wounded.

The action of General Dyer was bitterly denounced by the people of India and abroad. A Committee of enquiry was demanded and was ultimately appointed by the government with Hunter as its president. 18

Before the Committee began its enquiry the Government of India passed an Indemnity Act for the protection of its officers. There was a great deal of opposition to it in the Council, but Gandhiji, true to his principles of non-retaliation supported the bill. By this time the All India Congress Committee had appointed a sub-committee to lead evidence before the Hunter Committee. The Congress Committee asked Hunter to release the political prisoners for a short time, to enable them to collect the necessary evidence. But this request was refused. Therefore, Congress Sub-Committee decided not to lead any evidence at all but to hold an independent enquiry and publish its report. A step in Non-Co-operation was thus taken.

The Congress Sub-Committee published its report on 26 March 1920. Gandhiji hoped that the British would do justice to the victims and punish the perpetrators of the massacre which was in the words of the Congress Enquiry Committee, 'a crime against humanity'. 19 But the Hunter Committee report proved to be a mere 'white wash' which

18. The three Indian members of the Hunter Committee were Sir Chimanlal Harilal Setalvad, Pandit Jagat Narayan and Sadar Sahibsada Sultan Ahmed Khan.

Dyer's crime as 'a grave error' of judgement based upon an honest but 'mistaken conception of duty'. The report was regarded by Indians as a 'white washing documents' full of suppressio-verti and suggestio falsae and completely shook public confidence in British justice.

The action of General Dyer was strongly criticised by the people of India and abroad. One of the members of British Parliament, while accusing the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, described it as 'one of the worst outrages in the whole of our history'. The Duke of Connaught also rightly commented that 'the shadow of Amritsar has lengthened over the fair face of India'.

The British press criticised the incident. As The Nation of England commented: 'We shall show ourselves as a nation unfit to rule if we pass this thing over lightly. To condone it, to minimise it is to court its repetition...
The British Empire will not survive many Amritsar massacres'. Undoubtedly the Amritsar incident created a situation 'blacker than the 'Black hole' of Calcutta.
In spite of great opposition the British Government exonerated General Dyer by saying, 'he was doing what was right... his action at that time checked the spread of the disturbances to an extent which it is difficult now to estimate'. 26

The incident of the Jallianwala massacre became the turning point in the history of India. It was because of the report of Hunter Committee, that a loyalist like Gandhi was turned into a rebel. Now Gandhiji made up his mind that 'co-operation in any shape or form with this satanic government is sinful'. 27

The publication of the Hunter Committee Report synchronised with the publication of the Treaty of Sevres. The treaty of Sevres had dismembered Turkey. The Khalifa was living in Constantinople as a protege of the British. Smyrna was handed over to the Greeks and Lloyed George egged on the Greeks to occupy as much of Anatolia as they could. This act of Britain shocked the conscience of Indian Muslims and a Khilafat agitation arose in the country. They demanded 'the preservation of the Turkish Empire... and the continued existence of the Khilafat as a temporal no less than spiritual institution'. The deputation which placed this demand before the Governor General was organised under the

the guidance of Gandhiji and led by Ansari. Mohammed Ali, who along with his brother, had been released, led a deputation to England in March 1920 but returned disappointed. The Ali Brothers joined the Congress and took the lead in the Khilafat agitation. To Gandhi, the Khilafat question seemed to offer such an opportunity for uniting Hindus and Mohammedans as would not arise in a hundred years. He decided to launch a Non-Co-operation Movement in order to seek a modification in the Treaty of Sevres to seek the redress of Panjab wrongs and to lead India to Swaraj.

The present study is confined to the Central Provinces and Berar. The province was formed in 1861 by the merger of the Sagar and Narmada Territories which till then had been under the administration of the Lieutenant-Governor of North-Western Provinces and the territories acquired from the Bhoisees of Nagpur. The district of Nimar was added to the province in 1864; it was till then administered by the Central India Agency. In 1903, the Government of India added to it the territory of Berar which was leased from the Nizam. The Berar's position into the Central Province was to some extent

29. The Division and Districts included in the province are mentioned in Map 1.
special. The integration of Berar with the Central Provinces was designed to give financial support to the latter as well as for the administrative convenience. Berar was a fertile cotton-growing area, with surplus revenue.\(^{32}\) Whereas the revenues of the Central Provinces were barely enough to cover the cost of its administration. After 1903 the revenues of Berar together with those of the province enabled the government to construct public works and develop Nagpur in accordance with its status as the capital. This angered the revenue payers of Berar who were against the use of Berar's revenue in the Central Provinces and led them to demand the proper share of the divisible revenues.\(^{33}\) Besides, new land settlement further angered the landholders of Berar. In 1860 British officials, following agreement between the Nizam and the Government of India had made a land settlement in Berar. In keeping with the existing arrangement they settled the land on individual holders on a pattern similar to the ryotwari system in force in the neighbouring Bombay Presidency. The British officials introduced the 16-anna-system of classifying the soil. The settlement was made for a thirty-year period as was the practice in Bombay Presidency. Special arrangement were, however, made for the holders of 116 jagirdaris and ancient estates who were required to pay small quit

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33. Ibid., p.9.
rent. The land settlement in the Central Provinces differed from that of Berar. In Central Provinces, the government settled the land on the malguzars, who earlier were revenue farmers for entire mahals or estates. On the instructions of Canning an attempt was made to create big zamindari estates in the province on the pattern of Taluqdar system of Oudh. The attempt, however, did not succeed to any large extent. Under the terms of this settlement the malguzars were responsible for paying the revenue which was assessed at fifty percent of the net assets of the mahal.

Broadly speaking, the province consisted of two parts: The Mahakoshal and the Vidarbha. The Mahakoshal region consisted of fourteen Hindi speaking districts grouped into the three administrative divisions of Narmada, Jabalpur and Chhattisgarh. The Narmada division included Nimar, Hoshangabad, Narsinghpur, Betul and Chhindwara districts; the Jabalpur division had the districts of Jabalpur, Sagar, Demoh, Seoni and Mandla while Raipur, Bilaspur and Durg districts belonged to the Chhattisgarh division. The Vidarbha region consisted of eight Marathi-speaking districts grouped into the two

34. Ibid., p.9-10
35. Secretary, Finance Department, Government of India to Commissioner, Nagpur Territory, 28 June 1960, Finance Department (A) Consultation, June 1960, 359-82, NAI.
administrative divisions of Nagpur and Berar. The Nagpur division included districts of Nagpur, Wardha, Chanda and Bhandara while the Berar division comprised the districts acquired from the Nizam, namely Amraoti, Yeotmal, Akola and Buldhana. In 1920 the Hindi speaking district of Balaghat was also part of the Nagpur division, but in 1931, while reorganising the province in the interests of economy, the government placed Balaghat and Bhandara in the Chhatisgarh division, and brought Betul and Chhindwara (newly enlarged by the addition of Seoni) into the Nagpur division.

The province contained two distinct linguistic regions. The Mahakoshal mainly consisted of Hindi speaking districts, whereas the Vidarbha was predominantly (though not exclusively) a Marathi speaking area. Each region moreover had its own historical traditions and cultural background.

As a result of the establishment of various industries such as textile and availability of mineral resources and more transport facilities, the Vidarbha region enjoyed a better economic position than that obtaining in the Mahakoshal region. In comparison with the Mahakoshal region, the Vidarbha region had better educational institutions, newspapers and literary traditions also.

37. As per the Census of 1921, out of a total population of 1,39,12,760 in the province, 75,07,158 spoke Hindi or Chhattisgarhi, and 47,73,561 spoke Marathi. Census of India 1921, Vol.XI, Central Provinces and Berar, Part II, Table.
The two linguistic regions could never be fully integrated as a unit. The historical, linguistic, social, cultural and economic difference existing in them resulted in the selection of separate political leaders from among their own ranks. They were expected to advance their regional interests by their followers.

The leaders of the Mahakoshal region were mainly Brahmins, Rajputs and Marwaris, while in the Vidarbha region leadership was in the hands of Maharashtrian Brahmin.

38. Prominent leaders of the Mahakoshal region included Ravi Shankar Shukla, Brahmin, pleader, Raipur; Bishnu Dutt Shukla, Brahmin, Malguzar and landholder, Sihora (Jabalpur District); Kashi Prasad Pandey, Brahmin, pleader and landholder, Sihora (Jabalpur District); Makanlal Chaturvedi, Brahmin, poet, Khandwa; Chhedial, Rajput (Kshatriya), Malguzar and Barrister, Bilaspur; B. Raghavendra Rao, Kshatriya, pleader and landholder, Bilaspur; Harisingh Gour, Kshatriya (Rajput), barrister, orginally from Sagar; G.S. Gupta, Bania, pleader and Malguzar, Durg; G.C. Singhai, Bania (Jain), pleader, Damoh; Shivdas Degga, Bania, landholder, Raipur; Mathura Prasad, Kayastha, landholder, Chhindwara; Beohar Rajendra Singh, Kayastha, Zamindar and author, Jabalpur; Beohar Gulab Singh, Kayastha, Zamindar, Jabalpur; D.S. Mehta, Brahmin, pleader and landholder, Seoni; Seth Govind Das, Harwadi, Zamindar, Jabalpur; G.P. Jaiswal, Kalar, pleader, Hoshangabad; Syed Hifazat Ali, pleader, Khandwa.
Kayasthas, Marathas, Marwari traders and to a less extent Mahars. By 1918 politicians from the middle class slowly emerged as the leaders of society. The leadership in each region always tried to represent and foster the regional social norms, customs and traditions and thus guarded the regional identity. Till 1920, the leaders of the Vidarbha region dominated the provincial politics. Most of them were the followers of Tilak. The Mahakoshal region, on the other hand, was mainly influenced by the ideology of Gandhi. Later, however, the Mahakoshal started

39. The leaders of the Vidarbha region included M.V. Joshi, Brahmin, pleader and landholder, Amraoti; R.N. Mudholkar, Brahmin, pleader and landholder, Amraoti; R.A. Kanitkar, Brahmin, pleader and landholder, Buldhana; N.K. Kelkar, Brahmin, pleader and landholder, Balaghat; G.S. Khaparde, Brahmin, pleader and landholder, Amraoti; B.G. Khaparde, Brahmin, pleader and landholder, Amraoti; B.S. Moonje, Brahmin, Medical practitioner, Nagpur; M.S. Aney, Brahmin, pleader and landholder, Yeotmal; B.B. Tambe, Brahmin, pleader and landholder, Amraoti; M.V. Abhyanker, Brahmin, pleader and landholder, Nagpur; N.B. Walse, Brahmin, Medical Practitioner; Nagpur, Vamanrao Joshi, Brahmin, Journalist, Amraoti; G.M. Chitnavis, Kayastha, Wealthy Banker and landholder, Nagpur; S.M. Chitnavis, Kayastha, Wealthy Banker and landholder, Nagpur; B.K. Bose, Kayastha, pleader, Nagpur; Ramrao Deshmukh, Maratha, pleader and landholder, Amraoti; Panjabrao Deshmukh, Maratha, pleader and landholder, Amraoti; K.S. Naidu, Kshatriya, pleader and landholder, Nagpur; T.J. Kedar, Maratha, pleader and landholder, Wardha; Jamnalal Bajaj, Marwari trader, Wardha; Poonam Chand Kanka, Marwari trader, Nagpur; Brijlal Buyani, Maheshwari Bania, trader, Akola; Manchesha Awari, Parsi, Engineer, Nagpur and G.A. Gavai, Mahar, Journalist, Amraoti.
to assert its position and gradually became successful in challenging the Vidarbha superiority. 40

The Muslims comprised only four percent of the population of the Central Provinces and Berar and were found in both the regions. By 1919 they were urbanised and highly literate community and had great merchants, pleaders and Malguzars. They were awarded titles and favours by the British Government. They were loyal to the British rule. 41

There were extensive Depressed class communities in both the regions. In the Mahakoshal region they were mostly labourers in villages and towns. Among them the Satnams of Chhattisgarh region owned land also. In the Vidarbha region they were factory workers. The Mahars, however, owned and rented land and a few of them had acquired some education. Men like G.A. Gavai who sought to induce the Mahars to protest against their untouchable status, persuaded the government to aid them. By 1918-19 the government responded by admitting Mahars in small

40. The Government too encouraged the politicians to form linguistic and regional groups. After the establishment of an elected legislature under the Montague Chelmsford Reforms in 1920, politicians formed territorial lobbies to secure the newly created places in the Ministry and Executive Council. Their activities were often guided by their regional interests.

numbers to high schools and teacher training institutions. 42

The years from 1921 to 1937 form a significant period for a study of the working of the Legislative Council in Central Provinces and Berar. In 1920, the Government of India Act 1919 initiated the scheme known as Dyarchy in the various provinces of India. The first Legislative Council according to the provisions of the Act was constituted in the Central Provinces and Berar in January 1921. The scheme remained functioning in the province till February 1937.

The period under review was a very critical one for the national movement in the country. During this period the Indian National Congress launched its two movements, viz., the Non-Co-operation Movement and the Civil Disobedience Movement under the leadership of Gandhi. The interaction of the legislature with the national movement is an important, though yet unexplained problem for the study of the movement. It will be the purpose of the proposed study to make an in-depth study of the problem in its different phases and at different times.

Moreover, there is a need for study of the growth of parliamentary procedures and practices in a growing parliamentary democracy in India. The Central Provinces and Berar Legislative Council in particular played an important role in the scheme of constitutional evolution, political education, social and economic legislation, liberalisation of the provincial government and closer relation between the people and the administration. It will be interesting to analyse these points in the context of the national movement in the province.

The year 1920 witnessed two momentous events in the history of India. The first was the introduction of constitutional changes in the wake of the implementation of the Government of India Act 1919. The second event was the beginning of the first mass-movement, the Non-Co-operation Movement—initiating qualitatively a new phase of freedom struggle in the country. The reforms of 1919 evoked mixed reaction from the Indian nationalists. The Moderates in Indian politics welcomed the reforms as a token of British goodwill and took part in the elections, while the Indian National Congress rejected the scheme and boycotted the elections. An attempt has been made to analyse the attitude of the Liberals and the Congress towards the introduction of the reforms of 1919. An effort has also been made to throw light on the development of political awakening in the provincial politics in C.P. and Berar.
The period from 1921 to 1923 constituted the first phase for the working of the first reformed Council in the province. The first reformed Council as it emerged after the elections and nomination did not have any nationalist elements. It was dominated by the Liberals, the Loyalists and the Independents. An attempt has been made to analyse the role of the Liberals in the Council in the context of the national movement. An effort has also been made to assess their role in the constitutional evolution, political education and social and economic legislation.

The period from 1924 to 1929, the second phase, saw the dominance and decline of the Swarajists in the Council while the experiment of Janakpuri was in progress. Their aim was to transfer the nationalist struggle to the legislatures. It is proposed to analyse the role of Swarajists in the legislature. An attempt has been made to assess their response to local issues in the province.

The period from 1930 to 1937 constituted the third phase which coincided with the working of the fourth Council, the last under the Act. It also witnessed the second mass movement, the Civil Disobedience Movement. It is proposed to study the role of the Responsive Co-operatives in the context of the second mass movement. An effort has also been made to study their role in the enactment of some important legislation pertaining to the social, economic and administrative fields.
Along with the rest of India, the Central Provinces and Berar was closely involved in the national movement. The elected element in the legislature interacted with the movement going on in the province. So far, no worthwhile research work or in-depth study has come out about this interaction. The Legislative Council of the Central Provinces and Berar reacted to the national movement in the province in its own way and contributed significantly to the advancement of the cause of Indian nationalism. The History of Freedom Movement, and evolution of political leadership in the Central Provinces and Berar form the subject matter of two well-known volumes. Several historians collaborated to produce the first of these, *The History of Freedom Movement in Madhya Pradesh*. It was edited by D.P. Mishra, a prominent leader of the freedom struggle himself and a former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. The other, *Changing Political Leadership in an Indian Province: The Central Provinces and Berar*, 1919-39, is a remarkable piece of research done by D.M. U. Baker. Both the volumes have shed much light on the political history of the Central Provinces and Berar in the first few decades of this century. However, the role of the Legislative Council did not fully engage the attention of these learned authors as their interest was mainly to study the political movement. In this sense, the present work is an humble attempt to break some new ground.
An explanation about the place names is called for. The place names have been spelt according to the current usage. The spellings in vogue during the period under study have been avoided to minimise the changes of confusion.

This study has been mainly based on original records. I have drawn plentifully upon the original papers and government records, preserved at the National Archives of India and the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, National Library of India, Calcutta, Madhya Pradesh Records Room, Nagpur and Madhya Pradesh Secretariat Records Room, Bhopal, and these form the main sources for this study. The material consulted and used include fortnightly reports on the internal political situation of the province, Government circulars, confidential reports, Reports of the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces and Berar, All-India Congress Committee papers, Provincial Congress Committee papers, private papers and diaries of leading contemporary leaders, and the reports published in the Indian newspapers. Original and microfilm copies of important newspapers are available in the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and at the National Archives of India, New Delhi. The published records, and the Annual Administration Reports of the Government of Central Provinces and Berar, providing valuable and authentic statistics relating to my subject were also consulted. The newspapers of the times have also proved to be of immense value as these
not only provide authentic information regarding the day to day developments but also afford a glimpse of the zeal, enthusiasm and devotion which motivated all sections of the people. Certain books and unpublished Ph.D. theses have been useful as secondary sources for this work. Oral interviews with some of the living leaders of the freedom struggle or with their descendants, relatives and friends elicited valuable information. With their help, it has been possible to make a coherent study of the problems under study.