CHAPTER - 1
INTRODUCTION

All great men are not good. But Nehru had both the qualities of a great leader and good human being.

Some people came to the earth to give something to the people around him, others felt richer for his having lived among them, some people's life beings messages to the whole community as it touches the every bodies life and thus his or her life more meaningful. Nehru was one of them.

Jawaharlal Nehru was one of the forerunner of his generation who worked relentlessly to achieve freedom for Indians in particular and for the whole mankind in general. Nehru is a multifaceted personality. Had he not chosen politics as his career what he would had been chosen as a profession can also be deplored. Noble Laureate Pearl S. Buck wrote praising Nehru's literacy talent 'I know that had our times been more peaceful, he could have found a high career as a creative writer, for his style of writing was distinguished and his imagination alive and quick. I regret the loss of books he might have written had he not devoted his talent to his country in political life'.

Nehru tried to rate politics a high degree of intellectual exercise, which needs competence and at the same time compassion for life to make it meaningful and peaceful for all.

Nehru choose politics as his profession by challenging the prejudiced for that profession even in his father's mind also to make it as one of the high degree of intellectual work where prudence, wisdom and scientific temper should be assimilated for the benefit of the society. He challenged his father Motilal Nehru, an established advocate while choosing the profession that - 'He had a feeling that his own countryman had fallen low and almost deserved what they had got. And there was just a trace of contempt in his mind for the politicians who talked and talked without doing anything, though he had no idea at all as to what else they could do. Also there was the thought, born in the pride of his own success; that many - certainly not all of those also look to politics had been failures in life'.

It is very difficult to judge a person without being applied a psychoanalysis method on him. All the present psychological studies where persons behaviour are judged by the experts opened up new facts of the hidden qualities.

Jawaharlal Nehru was born in Allahabad on the 14th of November, 1889 to his father Motilal Nehru and mother Swarap Rani. He was the elder and only son with two sisters. They were Kashmiri Brahmin and descended from Kashmir during the last part of the Mughal rule. Their forefather was Raj Kaul who had been given a Jijir and a place in Delhi near a canal which is called ‘Nahar’ from that the family was known as Nehru. His forefather Gangadhar Nehru was a Kotowal but they were forced to shift from Delhi to Agra during the time of Sepoy Mutiny and then from Agra to Allahabad.

In Agra Motilal Nehru was born and due to the death of his father he was brought up by elder brother Nanda Lal Nehru who was an advocate at the Court of Agra. As the court shifted from Agra to Allahabad, whole family also has to shift. Motilal Nehru though unable to graduate himself became a practicing lawyer following the profession of Nanda Lal Nehru and achieve success in his profession as it is in his heart. And he with dedication to his work established himself as one of the successful lawyer of Allahabad High Court.

Nehru lived in a joint family, got his primary and middle level education under the guidance of an English tutor Ferdinand T. Brook. With him he developed the reading habit and grew interest on English
literature. He had created interest in Science and did scientific experiments in the laboratory installed at home and also developed an interest in Theosophy. He started thinking consciously about the various aspects of life and also the religion and accepted the greatness of Hindu religious books like 'Upanishada' and the 'Bhagavad Gita'. His private tutor Mr. Ferdinand T. Brook was chosen by Mrs. Anne Besant who was close to Motilal Nehru.

Mrs. Anne Besant was one of the member of the theosophical society and her speeches on Theosophy influenced Nehru tremendously. At the 13th years of his age Nehru became one of the member of the Theosophical society. He also attended the Theosophical convention held at Benaras and saw old Colonel Olcott renowned member of Theosophical Society. This influence of theosophy, made his tendency to be fearless in thinking the world affairs also took interest in international politics. He expressed as it influence him in such an early age as – 'So I became a member of the Theosophical Society at thirteen and Mrs. Besant herself performed the ceremony of initiation which consisted of good advice and instruction of some mysterious signs, probably a relief of freemasonry'.

thoughts provocating tendency within himself as such – ‘But I have a fairly strong impression that during these theosophical days of mine, I developed the flat and insipid look, which sometimes denotes piety and which is (or was) often to be seen among theosophist men and women. I was smug, with a feeling of being one of the elect, and altogether I must have been a thoroughly undesirable and unpleasant companion for any boy or girl of my age’.  

International affairs attracted the attention of Nehru and he closely observed the Russia-Japanese war, and interested in the power building capacities of Japan and of emerging Asiatic powers.

At this stage Nehru had the idea of rise of Asiatic power to dominate the European control over India and the spirit of nationalism made him bound to take part in this great battle of independence with a sword in hand.

During that time the Indian independent movement gradually able to attract the middle and high class Indians, who got the privilege to get education through English language. Indian National Congress was gradually become an organisation not only to give memorandums but to demand for more welfare measures for the people from the British government.

Nehru with his family sailed to Europe for better education in English public school. Nehru was fortunate in the sense that he got a vacant seat in Harrow school and admitted their without appearing for admission test. His fortune favoured him all throughout his life, which he admitted several times in his writings. ‘I was a little fortunate in finding a vacancy at Harrow for I was slightly above the usual age for entry, being fifteen’. Nehru’s at that time was financially very much secured for the successful practice of his father at Allahabad High Court. The whole family toured in the European continent for some months and returned to India.

During the studies in Harrow Nehru learnt Latin and gradually he became well conversant in Latin language. He easily accustomed himself to the atmosphere of Harrow and mixed up with the classmates, shared experiences and played games. But during these days he had a little bit aloof from others and his interest were not only confined with the different subjects for study and games, but more than it, the governmental affairs of England. Nehru during these days developed keen interest in general knowledge and reads more books and newspapers than his fellow classmates. This he reveal in his statement that, ‘My interests were certainly wider, and I read both

books and newspapers more than most of my fellow students. I remember writing to my father how dull most of the English boys were as they could talk about nothing but their games. Nehru developed keen interest in governmental affairs and he collected information regarding the Liberal Victory of 1906, that historic victory was such that he developed the interest to have the full list of cabinet members constructed by Campbell – Bannerman, and correctly stated this when he was asked in his class.

In Britain at that time the victory achieved by Campbell Bannerman as the leader of the liberal party was landslide. During 1906 'polling began in the middle of January and went on for a fortnight, as was the rule in those days. The very first result showed which way the tide was moving, and in the end the liberals were returned 377 strong: in addition there were 53 Labour members and 83 Irish nationalistic who were generally their allies. The conservatives totalled 157 only: so that the Government majority was 356, it was a landslide.'

During that time Nehru being a boy of sixteen years was concern about his own carrier and developed the innate qualities he had within him to concern about law making body and the law making

mechanism. Being a son of a successful lawyer he knew the prospects of law practicing profession also. But from the adolescent period Nehru ‘dreamt of brave deeds, of how, sword in hand, I would fight for India and help in freeing her’. So, he developed a very broad and wide outlook from very early of his academic life. And fortune also bestowed him the opportunity. Because Nehru from childhood was the lone child of the big, rich parents and got a very comfortable and peaceful life.

His sisters came to their home after eleven years from his birth. So, basically Nehru loves peace and he also was fortunate that destiny bestowed every possible opportunity for him to avail a peaceful atmosphere. During early childhood of his life for dominating personality like his father Motilal Nehru maintaining peaceful atmosphere at home and after that in Harrow and Cambridge, Nehru stated ‘So passed my early years. Sometimes, as was inevitable in a large family, there were family squabbles. When these happened as assume unusual proportions they reached my father’s ears and he was angry and seemed to think that all such happenings were due to the folly of women. I did not understand what exactly had happened but I saw that something was very wrong, as people seemed to speak in a peculiarly disagreeable way or to avoid each other. I felt very unhappy’.

So, Nehru liked the peaceful atmosphere and environment which he got at Harrow.

During his study at home he was influenced by his tutor Ferdinand T. Brook, who made him a member of Theosophical Society, and by attending the meetings he developed the interest to know the secrets of the Universe, specially from the book of Buddhist ‘Dharmapada’ ‘Upanisada’ and ‘Bhagabad Gita’. During those days he dreamt of flying high up airs without any appliances, and that dream hunted him throughout his life. Nehru stated ‘I dreamt of astral bodies and imagined myself flying vast distances. This dream of flying high up in the air (without any appliance) has indeed been a frequent one throughout my life; and sometimes it has been vivid and realistic and the countryside seemed to lie under neath me in a vast panorama. I do not know the modern interpreters of dreams Freud and others, would interpret this dream’. During the initial period at Harrow Nehru was fascinated for another innovation came out with much publicity that was the growth of aviation. Nehru wrote it ‘These were the days of the Wright Brothers and Santos Dumont (to be followed soon by Farman, Latham and Bleriot) and I wrote to father from Harrow, in my enthusiasm, that soon I might be able to pay him a week-end visit in India by air’.  

Nehru at Harrow got a few Indian students like son of Gackwar of Baroda and son of Maharaja of Kapurthala, and he also had some Jew friends whom in those days recognised as ‘damed jews’. Nehru got a prize for his good work in Harrow which was a book written by G. M Trevelyan on Garibaldi. The heroic work done by Garibaldi of Italy fascinated the minds of Nehru and he collected the other volumes of that series and read the series fully.

During that time of 1906 and 1907 Nehru also took interest in taking day to day news published on the freedom struggle of India. He got the news of deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai and S. Ajit Singh. He read the names of Bal Gangadhar Tilak from Poona, and he also knew about the new programme of Congress ‘Swadeshi’, ‘Boycott’ etc. After reading the whole Garibaldi series Nehru had in his mind ‘Visions of similar deeds in India came before me, of a gallant fight for freedom and in my mind India and Italy got strangely mixed together. Harrow seemed a rather small and restricted place for these ideas and I wanted to go to the wider sphere of the university. So I induced father to agree to this and left Harrow after only two years’ stay, which was much less than the usual period’.12

But leaving Harrow for good after two years of stay made Nehru emotional and tear came from his eyes at the time of departure. Nehru remembered the Harrow traditions and songs very well and he had a feeling of familiarity with the place where he spent his years with full efforts of learning.

Nehru admitted in Trinity College of Cambridge University and carried on his studies for a degree for three years. He studied the natural science tripos these are Chemistry, Geology and Botany. But addition to these subject he had keen interest in reading books on literature, History, Political Science and Economics. During these three years study in Trinity College, Nehru enjoyed a very quiet, comfortable, happy life and hence his intellectual horizon opened gradually. During the period he got the chance to take part with the high level intellectual discussions among the students as well as had the privilege to get in touch of some great philosopher like Nietzsche.

Nehru at that time though was among the whirlpool of different ideas but he opened his intellectual world and tried to think the happening of his surroundings in a scientific and reasonable way. Though otherwise he also like a young boy had interest for life but after all he was a shy young boy and always not an extract fit with his fellow
peer group. Nehru stated, ‘I was never an exact fit. Always I had a feeling that I was not one of them, and the others must have felt the same way about me. I was left a little to myself’.13

During the time Nehru read the books and writings of many famous writers like Ivan Block, Havelock Ellis, Kraft Ebbing or Otto Weininger, Oscar Wilde and Walter Pater. Among all these writings he was highly impressed for political ideas of Mere dith Townsend’s ‘Asia and Europe’.

Nehru during these days of Cambridge, thought for an adventurous life. He did not want to lead a plain life and to enjoy the life’s great pleasures. As he was not controlled by his religious temper and also disliked religious repressions he created some other standards for himself to achieve for his life. And at this stage of his life he was as he expressed, ‘I was superficial and did not go deep down into anything. And so the aesthetic side of life appealed to me, and the idea of going through life worthily, not indulging it in the vulgar way, but still making the most of it and living a full and many sided life attracted me’.14 At that period Nehru’s life was: ‘work and games and amusements filled my life and the only thing that disturbed me.

sometimes was the political struggle in India'. Nehru admitted that his study during the years in Cambridge was the period where his intellectual life opened up. Though he was not clear about his thought but different kinds of thoughts and real life situations were discussed among the peer groups with sincerity and efforts. Nehru stated

'Meanwhile, life was pleasant, both physically and intellectually. fresh horizons were ever coming into sight, there was so much to be done, so much to be seen, so many fresh avenues to explore. And we would sit by the fireside in the long winter evenings and talk and discuss unhurriedly deep into the night till the dying fire drove us shivering to our beds. And sometimes, during our discussions, our voices would lose their even tenor and would grow loud and exited in heated argument. But it was all make believe. We played with the problems of human life in a mock serious way, for they had not become real problems for us yet, and we had not been caught in the coils of the world’s affairs'.

During the study in Cambridge as the study of the subjects did not need much more time to concentrate, in leisure hours Nehru attended 'Majlis' which was society made by the Indian students of Cambridge. The society members discussed the political problems of

India but in a very unreal manner and Nehru never had the courage to speck publicly and took part in the discussions of the ‘Majlis’.

The Cambridge students had the debating society called ‘The Magpic and stump’, where there was a rule that a member not speaking for a whole term should pay a fine, and Nehru usually paid the fine. Nehru stated ‘Frequently I went to the ‘Majlis’ but during my three years I hardly spoke there. I could not get over my shyness and diffidence’. But though Nehru was unable to express his view but he was keenly interested in taking part in the Indian freedom struggle and achieve a different standard in his life on the basis of brave deeds. Nehru stated, ‘I was always, like my father, a bit of a gambler, at first with money and then for higher stakes, with the bigger issues of life. Indian politics in 1907 and 1908 were in a state of upheaval and I wanted to play a brave part in them, and this was not likely to lead to a soft life’. 

During these days news of Tilak’s activities and convictions, Arabindo Ghosh’s activities and the Bengalish’s mass support to Swadeshi and Boycott pledges stirred all the students studying at Cambridge, and all of them and Nehru himself was supporters of Tilakites or Extremists.

During the study in Cambridge the question about choosing the carrier, remain as a main issue to take decision. Though Nehru thought for Indian Civil Service, but his age made him compel to stay 2 more years in England to sit for the exam, which was not accepted by the family. Another, problem is that if he was selected he had to serve in the different parts of India being a transferable job. So, ultimately paternal profession became his choice to accept as carrier and ultimately in 1910, Nehru joined in Inner temple for law degree.

During 1907 and 1908 Indian freedom movement was under pressure for the clashes between the moderate and extremist fractions of the Congress Party. Extremist fraction of the party led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Ray tried to change the procedure of action of Congress Party by adopting certain direct actions against Britishers, Swadeshi Movement, Boycott movement after Bengal partition gave the fuel to the spirit of extremist fraction of the party, and the tussle between these two groups became evident within the Congress Party. During the time of study in Cambridge Nehru and the Indian students there got the opportunity to meet and hear the lectures of Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Ray and G. K. Gokhle. Bipin Chandra Pal made speech so violently which was
not audible for the audience their and Nehru also was not get anything from it. But Lala Lajpat Ray was very clear in his ideas and expressed it in a very lucid way which impressed all in Cambridge. Nehru also listen the lectures given by G. K. Gokhle and they were impressed by the arguments forwarded by the extremist fraction of the Congress Party.

During that tussle on Congress Party, Motilal Nehru played an important role and he was a moderate supporting the change needed in India on the basis of law and constitution. Motilal Nehru who was very clear in his thought knew that hard and extreme words lead nowhere unless they were followed by action appropriate to the language. Motilal Nehru did not want to support the extremist as he rejected the idea of extremism, that they can express the political activities as they desires. So, when he got opportunity Motilal Nehru rejected the ideas of extremists. Nehru did not support the activities of his father and ultimately, he wrote a letter to his father for these kinds of works. All that lead to a clash for sometime between father and son and that revealed Nehru’s ability to express his ideas clearly to the people and here to his father. Nehru wrote – ‘Having cast his lot with the moderate, father took an aggressive line. Most of the extremists, apart from a few leaders in Bengal and Poona, were young men and it
irritated him to find that these youngsters dared to go their own way. Impatient and intolerant of opposition, and not suffering people whom he considered fools, gladly, he pitched into them and hit out whenever he could. I remember, I think it was after I left Cambridge, reading an article of his which annoyed me greatly, I wrote him rather on an impertinent letter in which I suggested that no doubt the British Government was greatly pleased with his political activities. This was just kind of suggestion, which would make him wild, and he was very angry. He almost thought of asking me to return from England immediately'.

Nehru in Cambridge was a supporter of extremist ideas of Congress Party. But he disliked the nationalism which was the spirit behind the rise of extremist, it was religious nationalism, which could only lead India to social and philosophical glory but not for economical prosperity for future development. Nehru also realised the rejection of extremist ideas by his father, because Motilal Nehru was also aware about the impact of religious nationalism in India. As India was a multi-religious society so, religious nationalism will not going to work as a spirit to unite the whole people under the umbrella of Congress Party. Their was need of economic approach to address the problem of...
Indian independence which the moderates realised but in a restricted manner. Nehru wrote, ‘Moderates thus represented a more advanced social outlook but they were a mere handful on the top with no touch with the masses. They did not think much in terms of economics except in terms of new upper-middle which they partly represented and which wanted room for expression. They advocated also petty social reforms to weaken caste and do away with old social customs which hindered growth’.  

Nehru during the study of Cambridge was fascinated with the development of aviation in Europe. In 1909 he with his father travelled in the European continent and in Berlin they watched Count Zeppelin arrived flying his new airship from Frederickshafen on Lake Constance. Nehru wrote, ‘I believe that was his first long flight and the occasion was celebrated by a huge demonstration and a formal welcome by the Kaiser. A vast multitude, estimated at between one and two millions gathered in the Tempelhof Field in Berlin, and the Zeppelin arrived on time and circled gracefully above us. The Hotel Adlon presented all its residents that day with a fine picture of Count Zeppelin, and I have still got that picture’. 

Nehru admitted that in degree exams of Cambridge he did not do well. He was only moderately successful in his Science tripos examination and obtained a second class degree with honours.

After obtaining the degree from Trinity College, as in 1910 he joined the Inner Temple for Law degree, he got enough time to hover as the law study did not take much time in its study.

During this period Nehru drifted within the activities like some general reading, keeping interest on Fabians and Socialists ideas, monitoring the political movement of the day like Sinn Fein in Ireland, women suffrage movement in England. During these days he also was coming across some friends of Harrow and developed some expensive habits. His expenditure went up and up and he tried to made himself prosperous fellow among his group which made him like as he identified himself as ‘I was mainly trying to ape to some extent the prosperous but somewhat empty-headed Englishman who is called a ‘man about town’. This soft and pointless existence, needless to say, did not improve me in any way. My early enthusiasms began to tone down and the only thing that seemed to go up way my conceit’. 22

Nehru had a lucky escape in Norway when after achieving the degree from Cambridge he went there for a pleasure cruise. In 1910, Nehru went to Norway with a friend where they stayed in a little hotel. From that hotel they took the small table Napkins and went for bath as in that hotel there was no such provisions. They were told that they can bath in the nearby stream. They went there, and the stream had a roaring torrent which was coming from a Glacier, both of them got down into the water and though it was not so deep, the bottom level was so slippery and the water was so cold that freeze his limbs and he could not catch hold and swept away with the torrent, the Englishman ran to catch Nehru along the shore and ultimately he catch him and drag him out of that stream water. That stream after some two-three hundred yard ahead fell down from a high stiff hill and that waterfalls was a place of sight seeing of Norway. That incident made Nehru aware about the dangers of his own habits of adventuring new experiences.

Nehru passed the Law examination without making any remarkable result but, he was successful in passing all the exams one after another. Nehru was called to the Bar in 1912, during the summer and he returned to home after completing his study period by attaining
graduation and Bar at Law in the autumn of the same year. So, Nehru after staying for seven years in England for study got the opportunities to achieve the most sophisticated education available at that time.

Nehru arrived at Bombay and he expressed about himself as. 'I was a bit of prig with little to commend me'.

After deciding to join the paternal profession as a career, Nehru had got enough time to handle his own profession and also he continued his interest in politics.

Nehru visited as a delegate the Bankipore Congress in 1912, he observed that Congress Party at that stage was totally under the control of moderate group and it also was a party confined itself with upper class English knowing people's affairs. The party at that time was not represented by common masses of India, and it met annually and passed resolutions which had very little political implication and could not able to attract attention of the common people. During that session Nehru was impressed by the speech given by Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who also impressed him by his practical knowledge about the need of freedom of nation during stay in Cambridge. Mr. Gokhale who was than the member of Public Service Commission expressed the

---

need to make freedom movement more vibrant and effective in creating it a mass movement.

Nehru was not at all stimulated to join in Congress Party at that time and tried to concentrate and absorb in his own legal profession at Allahabad High Court. The legal professionals at that time was maintaining a routine life as laws which were affective were static and in favour of the British regime in India. Outside the Court he spent some time in bar library as well as in club but all these associations actually did not satisfy the young minds of Nehru. Nehru wanted to absorb into some other kind of amusement but at that stage in Allahabad there were little provision for these type of activities.

During these period the young, energetic Nehru could not absorb his mind into his professional works. Due to his coming out from a vibrant atmosphere and progressive academic environment in England, Nehru was not satisfied with the monotonous life of law professionals in India. Because of a colony of an empire the legal implication of ideas and intellectual works struck with the controlling measures taken by Britishers in India. A free atmosphere for intellectual development was lacking in India at that time which was accurately observed by Nehru. Nehru wrote, 'Even a bright young Englishman on
coming out to India will soon relapse into a kind of intellectual and cultural torpor and will get cut off from all live ideas and movements. After a day in office, dealing with the even rotating and never ending files, he will have some exercise and then go to his club to mix with his kind, drink whisky and read punch and illustrated weeklies from England. He hardly read books and if he does he will probably go back to an old favourite. And for this gradual deterioration of mind he will blame India, curse the climate and generally anathematize the tribe of agitators who add to his troubles, not realising that the cause of intellectual and cultural decay lies in the hide-bound bureaucratic and despotic system of government which flourishes in India and of which he is a tiny part.  

A few intelligent and capable Indians were able to enter in Indian Civil Services and their life became very comfortable but it also lose vibration of life because of administrative limitation impose upon them by British administration. So, those capable Indians who were in Civil Service were though got opportunities to work for the people, the scope was very limited being a member of colonial administrative organisation. Administration under the colonial rule only concerned about their service conditions while service rendered towards the

people had little importance for them. They concern only with promotions, leave rules, furloughs, transfers and little tit bits of service scandals.

So, during the time of 1912, the civil servant as well as other officials under British administration got benefits from their occupations as professionals but these opportunities were confined to those capable competent and intelligent section of the society who were able to acquire education through English language. So, the Indian civil servants and officials under British Governments are comprised of rich and upper middle class of people. They were concern about the whole administrative system, and they were the people who were the supporters of Congress Party. Congress Party initially passed certain resolutions and submit it to the British Government for its implementation. But these activities had no relation with common people and did not carry any meaning for the common masses until the Swadeshi and Boycott Movement came up after the Bengal partition in 1905. So, from 1905 common Indians began to take interest in Congress Party activities that involvement of common people increased gradually and rapidly after the organisation was administered by Gandhiji. During these days peoples engaged in different professions were also comprised from rich and upper middle class of the society.
These professionals like Lawyers, Doctors and Teachers of Universities were also lead a competent, comfortable life but confined with the problem of their own, without responsibilities to the people. Nehru wrote, ‘All these people lived in a world apart, cut off from the masses and even the lower middle class. Politics was confined to this upper strata. The nationalist movement in Bengal from 1906 onwards had for the first time shaken this up and infused a new life in the Bengal lower middle class and to a small extent even the masses. This process was to grow rapidly in later years under Gandhiji’s leadership, but a nationalist struggle though life giving is a narrow creed and absorbs too much energy and attention to allow other activities’. 25

During the year Nehru though engaged in the legal profession but the profession could not confine him totally and he tried to continue his interest in politics. But during those days Nehru was totally influenced by the extremist ideas and thought of freedom movement and simultaneously thought of an aggressive nationalist activity against foreign rule. In 1912, Nehru joined Congress Party, and regarding the agitation for the Fiji indenture system for Indian workers and on South African Indian question, he threw his full energy and worked very hard to establish the voice of Indians in the world platform.

During the period to engage himself into divergent activities he went for shikar, though he had no inclination for this type of hunting mania on forest animals. Nehru generally remained unsuccessful in the hunting purpose, but once he became successful and killed a bear in Kashmir. That killing hunted him for many years and kept him very sad for his own inhuman work for pleasure. Nehru expressed ‘This harmless little animal fell down at my feet, wounded to death and looked up at me with its great big eyes full of tears. Those eyes have often haunted me since’.26

During these time Gopal Krishna Gokhale was very active with his Servants of India Society and Nehru also was attracted to the activities of this society. The society tried to serve the people through administration, Nehru stated, ‘I never thought of joining it, partly because its politics were too moderate for me, and partly because I had no intention then of giving up my profession. But I had a great admiration for the members of the society who had devoted themselves for a bare pittance to the country’s service. Hence at least, I thought was straight and single-minded and continuous work even though this might not be on wholly right lines’.27

27. Ibid.
In those days Nehru also was interested in the development of confrontation among the European countries specially France, Germany, England, Austria, Hungary and the conflicting atmosphere for emergences of a war. At that time the feeling inside the country was such that though Indian intellectuals did not support the activities of Germany, but as Indians they would like to see the defeat of Britishers. Nehru stated that, ‘There was no love for Germany of course, only the desire to see our own rulers humbled. It was the weak and helpless mans idea of vicarious revenge’. 28

During those days Lokmanya Tilak came out from prison and he and Mrs. Anne Besant started the Home Rule League. Nehru joined in both of them, but worked for Mrs. Anne Besant League. In those days Home Rule League attracted the upper middle and lower middle class of people to work hard for the demand of self-governance. Though the demand of Home Rule League become very popular but it touches only the upper and lower middle class educated youth and people without electrifying the general people and the masses. During these years Mr. Srinivas Shastri one of prominent moderate Congress man, became very active through his spirited writings, and Nehru also inspired and moved during these years through these writings.

Nehru at that time was an energetic youth with a trained mind. got the contradiction of his learning in England and with the course of its application in India in domestic as well as social life. An instance of such Nehru mentioned as, 'Mr. Srinivas Sastri was addressing a student's meeting in Allahabad and he told them to be respectful and obedient to their teachers and professor and to observe carefully all the rules and regulations laid down by constituted authority. Mr. Sastri went on and called upon the boys to report each others sins of omission and commission immediately to the authorities. In other words they were to spy on each other and play the part of informers. I had freshly returned from England and the lesson that had been most impressed upon my mind in school and college was never to betray a colleague. There was no greater sin against the canons of good form than to sneak and inform and thus get a companion into trouble'.

During the war time Nehru was interested to become a member of Indian Defence Force. Britishers wanted to make by the Indian youth and desired to get military training. But due to the internment order against Mrs. Anne Besant the whole idea accepted by the Congress people specially the moderates were rejected and Nehru also was bound to follow that decision. Mrs. Anne Besants internment order specially

offended all the moderate leaders of Congress Party and that occasion also changed the view of Motilal Nehru which was bound to express in subsequent events. Motilal Nehru joined in Besant’s Home Rule League and when most of the moderate leaders resigned from Home Rule League, he came the President of the Allahabad branch of it.

During the course of time Congress maintained a co-ordial relationship with the Muslim League and solution of Hindu Muslim question became one of the main issue of Lucknow Session of Congress Party in 1916. Motilal Nehru was satisfied with the Congress decision to work in coordination with Muslim League for solving Hindu Muslim conflict. But the appointment of Edwin Montague and promulgation of Montague-Chelmsford proposals made again depression between the relationships of both the communities. All these happenings effect Motilal Nehru tremendously, who was being the leader of moderate group to accept the failure of moderates in Indian politics. All that effect Jawaharlal tremendously because talking about politics at home at that time was not a peaceful subject for discussion.

Influence of his father on Nehru was such that Nehru could not think about his own lifes vital questions properly due to too much dependence on his father. Another aspect of it was that he was till that
time not financially independent, so, he did not think himself nearly to take the responsibility of his family. During the years of his college and after coming back from England, Motilal Nehru and his wife concerned about the marriage of their son. Nehru at that time unable to think consciously about the marriage and very reluctantly gave this consent to his father without any queries about the bride. They decided and selected Kamala Kaul, a daughter from a middle class Kashmiri Brahmin family who were based at Delhi and had business and a flour mill. She was educated at home and fluent in Hindi and Urdu, when she was thirteen years old Motilal Nehru took her to their place to make herself familiar with the house hold practices of the Nehru family. And on 8th February, 1916 Nehru married Kamala Kaul at Delhi in a Marriage Hall, the marriage was a princely marriage and Motilal Nehru spent huge amount for the whole celebration. After marriage Nehru with family went to Kashmir and spent some months there. When they were in Kashmir Nehru with his cousin went to the mountains of Kashmir and visited Ladakh road and Zoji-la pass saw the beautiful snow capped pictures there and went ahead to visit the ice capped self made ‘Shivalinga’ of Amarnath. But during their journey they faced difficulties due too snowfall and crevasses became very difficult to pass by. At one time Nehru was fell inside a crevasse and only with the rope the cousin and the Cherpa pulled him out. They felt worried and
disappointed for carry on their journey and without visiting the
Amamath returned to the valley. That was the second instance where
Nehru by the Grace of God saved his life.

The year, 1916, was eventful in the sense that in that year Nehru
for the first time met Gandhiji. It was in Lucknow Congress during
Christmas where Nehru met Gandhi, with other young activists of
Congress Party. At that time Nehru admired him for his heroic fight in
South Africa, but he seemed very distant and different and un-political
for him as well as his fellow party men. At that time Gandhi confined
himself to the South African Indian question. But after his success and
victory in Champaran, on behalf of the tenants of the planters paved
the way of his interest in Indian problem and he also was prepared to
apply his methods in India which also promised success.

During these days Nehru was not satisfied with the activities of
his own profession as well as the activities of Congress Party. Nehru
looked for the action plan from the party to finalise its course of action
of struggle, so at that time the need of action was highly felt by Nehru.
Nehru expressed about his mind as, ‘Father had been closely watching
my growing drift towards extremism, my continual criticism of the
politics of talk and my instant demand for action. What action, from the
national point of view, did not seem to be at all easy, but I felt that both
individual and national honour demanded a more aggressive and fighting attitude to foreign rule'.

During these days Nehru was inspired by the eloquent speeches delivered by Sarojini Naidu in Allahabad and he read deeply the books of Bertrand Russell.

As Nehru was not satisfied with his own activities, his father Motilal Nehru also was still unsure of what to do and the doubts in him added to his worries about his son and that did not make him a peaceful talker on the public issues of the day. Very often the talks between father and him ended abruptly by losing his temper. Nehru stated that, 'Father himself was dissatisfied with moderate philosophy, and a mental conflict was going inside him. He was too obstinate to change from one position to another until he was absolutely convinced that there was no other way. Each step forward meant for him a hard and bitter tussle in his mind, and when the step was taken after that struggle with part of himself, there was no going back. He had not taken it in a fit of enthusiasm but as a result of intellectual conviction and then, having done so, all his pride prevented him from looking back'. So, Motilal Nehru also started looking for Gandhi who had the

---

31. Ibid.
experiences and eagerness to formulate the action plan to further the freedom struggle in 1918.

During those days Nehru’s own political and public activity were modest and he hesitated to address public gatherings. But in 1915 he was asked to give a public speech in Allahabad at a protest meeting against a new Act muzzling the press. Nehru spoke briefly and in English. As soon as the meeting was over Dr. Taz Bahadur Sapru embraced and kissed him in public on the dais because a new recruit had been obtained for public work. Public work consisted in those days practically of speaking only.

Before taking a full fledged part into the freedom struggle Motilal Nehru took time to decide about the matter and he started the newspaper named ‘The Independent’ from Allahabad. Nehru also was one of the directors of this paper and utilised his full effort in publishing the idea through it. The paper achieved great success in the beginning but, difficulties arose when proprietors and directors were in jail and remained far from the office. And ultimately in 1923, the paper died. Nehru wrote, ‘This experience of newspaper proprietorship gave me a fright and even since I have refused to assume responsibility as a director of any newspaper’.  

---

At that time when Congress Party was waiting to formulate a course of action, Gandhi’s role was the main because on the basis of his own experiment, he made the course of struggle of freedom movement. The situation was also favourable as during those years due to the end of war situation Britishers gave a new Act, called Montague-Chelmsford Act to give the right of self rule to Indian. But that Act did not give any power to the Indians and the Indian soldiers returned from the First World War experienced very bitter experiences from Britishers. The Muslim Community people were also offended due to the action taken by Britishers against Khalifa and the settlement of Turkey question. And so, the timely decision was taken by Gandhi for defying the Act implemented by Britishers with the support of the Congress leaders. Objection of Rowlatt Act of 1919, only a rightly chosen measure by Gandhiji to express the Indian demand to Britishers for their repressive measures against Indians. Nehru wrote, ‘Gandhiji had passed through a serious illness early in 1919. Almost from his sick bed he begged the Viceroy not to give his consent to the Rowlatt Bills. That appeals was ignored as others had been and then, almost against his will, Gandhiji took the leadership in his first all India agitation. He started the Satyagraha Sabha, the members of which were pledged to disobey the Rowlatt Act, if it was applied to them, as well as other
objectionable laws to be specified from time to time. In other words they were to court gaol openly and deliberately'.

When Nehru read about this proposals in the newspapers his reactions was one of tremendous relief. He realised that here at last was a way out of the tangle, a method of action, which was straight and open and possibly effective. Nehru was afire with enthusiasm and wanted to join the Satyagraha Sabha immediately. He never thought about the consequences of law breaking, gaol going etc., and if he thought of them he did not care. But gradually he realised it and his ardour was dampened and he accepted it that all was not plain sailing.

Though Nehru was eager to participate in the activities of new strategies taken by Mahatma Gandhi, but he was controlled by his father Motilal Nehru to proceed him into the action. Motilal Nehru was dead against of this new idea. He was not in the habit of being swept away by new proposals; he thought carefully of the consequences before he took any fresh step, and the more he thought of the Satyagraha Sabha, and its programme, the less he like it. Apart from the general considerations, what really moved him was the personal issue. Motilal Nehru was intensely attached to his children. He was not showy in his affection, but behind his restrain there was a great love.

For many days there was this mental conflict and both Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru felt that those big issues were going to involve a complete upset of their lives, and they tried hard to be as considerate to each other as possible. Both of them had a distressing time, and night after night Nehru wandered alone, tortured his mind and trying to grope his way out. Motilal Nehru, as Nehru discovered later actually tried sleeping on the floor to find out what it was like as he thought that this would be his son’s lot in prison.

Gandhi came to Allahabad at Motilal Nehru’s request and they had long talks at which Nehru was kept outside. And as a result Gandhiji advised Nehru not to precipitate matters or to do anything which might upset his father any way. In that situation Nehru made his mind and resolved about his activities as, ‘I wanted to lessen his obvious suffering if I could, but I had no doubt in my mind that I had to go the way of Satyagraha’. 34

During Satyagraha Day – all India hartals and complete suspension of business, firing by the police and military at Delhi and Amritsar, and the killing of many people, mob violence in Amritsar and Ahmedabad – the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh – the long horror and terrible indignity of martial law in the Punjab went on.

Motilal Nehru presided over the Amritsar Congress during Christmas in 1919, and he issued a moving appeal to the moderate leaders or the liberals to join this session because of the new situation created by the horrors of martial law. But moderate leaders did not answer it in the way he wanted and refused to join. That refusal hunt Motilal Nehru and widened the gulf between him and the Liberals and this spontaneously led him by cutting adrift from his old life and his profession and throw in his lot with the new movement started by Gandhiji.

The Amritsar Congress was the first Gandhi Congress. Among the other prominent congressman Lokmanya Tilak was also present and played vital part in the deliberations. But among all other leaders, majority of the delegates and the great crowds outside looked to Gandhi for leadership. The slogan Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai began to dominate Indian political horizon. The Ali Brothers Shaukat Ali and Mohammed Ali after came out from prison joined Congress and Khilafat movement with the national movement began to take a new shape and develop a new orientation. Gandhiji's action plan influenced the Muslim intelligencia, who at that time was came out to protest the rights of Khalifa through Khilafat Movement. In India, the Khilafat
Committee came more and more under Gandhiji’s influence and began to flirt with his ideas of non violent non-cooperation. Gandhi joined hand with Khilafat Committee and also accompany with them to Viceroy for pressing for demands on behalf of the Muslim Community through Khilafat Committee. But regarding making of the demand he lodged objection and asked them that they must not make exaggerated demands which they were not going to press, but should state the minimum, clearly and without possibility of doubt and stand by it to the death.

Gandhiji’s resolved mind again came clear before Nehru when he attended with Gandhi a Muslim meeting which was council of Muslim League at Allahabad in Syed Raza Ali’s House. Gandhiji addressed them, he spoke well in his best dictatorial vein. He was humble but clear cut and hard as a diamond, pleasant and soft spoken but inflexible and terribly earnest. His eyes were mild and deep yet out of them blazed out a fierce energy and determination. ‘This is going to be a great struggle he said, with a very powerful adversary. If you want to take it up, you must be prepared to lose everything, and you must subject yourself to the strictest non-violence and discipline. When war is declared martial law prevails, and in our non-violent struggle there will also have to dictatorship and martial law on our side, if we are to win.
You have every right to kick me out, to demand my head, or to punish me whenever and however you choose. But so long as you choose to keep me as your leader you must accept my conditions, you must accept dictatorship and discipline of martial law. But that dictatorship will always be subject to your goodwill and to your acceptance and to your cooperation. The moment you have had enough of me, throw me out, trample upon me, and I shall not complain’.35

As Gandhiji expected the council of Muslim League with the leadership of Shaukat Ali voted for the war, at that time Muslim League did not represent the Muslim opinion, it was the Khilafat Committee of 1920, that was a powerful representative body which entered with the struggle started by Gandhiji with enthusiasm.

So, with full vigour and with the blessings of parents Nehru absorbed himself with the activities of Congress Party for attainment of independence for the nation. August 1st of 1920 which was fixed by Gandhi to start the non-cooperation movement on that very day, Lokmanya Tilak died at Bombay. Nehru with Gandhiji joined that mighty demonstration in which the whole of Bombay's million population seemed to have poured out to do reverence to the great leaders whom they had loved so well as a true patriot.

'The story of Jawaharlal Nehru', his daughter Indira Gandhi said 'is that of a man who grew in storm and stress till he became the representative of much that was noble in his time. It is the story of a generous and gracious human being who summed up in himself the resurgence of the third world as well as the humanism which transcends dogmas and is adopted to contemporary context'.