The Meaning of Swadeshi and its developmental stages mainly from the period of 1857 to the establishment of Indian National Congress-1885

The rising classes of the educated youth, the industrialist and the proletariat, fed the fire of Militant Nationalism, which had been kindled by unemployment, plague, famines, earthquake and mass-poverty.

Further stimulus to militant Nationalism was given by the Religious Revivalism and Cultural Renaissance.

This revivalism was due to the influence of saintly personalities like those of Vivekananda, Dayanand and Miss Besant and to the work done by religious societies, such as Brahmo Samaj, Rama Krishan Mission, Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society.

Under the impulse of this revivalism, militant nationalism resuscitated the memories of India’s Vedic past of the great achievements of Ashoka, and of the chivalrous deeds of Rana Pratap, Shivaji and Rani of Jhansi “world picture of a golden age of peace and plenty before the advent of the British”, became the common theme of Nationalist leaders. According to vedantism, ‘Reality is the one though appearances are multitudinous. 1

This revivalism expressed itself in a marked degree in the political life of Bengal and Maharashtra, which become the centres of militant

1. The Indian Nationalist Movement by S.C. Bartarya pg. 108
activities. The Shakti cult was revived, Hindu ceremonials and form of worship were given a new political interpretation with a philosophical and mystical grab. To Bankim Chandra, the Hindu Goddesses were symbolic of the different stage of national evolution.

To Aurobindo nationalism was surrounded by a mist of glory, the halo that medieval saints beheld gleaming sound the head of martyrs. In Maharashtra the revivalism took different forms. Tilak the exponent of militant Nationalism, through the inauguration of Ganapati and Shivaji festivals caught the imagination of the Maharashtrian youth. Through the glorification of the heroic exploits of Shivaji against the Moghal emperor Aurangzeb and his general, Afzal khan, he infused a militant spirit. Tilak’s emphasis on ‘Nishkam’ action as propounded in Gita, infused a spirit of self immolation and martyrdom. A revolutionary wave of insurrection and militancy was set in motion.

Along side religious revival, cultural renaissance also took place India at that time was witnessing a many sided renaissance in art, poetry, literature and music Chatterji the novelist with his inimitable style and popular themes, Tagore the poet with his poetry of humanity struck new literacy forms and created new masterpices.

There was a great outburst of literary and journalistic activities of revolutionary nature.

The effect of these revivalists and cultural trends was the creation of a new spirit – the spirit of patriotism, national pride and self – sacrifice. This led to a feeling of revulsion against things western the western ways

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2. Pg. 109 The Indian Nationalist Movement by S.C. Bartarya.
of thinking and living, the western outlook and philosophy - and love for 
things Indian. The discovery of India's hoary and glorious past and an 
memorable culture awakened political consciousness, which sought an 
alliance between religion and nationalism.

The revivalists have been accused of introducing forces of religious 
orthodoxy, of obscurantism, and mysticism in the national life and thereby 
of causing estrangement between the Hindus and Muslims. In spite of 
some of its drawback revivalism, in the earlier stages of national evolution 
was, through its emphasis on religion, able to make a successful appeal to 
the conservative mind and to awaken national consciousness among the 
masses. The organisations of festivals, prayer meetings and Kavi-
Sammelans were attempted in order to escape imperialist restrictions, 
which banned all direct political organisations. Certainly the role of the 
revivalists played in awakening the slumbering national and making it 
politically minded and militant cannot minimised.3

Dayanand Saraswati was out and out a nationalist. The aim and 
object of his entire programme was to being all round progress and 
advancement in the life of the nation. But he fully knew that the real 
progress was quite impossible without a radical change in outlook. Hence 
the great task before him and his Samaj, was the problem of social 
reconstruction. Faced with this problem the Swami and his Samaj made 
frontal attack on social evils.

Dayanand raised his mighty voice against the theory of caste, 
which he pronounced as thoroughly unvedic. He declared that there 
should be equal treatment and equal opportunities for all.

3. Pg. 110 The Indian Nationalist Movement by S.C. Bartarya.
Dayanand emphasised, the traditional broad-based Vedic culture and he rose above to pronounce that the theory of caste was false, unvedic and un-Indian. Such a thing was a negation of the laws of Manu.4

One can never overestimate the good Dayanand did to Indian by denouncing the caste system and by giving Hindu’s a renewed life through social justice.

Fifty years after his death Mahatma Gandhi made up his mind to fast unto death for the vindication of the same principle for which Dayanand stood.

From the national point of view the Samaj did the utmost for the betterment of the lot of untouchables.

The Arya Samaj started the Shuddhi movement to prevent low caste Hindu’s from embracing Christianity or Islam and to uplift them as an integral part of Hinduism.5

Though shuddhi movement was criticised at several points, the followers of Swami did not cave for it. They were radical nationalists to the core. In their country, there was no place for foreign religious and foreign rulers. They wanted India should belong to the Indians only.

The Hindu society in which Dayanand began to work was very unjust towards its womanhood. The woman had fared much worse at the

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4. Swami Dayananad Saraswati by Dharpal Pandey Pg. 96,98,100
5. Swami Dayananad Saraswati by Dharpal Pandey Pg. 101-102
hands of Islam and Christianity; still the position of the woman in the Hindu society was not what it was in the Vedic times. They began to wear purdah and depended on their male felle. Early marriage was universally prevalent and monogamy was replaced by polygamy. They were not allowed to read and get education. Indian women owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dayanand, who did so much for their emancipation.6

Swami Dayanand wanted to establish schools and colleges on a national line to spread the ideas, principles and schemes of national education. The establishment of such institutions would serve as a permanent means of enlightenment for the public and thus help him to his work of reform and regeneration.

He advocated free and compulsory education for all. He was of the opinion that education was the birth right to every human being.

Dayanand was not in favour of co-education of boys and girls. He opposed it on moral and educational grounds. According to him the rock on which the edifice of moral training can be raised is Brahmacharya, which means simplicity, purity, and self-disciple. He believed in rigid chastity and austerity during student life.

Dayanand's preaching had a deep impact on his followers who opened many educational institutions to respect his sentiments.7

It was Dayanand Saraswati who through his militant approach, made Indians realise for the first time that they were heirs of a splendid heritage, that they were great nation in their own right. He taught them

6. Swami Dayananad Saraswati by Dhanpati Pandey Pg. 107-109
7. Swami Dayananad Saraswati by Dhanpati Pandey Pg. 113-116
that they must adhere to their own religion must be proud of their hoary culture and must cultivate their own language. He was the first among leaders to give this concept of ‘Swaraj’.

He hailed from Gujarat, yet he made Hindi, the medium of his propagation. He was the man, who gave, the slogan of Swadeshi and boycott, and aroused national spirit.

This burning patriotism of Dayanand made Indian nationalism more broad – based and brought it nearer to the masses.

The attention of Maharishi Dayanand was not confined only to the religious and cultural regeneration of India, he also gave birth to those concepts, which became the basis of the Indian Nationalism, after 1905.

Swami Dayanand gave the war cry of ‘Swaraj’ is our birthright. He held that India should belong to Indians. In the country of Dayanand’s ideals there was no place for Europeans. He believed – “It is the religious duty to get rid of Europeans and all the evils that attend them. The better a man attends his religion, the more clear will be his perception that Europeans and European influence must be rooted out”.

The slavery, according to him was also traceable to false religious notions and practices prevalent among the masses steeped in ignorance.

At the time of the advent of Dayanand, the greatest problem before India was the realisation of her political freedom. He realised that without this freedom, it was impossible to give effect to any broad scheme of social and economic reconstruction based on the fundamental rights and
traditions of the country. Hence he wanted freedom, in every sense and every field.

Dayanand clearly brought out the difference between “Suraj” and “Swaraj”. It was claimed by the English educated Indians that the British government was the best possible government. He compared ‘Suraj’ with ‘Swaraj’ and said that no foreign government however good could ever equal self-government. This was the time when nobody could dare to put forth the meaning and lesson of Swaraj.

Dayanand died in 1883. His Satyarth Prakash was written by long before his death and was first published in 1875. The Indians National Congress came up not as a Swaraj demanding party but as a petitioning body for some share in the government of the country. It was in 1906 that Dadabhai Naoroji spoke of self-government in his famous presidential address at the Calcutta session. Therefore Swami Dayanand’s talk of Swadeshi Raj at a time when the country was so backward in political consciousness bears significance. It was he who first of all taught the lesson of Swaraj and took it as the birth right of men. He had given the slogan ‘India for the Indians’. This slogan became the basis of the Indian National Congress during the Calcutta session. The session was remarkable for the slogan Swaraj which Dada Bhai gave and which at that time caught the people of the country in a frenzy of effort for the attainment of that ideal. The background of the demand of Swaraj was prepared by Dayanand and it was left his countrymen to struggle for it. Dayanand fearlessly demanded this right and claimed for Indians in India the same control that Englishmen had in England. The whole matter can be comprised in one word ‘self-government’ or ‘Swaraj. Thus the spirit of Dayanand influenced the Calcutta session. And other sessions of the
congress after wards. Now the congress leaders fully realised that self-government in the only and chief remedy.

Dayanand believed that without the sense of self-confidence Swaraj could not be achieved. During his time, India was under the sovereignty of British. Religions of foreign countries were prevailing. Education was crippled. It was made expensive and officialised. At this critical juncture Dayanand stimulated the sense of self-confidence. He revealed to the Indians their past glory for stimulating the sense of greatness and self confidence in them. He was the force giver, confidence builder to the Indians soul and mind. He was confident that if Indians become politically conscious and physically strong, then Swaraj was not far from them. He was the force giver, confidence builder to the Indians soul and mind. He was confident that if Indians become politically conscious and physically strong, then Swaraj was not far from them.

The ideas of Swaraj and self-confidence have been fully discussed in the 6th chapter of Satyarth Prakash.

According to him the State should educate all its subjects.

It should be kept in mind that English Government was not imparting education to all, and in doing so the government was snatching the right of education from general masses in India. The British government was an absolute government Dayanand stood against absolutism stood for democracy. He fearlessly said, that the governor and the governed should co-operate in fostering prosperity, and enlightenment by establishing a board of education, board of religion, and board of

8. Swami Dayananad Saraswati by Dhanpati Pandey Pg. 121.122.123.124
politics and by providing men and women with education, liberty, training wealth etc. Swami criticized this policy of the rulers and said that rulers should at least co-operate with the deserving candidates for the smooth running of the government. The absolute British government was plundering India’s wealth Swami Dayanand warned Indians that British rulers were responsible for bringing ruin and untold miseries upon them. Thus while political discontent was enraging people, Dayanand pointing out the general duties of a state was creating forces of Indian national renaissance was broadening the minds of the people and was opening the windows of their hearts to the new breezes of freedom and liberty, and to the feelings of higher values of life and the country. India began to pass through an intense period of self-analysis and of a cultural and intellectual awakening.

Dayanand gave the true meaning of law too. He criticized the lawmaking policy of the government. The government used to change laws form time to time and pass new laws, according to their convenience and political situation in India. The English laws protected only the English people and not Indians. They stood for imperial expansionism. Dayanand held that such laws would never liberate a slave country, and would never, bring Swaraj. He pointed out the importance of law to the Indians – “Law is the real head, law is the real ruler, law is the administrator of justice, law is the actual governor, law governs the kind, law protects the subjects, law wakes when men are asleep, therefore wise men hold that law alone is religion”. He further said, “Law administered thoughtfully gives the people all round happiness. Law applied thoughtlessly ruins them all.

During the period of Swami Dayanand Indian were bearing the burden of both political and economic slavery; were being made to pay
heavy taxes. On this Dayanand said that the annual taxes should be collected through honest person, and the kings and other officials of the state.

Dayanand thus may be regarded as a pioneer in the renaissance movement in India. His writings and actual participation in the process of regeneration and rejuvenation of India have become a source of inspiration to his countrymen to their struggle for emancipation and cultural advancement of the nation. Dayanand through the Vedas provided moral and social background to the Indian Nationalism. He insisted on the moral purification of the individual and the necessity of social reconstruction.

The ideas of Swaraj and self-confidence flew side by side like two distinct streams, meeting sometime at one place. A good number of Arya Samajists began to preach the idea of Swaraj. Magazines of the period such as India. Vihari, Hindustan Hitkari and others cried for Swaraj.

Dayanand Saraswati laid stress on the Swadeshi and he is regarded as the first advocate of this movement, though it got its strength with political colour after the partition of Bengal. He along with his followers realised the deplorable economic condition of the country, and after realising that British government was not likely to protect the industries of the country, started Swadeshi movement. It was essential for the reconstruction of the economy as well as the social and political unity of India. We are informed that earlier leaders learnt their first lesson of Swadeshi from Swami Dayanand. Dayanand was a symbol of Indians India and was an Indian to the core.
Dayanand’s Swadeshi movement became the rallying cry all over India and his supporters advocated in favour of Swadeshi and the national struggle for freedom began to extend from classes to masses. Lala Lajpat Rai delivered a series of lectures in order to promote Swadeshi movement in Punjab while delivering a lecture at Allahabad on the ‘New Spirit’ he advised his countrymen to boycott British courts and start Swadeshi Panchayats for the adjudication of their disputes. He presided at the All India Swedish Conference in Surat in 1907 and appealed to Hindus and Muslims to unite themselves for the success of the movement. As a devoted member of Arya Samaj he was a votary of Swadeshi long before it became a popular slogan and political weapon of the Indian National Congress. The economic emancipation of India was dear to him and for this he considered self-reliance and self-help as essential as for political freedom.

Besides Lalaji, a band of other Arya Samajists too the task of popularising the Swadeshi movement on their shoulders. Similarly journals like The Sat Dharm Pracharak, The Arya Gazette, The Punjabee, The Arya Messenger etc. appreciated the Swadeshi and appealed to Indians to take active part in the movement.

Although himself a Gujarati he abandoned the language of his province in favour of Arya Bhasha and wrote Satyarth Prakash in that language. He felt that Hindi being the most extensively spoken and understood of all the regional languages could be given that high place. He wrote the commentaries on the Vedas in Hindi, an epoch making attempt in the intellectual history of India. The non-Brahmin sections received a new sense of intellectual self-confidence. Dayanand was a

9. Swami Dayananad Saraswati by Dhanpati Pandey Pg. 125-128
product of Sanskrit learning. His nationalism appealed to the western Educated Indians Dayanand lectured in Hindi, which enabled him to reach the Indian masses.

Dayanand helped to make Hindi the national language of India he never wanted that the study of English should be neglected; he only wanted the 'vernaculars of the country' to take its proper place. He wanted that all Indians should be conversant with their own language, culture and traditions.

In fact the literary history of Hindi gives Dayanand the foremost place among the patrons of that language in the modern age. For the advancement of the Indian languages. Arya Swajists like Sunder Lal, Pandit Jugal Kishrooe, Lala Lajpat Rai did yeoman service. When Lalaji formed Hindu elementary Education league and announced that the instructions to the students would be given in Hindi, it aroused a considerable amount of controversy in the press. But Lalaji's decision was firm Similar opinions were expressed by the contemporary journals and magazines. The Tribune of 28th August 1911 appreciated the view and opined that Hindi was the only language, which could become the national language of India. The Prakash of Sept 5th 1911 published an article written by Lala Lajpat Rai in which it was stated that Dayanand adopted Hindi as the medium in which he preached his message to the countrymen and directed his followers to spread and promote Hindi as their language.

The Abhyudaya of Allahabad and the Arya Mitra of Agra expressed their opinions and urged that Hindi should be the medium of instruction in all schools and colleges.
Dayanand’s militant view gave a radical content to Indian nationalism. The apostles of this new spirit were Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chanda Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and Aurobindo Ghosh.

The Tilak School, which emerged from the Dayanand School, began to change the political outlook of the English educated Indians and played an important role in national movement. This new leadership of Tilak School desired a radical change, a revolution in the system of government, which was expressed by the term ‘Swaraj’ and ‘Swadeshi’, which it now demanded and which became the goal of Indian political programme. This new school demanded social equality, and political emancipation as its birthright.

Unlike Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Surendra Nath Banerjee, they rejected the idea of England’s providential mission in India as an illusion. The extremists bolstered up India’s past and advocated militant struggle, not debate.

Tilak renewed the ancient glory of India by starting Ganapati and Shivaji festivals Chandrapal looked upon the reawakening of the national consciousness as the revival of the ancient idealism of the Shakti cult. Lal Lajpat Rai, a staunch Arya Samajists followed the path of Dayanand and popularised the Vedas the Hindi Aurobindo Ghosh had also firm faith in the philosophy of Swami Dayanand and like the Swami found all roots of wisdom and science in the Vedas.

The philosophy of Dayanand gave birth to a new spirit and an extremist group. The militant nationalism was steeped in a religious spirit. The alliance between nationalism and religious revivalism gave people a
new feeling of manly self-reliance and a determination to resist foreign domination.

The inspiring political message of Dayanand had a marvellous effect on his followers. They joined the national movement in pretty large number all over India. Giving an account of their activities in the Punjab in the beginning of the 20th century. Sir Denzil Ibbetson, the Lieutenant Governor remarked. I have been told by nearly every district Magistrate of the Punjab, that wherever there was the Arya Samaj, it was the centre of Seditious talk. Later Sir Michael O Dwyer, his successor expressed similar views – ‘It should be noted in the fairness to the orthodox Hindus’, that while the Samaj does not include perhaps more than five percent of the Hindu population of the Punjab, an enormous population of the Hindus convicted of sedition and other political offences from 1907 down to the present day (1919) are members of the Arya Samaj. ‘Swami Dayanand Saraswati is certainly one of the most powerful personalities who have shaped modern India and are responsible for its moral regeneration and religious revival.

The most prominent Arya Samajists are at the same time the most influential nationalist leaders as Subhas Chandra Bose.

Dayanand Saraswati was a great path maker, in modern India who through bewildering tangles of creeds and practices – the dense undergrowth of degenerate days of our country – cleared a straight path that was meant to lead the Hindus to a simple and rational life of devotion to god and service of man with a clear sighted vision of truth and courage, of determination. He preached and worked for our self respect and vigorous awakenment of mind that could strive for harmonious adjustment with the progressive spirit of the modern age and at the same time when it
revealed its personality in freedom of thought and action in an unclouded radiance of spiritual realisation.¹⁰

¹⁰. Swami Dayananad Saraswati by Dhanpati Pandey Pg. 129-133
BRAHMO SAMAJ

The impact of west began to operate through perceptible and imperceptible ways Western India began to penetrate into Indian thought and habits. The orthodox revolted outwardly, but searched inwardly for a change. For the intellectual there was the need to rationalise the traditional society. A wave of unrest swept over the thinking minds during the early years of the nineteenth century. Out of that unrest, the Indian renaissance began to take shape. In the wake of that awakening, there also emerged the socio-religious reform movements. It was an age of enlightenment and awakening, of renaissance and reforms of rationalism and progress, which all culminated in a growing consciousness of the need for liberty and unity.

Throughout nineteenth century there followed phase after phase of various reform movements in India to renovate the society and rationalise religious thoughts.

The first in the series was the movement initiated by Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy laid the foundation of Brahmo Samaj in 1830. He challenged the current religious beliefs and social practices of the Hindus as not being in consonance with their own scriptures.

He openly protested the blind acceptance of the authority of the priesthods or the interpretations of the scriptures. He fought against the Sati system tooth and nail. He opposed the worship of images of God and

1. A Social, Cultural an Economic History of India by P.N. Chopra, B.N. Puri, M.N. Das Pg.98
Goddesses, denounced polygamy and abuses of the caste system. Ram Mohan Roy realised that a democratic society characterised by liberty, equality and fraternity was possible of achievement only if caste was eliminated. He favoured remarriage of the Hindu widows. By these successive shocks he galvanized the dormant Hindu society.

With profound knowledge of Sanskrit Arabic, Persian and English and with a deeper understanding of the philosophies of Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism and Christianity he became a rare intellectual of his time. He was in search of rationalism and felt resentful towards the prevailing socio-religious customs around him.

Ram Mohan's vision was broad enough to encompass various aspects of Indian life. His movement covered religious, social, economic, educational, social, economic, educational, political and national issues.

In religion, Ram Mohan Roy pointed to a universal inner spiritual synthesis, far from external forms represented through meaningless practices. To turn the mind of India to the truths of Vedanta became the prime motive of Ram Mohan. It meant a crusade against the outer forms of Hinduism, notably polytheism, worship of images, ritualistic ceremonies and superstitious rites. Belief in one almighty God is the fundamental principle of every religion. He established his theories from the Vedanta, the Bible and the Koran.

Thus Ram Mohan began the first great religious reform movement of the nineteenth century. Since religion was the dominating force in Indian society, reform of religion meant also reform of society.

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3. A Social, Cultural and Economic History of India Pg. 100-101
Brahmo Samaj by bringing about religious and social reforms effectively helped the progress of the Indian society they advocated a society based on the progressive and liberal views.

Ram Mohan Roy raised his voice against the social abuses, which rendered incalculable harm to society. The caste system appeared to him as the greatest obstacle to national unity. Besides, this, the Hindu society suffered from other social evils such as polygamy, degradation of women and above all the sati system Ram Mohan's endeavours to rouse opinion against those customs marked the beginning of an era of social change.

A pioneer of modernism, Ram Mohan Roy realised the value of western education. He established two English schools and showed the way to new the liberal learning. He pleaded with the government to give India the benefit of more liberal and enlightened system of instruction embracing Mathematics National philosophy, chemistry, and anatomy, with other useful sciences. He negotiated with the missionaries to procure able teachers for western education.

Though Ram Mohan's Primary concern was socio-religious reform yet the economic misery of the people touched his conscious deeply. Bengal was passing through two economic evils. A series revenue experiment culminating in the permanent settlement put the peasant at the mercy of the landlord. The second evil was the perpetual drain on the country's economy. The company's commercial and economic policy, baked by their political power had brought devastating results.4

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4. A Social, Cultural and Economic History of India by P.N.Chopra,B.N.Puri,M.N.Das
Pgs.101-102
Raja Ram Mohan Roy presented papers before the House of Commons in England in 1831 regarding the judicial and financial conditions prevailing in India and suggesting improvements in them. He even told them that between 1765-1820 11 crore rupees went to England, which was a drain on Indian economy. He even suggested reform in the position of the agricultural labourers, before a special committee of the House of Commons and condemned the increase the revenue collection by the Zamindars.5

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was also a pioneer of political reforms in modern India. He played a very important part in awakening the national consciousness by expressing his thoughts on freedom.

He expressed happiness over French revolution. He expressed sympathy over the movements for the establishment of democracy in foreign countries. He expressed happiness over the establishment of constitutional government in Spain.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy also favoured the freedom of press.6 A prolific writer on various subjects. Ram Mohan became a patron of free press and constructive journalism. His Bengali weekly Sambad Kaumudi established in 1821 began to discuss political matters, besides religious and moral affaires. His Persian weekly Mirat-ul-Akhbar established next year discussed national, as well as international problems. But then came the governments press ordinance in 1823 to restrict the freedom of Indian press.7

5. The History and Culture of the Indian People British Paramouncy & Indian Renaissance by R.C. Majumadar.
6. History of freedom Movement by Tara Chand vol II Pg. 259.
7. Social, Religious & Cultural History of India Pg. 102.
On 17th March 1823, regroups Press ordinance was issued, which prescribed that no one should publish a newspaper or periodical without having previously obtained a license from the Governor General in council by submitting an affidavit.

The press ordinance will ever be memorable for the vigorous protest it drew forth from Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the constitutional agitation made against it by Indian leaders.

The activists of Ram Mohan Roy and five leading citizens of Calcutta in connection with press ordinance of 1823 constitute a notable landmark in the history of Indian’s struggle for freedom.

As a matter of fact the daring act of Ram Mohan and his five associates marks the beginning of a new type of political activity which was desired to be the special characteristic of India for nearly century. As R.C.Dutta has justly observed

“It was the start of that system of constitutional agitation for political rights which their countrymen have learnt to value so much in the present day”.

Ram Mohan Roy took leading part and set an example for others he regarded the press Ordinance as a serious infringement of civil liberty.

Ram Mohan Roy carried on a similar agitation against the jury Act of 1827, by which the Christians including native converts could not by tried by a Hindu or Musalman juror, but any Hindu or Musalman could be tried by Europeans or native Christians.
Ram Mohan also appealed to the board of control for the introduction of certain reforms. These included fixations of maximum rest to be paid by the cultivator, substitution of English for Persian, as the official language of the courts of law, the appointment of native assessors in the civil courts; trial by jury, reparation of the offices of judge and revenue commissioners; separation of the offices of judge and magistrate, codification of the criminal law and also of the civil law of India; consultation with the local magnates before enacting laws; and last but not the least, the appointment of Indians to higher posts, which were practically reserved for the British.

Ram Mohan was the first Indian to voice grievance of his country before the British authorities. He may justly be regarded as the pioneers of organised political movement in India and the method followed by him marks the beginning of what came to be known in later days as constitutional agitation.

It is very significant that public meetings for giving expression to public opinion on political matters came into vogue about this time. At the request of the leading citizens of Calcutta, the sheriff called a public meeting at the town hall on 5th January 1835 where a strong protest was made against some of the provisions of the charter act of 1833 and demand was made for the repeal of the Press Ordinance of 1823.

Regular agitation in the press and on the platform for reform in administration was carried on by the friends and associates of Ram Mohan after his death. The specific reforms demanded in addition to those mentioned above included 'the spread of education among the masses by free and compulsory education of children up to the age of fifteen,
vocational training through government institutions which would include among others agriculture, engineering and ship building.

On 18 April 1834, the Hindu college students held a public meeting in the Town Hall to send a memorial to the court of prospectors praying for the bestowal of more offices on Indians. Tara Chand Chakraverthy who moved the resolution attacked the civil services monopoly of Englishmen. He pleaded for opening it to public competition. All those indicate the advanced character of political ideas in Bengal in the second quarter of 19th century. As there was no English paper owned by an Indian Prasanna Kumar Tagore started one, called the reformer in order to propagate these political views.

Dwarika Nath realised the importance of establishing political associations. It was mainly by his efforts that the landholder's society was established in July 1838. Although it was primarily intended to safeguard the interest of the landholders, it deserves notice for other reasons.

In the first place as Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitra very justly observed, "It may be regarded as the pioneer of freedom in this country. It gave to the people first lesson in the art of fighting constitutionally to assert their claims and give expression to their opinions. Ostensibly it advocated the rights of the Zamindars, but as their rights are intimately bound up with those of the royts, one cannot be separated from the other".

Secondly it was the object of the organiser to establish branch societies in every district of the British Indian Empire with the view of establishing regular communications on all subjects connected with the object of the society.
Thirdly, it enlisted the cooperation of Englishmen who sympathized with the political aspirations of the Indians.

In order to arouse the interests of the English public in Indians affairs Mr. William Adams, a friend of Ram Mohan established the ‘British India society’ in England. The landholder’s society of Calcutta decided to co-operate with the ‘British India society’ in London and appointed a committee to supply regular information to the latter about Indian’s grievances and demands.

Dwarika Nath Tagore was instrumental in founding the “Bengal British India society” on 20th April 1843.

Thus there were two political associations in Bengal in the landholder’s society and the Bengal British India society. None of these maybe said to have achieved great popularity, but there can be hardly any doubt that they served to arouse the political consciousness for the people.

The educated community of Bengal felt the need of a strong political association not only to safeguard Indian interests against the organised attacks of the European Community but also to represent Indian views to the parliament. The result was the amalgamation of the two existing political associations in Bengal into one named the British Indian association.

The British Indian Association was founded on 29th Oct. 1851. From the very beginning, it had an all India outlook.

The Association brought to the notice of the local government the manifold grievances of the people and suggested various measures of
reform. It established local branches and tried to rouse the interest of the masses in political question. For this purpose it translated various Bills into Bengali and circulated them extensively all over the province for eliciting public opinion.

The growth of political ideas and political associations in Bengal during the first half of the nineteenth century have been regarded as the greatest contribution towards the Freedom Movement in India. We do not know of any parallel development of such political organizations in any other part of India during the same period. They were gradually spread in Bombay, Madras, and the rest of India, proving the truth of Gokhale’s dictum that “what Bengal thinks today the rest of India thinks tomorrow.”

It was Ram Mohan’s patriotism, which made him one of the earliest nationalists in India in a modern sense. He advocated liberal humanitarian nationalism. Emancipation of man from the bondage of ignorance and social tyranny, his freedom of thought and conscience and his equality with other fellow men were considered as the fundamentals of liberalism. Such free and emancipated individuals with feelings towards their motherland could create national unity.

The crusade of Ram Mohan to free the individual from social degradation and to abolish the caste system was for the purpose of building up nationhood. It was through a spiritual and mental revival that Ram Mohan wanted to regenerate the India people and unite them into a national fraternity.

8. History of Freedom Movement by R.C. Majumdar Pg. 276-284
History has acknowledged Ram Mohan as the herald of modern India and his time as the dawn of Indian Renaissance.

It was not their aim to make it a mass movement, though the purpose was to educate the masses.

The all India tour of Keshab also fostered the ideas of national unity by bringing together on a common platform, diverse people of India, indifferent regions. He was the first all India figure symbolising the unity of Indian culture.  

**HINDU NATIONALISM**

Rajnarain Bose held out before countrymen, a complete and comprehensive picture of nationalism in a prospectus, which he issued in 1866 with a view to the establishment of a society for the promotion of National feeling among the educated Natives of Bengal.

The object of this society was to resist, the powerful tendency imitating the west, by reviving the old ideas, traditions and customs in every walk of life.

The ideas preached by Rajnarain Bose were enthusiastically taken up by Nabagopal Mitra. He started an annual gathering known as Hindu Mela. In order to promote the national feeling, sense of patriotism, and a spirit of self-help among the Hindus. The Hindu Mela met altogether fourteen times from 1867-1880 its importance gradually declared owning

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to the establishment of other associations more directly connected with the political and national movement in Bengal.

An association called the "National Society" was founded after the fourth session of the Mela. Its avowed object was the promotion of unity and national feeling among the Hindus.

Nabagopal elaborated his view of Hindu nationalism through his writings. "He held that the chief criterion of nationalism is unity. This unity according to him is brought about sustained and promoted in different people by different means and on different principles. He maintained that the basis of national unity in India has been the Hindu religion.

'Hindu religion' he said "is not confined to Bengal. It embraces all of Hindu name and Hindu faith throughout the length and breadth of Hindustan, neither geographical position nor the language is counted a disability. The Hindus are destined to be a religious nation".

Rajnarain Bose proceeded to base his nationalism on Hindu religion.

He said the Hindu had forgotten their past, to such an extent that they had no recollection of the fact that rational thinking and ideas of social and personal freedom were not wanting in the history of their own culture.

Hindu Nationalism got a great impetus from the Arya Samaj 10

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The theosophical society gave a moral sanction, a philosophical basis and a new spiritual significance to the new-Hinduism, which laid the foundation of Hindu nationalism on a secure basis. The Theosophical Society upheld modern Hinduism in its orthodox form and giving a national explanation to what have been generally been decried as its crudities and absurdities.

Whatever might have been the intrinsic values of all these theosophical teachings strictly form religious or philosophical point of view, they gave an impetus to the development of Indian nationalism.¹

The third of the great movements in the revival of religion in India was society founded in New York on 17th Nov. 1875, by Nelena Blavatsy a Russian lady of noble birth and Henry Sterle Olcott a colonel in the American army ². In 1879, they came to India and found a more congenial soil for their mission. In 1886 the theosophical society of India was founded.

It was Annie Besant who later on championed the cause of theosophy in India in a more vigorous manner than the founders of the society ³.

Colonel Olcott lectured and turned the younger generation from materialism to recognition of the living spirituality latent in their religion.

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¹. History of Freedom Movement of R.C. Majumdar Pg. 268.
². India a National by Annie Besant Pg. 26
³. Social Cultural and Economic History of India by P.N. Chopra, B.N. Puri, M.N. Das Pg. 117.
He lectured through the length and breadth of India arousing Hindus to a sense of their national degradation urging them to separate the splendid Hindustan of the past from the excrescencies that were draining away its life. The very fact of a western from progressive America, doing homage to the greatness of the east, touched the heart of India. Everywhere Pride of the country arose, in the back of his footsteps.

In 1885, we wrote a lecture to students by Colonel Olcott where he urged, the danger of their irreligious education by government and their anti-nationalistic education by missionaries, whose policy, it was to destroy their reverence for their national religion.

In 1893, Ms Annie Besant came to India and the work thenceforth went on with increased rapidity, she devoted herself to the revival of religion knowing that that was necessary to the sense of nationality in India.

She was a Hindu at heart, she threw herself into the defence of Hinduism and justified both from modern and scientific science many of the Hindu practices which had been discarded and assailed by the Arya Samaj. 4

Theosophy laid stress on the things in religion which were based on national laws and so justified very often some old customs that otherwise would have died away, e.g. Brahmanic superstition that the Brahman alone could draw water from the village well and pour it into the village pots brought for filling. Yet an English Inspector travelling through these provinces said that the customs checked diseases, for you could take care

of one vessel and see that it was clean whereas if any vessel brought dirty from the house were dipped into the well, the disease would spread and health be injured. 5

Theosophical Society in India and the central Hindu College have helped to lay the foundation of a great movement, which is beginning, to built India into a NATION. 6

In essence the movement aimed at the quest of the Hindu spiritual wisdom through western enlightenment.

The movement revived and strengthened faith in the ancient doctrines and philosophies of the Hindus. It affected the intelligentsia more than the masses 7.

Most of the membership of Theosophical Society is made up of English educated men and women. Their work lies with the educated masses; for the religions can deal with the uneducated, if the advanced classes were enlightened and spiritual. “Better to work among those who influence the masses, changes should always begin above and work downward, then they influence powerfully but changes which begin in the masses tend to bring about revolutions rather than reform.

Colonel Olcott and Madame Balavatsky saw that until India recognised the value of its ancient faith could there be any bond of unity among the Indians, separated by provincial jealousies and hatred. So they pointed out the value of Hindu they held up Vedas, and the Upanishads as

5. For Indians uplift, by Annie Besant Pg.-215
6. Pg.-161
7. Social Cultural and Economic History of India Pgs. 117
the glory of India; proclaimed the value of Indian through and the priceless heritage of Indian people, until at last the Indians began once more to price themselves on their past and to realise that the Hindu scriptures were the foundation of a mighty system, the glory of the past and the life of the future.

With the result, everywhere this revival of the religions of east began to spread Boy's association were formed by colonel Olcott all over the land, in which the boys were helped to study their ancient faith and were taught to love and feel pride in their motherland. There were no cries of Bande Mataram in those days. The idea of motherland was new.

Theosophists preached Swadeshi, worked for the oppressed classes took up the question of the child marriage.

The central Hindu college is the only institution that has dared to refuse married boys up to the eight class in the school and has asked for pledge from the father not to marry the boy until he reaches the ninth class. They have shown that the marriage of a student is against the laws of Manu, who imposed celibacy on the students.

Arya Samaj did a lot for the education of girls. The Hindu Theosophists led the way and opened girl's schools all over the country.

Theosophists proclaim religion man's search for God as one sure foundation for national prosperity and stability.

The effect of the Theosophical Society is to spiritualise and nationalise the various religions to which its members belong and to induce them to regard each other with mutual respect, to provide a body of
workers filled with the enthusiasm of humanity who are ready to work for any case which implores the conditions of the community, to which they belong.  

Mrs Annie Besant in 1913 threw the whole of her influence in India built up her twenty years of religious educational and gradual social reform into the National Movement.

The work done by the Theosophies society in India has had as a general result the revival of the Eastern faiths; the checking of the destructive effect of missionary zeal; the establishment of an Indian ideal of Education, the inspiring of self respect in Indians of pride in their past' evoking hope in their future and the creation of a national spirit, now throbbing throughout the land.

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9. India a Nation –Pg.-30
10. For Indian Uplift Pg.-259.
SWAMI VIVEKANAND

The nascent nationalism in India received a great momentum from the life and activities of Swami Vivekanand – the great disciple of Rama Krishna Paramhansa. ¹

About his Guru Swami Vivekanand says – “To proclaim and make clear, the fundamental unity underlying all religions was the mission of my “master”.

He left every religion undisturbed because he had realised that they all are part and parcel of one eternal religion”

To him came many disciples but his favourite disciple was Narendranath Dutt a graduate of Calcutta University who went to him in 1882. ²

Vivekanand championed the cause of Hinduism in the Parliament of religions (USA) in 1893 in connection with the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus. There he expounded the principles of Vedanta and the greatness of Hinduisms with such persuasive eloquence that from the very first he captivated the hearts of vast audience. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that Swami Vivekanand made a place for Hinduism in the cultural map of the modern world.

The civilised nations of the west had hitherto looked own upon Hinduism as a bundle of superstitions, evil institutions and immoral

¹. History of freedom movement by R.C. Majumdas Pg. 316
². For India’s uplift –Annie Besant Pg. –30-31
customs, unworthy of serious consideration in the progressive world of today. Now for the first time they not only greeted with hearty approval the lofty principles of Hinduism, as expounded by Vivekanand but also accorded a very high place to it in the culture and civilisations of the world.

The Hindu intelligentsia was always very sensitive regarding the many evils and shortcomings of the Hindu society and religion. They had always taken for granted the inferiority of their culture vis-à-vis that of the west, which was so confidently asserted by the western scholars. Now all of a sudden the table was turned and representatives of the west joined in applauding the hidden virtues of Hinduism.

It not only restored self-confidence of the Hindus in their own culture and civilisation but also quickened their sense of national pride and patriotism. It was a great contribution to the growing Hindu nationalism.

On his return to India, Swami Vivekanand preached the spiritual basis of Hindu civilisation and pointed out in his speeches and writings that the spirituality of India was not less valuable, not less important for the welfare of humanity, than the material greatness for the west.

But Vivekanand was not prejudiced against the west, nor insensible to the value of her achievements. He frankly admitted that Indian culture was neither spotless nor perfect. It has to learn many things from the west, but without sacrificing its true character.

Swami Vivekanand combined in himself the role of a great saint and a fervid nationalist. He placed Indian nationalism on the high pedestal
of past glory, and it embraced the teeming millions of India, both high and low rich and poor. He devoted his life to the awakening of national consciousness.

Though an ascetic, Vivekanand was a patriot of patriots. The thought of restoring the pristine glory of India by resuscitating among her people the spiritual vitality, which was dormant but not dead, was always the uppermost thought in his mind. His great disciple sister Nivedita (an Irish lay name Margaret Nobel) who was his constant companion has remarked.

"Throughout those years in which I saw him almost daily, the thought of India was to him like the air he breathed".

There seems to be a great truth in the following tribute paid to him by a recent historian of Indian struggle for Swaraj.

"Swami Vivekanand might well be called the father of modern Indian Nationalism; he largely created it and also embodied in his own life its highest and noblest elements."

There is no doubt that nationalism and patriotism was lifted to a high spiritual level by Swami Vivekananda, although he was a religious devotee, and a Sanyasin who had renounced the world, his writing speeches and activities had a direct bearing on the devotion to motherland. He emphasised the greatness of the spiritual idea enunciated in the Vedanta and the important role it is destined to play in elevating the whole mankind. But, he said the great mission of India, would remain unfulfilled, so long as India continued in her present state of slavery and object poverty. The political and material greatness of India was
indissolubly bound up with the spiritual regeneration of India and the world.

Vivekananda restated the old ideals of God Vedanta in a new form. The fundamental concept of Vedanta was the essential unity of God and man he reiterated and its realisation by man by removing his illusion or ignorance. He said — Realisation of God is to be achieved not by retirement into hills, and forests and negations of worldly life, but by spiritualization of the normal contents of life. He put it in a more concrete form by laying emphasis on the fact that one should not shun away from the world, in order to seek God, but try to recognise him in his fellow beings, who are the images of God himself as taught by the Vedanta. The true worship of God was therefore, the service of their people. He accordingly asked every Indians to realise God in the nation and to dedicate himself to its service in spirit of religion reverence, without any pride or fear and irrespective of all earthly consequences.

Swami Vivekanand never tired of preaching that what India needs today is not much religion or philosophy of which she has enough, but food for her hungry millions, social justice for the low classes, strength and energy for the emasculated people and a sense of pride and prestige as a great nation of the world.

This saint galvanised the current of national life, infused new hopes and inspirations and placed the service to the motherland on a religious level.

Swami Vivekanand thus gave a spiritual basis to Indian nationalism. The lesson of the Vedanta and Bhagwad Gita permeated the lives and activities of many nationalists.
A review of the progress of nationalism in India was made by Gokhale, while inaugurating the servants of India society in 1905 in the following passage.

"The growth, during the last fifty years, of a feeling of common nationality based upon common tradition, common disabilities and common hopes and aspirations has been most striking. The fact that we are Indians first, is being realised in a steadily increasing measure and the idea of a united and renovated India and marching onwards to a place among the nations of the world, worthy of her great past is no longer a mere idle dream of a few imaginative minds but is the accepted creed of the educated classes of the country.

The most significant trait of the new nationalism was an intense love of the motherland, based on the conception of its past glory and future greatness. This was preached by Vivekanand and illustrated by Bankim Chandra in his famous novel Anandmath. He has depicted there the lives of a band of Sanayins who devoted their lives to the service of their motherland.

She was not only represented by the image of Kali the source of all power and energy, but the only form of worship acceptable to her was the selfless service to the motherland.

Thus Bankim Chandra converted patriotism into religion and religion into patriotism.\(^3\)

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3. History of freedom movement by R.C. Majumdas Pg. 316-322
These four religions movements mark successive developments of the national self-consciousness.

The Brahmo Samaj marked the awakening of the Indian nation from the state of coma produced by the East India Co.

It was the tendency of the Brahmo Samaj towards Christianity and its general westernising influence, which made the arising of the Arya Samaj a necessity for the saving of the Eastern ideals.

The spread of English language had ensured the passage of all valuable western thoughts to India. It was time that a distinctively Hindu note should be struck and an aggressive hard-hitting movement should arise.

The Arya Samaj arose. The missionaries had been in the later Brahmo Samaj a step towards Christianisation of India. To their horror, they found a new movement had arisen among the Indian people – the Arya Samaj.

The Arya Samaj saved the essential of Hinduism, but by throwing away much that was valuable it frightened the orthodox majority and by its propagandist character, it alienated the Muslim population. It was too exclusive and too aggressive. While we recognise the Arya Samaj and its patriotic vigour, as one of the strongest currents in the stream of Indian Nationality, we see the need of something more.
The Theosophical society was called, and with its recognition of the unity of religions, it brought other religions into the national Movement. It justified those elements in Hinduism, which the Arya Samaj had shut out.

In social life, Theosophists have rendered, service by their attitude of friendliness and ignoring race distinctions. In Education their service has been invaluable.

The work of Rama Krishna Mission completed the religious impulse by adding tolerance of pure and spiritual Hinduism.

The occasional Expression not only of pride in India, but also of contempt of the west in Swami Vivekanand necessary touch of lash – a lash of hatred.

Thus religion inspired Nationality and sir valentine chirol had true and acute insight when he saw in the revival of Hinduism the genesis of Nationality.4

4. For Indian uplift – Annie Besant Pgs. –32-34.
The beginnings of the Bengali literature may be traced to the foundation of Foet William College in Calcutta. It had a Bengali section with William Carey as its head Carry himself composed a grammar of the Bengali language in 1801. The Bengali prose got a lot of impetus from Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

While the languages of upper India came under the domination of Arabic and Persian. The English literature changed the whole outlook of Bengali literature, both in prose and poetry. Hitherto the Bengali poetry, concurred itself mainly with religions topics, but the influence of Romantic literature in Europe changed its whole Character and individual emotions as well as social and political topics formed its main theme.

The first issue of the weekly Samachar Darpan, the most notable of the early periodicals published on 23rd May 1818. It includes such items as news of India, Europe, new discoveries in Europe an ancient history and culture of India. The periodicals soon became the chief forum for discussion of all topics – political, economical, educational religions etc. that interested the public.¹

In Bengal the growth of literature made the greatest contribution to the development of national and patriotic feelings during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The name of Bankim Chandra Chatterji stands foremost in this connection. His famous novel ‘Anandmath’ contains the hymn Bande Matraram, which had become the national anthem of India up to 1947.

¹. History of freedom movement by R.C. Majumdas Pg. 272-273
The main theme of the novel inspired the Bengali youths to supreme self sacrifice during the hectic days of the Swadeshi Movement.

No other Bengali book so profoundly moved the Bengali youth save perhaps Sarat Chandra’s Pather Dabi’ written half a century later. Both the novels made a strong emotional protest against the British rule.

Some Bengali poems of the period gave a clarion call to patriotism.

The broad western type of nationalism, which embraced India as a whole, irrespective of creed and communities was also faithfully reflected in Bengali literature.

The newborn patriotism and national sentiments found expression in and were stimulate by a number of beautiful national songs, which have survived to the present day. The Bengali dramas and public stage also played a great part in fostering the national sentiments. There were social dramas written drawing attention to the social evils, which were eating into vital evils of the nation. There were dramas with a distinctly national appeal.

Some of the evils of the British rule which deeply stirred the feelings of the people, formed the theme of dramas, the best illustrations is Nita – Darpan by Dinbandhu Mitra, which depicted the terrible oppression of the indigo planters.

The glaring evils of the British rule were overtly or covertly emphasised in poems, dramas, novels, and songs. Reference may be made to one particular national song, which openly condemned foreign economic exploitation. It was form a novel by Babu Manmohan Bose
Bangadhipa Paranjaya depicting conquest of Bengal, by a foreign people who came from High Island.

History was also enlisted in the cause of nationalism, as Bengal had no knowledge in those days of her own great heroes, the lives of Rajput, Maratha, and Sikh heroes took their place. The patriotism of Rana Pratap and the heroes deeds of Shivaji were household words in Bengal. Rabindranath Tagore wrote stirring poems of Shivaji, and the Sikh Gurus.²

PRESS - The value of the Indian literature would have been considerably restricted but for the printing press which was unknown in India, before her contact with the west. It was mainly due to the printing press that the new spirit of the age made its influence felt over the people at large throughout the country.

The Bengali periodicals did not appear before 1818, but a large number followed in quick succession. One of them was edited by Ram Mohan Roy and he started another along with Dwarka Nath Tagore and some other distinguished liberal minded citizens of Calcutta. The Gujarati Bombay Samachar was started in 1822. Several Urdu Papers were published in Delhi in 1837, 1838.

The leading newspaper started by an Indian was the ‘Hindu Patriot’ started in 1853. Its object was to be fair and mainly advocacy of the interests of the country and impartial exposition of the social and political evils with which she is now afflicted.

² History of freedom movement by R.C. Majumdas Pg. 302-305
The government never took kindly to the English papers that criticized their action. The growth of the vernacular press caused them alarm. Even liberal minded officers like Munro and Ephinstone were opposed to the liberty of Press in India. Amrit Bazar Patrika was circulating broadcast tales of magisterial high handedness, all over the province. All these working upon youthful imagination created sympathy in us.

Munro candidly observed. "A free press and the dominion of strangers are things which are incompatible and which cannot long exist together for what is the first duty of a free press. It is to deliver the country from a foreign yoke". Elphinstone held similar views, but farsighted Englishmen were not wanting, who argued that a free press, "was the best protection against sedition and revolution" particularly in India, whose people had no other grievances to the notice of the government.

Mr. Adam, who officiated as Governor General, issued a rigorous Press Ordinance on 14th March 1823, which prescribed that no one should publish a newspaper, or other periodical without having previously obtained a licence form the Governor General in council by submitting an affidavit.

The press ordinance drew vigorous protest from Raja Ram Mohan Roy and other Indian leaders.

The activities of Ram Mohan and other leaders in connection with Press Ordinance of 1823 constitute a notable landmark in the history of India's struggle for freedom.
Raja Ram Mohan Roy drafted a petition, which was signed by others—Chandra Kumar Tagore, Gauri Chandra Bannerji, and Prasanna Kumar Tagore.

These men regarded Free Press as the natural right of all men free access of knowledge and opinion without the intervention of any authority to say what was good for them what was not. They boldly asserted that the ordinance would be a sudden deprivation of one of the most precious of their rights. It would also endanger national education by putting a step to the diffusion of knowledge. The daring act of Ram Mohan and associates marks the beginning of a new type of political activity. It was the start of that system of constitutional agitation for political rights, which became a special characteristic of India for nearly a century.3

**Indian Press in the struggle for Swaraj**

Swadeshi at that time was the most widespread form of national liberation movement. The opposition and resistance of the Moderates prevented congress from becoming a vehicle for the further development of the anti-imperialist movement. In this setting the extremist press began to play a most important part.

The Indians democratic press, which expressed the views of the extremists, propagated the idea of active struggle against colonial oppression among wide circles of Indian society.

It stimulated the spirit of patriotism among readers and united them. It is quite natural therefore that the growing influence of the

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3. History of freedom movement by R.C. Majumdas Pg. 273-277
democratic freedom loving press should have come to be an important indication of the development of the liberation struggle while the editors of extremist newspapers were as a rule political leaders.

Playing a prominent role in the provinces or on a national scale. The leaders of the movement attached particular importance at this time to the publication of political literature. Tilak for instance immediately after the Surat split energetically began seeking ways and means to disseminate and popularise the extremist ideas among the masses.

It was the democratic Indians press in the second half of 1907, voicing extremist views, which became one of the main objects of repression. By trying to crush Indian newspapers the authorities hoped to halt the speeding influence of the extremist to isolate them from the people.

The colonial authorities felt that the national – liberation movement was entering a new and more dangerous phase in which the Indian freedom press was a potent ideologically weapon as well as an extremely important organising influence.

The usual charge beginning with the trial of the editor of the ‘Punjabee’ was sedition. By the beginning of 1908 certain newspapers, mainly in Bengal, had considerable records of police persecution. The Jugantar for example, ha been charged with subversion five times in the course of the year 1904- Times of India July 13,1908 Pg. 5. In August 1907, the police raided the offices of another well-known extremist paper in Bengal the Bande Mataram’ and its editor Aurobindo Ghose, was brought to trial for writing a ‘subversive article for the Jugantar Times of India. 24\textsuperscript{th} Aug. 1908 Pg. 8.
The protests against and resistance to the police reprisals against Indian newspapers became an increasingly important form of expression for the Indians over dissatisfaction with the colonial regime. When the editor of Bande Mataram case was being tried and other trials were going on, the public openly expressed their solidarity with the defendants and clashed with the police frequently followed Times of India July 6 1908 Pg.15. 4

Persecution of Indian newspaper was not confined to Bengal. There were similar cases in other parts of the country and trials showed how widespread were the views of the extremist.

Certain events, which took place in the middle of 1908, particularly in Bengal, were a manifestation of protest by the national forces against colonial rule. Several dozen student and members of the editorial board of the Jugantar were arrested some of these admitted that they had formed a secret society to fight British rule.

The Bengal Zamindar and the Muslim league held meetings at which they fully denounced the 'anarchist action'. Some Indian newspapers expressed the opinion that that these people had been driven to terrorist acts by the British. Tilak gave an excellent analysis of the causes, which had led to such acts he wrote - much time has passed since the Bengal partition and all efforts to get the partition cancelled by lawful means have proved fruitless. The British bureaucrats resort more and more to repressive measures under the circumstances there were transgressions of the 'limitations of the law'. It would be naïve to think that there would

4. Tilak and the struggle for Indian freedom Indian Press in the struggle for Swaraj Pgs. 460-461.
be no action by the oppressed people in a country with 300 million populations as long as the reasons for such acts existed "Quoted from Times of India July 27th 1908 pg.5

An article in the Marathi paper 'Kal' of May 15th 1908, said about the terrorists- "they do not want anarchy but Swaraj" Times of India July 20th 1908 Pg.7 1908. The same month Munshi Shanti Narayan publisher of Hindu Swaraj was arrested on the usual change of Sedition. Times of India 4th December 1908, Pg 9 repression was also employed against Subramania Ayer, - Publishers of the Tamil paper - 'Swadesh Mitran' and the publisher of the Marathi paper Uishvavritta -Times of India August 4th, 1908 Pg 6. August 29th Pg.4 16 January 1909 Pg 4.

The effect of these trials turned out to be propaganda for the liberation idea. Many people disapproved of this method of struggle but none could deny the courage of these people, who had engaged in an unequal battle against the invaders for the liberation of their country.

One of the adverse results of individual terror was the cover it provide the authorities for increased repression.

The arrests of many publishers of Indian newspapers on the charges of sedition reached their culmination with the arrest of Tilak. 6

We will study the factors, which led to the emergence of the Indian National Congress, as the apex nationalist organisation that was to guide the destiny of Indian national movement, till the attainment of independence.

5. Tilak and the struggle for Indian freedom Pgs. 462-463
6. Tilak and the struggle for Indian freedom Pgs 464-466
The foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 was a culmination of a process of political awakening that had its beginnings in 1860s and 1870 and took a major leap forward in the late 1870s and 1880s. The year 1885 marked the turning point in this process, for that was the year, the political Indians, the modern intellectuals interested in politics, who no longer saw themselves as spokesmen of narrow group interests, but as representatives of national interest vis-à-vis foreign rule, as a 'national party' saw their efforts bear fruit. This all – India nationalist body was the symbol of the new national spirit and politics.  

The Indian national congress was founded in Dec 1885 by A.O. Hume.

It was the first organised expression of Indian nationalist on an all – India scales. The myth surrounding the formation of the Indian national congress is that it was started to provide a safe, mild peaceful and constitutional outlet or 'Safety valve' for rising discontent among the masses, which would inevitably lead towards a popular and violent revolution. Consequently the revolutionary potential was ribbed in the bud.

The congress did of course in time become a Nationalist Body the national character began to overshadow, the loyalist character. It also became a vehicle of mass movements.  

7. Indian Struggle for Independence by Bipan Chandra Pgs. 71-72
8. Indian Struggle for Independence by Bipan Chandra Pgs. 61-62
By, 1885 the formation of an all India, political organisation had become an objective necessity and the necessity was being recognised by nationalist all over the country. These moves acquired as a greater sense of urgency especially from 1883 and there was intense political activity. The Indian Association had already in December 1883, organised an All India National Conference and given a call for another one in December 1885.

Meanwhile the Indians had gained experience, as well as confidence from the large number of agitations they had organised in the preceding ten years. Since 1875, there had been a continuous campaign around cotton import duties, which Indians wanted to stay in the interests of the Indian textile Industry. A massive campaign had been organised during 1877-88, around the demand for the Indianisation of government services. The Indians had opposed the Afghan adventure of Lord Lyton and then compelled the British government to contribute toward the cost of the second Afghan war. The Indian Press had waged a major campaign against the efforts of the government to control it through the vernacular Press act. The Indians had also opposed the effort to disarm them through the Arms Act. A major agitation was organised during 1883, in favour of the Ilbert Bill, which would enable Indian magistrates to try Europeans. The bill was successfully thwarted by the Europeans. The Indians were quick to draw a political lesson. Their efforts had failed because they had not been co-ordinated on an all – India basis.

It thus becomes clear that the foundation of the Congress was the natural culmination of the political work of the previous years. The men, who met on 28th December 1885, were inspired by these objectives and hoped to initiate the process of achieving them.
India had thus entered the process of becoming a nation or a people. The first major objective of the founders of the Indian National movement was to promote this process to create an Indian people.

Indians did not deny this but asserted that they were not becoming a nation. India was as Tilak, Surendra Nath Banerjee and many others were fond of saying - a nation in the making. The congress leaders recognised that objective historical forces were bringing the Indian people together. And that for this, it was necessary to promote the feeling of national unity and nationalism among them.

Above all India being a nation in the making, its nationhood had to be constantly developed and consolidated. The promotion of national unity was a major objective of the Congress.

The second major objective of the early congress was to create a common political platform or programme around which political workers in different parts of the country could gather and conduct their political activities education and mobilizing people on an all India basis.

Modern politics the politics of popular participation, agitation, mobilisation was new to India. No political movement was possible till people realised this and then, on the basis of this realisation, an informed and determined political opinion had to be created.

The methods of the political struggle of early nationalist was based on petitions, prayers, memorials. All this led to politics, to be politicisation of the people. They did not organise any mass movements or mass struggles.
Nations and people become capable of meaningful and effective political action only if they are organised. They become a people, or historical subjects only when they are organised as such.

The basic objectives of the early nationalist lenders were to lay the foundations of a secular and democratic national movement, to politicise and politically educate the people, to form the headquarters of the movement, to form an all India leadership group and to develop and propagate an anti-colonial nationalist ideology.¹

**Development of political idea and organisations (1858 – 1885).**

As a consequence of the growth of nationalism there was a forward movement in political ideas and organisations in the later half of the nineteenth country.

Hitherto the political ambitions of the Indians did not to beyond administrative reforms with a view to securing more powers for the Indians. But gradually they were inspired by higher ambitions.

The idea of a representative government was not however a new thing in Bengal politics. A demand for it was included in the petition of the British Indian Association, Calcutta to the British parliament in 1852. On 25th July 1867 W.C. Banerjee delivered in England a long speech on representative and responsible government of India.

Seven years later Krishtodas Pal the veteran politician of Bengal recommended a similar constitutional government for India. In 1874 in a leading article in the Hindu Patriot on the ‘Home Rule for India’ observed

¹. India’s struggle for Independence, Pgs. 72-79, Bipan Chandra.
our attention should be directed to Home Rule for India to the introduction of constitutional government for India. Most of the British Colonies have been blessed with constitutional government but India is the only dependency, which despite the vastness of its area, its population and interest is denied the privilege.

A few advanced thinkers of Bengal started in 1875 a new association called ‘Indian League’ in order to stimulate the sense of nationalism amongst the people and awaken political consciousness among them”.

Even the Anglo-Indian Daily of Calcutta, the Englishman referred to this new political organisation as “the first marked sign of the awakening of the people on this side of India to political life.”

The India League was followed by another political organization called the ‘Indian Association’, headed by Surendra Nath. Even then, the conception of a united India, bringing all India upon the same common political platform had taken firm possession of the minds of the Indian leaders in Bengal.

One of the important topics which engaged the attention of the Indian Association was the new regulation reducing the age limit of the competitors for the Indian Civil Service Examination from 21 to 19. Indian Association held a public meeting in Calcutta to register an emphatic protest against it. In order to give an all India character to the agitation the Association had sent letters to different provinces asking for their opinion and letters and telegrams form leaders of different regions of India, protesting against the reactionary measure were read to the public meeting. This is the beginning of a new idea in the political agitation of
the country, which soon became a normal feature. The Calcutta meeting decided to send a memorial to the British Parliament praying that the maximum age limit for the ICS Exams be raised to twenty-two years and the examinations be held in London and one or more centres in India.

As Surendra Nath put it "the true aim and purpose of the Civil services agitation was the awakening of spirit of unity and solidarity among the people of India."

Thus an ill-conceived administrative measure led to the organisation of what maybe justly regarded as the first political movement on an all-India basis.

The stage was thus set for a political organisation embracing the whole of India, which came into being in less than a decade.

The Indian Association found anew scope of activity in another reactionary measure of the government the Vernacular Press Act 1878 passed by Lord Lytton. (Its object was to muzzle the newspapers in Indian languages, which spread the message of nationality and the newly awakened sense of political consciousness). It was followed by other reactionary measures such as Arms Act and License Act.

The Indian Association held public meetings to protest these obnoxious measures and in particular carried on a vigorous agitation against vernacular Press Act, which sought to cut at the very root of the nascent spirit of nationalism and political activity in India. A public meeting was held in Calcutta. This was attended by about five thousand men, and this is an indication of the growth in the political consciousness
of the people. Letters and telegrams were received from leaders and political associations all over India, supporting the object of the meeting.

A petition against the vernacular Press act was sent to Gladstone, leader of the opposition in the house of commons Gladstone moved a resolution in the House and out of 360 members present 152 members voted in favour of it. It may be added that the agitation carried on by the Indian Associations was not altogether fruitless for some sections of the Act were modified.

The efforts of the Indian Association to stimulate political consciousness of the people were aided by two notable events in 1883. The first was the agitation launched against the introduction of Ilbert bill. The Indian Association fought hard for the bill, though the bill was not withdrawn it was changed beyond recognition. The Indian learnt the value of combination and organisation in political struggle. The Ilbert bill agitation was thus another landmark in the history of India's political progress.

One particular feature of great importance was the prominent part that student community took in the organisation of public meetings and openly gave vent to their feelings of resentment against the government.

The memorable events of 1883 brought into the forefront the question of a political organisation an all - India character. In spite of its achievement, the Indian Association was a provincial organisation and felt the need of a closely-knit organisation embracing the whole of India.
It was decided to inaugurate an all-India National Conference. The idea was approved by all the branches of the Indian Association of North India as well as by the leading political organisation of Bombay and Madras.

The objects of the National conference were truly national.

The second session of the National Conference was held in Calcutta in 1885 on 25, 26 and 27 Dec. More than thirty political Associations from all over Northern India sent their representatives.

Among other subjects which were discussed may be mentioned - the Arms Act, the Civil services question the separation of judicial and executive functions and retrenchment of expenditure, mainly under three heads - annual military expenditure, the home charges and the enormous cost of civil administration.

The Indian Association wanted to give a permanent character to the Conference. Accordingly Surendra Nath moved that a conference of delegates from different parts of the country should be held next year.

This conference was the Indian National Congress².

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² History of Freedom Movement by R.C. Majumdar Pgs 324-339