CHAPTER-I

BEGINNING OF POLITICAL ACTIVITIES
AND EMERGENCE OF THE CONGRESS

The Tamil Region had witnessed early political developments towards the close of the Nineteenth Century when the Congress party played a vital role in creating political awakening and national consciousness. Political Organizations were at work in Madras even before the birth of the I.N.C. The initiative was taken by certain Non-Brahmin merchants. The first man to infuse political awakening in the mind of the elite people of the Madras Presidency was Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty.\(^1\) During the 1830’s, there existed an organization called the Madras Hindu Literary Society and its president was Kaveli Venkata Lakshmaniah, and Secretary V.Srinivasaiah.\(^2\) But it was predominantly European and was not concerned with public issues. It was essentially a literary club under whose auspices the great legal expert and the most popular British friend of India, George Norton delivered a series of lectures in 1833-1834 on “the Plan of Government and the System of Administration of Justice in India”.\(^3\)

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\(^3\) Gopalakrishnan, S., *Political Movements in South India 1914-1929*, Madras,1981, pp.9-10
course the society ceased to be active even as a literary club. It was therefore Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty who was the first person to arouse political consciousness in the Madras Presidency.

The conversion activities of the Christian Missionaries aided by Government officials in the Mid-Nineteenth Century aroused the religious sentiments of the Non-Brahmin Hindu merchants. The conversion of Hindus to Christianity was common in those days and the Christian Missionaries freely involved themselves in these activities. And it was clandestinely supported by the Government. Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty was greatly incensed by this disgraceful exploitation of the Hindus by the Christian Missionaries. Some of the top Europeans like E.B. Thomas, Collector of Tirunelveli, J.F. Thomas, Chief Secretary to Government, William Burton, a Judge of the Madras Sadar Court and the District Judge of Chengelpet were openly lending their support to the conversion of Hindus to Christianity. It was against the pledge of the British government not to interfere with the religious belief of the Indian people. This unhealthy trend had the blessings of Governor Marquis of Tweedale (1842-1848).

6 Parameswaran Pillai, G., Representative Indians, 1897, p.195.
Foresighted that he was, Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty knew that nothing could be done to stem this virus eating into the vitals of the Hindu Community without establishing an organ of public opinion. He transformed ideas into action by purchasing a paper run by one Narayanaswami along with its press and changed its name as ‘Crescent’, the first of its kind conducted by Indians. It’s chief objective being the advocacy of the Indian cause, it acted as a corrective on the ‘Record’, the declared Missionary organ. Harley of Vepery, a former army officer and a friend of Indian’s, was made its editor. The paper was naturally noted for its military spirit and intractable disposition. Its first issue came out on 20th October 1844. By highlighting the pressing problem of conversion, it succeeded in arresting the serious attempts made by the Missionaries to introduce the Bible as a text book in all government schools. It also succeeded in making the government expunge a legislation which aimed at extending certain facilities to Hindu converts to Christianity. These were certainly no mean achievements.

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Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty with the help of Srinivasa Pillai tried to convert the Hindu Literary Society into a political association but it failed. This circumstance paved the way for the formation of the Madras Native Association (M.N.A.). The popularity of the Crescent increased with the formation of the M.N.A. on 26th February 1852, by a resolution adopted on the same day at a public meeting chaired by a leading merchant of Madras, C.Appaswami Pillai. The establishment of this Association marked the beginning of the modern political activity on an organizational scale in the Presidency. Though the mercantile element dominated the management of the Association, it had also representatives of other professionals. Its president was C.Yagambaran Mudaliar, a Mirasdar and Secretary Y. Ramanujachari, who later became a translator in the local court. Another young patriot, who collaborated with Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty in founding the association was P.Somasundaram Chetty, a merchant and money lender. Leaders like V.Sadagopachari, P.Rangaiah Naidu and V.Ramanujachari also lent their support to the Association.

The M.N.A. was the earliest popular Indian ‘Quasi-Political’ association consisting of English-educated Indians under the dynamic headship of Gazulu. Though this political association was started originally as a branch of the British Indian Association of Calcutta, which itself was established only in October 1851, its members withdrew from the latter very soon and formed themselves into an independent society under the denomination of the M.N.A.\textsuperscript{14} The reasons for this decision were brought forth clearly in the petition of the M.N.A., to the Parliament. The Petition stated that the Calcutta Association recommended only the exaltation of the highest classes of the Hindus, while it left almost untouched the pitiable condition of the middle and lower classes and was in various respects unsuitable to the circumstances of the inhabitants of the Madras Presidency.\textsuperscript{15} Hence it expediently to withdraw from their connection as a branch association, subordinate to that of the metropolis, and to constitute from among themselves an independent society, under the denomination of the M.N.A., with the view of bringing before the Parliament the immediate grievances of their own Presidency.\textsuperscript{16} The Madras petition was criticized by some for its tone as well as its failure to include the customary compliments

\textsuperscript{14} Petition to the Imperial Parliament from the members of the Madras Native Association for redress of the grievances in connection with the expiration of the East India Company’s Charter, 10\textsuperscript{th} December 1852.


to the British rule. But it did attract the attention of the Home Government in England. The real grievances of the critics were that the separation between the Madras and the Calcutta Associations had wrecked the first major attempt at achieving inter-Provincial co-operation in political agitation in India.

The M.N.A., was quite sharply critical of East India Company’s rule, highlighting the shortcomings of the revenue and judicial systems in the Madras Presidency. It also did not spare the Company’s religious policy, taking strong exception to the Government patronage of missionary activity as well as to laws that represented an ‘insult and outrage’ to Indians and their religions. By late 1853, the M.N.A., had begun to extend its influence beyond the City of Madras. It persuaded local leaders in Cuddalore, Tiruchirappalli, Salem and Tirunelveli to start branches in order to help the parent Association with funds and information. The M.N.A., continued to function, on a fluctuating basis, until the inception of the Madras Mahajana Sabha (M.M.S.) in 1884. Thereafter it gradually faded out of political existence.

18 Madras Mail, 20th May 1884.
Although the causes for the decline of the M.N.A., are not easily determined, the nature of its membership appears to have contributed to its relatively short life. Most of the members came from affluent advantaged sections of society and were disinclined to confront the British authorities in any forthright way. A number of Government officials also belonged to the M.N.A. and they could not criticise the Government beyond a certain limit.\(^\text{20}\)

At the same time, difference of opinions were created within the M.N.A. As a result of this, two groups emerged such as ‘Pro-social reform group’ and ‘Pro-political reform group’. As an opponent of the M.N.A., two social associations were formed as the ‘Madras Hindu Debating Society’ which was founded in 1852 by M. Venkatarayalu Naidu, a Non-Brahmin Merchant and another association is the ‘Hindu Improvement Progressive Society’ which was founded in 1852 by Srinivasa Pillai one of the founders of the M.N.A.\(^\text{21}\) In 1853, M.Venkataraylu Naidu started his own paper the ‘Rising Sun’ mainly to focus discussion on the social problems affecting the Hindu society.\(^\text{22}\) However, the two societies wanted to support the British Government for the social reform. Following their death, these societies had also become defunct in the mid 1860’s.\(^\text{23}\) So that before the formation of the Congress in Tamil Nadu, two groups emerged one in social field and another in the political.


\(^{22}\text{Paul John, J., }\textit{The Legal Profession in Colonial South India,}\ Bombay,1991, p.40\)

The Triplicane Literary Society was established in 1868 by a Muslim Ibrahim Ali and later reformed by some Hindu graduates around Triplicane. Its office was situated in No.8, Tulasinga Perumal Kovil Street, Triplicane. R. Raganath Rao, its president and P. Rangahia Naidu, D. Rama Rao, V. Krishnamachari, G. Subramania Iyer, Satha Siva Iyer were the vice-presidents of the society. It expressed the native opinion and discussed important issues of the day. Despite that, public opinion in the Madras presidency was stagnant, because there was no recognized forum to voice the feelings and grievances of the people. The members of the Triplicane Literary Society realized the need for the native newspapers when the Anglo-Indian newspapers in Madras criticized the appointment of T.Muthuswami Iyer, a Brahmin Lawyer as the first South Indian Judge of the Madras High Court. So, in order to represent the opinion of the people, the members of the Triplicane Literary Society started The Hindu, an English newspaper in Madras on 20th September 1878. They were six most ardent and enterprising but inexperienced youths such as G.Subramaniya Iyer, M.Veeraraghava Chari, T.T.Rangachariar, P.V.Rangachariar, D. Kesava Rao Pantulu and N. Subba Rao Pantulu. G.Subramaniya Iyer, one of its founders also founded Swadesamitran, a Tamil newspaper in 1882. With the circulation of these newspapers, political activities in the Tamil Country was restored.

28 Sundram Pillai, K., Sri G. Subramania Iyer, Madras, 1907, p.2.
After the demise of the M.N.A., the absence of a recognized forum to investigate and ventilate public grievances and pass them on to the authorities for redressal was keenly felt. In 1881, G. Subramania Iyer and M. Veeraraghava Chariar with the help of Madras City lawyers and many Government officials succeeded in resuscitating the defunct M.N.A. It was placed initially under the leadership of C.V Ranganatha Sastri, first Indian Judge of the city small cause court and after his demise in the year, under that of V. Bhashyam Iyengar, a born lawyer who became the Advocate General, the first Indian to hold that office, a Judge of the High Court and the trusted adviser of the Government under successive Governors. The other prominent members were Salem Ramaswamy Mudaliar and P. Aandacharlu. The revived Association was mainly concerned with pressing the Government for greater measures of representation in local self-government. But it did not live long, thanks to the reign of terror unleashed by the Government of Grant Duff. During Duff’s regime, official members of the body were looked upon with suspicion. There was, of course, no ban on their membership in political bodies but this should be attributed to the earlier tendency of the British rulers to discount the ability and capacity of the Indians for any political activity rather than their generosity. If all along, the government gave no mind to the participation of their Indian officials in political affairs, it was purely owing


to its inclination to underestimate the Indian calibre and capacity for politics and administration. This accounted for the presence of many official members in the Association which certainly lent weight to it. But with the advent of Duff to the Governorship of Madras in 1881, there was a sea of change in the public life of the Presidency. While the prospect of India was hopeful with the advent of Ripon, who succeeded Lytton, Madras under Duff had a time of great anxiety. Indians in the public service of the presidency during this period were under the thumb of the Government. Men, who had no private means but depended solely on the jobs they held, would never dare to offend their English Superiors. Though there was no formal ban on their membership of the M.N.A., the officials began to leave it out of fear. With the non-official members also following in their footsteps, the fate of the Association was sealed. However, within the short span, it discussed many public questions and its able document on local self-government would testify to its labours for the advancement of the Presidency.\[31\]

After the extinction of the Second M.N.A., once again the presidency found itself bereft of a society to focus public opinion on many crucial issues of the day. There were many small political Associations functioning in different parts of the presidency. There were fifty of such units in 1882

which rose to a hundred in 1885.\textsuperscript{32} But the need for the political education of South India was never felt, but the series of repressive measures inflicted enough to limelight by Governor Duff necessitated to have an organisation to safeguard the people. There were no systematic and organized efforts in the form of occasional public meetings or memorials or newspaper articles to rise against the administrators both in India and England. Especially, after the scandalous happenings at Chengalpet and Salem during Duff’s regime, it became imperative to organize some society or association to channelise the rising tide of popular discontent which would otherwise find vent in undesirable directions or sink into a state of dull passivity.\textsuperscript{33} Furthermore, the administration of Sir Mount Stuart Grand Duff, the then Governor of Madras, was known for a series of blunders, sensations and scandals. The two notorious scandals in his tenure which shocked the Madras Presidency were the cases of Chengalpet and Salem Riots.

The farmers of Chengalpet district petitioned to the Governor of Madras about the high handedness adopted by the Thasildar of Chengalpet district in collecting land tax with vengeance on the farmers who had leveled charges against the Thasildar. A Village Munsiff who presented the petition was dismissed from service and was sent to Jail on charge of giving false evidence. Many such cases of high handedness against the landholders


\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Madras Mahajana Sabha Diamond Jubilee Souvenir, Op.Cit.}, p.5.
and ryots by the government officials were reported.\textsuperscript{34} The other incident of such nature was the Salem riots, in which an ordinary communal problem was exaggerated and treated as a seditious revolt by the government. In Salem, a leading advocate C.Vijayaraghavachari was arrested, tried and sentenced to ten years rigorous imprisonment.\textsuperscript{35} Soon \textit{The Hindu} newspaper carried on a vigorous campaign for the release of the persons falsely imprisoned. Finally due to the intervention of Lord Ripon, the then Viceroy, the prisoners were acquitted by the High Court of Madras. These events brought the people Tamil Nadu together for the common cause.\textsuperscript{36}

It was at this time the announcement regarding the holding of an International Exhibition in Calcutta in December 1883 was received. It was expected that important people from all over India would visit the exhibition. \textit{The Hindu} urged the Indian Association to take full advantage of the situation and advised to organize a Grand National Conference in Calcutta by inviting leaders from all over the country, to discuss important national issues. As suggested by \textit{The Hindu}, a conference was held at Calcutta in which more than 100 delegates from all over the country participated. Anand Mohan Bose in his opening speech remarked that it was the first step towards a National Parliament.\textsuperscript{37}

In Madras, during 1883-1884 the leaders staged three large scale political demonstrations. The first demonstration was held on 21\textsuperscript{st} April 1883 to demand an extension of Lord Ripon’s term as Viceroy and the next demonstration was held on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 1883 to celebrate the first anniversary of the issue of Lord Ripon’s famous resolution on local self-government.\textsuperscript{38}

The third was conducted on 31\textsuperscript{st} January 1884, in honour of Lord Ripon’s visit to Madras. At that time, they began canvassing to support the idea of a comprehensive central association which could claim to speak on behalf of the entire presidency. These demonstrations were characterized by unprecedented enthusiasm, unanimity of feeling, careful organization and growing co-operation between metropolitan and mofussil leaders.\textsuperscript{39}

However, the most immediate and acceptable provincial forerunner of the I.N.C. was the M.M.S. on 16\textsuperscript{th} May 1884 by a group of educated men.\textsuperscript{40}

Prominent among them were G. Subramania Iyer, P. Rangiah Naidu, M. Viraragahavachari, S. Subramania Iyer, R. Balaji Rao, P. Anadacharlu C. Vijayaraghavachari, and Salem Ramaswamy Mudaliar. It provided a forum for the non-official intelligentia to spread all over the presidency.\textsuperscript{41}

Thus there came the shifting of the political leadership in the Madras Presidency from the Merchant class to the intelligentia. The Sabha was a

\textsuperscript{40} G.O.No.1433, Public Department, 10 July 1886; \textit{Madras Mail}, 20 May 1884.
contemporary of the East India Association of London (1866), the Sarva Janik Sabha of Poona (1870) and the British Indian Association of Calcutta (1851).\textsuperscript{42} The first conference of the M.M.S., was held in Madras on 29\textsuperscript{th} December 1884 to 2\textsuperscript{nd} January 1885.\textsuperscript{43} Its chairman P.Rangaiah Naidu’s comments at the inaugural session of the M.M.S., focused on the need for a new organization distinct from the M.N.A., Many wondered at the need for a new \textit{Sabha} when M.N.A., had existed. The M.N.A., had consisted of officials and non-officials but the new \textit{Sabha} would consist of non-officials alone so that the grievances of the public would be represented fearlessly to the government.\textsuperscript{44}

The emergence of the M.M.S., marked the real start of organized political activity in Tamil Nadu. The M.M.S., debated upon all important issues of the day without fear or favour and was well-known for its independence of thought and action. It did not mince words in stigmatizing the cruelties, follies and injustices of the administration. In exposing the shortcomings of the authorities, it spared none, not even the Viceroy. After its establishment, there was a perceptible change in the political climate of the presidency. It had a solid share in mooting, discussing and finalizing the formation of the I.N.C.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{44} Rajendran, N., \textit{Op.Cit.}, pp.11-12.
\textsuperscript{45} Saroja Sundararajan, \textit{Op.Cit.}, p.16.
The enormity of the opposition to the Ilbert Bill and the inability of Ripon’s Government to stem the tide of the resistance also pointed to the urgent need to counter such hostility by mobilizing the scattered forces of Indian Political opinion through an organization. But in accomplishing the arduous task of founding the first ever National Political body, the M.M.S., played an admirable role. In December 1884, at an informal discussion in Bombay, organised by those who had gone there to bid farewell to Ripon, there arose the idea of creating a National body. There were representatives from the M.M.S., at a farewell party. This Bombay discussion may be said to have received a concrete shape in December 1884 at Madras.46

G.Subramanya Iyer along with P.Rangaiah Naidu and P.Anandacharlu had largely been instrumental in arranging the rendezvous of the seventeen powerful patriots at the residence of the celebrated Raghunatha Rao to discuss seriously the setting up of a national forum. They decided at this meeting to organize committees together with adherents for an Indian National union and to meet again for political discussion. These seventeen notables from various parts of India were among the delegates attending the annual Theosophical convention at Madras.47 Apart from these three stalwarts of the M.M.S., the participants at the meeting included such men of National stature as Dadabai Naoroji, K.T. Telang and V.N. Mandlik of Bombay, Narendranath Sen, Surendranath Bannerjee, M.Ghose and

Chandramitter of Bengal; C.Vijayaranga Mudaliar and Pandurang Gopal of Poona; Sardar Dayal Singh of the Punjab; Harish Chandra of Allahabad; Kaliprasad and Pandi Lakshminarayan of North West provinces and Sri Ram of Oudh.\textsuperscript{48} The idea of an All India Union of thoughtful men of North and South, East and West became a programme of action when in March 1885, the first notice was issued to convene the first Indian National Union at Poona in December of the same year. The Indian Association of Calcutta also held a conference in December 1884.\textsuperscript{49} However, all these moves were independent of each other. Such development confirmed the fact that the Indian Public Opinion was seeking an outlet through an All India Organization to provide a common platform for giving expression to the aspirations of the intelligentia and channelising action for implementation.

There were the difference of opinions and the specific immediate circumstances and the persons responsible for the formation of the Congress. Whatever the origin and whoever the originator of the idea, the idea was in the air that the need of such an organization was being felt.\textsuperscript{50} Pattabhi Sitaramayya gave the partial answer. India was feeling the need for some sort of an All India Organization apart from the great Durbar of 1877 or the International Exhibition in Calcutta, which were supposed to have furnished

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Ibid.}, pp.45-46.
the model for the great national assemblage. It is also said that the idea was conceived in a private meeting of seventeen men after the Theosophical convention held at Madras in December 1884. Allan Octavian Hume took the initiative and the Indian Union started by Hume was also supposed to have been instrumental in convening the Congress.\textsuperscript{51}

From this partial answer of Sitaramayya it is known that Allan Octavian Hume was not the originator of the Congress. Mahatma Gandhi clarified the answer little more when he said that Surendranath Banerjee was, if not the originator, certainly one of the originators of the National Congress. From this answer of Mahatma Gandhi, it is unambiguous that Hume was not the originator of the Congress but rather the claim goes to Surendranath Banerjee and only if that claim is disputed then Hume is also one of the originators.\textsuperscript{52} Rajaji is more emphatic when he observed that Surendranath Banerjee was the father or at any rate one of the fathers of the I.N.C. From Rajaji’s observation also, it is crystal clear that Hume was not the father but rather one of the fathers of the Congress and Surendranath is more entitled to acclaim to be the father.\textsuperscript{53} William Wedderburn who happened to be the Congress president also (twice), wrote the biography of Hume under the title, \textit{Allan Octavian Hume, The Father of the Indian

\textsuperscript{52} Bose, S.K., \textit{Surendranath Banerji}, New Delhi, 1968, p.50.
\textsuperscript{53} Shiva Chandra Jha, \textit{Indian Party Politics; Structure-Leadership-Programmes}, New Delhi, 1989, p.37.
National Congress (1913). Thus by the very title of book Wedderburn declares Hume as the father of the Congress. Hence it is seen that three authorities on the Congress P.Sitaramayya, Gandhi and Rajaji did not accept Hume as the originator or the father of the Congress while Wedderburn does. The actual work was done by Surendranath Banerjee but the publicity and limelight seem to have been stuck with Hume.

B.N Pandey, the Editor of the five volume centenary series of the History of Congress (1985) does not enlighten the matter much.

It was Mahadev Govind Ranade on whose suggestion the name Congress was formally adopted at the Bombay Conference in 1885. According to this, while the conference at Bombay was discussing as to which name should be chosen for the new organization-National Union, National Conference, National League, National Assembly or National Congress-it was Ranade who suggested the name that was finally adopted. Thus, the National Organization that emerged as the vanguard of the Nationalist Movement in India in 1885 was primarily originated by Surendranath Banerjee and it was baptized by Mahadev Govind Ranade as the Indian National Congress.

When it is proceeded to probe into the specific circumstance and immediate thinking of the I.N.C., it could be considered that the role of Surendranath Banerjee’s was in the forefront. Surendranath Banerjee passed the civil service examination in 1871 and returned to India along with his other successful friends, R.C. Dutt (later President of the Congress in 1899) and B.L. Gupta. Surendranath Banerjee was posted as Assistant Magistrate at Sylhet, from where hailed Bipin Chandra Pal. Because of racial prejudice Surendranath Banerjee was dismissed from the service within a short time. He made an appeal to the higher authorities in England but of no avail. Then he wanted to join the Bar but was not allowed. Thus, within four years, i.e., by 1875, the young 27 years old Surendranath Banerjee found both the major lucrative channels of job blocked because of the inordinate racial superiority complex of the British ruling authority. This was the darkest hour of Surendranath’s life but the finest of the nation and fortunate chance to India. The country lost a good civilian but gained a great leader.

On 26th July 1876, the Indian Association was established with Surendranath Banerjee as the moving spirit of the new body and Anand Mohan Bose as its first secretary. The very naming of it as Indian tell note that the sponsors wanted it represent All India interests and to foster All India unity.

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The ideals which Surendranath Banerjee had set before himself in organizing the Indian Association were creation of a strong body of public opinion; the unification of the Indian races and people on the basis of common political interests and aspirations; promotion of friendly feelings between Hindus and Muslims; and enlisting the masses in the public movements of the day. Thus, the sapling planted by Surendranath Banerjee in course of time grew into an All India Political Organisation called the I.N.C.\textsuperscript{59}

Lord Lytton’s reactionary rule (1876-80) provided the requisite fertilizers in the form of the Indian Durbar (1877), the sacrifice of cotton import duties (1877), the Vernacular Press Act (1878), the Arms Act (1878) and the second Afghan War (1878) for the sapling to grow. To cap them all was the reduction of the maximum age limit for civil service from 21 to 19. Much later Surendranath Banerjee himself summed up how all these reactionary measures under Lytton were blessings in disguise for the further political developments in India.\textsuperscript{60}

Hence Surendranath Banerjee had enough of ammunition for the Indian Association to stir up political consciousness all over the country against those reactionary measures. He made the All India tour, visiting important cities and contacting like-minded persons. Consequently the

Madras Mahajana Sabha was established in 1884 and the Bombay Presidency Association a little later. Besides, the Delhi Durbar had made Surendranath Banerjee to think of people’s assemblage on an All India level. The Delhi assemblage furnished the model for a like political organization intended to espouse the country’s cause. The idea of united India thus emerged as an unconscious by-product of the Darbar.\textsuperscript{61}

The tempo of the movement was further accelerated by the Ilbert Bill (1883), by which the Indian Magistrates were given the power to try the European convicts also. The opposition to the Ilbert Bill by the Anglo-Indians awakened the Indians who were not slow to realize that the inwardness of the opposition to the Bill was based on the assertion of racial superiority and its perpetuation.\textsuperscript{62} It taught the statesmen of India the lessons of organization; and immediately in the year 1883 there was held a political conference at the Albert Hall in Calcutta, at which both Surendranath Banerjee and A.M. Bose were present. At this meeting of 17\textsuperscript{th} July 1883, Surendranath Banerjee gave the clarion call for creating a National fund for constitutional agitation in India and in England.\textsuperscript{63}

An officially sponsored international exhibition was planned to be held in Calcutta in December 1883. In view of the anticipated presence of people from all over India, Surendranath Banerjee and his colleagues in the

Indian Association thought it propitious to call the First National Conference on this occasion. So the first National Conference was held from 28th to 30th December 1883 in Calcutta. It was the forerunner of the I.N.C.\textsuperscript{65}

The first session of the National Conference was presided over by Ramtanu Lahire, a renowned educationist. It was indeed an All India character and attended by representatives from different parts of India. A number of resolutions were adopted pertaining to the civil service, the separation of judiciary from the executive, representative Government, Arms Act and so on. The Conference was a complete success.\textsuperscript{66} The second national conference was convened by Surendranath Banerjee and his colleagues of the Indian Association in Calcutta on 25th, 26th and 27th December 1885. The second conference too was national in the full sense of the term and was attended by representatives of more than thirty political associations form different parts of India.\textsuperscript{67} The delegates to the conference gave national importance. The resolutions pertained to the Arms Act, Civil Service and so on were passed. The last resolution moved by Surendranath Banerjee was that the National conference be held every year and at different places in the country.\textsuperscript{68} At this time the conference convened by

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., p.47.  
\textsuperscript{65} Shiva Chandra Jha, \textit{Op.Cit.}, p.40. By which the Centenary of the I.N.C. was thus rightly celebrated by Indira Gandhi from 28th to 30th December 1983 in Calcutta.  
\textsuperscript{67} Surendranath Banerji, \textit{A Nation in Making}, London, 1925, pp.10-11.  
\textsuperscript{68} Shiva Chandra Jha, \textit{Op.Cit.}, pp.41-42.
Allan Hume Octavian Hume and others was also being held in Bombay. W.C. Banerjee had intimated Surendranath Banerjee to attend the Bombay conference but it was too late for Surendranath Banerjee to cancel the already convened programme. Thus, these two national conferences convened by Surendranath Banerjee were the beginnings of the organized political movement in India. But both had the same burning national issues, and on the ideological mode of approach, political milieu for the political elite of the country which subsequently made Surendranath Banerjee to merge his India Association with the Indian National Congress founded at Bombay.  

Allan Octavian Hume was the district officer at Etawah during the 1857 Revolt. He made his contribution in suppressing the Revolt. From 1870 to 1879 he was the secretary of the Government in India but was ejected from that place for the offence that he was too honest and too independent. He retired in 1882. While he was in the Government service he knew the things going on in the country. From the government secret reports he was convinced that the preparations were afoot for the breaking of the 1857 revolt. He felt that British rule could not survive if further revolt would occur in due course. Allan Octavian Hume was fully convinced that the future of the safety of the British rule in India would be in peril. He wanted to find out some way for staving off the storm that he found in looming large

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of the horizon of India. He was inquest of some safely valve. Thus, Hume had consultations with the Viceroy Lord Dufferin and other leading politicians of the country for doing something for stemming the tide of terrible revolution and national revolt against the Government. The National Congress was in fact brought into being through the initiative and under the guidance of direct British Governmental policy on a plan secretly prearranged with the Viceroy, as an intended weapon for safeguarding British rule against the rising forces of popular un-rest and Anti-British feelings. Thus the formation of the National Congress was represented from the point of view of the Government an attempt to defeat, or rather forestall, an impending revolution. Thus, with full official backing, Allan Octavian Hume called the following conference in Bombay, instead of Poona because of the out break of Cholera epidemic there, in December 1885.  

Many Scholars rejected outright the theory of the Delhi Durbar having anything to do with the founding of the I.N.C. The theory of the Madras meeting of December 1884, forming the nucleus of National body was also not agreeable to some. Their disagreement was based on three suppositions: (i) that the holding of a meeting at Raghunatha Rao’s house in Madras referred to above emanates from the pen of Annie Besant alone who speaks of it in her celebrated work, How India wrought for Freedom; (ii) that a majority of the seventeen men, who attended the aforesaid meeting,

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70 Ibid., p.27.
were not present at the first I.N.C., at Bombay; and (iii) that Annie Besant was not right in mentioning the name of Surendranath Banarjee among the seventeen good men and true as he was busy than getting up the National Conference at Calcutta.  

The answer to the first objection is that the meeting at Raghunatha Rao’s house, which was a most informal one decided suddenly during the Theosophical annual convention, could not have been given any publicity at all. Again, Annie Beasant was not the only person who spoke or wrote about it. The fact of a blue print for an All India political organization having been drawn at the Madras meeting was testified by Narendranath sen, Theosophist and Editor of the *Indian Mirror*, was present at the meeting. On his return to Calcutta, he wrote a series articles in his *Indian Mirror* paper in January-February 1885, emphasizing the need for establishing a National Organization in India on the lines agreed to at Madras. It was said that a circular containing the resolution adopted at the Madras meeting was issued in the beginning of 1885. Bipin Chandra Pal also referred to this meeting, though less specifically, when he wrote that the success of the annual Theosophical conventions encouraged some of the leaders to make an experiment of an Indian Political Congress.

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The Second objection that a majority of the seventeen men were present at the first session of the I.N.C., held in December 1885 was indefensible. It is on record that such Stalwarts as Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerjee, Narendranath Sen, K.T. Telang, Pandurang Gopal, G. Subramanya Iyer, P. Rangaiah Naidu and P. Anandacharlu took an active part in the first Congress. There was even a possibility of the other members too having attended the session but not signed their names, because, appendix I of the Congress proceedings says while giving the list of Delegates, that it was a nominal list of the representative who attended the first session so far as they entered their names in the register. The third objection carried absolutely no weight because the National Conference of Calcutta took place in December 1883 whereas the Madras meeting was in December 1884.

As a rule, the role of Southern India in the national resurgence and political revival did not receive the credit due to it. There is no escaping the fact that the Southern leaders themselves had a share in ignoring this crucial factor, though without intending it, a keeping there by the posterity totally unaware of the Presidency’s involvement in fostering the growth of Nationalism. The leaders had simply let the public persist in this erroneous impression that the Madras Presidency had been in a long political slumber

and that it had failed to take its place alongside of Bengal, Bombay and Northern India in contributing to the rising of National awareness to All India level. The Madras delegation to Bombay to bid farewell to Ripon in mid December 1884, testified to the theory that the ideas of founding a National Organization was mooted only there. This testimony was supported by such a stalwart as P.Anandacharlu, one of the members of the delegation, who affirmed that everything except the venue and date of the starting of the National Congress was finalized at that Bombay meeting.\textsuperscript{75} At Bombay, Telang himself had suggested to P.Anandacharlu that Madras should take the first move in organizing a National gathering. He made this suggestion when Dadabhai Naoraji broached the subject of an All India Association. Alluding to this, knowing its limitations Madras did not act upon the suggestion of K.T.Telang. This cannot be accepted because P.Anandacharlu took a leading role along with G. Subramanya Iyer and P.Rangaiah Naidu in convening the meeting at Raghunatha Rao’s house at Madras towards the end of December 1884. What made the Madras leaders not to give any credence to the meeting leaders to hold which they themselves strove hard remained a mystery. Some ascribe this general unwillingness to give Madras its due, to the claim of some of the founders of the Theosophical society like Alcott, that the I.N.C., was the child of the Theosophists. Even \textit{The Hindu}, the National newspaper, whose interest in the Indian Political movement was as intensive as it was beneficial, vehemently countered in March 1888,\footnote{Saroja Sundararajan, \textit{Op Cit.}, p.47.}
Raghunatha Rao’s claim that the idea of a National Congress was conceived at Madras. Even granting that the notion of a national Political organization had its birth only at the Bombay meet of December 1884, it was indisputable that the Madras Mahajana Sabha and the leaders of the Madras Presidency like P.Anandacharlu, G. Subramanya Iyer, P.Rangaiah Naidu, S. Subramanya Iyer, Subba Rao Pantulu and others had a lion’s share in the formation of the I.N.C.\textsuperscript{76} Their selfless and matchless services in the years preceding 1885 and their solid contribution to the Congress Movement subsequently would bear this out.

The first session of the I.N.C., was held from 28\textsuperscript{th} to 30\textsuperscript{th} December 1885 at Bombay under the presidentship of Womesh Chander Banerjee (1884-1906). The first session of the Congress commenced at 12 noon on 28\textsuperscript{th} December 1885. Immediately on the commencement of the meeting it was proposed by Allan Octavian Hume Bengal (General Secretary of the I.N.C.), seconded by G.Subramania Iyer (Madras), supported by K.T.Telang (Bombay), and unanimously carried, that W.C. Banerjee, standing counsel, Bengal be invited to assume the office of the president of the Congress. Banerjee was then invited and installed in the chair and he delivered his presidential address.\textsuperscript{77} Furthermore W.C.Banerjee laid down the following as the objects of the Congress in his first address:

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(i) The promotion of friendship and co-operation amongst all the earnest workers for the country’s cause in the various parts of India.

(ii) The eradication and elimination of all possible race, creed or provincial prejudice amongst all lovers of the country and the fuller development and consolidation of national unity.\(^{78}\)

(iii) The examination and solution of the more important and pressing social questions of the day.

(iv) The determination of the methods upon which it is desirable for native politicians to labour in public interests. Subsequent Congress sessions demanded piecemeal reforms in the administration of the country in an almost prayerful language.\(^{79}\)

The character of the National Congress is a National body; it is not a sectional, sectarian or communal body, because it claims to represent all interest and all communities. It represents no particular community, no particular class and no particular interest. Its membership has been and is open to all men and women who love India and are prepared to work and suffer for her sake. There were Hindus, Muslims, Parsees, Sikhs, Christians and even European and Anglo Indians. They contributed more to its growth. It was conceived in the brain of an Englishman A.O. Hume and was nursed by two great and noble minded parsees, Sir Ferozshah Mehta and Dadabhai Naoroji. Its presidents have been chosen from different provinces and

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different communities. The Bengalis, Parsis, Tamilians, Punjabis, leaders from U.P., Maharashtra and other provinces were among its presidents.\textsuperscript{80} Thus, it shows its character.

During the first session of the I.N.C. seventy two delegates attended from various parts of India. From Tamil Nadu a number of leaders who attended the session were P.Rangaiah Naidu, President of the Madras Mahajana Sabha, Municipal commissioner and Vakil High Court, Madras; S. Subramania Iyer, member of the legislative council and Vakil High Court, Madras; P.Anandacharlu, municipal commissioner and Vakil High court, Madras; G. Subramania Iyer, editor of \textit{The Hindu}; M. Viraragavachariar, sub-editor of \textit{The Hindu} and Secretary of the Madras Mahajana Sabha; C.Singarvelu Mudaliyar, municipal commissioner, Madras Merchant and Trustee of the Pachaiyappa Charity\textsuperscript{;81} M.E. Shrirangachariar, S.V. Athalye, medical practitioner; M.Y.Ramanuja chariar, leader Chengelpet; N.Narayan Swami Aiyar, Land holder; S.A.Swaminath Aiyer, public prosecutor and president of people Association, Tanjore; K.Pattabirama Aiyer, Kumbakonam; Perter Paul Pillai, land holder and school master, Tirunelveli; S.P.Narasimhulu Naidu, editor of \textit{Crescent} and member of the local board Coimbatore; Krishnaswami Rout, Salem and others.\textsuperscript{82}

In the first session of the I.N.C. series of resolutions were passed such as (i) Reform of the legislative Councils; the expansion of the same councils. (ii) the recruitment of the Indians to the civil services, the Introduction of the Indian civil service examination both in England as well as India simultaneously, and the raising of the upper age limit of the candidates. (iii) the reduction of the expenditure on military. (iv) the separation of the executive and the judiciary of the government (v) the abolition of the India Council (vi) the repeal of Arms and Press Acts (vii) the spread of education in India which made the Indians fit for higher positions (viii) the development of native industries and to prevent the exploitation of the Indian economy. 83

Apart from these demands, the Congress also concerned itself with famine relief, forest laws, commerce and industry, social evils, the position of the depressed classes and women, national education and various other themes. Above all, the primary object of the Congress was to quicken the national consciousness of the people and to further the growth of the Nationalist Movement in India as well as in Tamil Nadu. 84 The very first resolution sought the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into the working of the British-Indian administration in India and in England with adequate representation for Indians on that commission. It also recommended that all available evidence should be taken both in India and

England. The Madras delegate, G. Subramania Iyer, popularly known as Editor G.Subramania Iyer, had the unique privilege of moving this resolution.  

The Congress Movement evoked good response in Tamil Nadu due to the initiatives taken by leaders like G. Subramania Iyer, P. Rangaiah Naidu, S. Subramania Iyer, M. Veeraragavachariar and others. The Madras office of the Congress formed local committees which deputed propagandists to different parts of Tamil Nadu to spread its ideals. In the meanwhile, the Congress session held in 1886 in one of its resolutions selected Madras as the venue for the third session to be held in December 1887.

The decision to hold the third annual session at Madras was welcomed with much jubilation by the Congress leaders of Tamil Nadu. On 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1887, the leaders organized a meeting to discuss the modalities for holding of the Congress sessions. T. Madhava Rao was requested to be the Chairman of the Reception Committee. T.Madhava Rao hesitated initially but accepted the offer eventually. A Reception Committee consisting of 120 members headed by T.Madhava Rao was formed. This committee consisted of Eurasian, Muslims, Christians, Hindus, etc. An executive committee was formed in every town which had a population of 10,000 and

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above in the Madras Presidency to propagate the ideals and the aspirations of the Congress. On the eve of the sessions, M.Veeraragavachariar, one of the Secretaries of the Congress, published a Tamil pamphlet titled, ‘Congress Vina-Vidai’ which traced the history of the Congress and its objectives. Thirty thousand copies of the said pamphlet were distributed. This pamphlet enabled the people to have a clear picture of the Congress.

This booklet containing 56 questions and answers in all was a satire meant to educate the public on the various aspects of the British administration in India. It was not an angry satire but a very effective one tinged with subtle humor. The author, reputed for tact and intelligence, laid his lash tenderly on the British Bureaucracy. The questions and answers, at once sharp and witty, exposed all the evils of the British administration and put forth the objectives of the Congress movement laying special emphasis on the unity of India. The booklet succeeded beyond anybody’s expectations. With the permission of the Congress, M.Veeraragavachariar distributed 30,000 copies of it at this Congress session. It had an uproarious welcome outside India also. From the Tamil speaking population of Singapore, Mandalay, Rangoon and other places, where it had triumphantly sailed, came bulky purses containing several hundreds of

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90 Srinivasachari, C.S., History of the City of Madras, Madras, 1939, p. 274.
rupees. These donations, which were spontaneous, were indicative of the pure love of the Tamils for their motherland. The immense popularity of this publication revealed the scorn in which the British government in India was held. It was naturally frowned upon by the English satraps in India.

Again, English was not the only language used at this session. Tamil was also used freely and it was well received by the audience. T.M.Mookanachari, a working carpenter from Tanjore, was the first to speak in Tamil. Breaking the tradition of the Congress, he spoke on the motion on Technical Education moved by Ramaswamy Mudaliar of Salem, then Sheriff of Madras, and seconded by John Adam. T.M.Mookanachari stressed the need for technical education in developing and securing national prosperity. Revival of local factories and workshops could provide decent employment to thousands of Indians living in cruel poverty. While concluding his sensible speech, which was widely appreciated, T.M.Mookanachari referred to the “aggressive annexive polity” and the unconscionable increase in taxation - the essential features of Dufferin’s regime-and said that the Indian community should secure potential voice in the administration. It was this conviction more than anything else that was giving such an intense earnestness to their efforts in the direction of representation.\footnote{Sen, S.P., (Ed.), \textit{Dictionary of National Biography}, Vol. IV, Calcutta, 1972, p.99.} His speech had the greatest appeal to the masses because it was delivered in their mother tongue. Allan Octavian Hume, congratulating the speaker said: “But perhaps the most interesting feature debate was a
long, sensible, matter of fact speech in Tamil by T.M.Mookanachari of Tanjore.” The speech frightened the administration, unused as it was, to such a frank and direct appeal to the people in their mother tongue.

The sale of the amount from M.Veeraraghavachariar’s ‘Congress Vina Vidai’ was donated to the Congress. Besides, G. Subramania Iyer’s ‘Suya Arasatchi Vina Vidai’ (Self-Government Catechism”) written in 1883 in Tamil, was also given to the audience free of cost. But these booklets and certain other innocuous leaflets such as ‘The Old Man’s Hope’ authored by Allan Octavian Hume and a parable in the form of a dialogue between one Moulvi Fariduddin and Rambuksh, circulated among the people purely with the intention of attracting public attention to the political movement, were regarded suspiciously by the officialdom.

A sum of Rs.30,000 was required for the conduct of the Madras session. About Rs.5,500 was collected from 8,000 petty subscribers ranging from Rs. 18 to Rs.30/-. Further, Tamil speaking people of Madras, clerks, hotel-keepers, traders, peons, medical men, artisans, Government servants and even workers residing in far off places like Mandalay, Rangoon and Singapore sent several hundreds of rupees. Salem Ramaswamy Mudailar, P. Somasundram Chetty, T. Namberumal Chetty, the Raja of Sivanganga;

93 Mani, P.S., Congress Vina-Vidai (Tamil), Madras, 1979, p.50.
the Raja of Venkatagiri and C.S. Vandayar of Pondichery sent substantial amount as contribution. Donations were also received from the Prince of Mysore, Travancore, Cochin and others. Further, the mercantile community of Madras bore a major share of the expenses. The priests of some of the prominent temples of South India were approached and they responded with donations. In order to remind the people of the Madras session, the Swadesamitran issue of 24th December 1887 carried a lengthy editorial.

The Congress sessions was held at Madras from 27th to 30th December 1887. A huge Pandal in Mackey’s Garden near Thousand Lights, Madras, measuring 130 feet long and 92 feet wide was erected. An audience of 3000 listened to the speakers. The arrangements were made in such a way that every word of the speeches was distinctly heard by the assembly. Describing the session, The Hindu wrote, “the August Assembly that met at the Mackey’s Garden was worth the earnest study of all students of Indian Politics.”

The Madras session was presided over by Badruddin Tyabji. Out of the 760 elected delegates only 607 were present. Out of 607, Madras had 362. Bombay and Sindh 99, Punjab 9, North West Provinces and Oudh 45, Central Province 13 and Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam 79. Among the

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delegates, there were Fellows of the Universities, Honorary Magistrates and not less than 160 of them were Chairman. Besides Vice-Chairman or members of Municipal or local Fund Boards, leaders like P. Rangaiah G. Subramania Iyer, P. Anandacharlu, Naidu, the Maharaja of Vizianagaram and the Zamindar of Bobblli took part in the proceedings.

The European community of Madras was friendly towards the Congress. Eardly Norton, a prominent Barrister and John Adams, Principal of the Pachaiyappa’s College along with 1800 students attended the session. Lord Connemara, the Convener of Madras attended a reception given by Eardly Norton and received the delegates in the Government House. Furthermore, papers like the *Madras Mail, Bombay Gazette, Daily News* and the *Statesman* along with the other Indian papers both English and vernacular were supported the Congress. T. Madhawa Rao, the Chairman of the Reception Committee while welcoming the gathering observed that India’s contact with the British rule had created an atmosphere conducive to intellectual awakening. He said that contact with such a nation is like the contact of iron with magnet.100 T. Madhawa Rao described the Congress as a triumph of British administration and a crown of glory for the British nation.101

T. Madhawa Rao in his capacity as the Chairman of the Reception Committee announced that a president should be elected to conduct the session. W.C. Banerjee proposed the name of Badruddin Tyabji, a leading

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Barrister of Bombay and it was seconded by S. Subramania Iyer. Badruddin Tyabji was unanimously elected as the President of the session. Badruddin Tyabji, in his Presidential address delivered on 27th December 1887 highlighted the representative character of the Congress and suggested the formation of a committee to draw up a programme for the work of the Congress. During the course of his address Badruddin Tyabji said that the ludicrous attack made upon the Congress by critics was baseless. He pointed out that not all the Europeans were hostile to the cause of the Indians. He asserted that the Madras Congress was truly the representative of national gathering. Referring to the criticism that the Muslim community kept aloof from the proceedings of the last two sessions of the Congress, Badruddin Tyabji said that Mussalmans should also co-operate with their fellow country men, other races, and creeds for the common benefit of all. Badruddin Tyabji appealed to the educated people to dedicate themselves to the cause of Indian nationalism. He advised to the press and public to be moderate in criticism, be accurate in facts and logical in conclusions.

The speakers who addressed the delegates advocated many reforms. They demanded expansion and reformation of the Council of the Governor-General. They called for separation of the executive and judicial functions as an important necessity. Finding the poor proportion of the Indians in the military service, the speakers appealed to the Government to recruit more

Indians in the army and establish a military college in India. As the Indians were already undergoing a miserable existence, the Congress requested the Government to take steps to remedy the situation. Suggestions were also made for the deletion of certain provisions of the Army Act of 1878. All these deliberations resulted in the passing of certain important resolutions. Such as,

1. Formation of a committee to frame rules for the formulation of the constitution and its working;
2. Extension and reform of the Council of the Governor-General and the Provincial Legislative Council.
3. Strict separation of executive and judicial functions.\(^{106}\)
4. Military service in its higher ranks opened to the natives of this country;
5. Taxable minimum income to be raised to Rs. 1,000;
6. Government to formulate a system of technical education suitable to the country.
7. Modification of the provisions of the Arms Act.\(^{107}\)

Furthermore, the session decided to forward these resolutions to the Governor-General in Council. It was also resolved to hold the fourth session of the Congress at Allahabad. At the same time, the Madras Session of the Congress produced many positive results. It enabled the people to think about the principle of constitutional liberty and contributed to the establishment of a social front to end caste prejudices. The Hindu after the sessions appealed to the leaders “not to rest on their oars and stressed the


necessity to spread the message of the Congress among the Muslim masses". The *Swadesamitran* which espoused the cause of Nationalism wrote after the Congress sessions”, the object for which the Congress had been established should be preserved until crowned with success”. At the same issue, the paper observed that the aims and views of the Congress should be widely known by the million who engage in trade or agriculture. Therefore, it was naturally alienated by a feeling of exclusiveness and lack of common interest. By the grace of Providence, the country was entering into a new existence. The leaders spread these ideals by means of pamphlets and publications in the newspapers. The 1887 session produced a remarkable impact on the public. After the session, the public realized that salt, stamp and land taxes were too excessive. The public also objected to the high salaries paid to the British Officers. The native press published facts testifying to the sufferings of the masses. It argued that England, France, Germany and Japan owed their high standard of living to the patriotism of their people and exhorted the Indians to shake off their lethargy and work for the spread of nationalism. The Nationalist papers thus played a notable part in converting Congress Movement into a mass based one. They wrote repeatedly on the insolent stand of the Europeans and succeeded in imparting an impression to the Indians that India was ruled only for the

112 Sultan-ul-Akbar, Madras, 4th February 1889, M.N.P.R., 1889, p.36.
Simultaneously, the Congress leadership of Tamil Nadu also began to think in terms of reforms and demanded the enlargement of the legislature. The sustained efforts of the Nationalists met with positive results. Lord Dufferin, who at a later differed from the aims of the Congress, had to concede to the demand for reform and this resulted in the promulgation of the Act of 1892. After this development, the demand for reform became more aggressive in Tamil Nadu. Thus the year 1887 established the Congress Movement on a broad basis in Tamil Nadu.  

For long, the M.M.S., remained the Standing Congress Committee which elected the delegates from the Madras Presidency to attend the annual sessions of the I.N.C. The 1907 meeting of the M.M.S., held under the presidential of N. Subba Rao Pantulu who decided to constitute a Provincial Congress Committee. A resolution was passed to invite the District Associations where such existed and also the other districts to nominate not less than two persons from each district. So that the M.M.S., and the nominated persons from the districts might constitute the Madras Provincial Congress Committee.  

Thereafter, the Provincial Congress Committee, constituted on a wider basis, became the electoral body which elected delegates to the annual Congress sessions.

113 Arya Jana Paripalini, Madras, 1st September 1889, M.N.P.R., 1889, p.192.
The M.M.S., was the Provincial forerunner of the I.N.C., Delegates sent by the M.M.S., attended the first meeting of the Congress at Bombay in December 1885, but the formation of a Provincial Congress Committee for the Presidency did not lead to the disbanding of the M.M.S. In 1894 it was affiliated to the Madras City District Congress Committee and continued until the 1930’s to function as an influential body complementing the activities of the local Congress.\textsuperscript{116} The strength of the M.M.S., and the Madras Provincial Congress Committee in the period before 1914 laid in their ability to express the grievances and opinion of the professional middle class.

After the arrival of Gandhi in India in 1915 from South Africa, the tune of the Congress party changed in the sphere of political affairs. By his triumphs at Calcutta and Nagpur, Gandhi shifted the focus of the Congress from achieving limited constitutional objectives by constitutional means to the attainment of Swaraj through Non Co-operation and civil disobedience. Such a drastic change necessitated the remodeling of the Congress Organization.\textsuperscript{117} For the Moderates it had been sufficient to have an informal organization that was a national platform rather than an agitational machine. But in striving for more, it could mobilize the masses which were strong enough to restrain and direct agitation along non-violent lines. The Nagpur Congress attempted to do it.\textsuperscript{118} The Congress president became a full-time chief of the national party assisted by the newly created Congress Working

Committee, which was designed to meet the need for a compact and disciplined executive to direct a loosely knit mass movement which necessarily had to remain a broad coalition of divergent elements. To balance the Congress Working Committee and be a check on its power, the All India Congress Committee (A.I.C.C.) was expanded from 181 members in 1920 to 350 in 1921.¹¹⁹ At the next level down, the provincial units of the Congress were reorganized, with Provincial Congress Committees based mainly on the linguistic regions of India replacing the British Provinces. In the Madras Presidency, the development of the Andhra Movement had already led to the separation of the Telugu districts from the Madras Provincial Congress Committee to form an independent committee in 1917.¹²⁰ But until 1920 some Telugus living and working in Madras City and in the Southern Telugu Districts continued to attach themselves to the old Provincial Congress Committee.¹²¹ The effect of the Nagpur reorganization was to confine the Madras Committee to the Tamil-Speaking region of the Presidency and in November 1921 it changed its name to the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee.¹²² Thus the I.N.C., began to meet its rifts since the beginning of the Twentieth Century when new ideas and concepts and regional politics emerged within the Congress party which led to power struggle in due course.