CHAPTER-IV

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The study of V.O Chidambaram Pillai’s career in the light of other important contemporary events will enable us to understand his personality fully. The political life of V.O. Chidambaram Pillai can be divided into three parts. i.e., from 1906 to 1914, 1914 to 1920 and 1920 to 1936.

During the first part of his career he earned the names of Swadeshi Pillai, Kappal Ottiya Tamizhan and Chekkizhutha Chemmal. During this period, he entered politics, organized the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company and was imprisoned for celebrating the release of Bipin Chandrapal.

The second period was noted for the beginning of the Gandhian era and the Home Rule Movement. During this period pillai became a disciple of Gandhi.

He resigned from the congress in 1920, as he could not accept the principles and programmes of Satyagraha and Non-co-operation Movement. Like his Guru Tilak, he would do nothing to hinder the progress of the Nation.

During the third part of his life pillai was “Unhonoured unsung and unwept”. He was forgotten by his fellows for all the services to his mother land. One may claim that Pillai’s best contribution to his nation was over along with his arrest in 1908. But what one could do during a span of three years between 1906 to 1908. This period was remarkable for all his Swadeshi spirit as well for his herculean task of organising the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company. As he was fed up with the method of petition and protest, he joined the extremist group and accepted Tilak as his political mentor and celebrated the release of Bipin Chandrapal and that prevented all his ventures.
A new era in the political life of India began with the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. The Congress was born because of the national awakening in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The Congress was founded by A.O. Hume, a retired member of the Indian Civil Service. The political unrest in India demanded the foundation of a genuine nationalist movement. Hume consulted Lord Dufferin and appealed first to the graduates of the Calcutta University to form an association for the upliftment of India. The appeal had a good effect and many leading personalities joined the Congress.

The first President was W.C. Banerjea followed by other eminent persons like Dadabhai Naoroji, Badruddin Tyabji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Surendra Nath Bannerjea, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Motilal Nehru and Pandit Nehru\(^1\).

In the early stages the Congress started with criticising the policies of the British Government and with demands for reforms. It sought redressal of grievances by formulating resolutions, to be presented to the government. Another aim was to create national awareness among the people.

The initial reaction of the British towards the congress was sympathetic. As the Congress grew in strength and popularity, the British government grew hostile. They began to adopt a policy of favouring anti-Congress elements. The six years of Lord Curzon’s rule were (1899-1905) full of reactionary measures.

The early members of the Congress who dominated the affairs of the Indian National Congress from 1885 to 1905 were called the Moderates. Regarding the Moderates M.G. Ranade said, “Moderation implies the conditions of never vainly

aspiring after the impossible or after too remote ideals, but striving each day to take the next step in the order of natural growth that lies nearest to our hands in a spirit of compromise and fairness”2.

Towards the end of 1903, the Moderates realised that their caution policy had failed. Many articles appeared denouncing the methods of the moderates and their programmes of action. The policies of the moderate leaders were criticised. Lala Lajpat Rai said that the Congress under the moderates “Lacked essentials of a national movement” and again he observe; “The movement was neither inspired by the people nor devised or planned by them. It was a movement not from within”3. The policies of the moderates were attacked as “halting and half hearted” and was observed as “Political mendicancy or beggary through prayers and petitions”4.

The moderates became unpopular because of their loyalty to the crown. They did not see any alternative to the British rule. More over they failed to understand the impatience of the people who were struggling hard in many ways. They also failed to note that the political and economic interests of the Indians and British clashed.

They believed in British sense of justice and fair play and were loyal to the British crown. They relied upon the solemn pledges given by the British Government to the people of India from time to time and believed in orderly progress and constitutional agitation within the frame work of law. They tried to excite public opinion through press and petitions on all political economic and social problems prevailing at that time.

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4. Ibid., P. 146
The basic weakness of the early nationalists was their narrow social base. It had no appeal. They did not get the support of the masses. “During this period the Congress was dominated by the affluent middle class intelligentsia, men of legal, medical, engineering, literary pursuits and journalists”\(^5\). It fought for all the social classes but it failed to mobilise all the people in its struggle against British Imperialism.

The government which was friendly and sympathetic soon became hostile in its attitude towards the Congress. Many British officers condemned and publicly criticised the Congress. As a result the British pushed further the policy of “Divide and rule”. Their main achievement was the focusing of public attention on the fact of Indian poverty which was due to the colonial exploitations of India’s economic resources by Britain. In spite of their failures, the moderates laid strong foundation of National movement and political maturity.

There was another younger group within the Congress which aimed at “Swaraj” to achieve by more self-reliant and independent methods. They can be termed as Extremists. The growth of extremism was due to the special circumstances and the dissatisfaction with the working of the Congress. There was the general recognition of true nature of British rule. Dadabhai Naoroji exposed the exploitative nature of the British rule in India. There was a general reaction against increasing westernisation of Indian life, thought and politics. The younger generation was disgusted with performance of the congress as well as the reactionary attitude of the Government. Tilak and Lajpat Raj preached non-co-operation and boycott.

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\(^5\) B.L. Grover, *A New look on Modern Indian History*, (New Delhi: S.Chand & Company Ltd., 1983), P. 389
The British government failed to take proper measures to save the people when thousands died because of bubonic plague at Bombay. Tilak vehemently condemned the Government through his paper Kesari and warned his countrymen regarding the indifference of the British government towards Indians and it resulted in the death of two British officers Rand and Ayearst\(^6\). When Tilak was prosecuted and sentenced to imprisonment for eighteen months it paved way for more violence and rise of extremism.

The extremists talked of democracy, constitutionalism and progress and of broadening the social base of the national movement. They wanted to get a larger share for Indians in the administration of their country and to end British economic exploitation of India. They gave new slogans to the Indian nationalist movement, non-co-operation, passive resistance, mass agitation, self-reliance and discipline\(^7\).

**THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MODERATES AND EXTREMISTS**

The Moderates and Extremists differed fundamentally on the political goal as well as the methods to be adopted for the same. The moderate’s political goal was defined in 1905 “as the colonial form of self Government”. But the extremists demanded absolute autonomy, free from foreign control. The extremists wanted to obtain Swaraj or self government. The extremists felt that they could not expect anything good from the British government. Bipin Chandra Pal declared, “They have come here for the creation of their own empire, for the exploitation of the resources of the country and even the intellect of the land. Look facts in the face\(^8\)”.

\(^7\) B.L. Grover, *Op. Cit.*, P.402
\(^8\) V.D. Mahajan, *Op. Cit.*, P. 151-152
The Extremists did not believe in petition, prayer and protest and believed it as mad act and they advocated the new creed of Nationalism. Tilak, Arabind Ghosh, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Khaparde belonged to the Extremists group. Arabind Ghosh defined the term patriotism as devotion to mother country and his entry was regarded as a major event of the year in Indian politics and he placed his party on a high pedestal through his articles. Bipin Chandra Pal preached the new policy of his party through his eloquent speeches both in English and Bengali.

The Extremists wanted to influence the course of the Congress in the direction of active political agitation but it was not welcomed by the moderates. Naroji, Banerji, Mehta and Gokhale had the faith in the policy, “of social reform, gradual political reform and re-making of India largely in the image of the west”\textsuperscript{9}.

In 1906, the two groups differed over the issue of the visit of the Prince of Wales. To please the British Government the Moderates wanted to pass a resolution of welcoming the Prince. But it was vehemently opposed by the delegates of Bengal. At the end, the resolution was passed as an appeal was made by Gokhale with the support the delegate from Punjab and Maharashtra in the absence of the Bengalis.

Again the Moderates did not support Tilak’s resolution for “Passive resistance” as they considered it as “going too far”. The Benares session adjourned, “With an apparent air of compromise and reconciliation”\textsuperscript{10}.

After the Surat split in 1907, the British Government wanted to suppress the Extremists in all possible ways. The first victim selected by them was Bipin


\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Ibid.}, P. 64
Chandra pal the leader of the Extremist party in Bengal. The Government’s anger was directed against him not only for his activities in Bengal but for his public meetings that he addressed at Vizagapatnam, Vizianagaram, Cocanada, Rajahmundry, Bezwada, Masulipatnam and Madras\textsuperscript{11}.

Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh were also sent to Mandalay in Burma on 9\textsuperscript{th} May 1908. On 22 July Tilak was convicted and sentenced to six years transportation\textsuperscript{12}. In December 1908, nine persons includign Datta were deported without trial.

Morely and Minto introduced the Policy of Reform cum Repression and it was later on followed by the successive viceroys and the Government at home as the basis of British administration in India. The following four important policies were adopted:-

1. Legislation for the curtailment of the normal rights of individuals.
2. Effects of the Press of 1910.
3. Prosecution of sedition.
4. Deportation without trial.

**REPRESSIVE LAWS**

Even though lord Minto accepted the resignation of Fuller it did not bring peace to Bengal. The unrest and violence in Bengal grew day by day and worsened the situation. No less than five acts were passed to curtail the ordinary rights of the citizens between November 1907 to August 1910.

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\textsuperscript{12} Theodore L. Shay, \textit{The Legacy of the Lokamanya} (London:Oxford University Press, 1956), P.125.
On 11 May 1907 an ordinance was passed by the viceroy against the rights of holding public meetings. No such meetings could be held without giving seven days written notice to the Magistrate who could prohibit it or sent police to watch its proceedings. As the ordinance was valid only for six months, the Government of India proposed to put it on the statute book by passing a legislation. When the Government insisted, Morley also passed a series of most repressive measures. The first one was the prevention of sedition meetings acts of 1907\textsuperscript{13}.

According to this act, any public meeting attended by more than 20 persons could be held only after the conveners gave three days notice to authorities and obtained permission to hold the same. The authorities had the powers to prohibit any meeting. They also could send the police to such meetings. The year 1908 is noted for the repressive measures.

**THE INDIAN PRESS ACT**

The Indian press Act was passed in 1910 by which the District Magistrate acquired powers to obtain an amount from Rs. 500 to Rs. 5000 from existing presses and publication and Rs.500 to Rs. 2000 from new presses and publications as security deposits. This amount would be forfeited for publishing any seditious and objectionable matter, which was so defined that any independent criticism of a Government or any writings against the Indian princes, judges, executive officers etc., could be considered seditious\textsuperscript{14}.

\textsuperscript{13} R.C. Majumdar, ed., *Struggle for Freedom*, P. 108
\textsuperscript{14} *Ibid.*, P 110
Consequent to this Act, Press prosecutions were numerous, the Yuganter, Sandhya and Bande Mataram were suppressed\textsuperscript{15}. The editor of Sandhya, Brahma Bandav Upadhyaya died in a hospital.

Over 300 presses and 300 Newspapers were penalised. A security of over Rs.40,000 was demanded for 500 publications. Because of this about 200 presses and 130 Newspapers could not be begun again. Leading journals like Amrita Bazar Patrika, Bombay Chronicles, The Hindu, Inbasumathi, Swadesamitran, Vijaya, Hindu Vasi and Bharatmitra suffered under its rigour but anti-Indian press thrived\textsuperscript{16}.

Aurobindo left the British territory after undergoing many hardships and three prosecutions and started an Ashram in Pondicherry.

\textbf{NINE DEPORTATIONS FROM BENGAL}

In Bengal, nine deportation took place namely of Krishna Kumar, Pulin Behari Das, Shyam Sunder Chakravarthi, Aswini kumar Dutt, Manoranjan Guha Thakurta, Subodh Chandra Mullik, Sachindra Prasad Bose, Satis Chandra Chatterjee and Bupesh Chandra Nag\textsuperscript{17}.

\textbf{PROSECUTION FOR SEDITION}

Bal Gangadhar Tilak in Maharastra was arrested on 13 July 1908 and on the same day were arrested in Andra, Harisarvothama Roa and two others. Tilak was given six years transportation after five days trial by a Bombay Judge. The Hindu commented the prejudicial attitude of the Parsee judge Davar, who prolonged the

\textsuperscript{15} Pattabi Sitaramayya, \textit{The History of Indian National Congress}, Vol I (New Delhi: S.Chand & Co., 1969) P. 70
\textsuperscript{16} R.C. Majumdar, ed., \textit{Struggle for Freedom}, P 113
\textsuperscript{17} Pattabi Sitaramayya, \textit{Op. cit.}pp.71
court proceedings till 10 P.M. “Having predetermined what the punishment on the accused should be\textsuperscript{18},

Hatilal Varma of Aligarh was sentenced to 7 years transportation for circulating leaflets and sending telegram to Bande Mataram. People in charge of various newspapers were also not spared. The editor of Urdu-1-Molla had to undergo two years rigorous imprisonment and pay a fine of Rs.500, because of an article on the education policy of the British Government in Egypt\textsuperscript{19}. The Editors of the Hindu Swaraj, Vihari and the Arunodaya were also imprisoned on charges of sedition\textsuperscript{20}.

Bhupendra Nath Datta, a brother of Swami Vivekananda was given a long sentence for his writing in Yugantar\textsuperscript{21}. Imprisonment for sedition became common. But soon sedition gave way to underground violence. Gokhale even warned the Government that “The younger men were getting out of hand and that they, the elders, could not be blamed if they could not control the youth”\textsuperscript{22}.

Political murders began to take place from time to time. The most important event was the murder of Sir Curzon Wyllie in London at a public meeting in 1907 by a youngman named Madan lal Dhingra. Dhingra was hanged for his murder\textsuperscript{23}.

**THE LULL BETWEEN 1910 AND 1914.**

There was a lull in the National movement between 1910 and 1914 due to many reasons, mainly because of the split in the Congress. After the Surat split, the Extremists were deprived of leadership and their eminent leader Tilak was exiled.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[18] Rangaswami Parthasarathy, *A Hundred Years of the Hindu, The Epic Story of the Indian Nationalism*, (Madurai :Kashhuri & Sons Ltd.), P 187
\item[20] Ibid., P. 116
\item[21] Pattabi Sitaramayya, op. cit. pp.71
\item[22] Ibid., P. 71.
\item[23] Ibid. P. 72
\end{footnotes}
Aurobindo Ghosh too gave up politics and took to spiritualism. Under the leadership of Gokhale, the Moderate Nationalists like S.N. Banerjea, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Tej Bahadur Sapru were working the reforms in a spirit of loyal co-operation. When lord Hardinge came to power he sought conciliation and pacification. The new viceroy and the Secretary of State Lord Crewe realized the danger of the situation and decided to annual the partition of Bengal and did the same. The Political tension was somewhat relaxed in 1912 but an attempt was made on the life of Hardinge. A bomb was thrown on the most popular viceroy but he narrowly escaped.

THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIA

The First world war broke out in July 1914 and towards the end of that year, the Germans were knocking at sent off the standing Indian Army to Flanders marching from Marseilles without a day’s rest to the firing line. India being a dependent constituent of the British Empire joined the war automatically and the Indian Army saved the Allies from disaster.

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 had a great repercussion upon Indian politics. The Indian national Congress sought to take advantage of this and wanted to present a united front to obtain the maximum advantage of the situation. For this, they wanted to win over the Extremist or the Nationalist group as well as the Muslim league and won it and this achievement was the most creditable performance of the Congress since the Surat split of 1907.

After nearly completing full term Lokamanya Tilak was released from Mandalay prison and was brought to Poona on 17 June 191424. For six long years he had been completely cut off from the political affairs of the land. Though he

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was old and tired, the British Government was so much afraid of him. He quickly appraised the political situation and felt that the Nationalist movement should be revived. He stood for the three fold programmes.

1. The Congress compromise
2. The re-organization of the Nationalist party
3. The setting on foot of a strong agitation for home rule.

On the first programme Tilak and the Nationalist party felt that the avenues to the election of Congress delegates should be widened.

According to the Articles of the constitution only the moderates were allowed to elect the delegates of the Congress and the Nationalists were barred. Annie Besant and N.Suba Rao Pantulu, the general secretary of the Congress went to poona in December 1914 to widen the Article XX and conferred with Tilak and Gokhale and others who were in favour of the Amendment. Subba Rao then went to Bombay to consult Sir Pherozzhah and returned disappointed.

**BESANTS NEGOTIATION**

Besant saw Tilak with Subba Rao the Secretary of the Congress on 5 December 1914. She had already consulted Gokhale who was agreeable to a compromise. The amendments of the Congress constitution which she had proposed and were agreeable to both Tilak and Gokhale, would have enabled any association having colonial self government as its object to elect delegates, to the Congress whereas the existing constitution provided that the election should be made at a public meeting convened by Congress committee or other recognized bodies. Subba Rao later went to Pherozeshah Mehta who, however was not agreeable to the amendment. Subba Rao returned to Poona and orally conveyed to Gokhale the conversation he had with Tilak.
According to him, Tilak’s view was that while there was no difference in the approach, moderates party believed in association cum opposition. While the new party believed in opposition, pure and simple. Tilak further held that they should concentrate on only one demand, namely self government within the expire, and he and his party once they came together would try to work for obtaining a majority for their method in the Congress. On learning this Gokhale wrote to Bhupendra Nath Basu (The President elected for the Congress) a letter explaining his withdrawal from his original agreement.

When the matter was discussed at the Madras Congress in December 1914, the President Bhupendra Nath Basu, read that letter to the subject committee. On this Besant wired to Tilak asking whether he advocated boycott of the Government and Tilak promptly wired back that he had never advocated boycott of Government and that prominent nationalists have served and were serving in municipal and legislative councils and that he had fully supported their action on privately and publicly. The subjects committee of the Madras Congress referred this question to a committee.

Sir Pherozeshah also met Tilak and Gokhale. The latter felt the entry of the former would be a renewal of the old struggle. Gokhale, in an oral message to Besant, withdrew his support to the amendment. He too wrote a confidential letter to the President elected for the Congress in 1914 and explained his reasons for the change of his view. But that confidential letter in no time came to the public eye. it was stated in it that Tilak and openly avowed his intention of adopting the “Boycott of Government”. Thus the reconciliation was not possible in 1914 and it was postponed. The Bombay conventionalists were also against the Besant amendment.

25. R.C. Majumdar, Struggle for Freedom, P. 245
When the situation was like this Gokhale passed away on 19 February 1915 and when the Congress was to meet at Bombay in November 1915. On the eve Sir Pherozesha Mehta also passed away. Thus the year 1915 passed away with the loss of two great men, Gokhale and Mehta.

The events of the year 1915 were responsible for the reunion of the Congress. On 19 February 1915 Gokhale passed away and Mehta also died the same year. Wacha was getting old and S.N. Banerjea was not interested. Satyendra Prasanna even though Presided over the Congress of Bombay in 1915, was losing interest in Congress and above all Pandit Malaviya was not in a position to lead the moderate wing. Heramba Chadra Maitra, Mudholkan and Subba Rao Pantulu were the only prominent personalities. There was no leader to lead the Congress. Gandhi who had just arrived from South Africa, was silently studying the politics of India under his political Guru Gokhale. Lala Lajpat Rai was quite disgusted with the affairs of the country. Generally speaking the moderates were not in power and the leadership was gradually passing into the hands of the Extremists.

When the compromising efforts of the Congress failed Tilak concentrated on his Home Rule movement started on 28 April 1916, at Poona some six months before Besant Started. Tilak was presented a purse of one lakh of rupees in 1916 when he completed his Shastipurit. But he dedicated the same to the National work. Till 1916 a leader for India was to be founder.

In January 1916, Tilak joined back the Congress and the lucknow session was a unique one for fraternization of the Hindus and Muslims as well as for the formulation of a scheme of self government. It also witnessed the reunion of the Congress.
THE HOME RULE MOVEMENT

The two home leagues of Tilak and Besant worked in close co-operation during the year 1917. Tilak’s activities were concentrated in the provinces like Bombay and Central Provinces and Besant’s field of work covered the rest of the country. Tilak travelled widely and tried to unite the people under the banner of Home Rule League. Tilak preach patriotism, fearlessness, self-respect and sacrifice. He was worshipped by the people. The object of the Home Rule league was “To attain Home Rule or Self Government within the British Empire by all constitutional means and to educate and organize public opinion in the country towards the attainment of the same”26.

Joseph Batista was appointed as the President and N.C.Kalkan was nominated as the secretary. G.S.Khaparde, B.S.Moonje and R.P.Karandikar and Tilak did not accept any office27.

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Annie Besant also set up a similar organization in September 1916 with its head quarters in Madras and both the leagues functioned in the close co-operation. Annie Besant came to India in 1873. She was a great lover of india and was deeply interested in the educational religious and social uplift of the Indian people. She stirred the women of India and drew them into the Nationalist movement and showed “Uncalculating heroism, the endurance and the selfless sacrifice of the feminine nature”. She said, “The women marched in procession when the men

26. R.C. Majumdar, Struggle for Freedom, P. 251
27. Ibid., P 252
were stopped and their prayers in the temples set the internal captive free. Home Rule has become so intervened with religion, by the prayers offered up in the great southern temples and spreading from them to village temples and also by its being preached up and down the country by Sadhus and Sandyasis”.

On 2 January 1914 she brought out a weekly The common weal and she started a daily Newspaper entitled The New India.

In 1917 Besant Christened her movement as All India Home Rule league to distinguish it from Tilak’s and it was established all over the country28. When the idea of the Home Rule movement spread to the remotest corners of the land like a wild fire, she was called upon to furnish security for her press. She deposited and forfeited a sum of Rs. 20,000 for the Common weal and New India.

**THE MEASURES AGAINST THE HOME RULE MOVEMENT**

The British Government somehow or other wanted to put down the home Rule Movement which was at its height in 1917. The Government was armed under the Defense Act of 18 March 1915 and the press Act was introduced to check the Home Rule movement. The school and college boys were not allowed participate in the Home Rule movement.

In July 1916, Tilak was prosecuted for delivering seditious speeches and was asked to furnish a personal bond of Rs.20,000 “With two sureties of Rs.10,000 each to be of good behavior for a period of one year”29. Later he was not allowed to enter Delhi and Punjab. The British also followed the same policy with Annie Besant. The Government of Madras issued orders of internment on 14 June 1917 against Besant and her two associates G.S. Arundale B.P. Wadia.

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29 D.C. Gupta, *Indian National Movement*, P. 83
When the Home Rule movement was thus suppressed, the All India Congress committee along with the Muslim league appreciated the achievements of the Home league and condemn the British attitudes towards it. The British officials were alarmed by the union of the Congress with the league.

MONTAGU CHELMSFORD REFORMS

During the First World War Great Britain was in Peril. In 1917 the war situation in Europe became grave. The British vessels were sunk by the German submarines. The Turkey Sultan also joined with Germany and the Government of India was asked to send its army against the sultan. As it was mismanage a commission was appointed by the parliament in 1917 to investigate the affair. The commission submitted its report on May 1917 and the Government of India was accused and blamed as it failed to supply adequate men and material.

The House of Commons discussed the Report of the commission and Austen Chamberlin, the Secretary of State for India was criticized by Montagu and Chamberlin was asked to resign, by Premier Lloyd George and Montagu was appointed in his place. The New Secretary of State wanted to get the co-operation of the British friends in India.

Montagu along with his viceroy Chelmsford came to India and remained for a period of six months. He travelled extensively and met various party leaders and returned home and submitted his report on 8 July 1918 on Indian constitutional Reform.

The passing of the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 changed the phase of the national movement. It was condemned as inadequate, disappointing and unsatisfactory. There was increased agitation in India in the years 1917 and 1916. Tilak and Besant were carrying on their Home Rule campaigns vigorously. When
the world war came to an end by 1918 the British once again began to adopt repressive measures. In 1919 the Government passed the Rowlatt Acts giving repressive powers to the Government. There was a great opposition from the Indian public and it had no effect.

The Congress lost all its faith in the British sense of justice. It was now that Gandhi who had assumed the leadership of the Congress, decided to fight with the weapon of Satyagraha against British injustice and misrule. The subsequent hartal against the Rowlatt Acts ultimately resulted in the arrest of Gandhi on his way to Amritsar. The Jalianwalla Bagh massacre of 13 April 1919 and the birth of Khilafat Movement further convinced Gandhi about his programme of passive resistance to attain freedom. This took the shape in the adoption of the Non-violent, Non-co-operation movement. The Non-co-operation resolution was moved by Ghandhi himself and the Non co-operators were asked to follow Ahimsa or Non-violence and were expected never to give up Satya or truth under any circumstances.

THE BEGINNING OF THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT

The partition of Bengal was a turning point in the annals of Indian History. It had far reaching consequences. Swadeshi Boycott and National education were the outcome of the partition.

The main facts regarding the evolution of the partition scheme may be summarized as follows. Sir Stafford Northcote suggested a reduction in the size of the vast presidency of Bengal after the Orissa famine of 1866, (which then included, apart from Bengal proper, the whole of Bihar, Orissa and Assam) on the ground of administrative efficiency.\(^\text{30}\)

In 1874, Assam was separated and made into a Chief Commissioner’s province, Sylhet, a predominantly Bengali speaking area was transferred amidst local opposition. In 1892 a proposal was made for the transfer of the South Lushai Hills from Bengal to Assam. At the same time officials in the foreign department suggested transference of the whole of Chittagong division also (comprising the district of Chittagong, Chittagong Hills tracts, Noakhali and Tippera).

During the period of 1896-97 the latter idea was discussed in detail. For the first time William Ward, the Chief Commissioner of Assam, pointed out that the Dacca and Mymensingh districts should go along with Chittagong division into a big unit for administrative care. As William Ward’s successor Henry Cotton vehemently opposed the entire plan, the Indian Government decided to transfer south Lushai on 29 April 1897 tentatively\textsuperscript{31}.

The question of Bengal’s boundaries was revived in 1901 in connection with Sir Andrew Fraser’s (the then Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces) suggestions for some readjustments along the Bengal-CP border so as to solve the problem of Sambalpur\textsuperscript{32}. For the next fourteen months, there was no further development regarding this problem.

When Fraser strongly suggested the idea of transferring both Chittagong division and Dacca and Mymensingh on 28 March, 1903, it was accepted by


\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Ibid} p. 11.
Curzon and entered into the viceroy’s minutes, on territorial redistribution in India. (19 May – 1June 1903)\textsuperscript{35}.

The idea of making a full scale province was suggested by Fraser in the last week of December 1903 by annexing Back arguing and Faridpur with Assam\textsuperscript{34}.

In course of time the number of transferable districts increased considerably. On 6 April 1904, the Government of Bengal added Rangpur, Boragra and Pabna, five months later Simla, and even annexed Rajshahi, Dingapur, Malda, Jalpaiguri and Cooch and Bihar state to the new province\textsuperscript{35}. On 19 July 1905, the Government of India announced its decision to set up a new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam comprising of Chittagong, Dacca and Rajshahi divisions, Tippera, Malda and Assam. The formal proclamation came on 16 October 1905\textsuperscript{36}.

Thus the partition of Bengal became the parting gift of Curzon. This announcement raised a hue and cry among the Bengalis. With partition was accomplished. Bengal entered into a new phase of life, a period of unrest and agitation.

**WHAT THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES THOUGHT?**

When the Bengalis felt that the partition was a grave mistake of the British authorities, the later justified it on the ground of administrative convenience and reducing the excessive burden of the Bengal Government.

\textsuperscript{34} *Ibid.*, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{35} *Ibid.*, p. 11
Nationalist opinion on the other hand has always been virtually unanimous in the conviction that all such administrative arguments were little more than smoke screens for a deep imperialist design of “divide and rule”\textsuperscript{37}. The underlying political motive had been variously explained as encouragement of Muslims, separation and the creation of a rival centre of nationalist Hindu politics in the East.

Curzon’s repressive measures and the most drastic of them, the partition of Bengal aroused general resentment. A mass anti-partition movement arose in Bengal which won support in other regions of the country and set off the upsurge of the Indian National movement in 1905-1908.

The partition was resented by many East Bengal landlords. For several decades under the permanent settlement the income of the landlords increased substantially while the revenue assessment of their estates remained unchanged. Hence the East Bengal landlords feared that in the new province land revenue might be raised\textsuperscript{38}. The Bengal National chamber of commerce also pointed out that partition would disrupt the existing economy between both parts of Bengal, particularly between East Bengal and Calcutta\textsuperscript{39}.

**PARTITION A SETTLED FACT**

\textsuperscript{37} Sumit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal (1903-8).* (p. 13.


All petitions not to partition Bengal as well as all the other anti-partition actions conducted in the spirit of the traditional leadership of the National organization, proved of no avail and the partition of Bengal became a settled fact in 1905.

For centuries, Hindus and Muslims in Bengal have been living amicably together and the suitable move of Curzon to inject communalism through partition would be fatal to the progress and politics not only of the province but of the country also and hence they vehemently opposed it.

The Mymensingh Association instructed its members to collect in the district not less than 1,00,000 signatures to a petition against partition\textsuperscript{40}. Leaflets were also distributed in Dacca among the population during anti-partition action. Large crowds protesting against the partition net Curzon in 1905 on his tour of East Bengal. The protest movement spread not only to towns but to the rural areas also.

Nineteenth century was generally marked by the decline of many of India’s and Bengal’s traditional handicrafts. For instance the survey on 1890 admitted the decline of all Bengal handicrafts except wood work, brassware, mat works and pottery\textsuperscript{41}.

In Bengal particularly on items like tea and coal also declined\textsuperscript{43}. Attempts were made for revival of the past. Rabindranath dreamt of achieving a place of honour for his country in his poems\textsuperscript{44}.

\textsuperscript{40} I.M Reisner and N.M. Goldberg, \textit{Tilak and the Struggle for Indian Freedom}, P. 268
\textsuperscript{41} Submit Sarkar, \textit{The swadeshi Movement in Bengal}, 1903-8, P. 92
\textsuperscript{42} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 94-95
\textsuperscript{43} Rabindranath Tagore, \textit{Gitanjali} (London :Macmillan and co., Ltd., 1932) p .27
KEY FIGURES OF SWADESHI MOVEMENT

“Bande Mataram” the slogan of the Sanyasis in Bankim chandra’s Bengali novel, became the stirring war cry of the Nation. Vivekanandas fiery gospel on a whole generation of patriotic and militant Bengali youth is well known.

Among lesser personalities not to forget Bijoykrishna Goswami, the Brahma preacher turned Vasishnavite who became the ‘Guru’ of no less than four key figures of Swadeshi movement Bipin Chandra Pal, Aswinikumar Dutta, Satis Chandra Mukkerji and Monorajan Guha Takurta.

INFLUENCE OF EVENTS ABROAD

The mood of self reliance and confidence in the heritage of the East was enormously strengthened by events abroad. The Boer war had tarnished the image of British strength. The unexpected Japanese victory of 1904-05 blew up the myth of European superiority and sent a thrill of pride through the whole of Asia. Indian Nationalists were inspired by the Russian Revolution of 1905-06. Poet Bharathi had encouraged and mentioned it in his “India”\(^{45}\).

THE THREE FOLD PROGRAMMS

The nationalist presented the nation with a threefold programme for effective practical political action. The main principles were Boycott, Swadeshi and National education. Originally these were designed for use in Bengal but soon it was decided that the entire nation could well co-operate with Bengal in following this threefold programme and thus tremendously increase the pressure on the British.

Boycott initially involved the refusal of the people to purchase British manufactured goods. The boycott of British good was first suggested in the

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Sanjivant, a Bengali weekly in Calcutta, on 13 July, 1905, and adopted at a public meeting at Bagerhat, a mofussil town on 16 July.

TILAK AND BOYCOTT

Tilak was one of the first to realise that boycott could be expended to the point of jeopardizing the foundation of the whole British administrative machinery in India. Boycott became a political weapon, its effective use demanded courage and a large measure of self-sacrifice. Tilak emphasized this in a speech at Calcutta by saying “If you have not the power of active resistance, have you not the power of self-denial and self-abstinence in such a way as not to assist this foreign Government to rule over you?. This is boycott and this is what is meant when we say, boycott is a political weapon”

The original conception of Boycott was mainly an economic one. It had two distincts but allied purposes in view. The first was to bring pressure upon the British public by pecuniary loss they would suffer as a result of the boycott of British goods, particularly the Manchester cotton goods for which Bengal provided the richest market in India.

Secondly, it was regarded as essential for the revival of indigenous Swadeshi industry which being at its infant stage could never grow in the face of free competition with foreign countries which had highly developed industry.

Boycott was an earnest and emphatic protest against the repressive measures which had been adopted in Bengal. People there had been compelled to resort to the boycott of foreign goods as a last protest and perhaps the only constitutional and effective measure left to them to draw the attention of the British. The idea of economic boycott as a weapon to coerce the British to undo the partition gradually receded into the background. It developed into an idea of non-co-operation with

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the British in every field and the object aimed at was a political regeneration of the country.

THE TOWN HALL MEETING

The most important meeting was held on 7 August 1905 at the Town Hall of Calcutta, where the students of Calcutta played an important role. The meeting passed the following important resolution.

“That this meeting fully sympathises with the resolution adopted at many meetings held in the mofussil, to abstain from the purchase of British manufactures so long as the partition resolution is not withdrawn, as a protest against the indifference of the British public in regard to Indian affairs and the consequent disregard of Indian Public opinion by the present government”\(^{48}\).

PEOPLE FROM VARIOUS WALKS OF LIFE PARTICIPATED

The cobblers in Mymansingh refused in a body to mend English shoes. The Oriya cooks and servants in Brisal held a meeting declaring that they would not serve masters using foreign goods. After holding a meeting at kalighat the washer men passed a resolution boycotting the washing of foreign clothes. The Cobblers of Faridpur refused to mend the European shoes and the washer man to wash European clothes. A young girl of six refused to take foreign medicine in spite of her serious illness. The priest did not accept the use of foreign cloth in marriage function. As the answer book supplied to the students were made of foreign paper the students refused to sit for the examination. The orthodox, “Pandits” also

\(^{48}\) R.C. Majumdar (ed), *Struggle for Freedom*, P 28
contributed their mite by announcing that the use of foreign salt and sugar was not sanctioned by Hindu religion⁴⁹.

On 16 October 1905, the decision to partition Bengal came into force and it was declared a day of national mourning. Its observance was widely conducted by native organisations. The students visited the market place, retail shops and houses and urged the people to observe the mourning. It was observed at the city of Calcutta on a large scale. Men and women, young and old participated in the mass demonstration by singing patriotic songs and shouting “Bande mataram”.

MEASURES AGAINST THE STUDENTS

As the students of Bengal took an active part in the national liberation struggle, the Government issued instructions to the educational institutions to control their boys and prevent them from participating. According to a contemporary report. “The chief part of the officials wrath against the Swadeshi is vented on the students. They are harassed, prosecuted and oppressed for their advocacy of the country’s cause. They are being flogged, fined, imprisoned, expelled from schools and colleges and even rusticated from the universities”⁵⁰.

Foreign Cigarettes were burnt at Suribazar and at Dinajpur, the doctors, pleaders and Mukhtears threatened the Marwaris, that if they imported foreign articles they would refuse to work for them. Some students made a bonfire of cigarettes, cricket bats, footballs, clothes etc. at Jalpaiguri and even an effigy of Lord Curzon was burnt⁵¹. National volunteers started the system of “peaceful picketing” at the shops which were selling foreign goods.

A fourfold programme was preached when repression increased.

⁴⁹ R.C. Majumdar (ed), Struggle for Freedom, P. 29-30
⁵⁰ Ibid., p 37-38
⁵¹ Ibid., p 37-38
1. Abjuring of English cloth, salt, sugar etc.
2. Abjuring of English speech
3. Resignation of honorary offices under Government and seats in councils.
4. Social boycott against persons purchasing foreign articles⁵².

SOCIAL BOYCOTT

The social boycott was the powerful weapon. Dealings with foreign goods in any form by any man were opposed. Such people were subjected to various degrees of humiliation. They were condemned by the society itself. Priests, doctors, physicians, servants, washer man and barbers refused to serve them. The social ostracism made a man unpleasant, sometimes even very miserable and he got only a little help from the Government. “Sometimes “the renegade” would suffer material loss and bodily or mental pain⁵³.

THE IMPACT OF THE BOYCOTT

As no exact statistics are available it is difficult to from an accurate estimate of the effect of the boycott movement on the imports of foreign goods in Bengal. From the available official and confidential Police Reports, it can be estimated, for the first two or three years there was a serious decline in the import of British goods, particularly the purchase of British goods in eight districts outside Calcutta showed a decrease from Rs.77,000 to Rs.9,000 during the period September 1904 to September 1905 and more or less the same was the case with other British goods, such as shoes and cigarettes⁵⁴.

Boycott and Swadeshi merged into a great National movement. The Nationalists wanted to boycott the British rule itself. From the Swadeshi movement

⁵² R.C. Majumdar (ed), Struggle for Freedom, p 38
⁵³ Ibid., p. 39
⁵⁴ Ibid., p 42
the weaving Industry of India in particular received the greatest impetus and in 1905, there was a great demand for indigenous articles. British goods sold under German trade marks.

THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT

Like Boycott, the Swadeshi as a purely economic measure for the growth of Indian industry, was not an altogether novel idea in India. It was preached by several eminent personalities in the nineteenth century, such as Gopal hari Deshmukh better known as Loka Hitawadi of Bombay, Swami Dayananda and Bhola-Nath Chandra of Calcutta.

Swadeshi assumed a new form based upon the literal connotation of the word Swadeshi namely attachment to everything Indian. It was the result of the newly awakened patriotism and Nationalism. It is specifically economic in aspect. Swadeshi may be defined as the sentiment, closely associated with many phases of Indian Nationalism that indigenous goods should be preferred by consumers even if they were more expensive and inferior in quality to their imported substitutes and that it was the patriotic duty of men with capital to pioneer indigenous industries.

Sippur iron work near Howrah started by Kishorilal Mukherje in 1867, was still in operation in the Swadeshi period with 110 workers in 1908. Another successful industry was the Bengal chemicals started by Prafulla Chandra Ray in 1893. By the arms of political injustice, the Britishers destroyed the traditional

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55 Submit Sarkar, The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, (1903-08) p 95
56 Ibid. p.96
handicrafts of India and its status was rendered as suppliers of raw materials and market for British manufactures goods.

The confidential report of the Intelligence Branch of the Government of Bengal gives an account of the spread of the Swadeshi movement. “Boycott and Swadeshi movement assumed an all India character even towards the end of 1905. The progress of the movement was reported from 23 districts in the untied provinces, 15 towns in the central provinces, 24 towns in the Bombay Presidency, 20 districts in the Punjab, and 13 districts in the Madras Presidency”\(^{57}\).

The Nationalist at that time felt the three fold programme of Boycott, Swadeshi and National education must function together and must not be separated at any cost.

**THE SPREAD OF SWADESHI OUT SIDE BENGALE**

Nationalist were responsible for the spread of Swadeshi in various Provinces. In the Bombay Presidency the movement found its leaders in B.G. Tilak and S.M Paranjpye, as well as in Kethar (Tilaks’ daughter) and A.V. Joshi. An active part in propagating it was taken by Vishnu Govind Bijapurkar and Mahadev Rajaram Bodas. In Punjab there were three prominent leaders like Jopal (Jaipals) Rani Ganga Ram, Pandit Chandra Dutt of the Arya Samaj and Munshi Ram (the later known as SwamiSharadhananda) a pleader of Jullunder and Arya Samajist. In the Madras Presidency Subramaniya Aiyar, P.Ananda Charlu and T.M. Nair were among the most enthusiastic advocates of the movement. At an important meeting held on 1 December 1905 with P.Ananda Charlu in the chair, Nair moved a resolution justifying boycott as adopted by the Bengalis and characterizing it “as a weapon of a weak nation against a strong Nation”\(^{58}\).

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\(^{57}\) R.C. Majumdar (Ed), *Struggle for Freedom*, P 45

\(^{58}\) Ibid. P 45
When the movement spread rapidly, the Government applied all measures to suppress it. The undeclared war was started between the Government and the people while the former applied both civil and military force; the latter was in possession of the only weapon” passive Resistance”. This war led to the wider conception of Swadeshi to political awakening, patriotism and above all national consciousness. As the people had no other means they started many secret revolutionary organizations which resulted in terrorism. The single handed fight of the Province of Bengal aroused the sympathy of the rest of the provinces.

The Tagores of Jorasanko were responsible for the Swadeshi adventure. In 1807 Dwijendranath and Ganendranath Tagore played a great role in starting the “Charita or feature of the Hindu mela was the Exhibition of indigenous crafts”. Secret societies called Sanjibani Sabha were formed by Jyotirindranath Tagore with the President of Rajnarayan Bose and a match workshop was formed by Rabindranath. In 1884 Inland River Steam Navigation service was started by Joytirindranath.

Fuller was appointed as the lieutenant Governor of the Province of East Bengal. His reign was noted for all atrocities and it was pointed out by poet Bharathi in his newspaper India. The special correspondent of Daily News of London, Nevinson visited Bengal during 1907-08 and he too had given a vivid account of Fuller’s regime in East Bengal.

Aswini Datta and other leaders of Bengal were ill-treated by Fuller. The important leaders were asked to vacate their town within a fortnight and the Guricha military gave a lot of troubles to the people. Barisal was the worst sufferer and other cities were also threatened by the Magistrates. People were not allowed

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59 Submit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-08*, p. 109
63 R.C. Majumdar (ed), *Struggle for Freedom*, p 47
to sell Swadeshi goods and sixty six clerks in Barisal were dismissed for doing so\textsuperscript{64}.

In the new province to put down Swadeshim, the authorities started a crusade against ministerial officers. At Rajshahi the ministerial officers were kept under suspension in connection with their contribution to the National Fund in vain. Another allegation was that the surplus of the Dramatic club was paid to the National Fund. At the end of the enquiry the clerks of the Tiffin club were warned not to interfere with the affairs of the country\textsuperscript{65}.

As Swadeshi became deep rooted in the minds of the Bengalis, they boycotted Manchester goods and there was much demand for Swadeshi dhoties. The weavers worked around the clock to meet the demand. Swadeshi meetings were held every day in all parts of Bengal. One meeting was held on 13 April 1906 at Coochbehar, two at Howrah, one at Ranaghat and two at Faridpur\textsuperscript{66}.

One kunga Dass at Tajil in the Mymensingh District was charged in connection with the burning of Manchester goods which he had purchased\textsuperscript{67}. A Swadeshi meeting was held at college square and Surendra Nath Bannerjee gave a lecture on Swadeshi. He warned the Marwaris who had entered into fresh contract for procuring foreign goods. He told that the people were not frightened by the repressive measures of the Government. He quoted the instance of fifty year old gentlemen, father of a boy who had been sentenced to whipping by Kingsford, the chief Presidency Magistrate for his Swadeshi activities\textsuperscript{68}. Swadeshi meetings had great effect on the Bengalis. Influenced by the spirit of Swadeshism, the Bengalis refused to buy Manchester goods and practically all business was suspended\textsuperscript{69}. The

\textsuperscript{64} R.C. Majumdar (ed), Struggle for Freedom p 48
\textsuperscript{65} The Hindu, 6 April 1906
\textsuperscript{66} The Hindu, 14 April 1906
\textsuperscript{67} The hindu, 21 April 1906.
\textsuperscript{68} The Hindu, 12 January 1906
\textsuperscript{69} The hindu, 9 March 1906
Swadeshi campaign had more effect in the moffussil than in the metropolis. Manchester piece goods, foreign sugar and Liverpool salt were boycotted everywhere. Swadeshi piece goods had great demand and they were available at cheaper rate\(^70\).

Swadshi Bank were established in Bengal. D.N. Mookerjee a partner in the big English firm of Martin and Company established the swadeshi Bengal National Bank in 1907. Tilak induced the Bengal industrialists to start their own banks and encourage them to increase production\(^71\).

**BOMBAY**

Tilak was responsible for the spread of Swadeshi in the city of Bombay. It was he who presided over the first Swadeshi meeting on 23 December 1905, under the auspices of the National congress. An Industrial and agriculture Exhibition was held at the end of 1905, in Bombay and V.D. Thackersay was appointed as the manager. Tilak also established the Swadeshi co-operative stores along with Industrialists like Tata\(^72\).

Generally speaking the working classes were discontented in Bombay in 1905. The cotton mill owners exploited the workers by increasing the number of working day hour to 14 or even more which resulted in huge profits. In 1905-06 twenty Bombay mills with a capital or Rs. 27,277,000 made Rs. 22,136,000 in profit\(^73\).

Working women, rich women and those who had been aloof from politics, now vigorously participated in the National liberation movement not only in

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\(^{70}\) The Hindu, 10 March 1906  
\(^{71}\) I.M. Reisner and N.M. Goldberg, *Tilak and the Struggle for Indian Freedom*, P 395  
\(^{72}\) *Ibid.*, P 365  
\(^{73}\) *Ibid.*, P 417
Bombay but in many other cities on India in 1908. They actively participated specially in picketing shops and boycotting British goods\textsuperscript{74}.

Swadeshi and the boycott movement were welcomed by the whole of Maharashtra. A number of meetings were held in various parts of the Presidency. New organizations and special committees were formed in order to keep the agitation in full swing\textsuperscript{75}. Sabhas like Swadeshi Vaster Sabha were formed where the people took pledge to use hand made goods. The Maratha theatrical conference requested the Marathi theatrical companies to use only Indian made goods in their theatres\textsuperscript{76}.

Tilak’s speeches and writings had much effect on the public mind. His two articles in September in Kesari added more fuel to the fire of Swadeshi. In these articles he emphasized that the people should prefer native goods and asked his countrymen not to use British made goods\textsuperscript{77}. Tilak was responsible for reviving the memory of Shivaji in various parts of India. Public meetings and festivals were organized all over Maharashtra.

**A PAISA FUND**

For the revival of the Indian Industry and agriculture, “A Paisa Fund”\textsuperscript{78} collection was started by Tilak in 1906. The target of the fund to be raised was between 6 to 7 lakhs of rupees. Tilak too planned to send students to Europe, America and Japan for Industrial training.

**AT POONA**

\textsuperscript{74} I.M. Reisner and N.M. Goldberg, *Tilak and the Struggle for Indian Freedom*, p 631
\textsuperscript{75} Ram Gopal, *Lokamanya Tilak a biography* (New Delhi: Asian publishing House, 1956), P 43
\textsuperscript{76} *Ibid.*, P. 43
\textsuperscript{77} *Ibid.*, P 232
\textsuperscript{78} Ram Gopal, *Lokamanya Tilak a biography*, p 233
At Poona, the Ganapathy festival was started by Tilak. The novelty of the function was that songs were sung in praise of Japan and Swadeshi movement. The object of the Ganapathy festival was described by the Bhals of September 1905 in an editorial comment “The primary object of the Ganapathy Festival is to lay before Ganapathy our political grievances and pray to him to give us the mental and physical strength for securing their redress. We should, therefore, arrange for the singing of songs on political subjects during the festival, otherwise the original aim of the celebration would be frustrated”\textsuperscript{79}.

As Swadeshi was gaining ground by these festivals and songs new rules were introduced to restrict the same. According to this no Ganapathy image should be taken for immersion without a pass from the police commissioner, unless it was taken by a single person over his head through the streets\textsuperscript{80}.

**MUSLIMS AND SWADESHI**

Throughout 1906 Tilak visited numerous places. He was responsible for the rapid spread of the Swadeshi movement even among the Muslim community. He delivered lectures on the occasion of Ganapathy festival at Nasik in August. The Muslims in many place responded to his call. At Dhulia a meeting was organized only for the Muslims and it was presided over by a divine, Mulla Skeith Chand. The Muslims shouted Bande Madaram and Allah-o-Akbar\textsuperscript{81}.

In Poona also the Muslims joined hands with the orthodox Hindus. In December Kazi Saifuddin of Hyderabad addressed both the Hindus and Muslims

\textsuperscript{79} Ram Gopal, *Lokamany Tilak a biography*, p 233

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., p 233

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., p 235
and insisted that they both should join together and must carry the message of swadeshi for the Industrial regeneration of the country.\(^{82}\)

Tilak visited Nasik and Belgaum in 1906 when the Ganapathy festival assumed a political character. He also induced the Brahmins to use indigenous goods. He was so popular among the people and his birthday 11 July was celebrated as Shivaji’s birthday. He was called as Shivaji of the ages.\(^{83}\) Tilak imported the Swadeshi movement from Bengal and the Bengalis in turn imported the Shivaji festival from Bombay.

**CALCUTTA**

At Calcutta Tilak delivered lectures on Swadeshi, consequently the Muslims joined hands with the Hindus for the common cause. Shivaji festival becomes very popular so much so, it was celebrated even abroad.

A Number of Swadeshi Exhibitions were conducted in Calcutta. In October 1906 and March 1908 Mahila Swadehi mela was organized by the Mahila Silpa Samit. (Ladies Industrial Society) This Samiti was founded by Hari Snmoyee Debi.\(^{84}\)

Tilak wanted the disappearance of British rule through Swadeshi. “The object … is to bring about the spread (i.e. country-made) things, visible and invisible, to bring about the gradual disappearances of visible foreign things, and to bring about the gradual disappearance of foreign ideas also.\(^{85}\) said “Like the bodies our mind always rest in Swadeshi goods and also in our hearts.\(^{86}\) The Nationalists

\(^{82}\) Ram Gopal, *Lokamany Tilak a biography*, p 236

\(^{83}\) *Ibid.*, p. 236

\(^{84}\) Submit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi movement in Bengal (1903-08)* p 116

\(^{85}\) Theodore L. Shay, *The Legacy of Lokamanya*, p 96

\(^{86}\) *Ibid.*, p 96
felt Swadeshi as our economic, political and spiritual weapon and above all it was Bande Mataram in action.

Babu Surendra Natha Banarjee resigned the post of Honorary Magistrate of Calcutta and Barrackpur\textsuperscript{87}. With the capital of Rs. 4,00,000 the Calcutta Marwaris set up a Swadeshi Spinning and Weaving Mill\textsuperscript{88}.

**AT MADRAS**

As for the Madras Presidency was concerned, it was regarded as the dark city by the other Presidencies. The Gospel of Nationalism and Swadeshism were preached by the Apostles like Bipin Chandra Pal, Subramaniya Iyyer, Poet Bharathi, Chidambaram Pillai and Subramaniya siva. To awaken the people from darkness the uncrowned prince of Bengal, Pal was invited by Poet Bharathi in 1907. But before this a number of Swadeshi meetings were held in many places.

A grand Swadeshi meeting was held at Madras in February 1906, under the auspices of the Madras Mahajana Sabha. People from various walks of life attended. With the slogan of Bande Madram a Procession was started from the Memorial Hall and it went through the Mint street and China Bazaar Road and arrived at Esplanade and joined the meeting\textsuperscript{89}.

Under the auspices of the Swadeshi league a mass meeting was held at Madras in March 1906 and Subramaniya Iyer presided over the meeting\textsuperscript{90}. Venkataramana Rao explained the objects of the Swadeshi league. He said that the members of the league should use only Swadeshi goods.

\textsuperscript{87} The Hindu, 1 May 1906
\textsuperscript{88} I.M. Reisner and N.M. Goldberg, *Tilak and the Struggle for Indian Freedom*, P. 365.
\textsuperscript{89} The Hindu, 24 February, 1906
\textsuperscript{90} The Hindu, 30 March 1906
A Swadeshi Public meeting was held at Ranade Library Hall in Mylapore on 22 September 1906. Sundaram Iyer presided over the meeting and Subramaniya Iyer and Krishnasamy Iyer spoke about the Swadeshi.

**THE NATIONAL FUND**

An amount of Rs. 6869-11-9 was raised by the strenuous efforts of G. Subramaniya Iyer through door to door collection, on Deepavali. After declaring the expenses, the balance Rs. 6092-12-9 was handed over to National Fund. This fund was collected with the object of helping the indigenous industries. G. Subramaniya Iyer was the editor of The Hindu and was the stanch believer of Swadeshi movement in Madras Presidency. Later he started Swadesamitran and was an important member in Madras Mahajanna Saba. In 1908, the Government filed a case against Subramaiya Iyer regarding the articles in Swadesamitran. Poet Bharathi was appointed as the Sub-Editor of Sadesamitran for some time. Subramaniya Iyer toured South India far and wide and kindled the fire of Nationalism. He also organized four or five meetings every week and collected Swadeshi Fund. He also visited Madurai and as the students of the Native College were much inspired by his lecture, they shouted Bande Madaram after prayer. The Principal of the college Venkobachari punished the poor students for the same.

G. Subramaniya Iyer held a mass meeting at Tanjore to Popularize National Fund. He also aroused the people at Seerkali, Mayavaram and Kumbakonam.

Swami Abedhananda played a significant role in spreading Swadeshism in South India. He belonged to Rama Krishna Mission. Accompanied by Swami Rama Krishna Ananda and Swami Paramadanda he arrived at Madurai from

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91 The Hindu, 24 September 1906
92 Ellasai Maniyan **(ed)** Bharathi Tharisanam, pp 152-153
93 The Hindu, 15 June 1908
Courtallam to deliver lecture at the Hindu college on 4 July 1906. The Sub-Judge Swaminatha Iyer presided over the meeting. Swami Abedhananda also visited Rameswaram, Trichy, Tanjore and Madras.\textsuperscript{94} At Trichy he was given a warm Public Reception at National High School.

A Swadeshi meeting was held at Coimbatore in 16 July 1906 by the Sanmargha Sabha. The Tamil Padit C. Thiruchitrambalam gave an interesting speech on Swadeshi at St. Michael’s Collage and Arokiya Swamy Pillai presided over the meeting.

The Swadeshi movement was spreading like a wild fire to every nook and corner of the country and it was but natural that Thoothukudi too should feel its impact. V.O. Chidambaram Pillai a Lawyer of Thoothukudi, a patriot at heart and an extremist in action took it upon him to keep this fire burning kindling it, nursing it and always trying to make it burn forever intensely.

\textsuperscript{94} The Hindu, 15 June 1908