CHAPTER VI

The Struggle for Self-Government within the Empire

Even after the suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, there were sporadic armed rebellions in different parts of the country in the later decades of the nineteenth century. But at the same time, another type of freedom struggle was gradually taking shape in the country. It started even from before 1857 in the form of the movements launched by the Young Bengal group in 1828, the Landholders' Society of Calcutta in 1837, and the Bengal British India Society of Calcutta in 1843. Until the seventies of the nineteenth century, however, these associations of the Indians had no vision of an India ruled by the Indians themselves with or without British support.

With the formation of the India League in 1875 and of the Indian Association in 1876, Indian politics acquired a new life. These two organizations differed from the pre-Mutiny organizations of the same nature in the sense that these two organizations wanted the Indians also to participate in the administration of the country along with the British with all loyalty to the British Crown. The full development of this type of movement was marked by the birth in 1885 of the Indian National Congress which decided to "oppose by all constitutional methods all official acts or measures opposed to those principles which were laid down by the British Parliament", and hoped to form by it "the germ of a native parliament" - as it has been already pointed out in the first chapter.
We are to note here that the Indian National Congress decided to oppose "all official acts or measures" by "constitutional methods" only; and these "official acts or measures" were again limited to those which were against the principles of the British Parliament. The ultimate goal of these organizations of the later nineteenth century was good government, wider employment of Indians in higher offices in the public service and establishment of representative institutions. Until the emergence of the Extremist group of the Congress, the highest ambition of even the Indian National Congress was only self-government within the Empire. As Surendranath Banerjea writes:

... the old leaders of the Congress advocated the progressive realization of Self-Government, which is the outstanding principle of the message of August 20, 1917. So far back as the year 1902, speaking as the President of the Ahmedabad Congress, I observed:

'We have no higher aspiration than that we should be admitted into the great confederacy of self-governing states of which England is the august mother.'

It is no wonder, therefore, that the very distinct characteristic of the Congress in its early stage was its loyalty to the British Government. All the leaders of the Congress of this

stage, viz. Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozshah Mehta, Surendranath Banerjea, Badruddin Tyebji, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Gopal Krishna Gokhale were products of English education and they had genuine respect for the British culture, British love of liberty and all that. Thus, inspite of their zeal for self-government for the Indians, they believed that the British rule was a divine dispensation which was not only desirable but also indispensable for India. As Dadabhai Naoroji said in the second session of the Indian National Congress in 1886,

It is our good fortune that we are under a rule which makes it possible for us to meet in this manner. It is under the civilizing rule of the Queen and the people of England that we meet here together.  

Surendranath Banerjea had also expressed the same view in 1919 when he addressed the Rotary Club in Calcutta in these words: "We of the Moderate party believe that the connection of England with India is a divine dispensation ordained for the holiest and the highest ends." (underlined by me)

We have only two novels that reflect this mode of the Indian freedom struggle. But though the number of works is thus small, this phase of the Indian freedom struggle has not been poorly represented by them. For the two novels on the political theme of this phase of the national movement are by no means small in their

scope and objective. These two novels are *The Prince of Destiny* by Sarath Kumar Ghosh and *Hindupore* by Siddha Mohan Mitra, both published in the same year 1909.

The story of *The Prince of Destiny* is rather a clumsy one. Barathpur is a Rajput kingdom not far away from Delhi. A son is born to the king of Barathpur at the time when Queen Victoria is proclaimed the Empress of India in Delhi in 1877. The king of Barathpur is a great friend and well-wisher of the British Government in India - a typical Indian in the image of the national leaders of the time. The naming ceremony of the new-born baby is attended by many Britishers of high position, two very notable among them being Colonel Wingate - a great friend and well-wisher of India and his niece Ellen. These are two idealized Britishers like whom all the Britishers in India were expected to be by the Indian political leaders of the time. In this naming ceremony, Colonel Wingate arranges with the king that when the boy would come of age, he would be sent for education to England where Wingate would act as the guardian of the boy.

The boy grows up and proves himself to be very wise, honest and sincere. His sister Delini gives him early education when he is seven. This informal education leaves in the mind of the prince an indelible impression of ancient Indian tradition and culture. Side by side with this education, he is also given such training as will enable him to rule Barathpur in future as

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its king. Later he is given formal lessons in ancient Indian classics, philosophy etc. by Vashista, a recluse and the High Priest of Vishnu, the family deity of the king. After the completion of this Indian education, he is sent to a newly started English College for the princes of India for his preparation for higher studies in England.

At eighteen, Barath leaves for Cambridge as arranged earlier and Colonel Wingate receives him in London. Ellen, the thirty-eight year old spinster niece of the old bachelor Colonel acts as Barath's mother in his new home in London. She accepts him as her son formally and calls him by his pet-name Dilkhusa which was given to him by his own mother. Wingate also treats him just as his own son besides acting as his guardian. Wingate arranges for the education of Barath in such a way that after the completion of his education in Cambridge, he would not only be a Cambridge Tripos but also a man imbued with the true British ideals.

While at Cambridge, Barath keeps coming to Wingate and Ellen in their London house. It is during such a visit that Barath is acquainted with Lord Melnor, a young political leader of the conservative party, who is regarded as an expert in the Eastern problems. Another acquaintance of Barath in Wingate's house is that with the famous English poet Francis Thompson. With this poet in tattered clothes, Barath visits the slum areas of London and gathers experiences about this aspect of the British society. Thus Barath educates himself in England and prepares to be a perfect Indian after the image of the Indian national leaders of his time.
At the Tripos Examination in Cambridge Barath stands second in Mathematics. Then, instead of coming home directly he lingers for some time in Wingate's house and tours different parts of England to complete his education according to Wingate's plan. Wingate the old man dies at this stage, and Barath spends some more months with Francis Thompson in Wingate's house to give company to his godmother Ellen.

At last, Barath leaves England for Europe on his way to India. At the time of his departure from England, Ellen gives him a sealed present. When he opens it on the deck, he finds it to be a miniature portrait of Nora the fair niece of Ellen. Nora was then in Dublin for her education. He met her in Wingate's house and loved her. Barath has himself taken a handful of earth from England as a memento of his stay in the country which he has loved so deeply.

Meanwhile in Barathpur, Vashista the royal High Priest has been appointed the Dewan. As the Dewan, Vashista has sent a group of English educated young men for training in various fields. The king of Barathpur is also dead. Thus on Barath's return, he is crowned the king of Barathpur. As the new king, Barath changes the administrative set-up on new lines.

A difference of opinion between the Dewan and the new king soon takes place. According to a new law framed by the British Government, approval of the British Government for succession in a native state has been obligatory. To Vashista the tenacious upholder of the Indian tradition, this approval is unnecessary.
But Barath the young man with Western education sees no harm in it. Their difference widens when Vashista wants to solemnize the marriage of Barath with Suvona, a princess of a neighbouring state. Before leaving for England, Barath had a fascination for Suvona. On seeing her after years, his love for her had also been revived. Nevertheless, he is not inclined to marry Suvona now since he cannot forget Nora and be indifferent to the suggestion of his dear god-mother Ellen. This piques the traditionalist Vashista more. As a typical Indian representing the traditionalist Indians of the earlier phase of armed freedom struggle, Vashista grows then more hostile to the British and secretly plans an armed revolt. He resigns his Dewanship and engages himself in the preparation for the revolt.

Meanwhile Barath has received Lord Melnor in his palace when the latter came on a tour to India to study the Indian political situation. From his stay there, Melnor learns about Vashista's resentment of British interference. As a sympathetic Britisher Melnor wants to understand the resentful attitude of Vashista; and with this in view he arranges a meeting with this staunch Indian traditionalist.

After this meeting Melnor goes on an Indian tour and gains first hand knowledge about India. On his return to Barathpur, he suggests certain social reforms like remarriage of widow, abolition of compulsory dowry, doing away with joint family system and Sati. In order to bring about these social reforms in Barathpur, the sanction of Vashista as the royal High Priest is necessary. But when he is approached by the new Dewan for this, he disapproves of
all those reforms because they go against the Indian tradition.
Vashista finds another occasion after this to express his dissatisfaction with the new order. The news spreads throughout India that the son of Queen Victoria would be the new Emperor; and on this occasion a Durbar would be held in Delhi. But whereas on the earlier occasion of Queen Victoria's Proclamation as the Empress of India, the Viceroy of India paid return visits to the native states in response to the attendance of the native kings in the Durbar, this time there will be no similar return visits of the Viceroy to the native states. Vashista's dissatisfaction increases at this and he holds on with more emphasis his view that Indian princely states are degraded by the British to their vassal states; and the Indian kings are no longer regarded by the British as their friends and allies. There is a wide spread dissatisfaction throughout India over this issue.

Melnor is now appointed the British Resident in Barathpur on his own request to the Secretary of State for India. Melnor brings with him Nora who happens to be his niece. Barath's earlier feeling for Nora is then revived and he wants to marry her. Both Nora and Melnor are happy at this. But Vashista becomes more unhappy for this and he warns Barath that there would soon break out a rebellion in the kingdom for which Barath's pro-English activities alone would be responsible.

As the marriage takes place, the rebellion breaks out. The attack on the capital takes place on the day on which there is a strike all over British India and the Indian revolutionaries isolate Barathpur by cutting off telegraph wires and damaging
railway tracks. As the rebel forces march on to the capital, Vashista the brain behind the revolt, engages himself in a verbal war with the king in the palace in the presence of Melnor and Nora. In a long, heated debate Vashista inveighs against the activities of Barath, who with all respect to Vashista, defends himself explaining how English influence is good for India. At the end of the verbal duel, the Indian traditionalist who wants to free India by armed forces is defeated by the arguments of the new Indian to whom the British rule in India is a 'divine dispensation'. Vashista then admits that Barath, his student has become the teacher of his teacher; and he then orders the rebel forces to withdraw.

Melnor and Nora after this go back to England - Melnor with the hope that he would enter the British Parliament again and teach the House of Commons the lessons he has learnt in India; and Nora with the hope that she would return to India again to devote her life to the cause of the Indian women.

Vashista dies after this, an aged old man; and Barath, burning the garland of Nora and consigning its ashes to the Ganges with full religious rites, marries Suvona. He, however, never brings her to his bed and advises her to adopt a son who would succeed him to the throne of Barathpur. Then teaching her the Indian ideal of renunciation, he "went out of the palace, into the world..." And then the author writes:

Search for him, O my masters, somewhere between the upper Ganges and Buddha-Gaya or between Benares and Nasik. Somewhere

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there you would find him sitting beneath a Bodhi tree, awaiting his call. The New Krishna has not come, for indeed, Barath was not he: but the world may hope for a new Buddha, one who will teach all the earth anew the doctrine of peace.

From such a story, it is not difficult to understand the intention of the author. The India of the ancient times is gone for ever; and any attempt to revive those days would be futile like the attempt of Vashista. One must welcome now all that is good in England for the creation of a new India. Of course, any idea of creating a completely new nation by blending the two races of the rulers and the ruled would also not be realistic like the marriage of Barath and Nora. Besides preaching this idea through the main story, S. K. Ghosh does it in the novel by some other means also. Sometimes he has done it through certain stray events, sometimes through the conversations of his characters and sometimes, again, through his own remarks. The following are some of the examples.

We have already seen from the story that the character of Vashista is a type of the Indians upholding all Indian traditions, as his name also suggests, Vashista being the name of an ancient Indian sage. We have in the novel a similar character in the person of Viswa-mitra, the erstwhile Senior Judge of the Supreme Court of Calcutta, who also reminds us of that ancient Hindu sage of the same name. Viswa-mitra strides the path of Delhi with a cheap cotton dhoti that "fell short of his ankles", a "beggar's staff in his hand" and a "beggar's bowl" in his girdle when the

city goes mad with merry-making on the occasion of the Durbar on Queen Victoria's Proclamation. This recluse-like Hindu Supreme Court Judge resigned his office voluntarily at the pinnacle of his fame in that high office in order to seek renunciation like a true Hindu. He passes from one centre of attraction to another in the city, lonely and alone with a melancholy face and a brooding mood. He later spends the night beneath the stars, under the canopy of the sky, amidst the ancient ruins - away from the city in frenzy, whispering to himself again and again, "How long, O Brahma, how long?"

In his sleep, he sees the vision of Indraprastha, the days of the Mahabharata when India was steeped in glory. He also dreams of subsequent glorious periods of Indian history. He dreams further of a Prince of Destiny - a New Krishna - who will be born in the country to free her from the evils of foreign influence and lead it back to its pristine purity. Waking from sleep, he goes farther away from Delhi and reaches the temple of Vishnu where Vashista is the High Priest. Vashista is also a dreamer of the same nature; and the two together go in search of the New Krishna of their dream. They reach the city of Barathpur where a baby is born to the king. They believe that the new-born baby is the New Krishna of their dream who has come to redeem the country. The novel that begins thus, ends with their disillusionment and frustration. They die with the realization that the Second Coming of the New Krishna for the deliverance of the country is no more possible.
Like the Indian national leaders of the time, the author shows further that the Western influence is not only inevitable but also desirable. For this, when Vashista protests against Barath's ties with the British and resigns his Dewanship, the author has made Barath defend his leaning upon the British thus:

For the present it is essential that the East should be on the terms of Friendship with the West for its own sake. Are we fit as yet? Fit to govern ourselves in the best possible manner without Western aid?  

Showing the reason why India must welcome British rule in India in this manner, the novelist has calculated the benefits from this rule. He has done it in connection with the debate between Vashista and Barath on the British rule in India when the rebel forces of Vashista are marching on to the capital. Barath which is the Anglicized form of the Indian word Bharat meaning India, speaks here:

Let me begin by depicting what Britain has done for India, at least for the last fifty years when the period of consolidation began. She has given an internal peace. ... It is a priceless blessing and the beginning of all other blessings. And again she has given us the possibility of adopting what is best in Western institutions. ... Thirdly, during the last fifty years the spirit of nationalism has first been begotten in India. That is due directly to the British by the work of consolidation, indirectly also - for even in their errors,

8. ibid. p.495.
when we saw injustices we were aroused to a fellow-feeling with those who had suffered.  

The same spirit has found expression through the words of Lord Melnor also, when he speaks in the same context with almost a prophetic voice:

But what is our object in introducing British institution in India? It is to enable her in due time to govern herself in the manner of a British Colony, Canada or Australia, though still a part of the British Empire. Nay, I shall go further; no earthly tie can be permanent, and the time must come when India will be prepared for her complete independence. In that hour Great Britain will grant it in peace and friendship. Her sole reward will remain in India's gratitude, a reward unique in human history; for the labour of regenerating an ancient people that gave the beginning to the human race will in itself be unique.

"Regenerating an ancient people", and to prepare India for "complete independence" in the long run — were what the Indian leaders of the time thought the British were destined to do in India.

But though in this way the author shows the British rule as desirable for India, he at the same time suggests to the British that it is only their arrogant behaviour which rouses the Indians against their rule. What sort of behaviour is expected from the

British by the Indians is suggested in the novel through the behaviours of Colonel Wingate, Ellen, Lord Melnor and Francis Thompson. We have seen from the story the goodwill of Colonel Wingate and Ellen towards the Indians. We have also seen Lord Melnor's sympathetic understanding of the Indian problems. It is he who leaves India with the hope that he would teach the British House of Commons a new lesson. And it is he about whom the author writes on the eve of his departure from India:

... for he can see Indian affairs not only with English eyes but also Indian. He practises the lessons himself, those he learnt in India so painfully. Yes, he would rather see Britain just than Britain Great; but much more see her great by being just.  

The novelist shows the friendly relation between the poet Thompson and Barath for the same purpose. This English poet reveals many weaknesses of the British society before Barath and Barath gets encouraged to express his wounded feelings before this Britisher who sees things in their true perspective. Barath requests Thompson to translate the great Indian drama *Sakuntala* into English because, to him, this play by Kalidasa is "worth the whole British army in India."  

Let the British public read it and understand our most cherished ideals. That will serve to remove a mountain of misconception between Great Britain and India.

Thus says Barath to Thompson. Thompson appreciates the idea and gives serious consideration to this task though he does not live long to undertake the work.

The author then hints that though such a cordial relation between the rulers and the ruled could have made the British rule firm and stable, its absence has made the great empire falter. The author throws the blame on the rulers whose tactless actions and lack of understanding of the Indian situation have roused the Indians against them. He shows the case of the imperialist writers Kipling, Macaulay and others as an instance in point. The author shows how after the death of Queen Victoria, her plan to grant more privileges to the Indians was left neglected by the British Government which resulted in an agitation in India. The British Government tried to suppress the agitation when

... an English writer arose, a mere youth, who wrote stories in English papers in India heaping contempt upon contempt on Bengal generally as the prime movers in the political agitation. ...

Still the evil was not irreparable (sic): the Indian writers and speakers still kept their eyes on the press in England for hope and support. But just then the youth came out of India and burst upon the English. He became the prophet of England, aye, of Europe. ... In the press of England the condemnation of Bengal was severe indeed.14

14. ibid. pp.138-139.
It is with the same purpose that the author has introduced the revolutionary Naren into the story. This revolutionary from Bengal urges the people of Barathpur to rise into rebellion and speaks in a public meeting thus:

I have something to say of this banjo-poet. For twenty years he and his hundred imitators in England to write of India by inspiration, have abused us and insulted us most deeply. I have in mind a recent book deemed to be almost a standard work on India. Confirming the banjo-poets and the others, he calls the Bengali cowards, devoid of redeeming virtue, nay, even beneath contempt. Why? Because for twenty years we have taken their abuse by lying down. Why, again I ask? They tell us because we are afraid to strike back.\(^5\)

It is with the same purpose again that the author has made Vashista remark: "In India itself the commonest Tommy, the son of an East End unsuccessful pork-butcher, is placed above a Sikh or a Rajput soldier of a good caste."\(^6\)

But though in this way the author shows that it is the British arrogance that has maligned the Indians against their rule, he does not by any means imply that if the British had corrected their behaviour with the Indians there would have been no agitation at all. The author is realistic enough to see how the British had divested the Indians of many of their political privileges quite unnecessarily and humiliatingly. He suggests in many

\(^{15}\) ibid, p.560. \(^{16}\) ibid, p.574.
places that these deprivation and humiliation are also at the root of the Indian agitation. In the fourteen page long chapter called "The Lesson of Adowah", the author has expressed this view quite directly. The novelist refers in this chapter to the contemporary incident of the defeat of Italy by Abyssinia at Adowah. In this context, he reviews the contemporary Indian situation and observes that the Italian defeat by an eastern country should be a lesson to the western countries including England.

Queen Victoria's policy designed by the wise Beaconsfield was such that though Britain was the suzerain of all India, it could make Indians feel that their country was "bound to Great Britain not only by the ties of loyalty but also by the greater bonds of affection and patriotism." According to the same policy native kingdoms were to be regarded by the British "as 'friends' and 'allies' with complete suzerain rights in their own kingdoms." But after Beaconsfield's death, the Imperial Government of England brought by a slow process the kingdoms of India under its control until at last "it came to pass that Beaconsfield's 'Sovereign Princes of India' became 'the ruling Princes of India' including the demigods who had reigned as kings and emperors for thirty centuries."

The author suggests in this chapter that it is for such a tactless handling of the Indian situation that Britain may have to face an Indian upsurge for self-government and humiliation as Italy did. Through the resentment of Vashista and Naren also the

author expresses the same idea. The revolts of these two militant nationalists in the novel are only echoes of the grumblings of the Indian people of the time who felt that they should rise for 'self-government within the Empire'.

The novel thus expresses very distinctly the two moods of the people of India of that time - the mood to accept the British rule as a 'divine dispensation' and the mood to struggle for 'self-government' within that 'dispensation'. It is for this that the title of the novel - The Prince of Destiny, is quite justified. Barath who wants 'self-government within the Empire' itself, regarding the British rule as a 'divine dispensation' is the Prince of Destiny. Because the Indians of his time realized like their leader Gokhale who as the President of the Benares session of the Congress in 1905 spoke:

For better or worse, our destinies are now linked with those of England, and what the Congress fully recognizes is that whatever advance we seek must be within the Empire itself. That advance, however, can only be gradual. 19 (underlined by me)

In judging the novel as a piece of literary art, we must, however, remark inspite of so much of condescending praises lavished on it by the British press of the time as well as by a few British dignitaries, that this is not a novel of high standard. Its plot is cumbrous; and to this again a sub-plot has been added making

this novel of more than 600 pages unnecessarily bulky. The novel would hardly have lost anything if the sub-plot of Madhava and Kamona were altogether dropped.

Another artistic flaw here is that many political problems of the time are raised without properly assimilating them into the texture of the work. These problems are found sometimes in the form of the author's own reflections or observations and sometimes in the form of long dialogues between characters. This very often mars the interest of the reader unless he has a special political interest in reading the novel, a problem which a reader does not face in reading E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, for example.

Siddha Mohan Mitra's *Hindupore* is also a political novel akin to S. K. Ghosh's *The Prince of Destiny* in its portrayal of the dissatisfaction of the Indians under the British rule. Mitra's *Hindupore* is, however, narrower in scope and shallower in depth than Ghosh's *The Prince of Destiny* in so far as Mitra attributes the Indian unrest to the misbehaviour of the British rulers and their lack of respect for the Indian culture alone. S. K. Ghosh went deeper into the problem and showed the curtailment of power of the native rulers and the objectionable British interference with the native political affairs also as causes. He was wider in his scope in the sense that he suggested remedies also in the novel by hinting at the Indian aspiration for self-government of

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that time and showing the expectation of the Indians for British willingness to grant that and grant even complete independence in course of time.

To prove that rudeness of behaviour of the British officials was the sole cause of the Indian unrest and suggest that there would not have been any unrest in the country if the Britishers were polite and reasonable in their behaviour and respectful towards Indian culture, the author has created four categories of characters in Hindupore. There are, for example, the good British characters like Lord Tara, Dr. Celitia, Mr. Harvey and Father Long. Then there are the good Indian characters like Raja Ram Singh, Dewan Mohan Lal, Nabob Shamshere Khan and others. These two groups of people belong to an ideal world where they all, irrespective of their nationality, meet in cordiality and friendship. The Indians as Indians look forward here for their regeneration to the British, and the British as British care always for the welfare of this ancient and civilized race. In contrast to them, there are the two groups of bad British and Indian characters, the British behaving cruelly and inhumanly with the arrogance and false pride of a superior race, and the Indians losing patience and getting restive without any far-sight.

The story element is thin in this novel and the plot is simple. Lord Tara, the young Irish M.P. who in his sympathy for India and understanding of the Indian problem reminds us of Ghosh's Lord Melnor, is the hero here. He is "full of ardour and enlightened zeal for the true welfare of the vast Indian Empire." 21

he is sailing to India for the purpose of studying the Indian situation, he meets on the ship the young doctor Miss Celitia Scott. Celitia was eager to serve India and her opportunity has come when she has been nominated to superintend the hospital at Cuttack and attend on the women pilgrims on their way to Jagannath. They then meet in the same ship an Indian passenger in the person of Raja Man Singh, the Rajput king of Hindupore. The two British lovers of India become very friendly with this Indian king who also happens to be an admirer of the British. One more man who comes to India on the same ship and becomes friendly with these men is an English Christian missionary, Mr. Long.

Arriving at Bombay, Dr. Celitia Scott leaves for Cuttack. Lord Tara had to leave for Barrackpore where his friend Harvey, an I.C.S. Officer, is waiting for him; but he has to yield to the invitation of his new Indian friend, the Raja of Hindupore to be his state guest in the capital for some time. At Hindupore, the Lord learns that the Raja has a niece called Kamala, the fair daughter of the Raja's elder brother whom he had succeeded to the throne after his death. Kamala is gifted with all the virtues expected of a Hindu maiden besides her unique beauty. She has been given higher education in private in the Hindu tradition. She has now been engaged by her uncle, the Raja to take care of the Lord. Kamala does it perfectly well, without, however, being seen by the guest according to the Hindu custom. Some time later, the Raja's mother needs a good doctor for her neuralgia and Dr. Celitia is called in. Both Lord Tara and Dr. Celitia are now at home in the palace of Raja Man Singh.
Lord Tara goes to Allahabad for a few days when he is invited by a Nabob. After coming back from there and spending some more days in Hindupore, he receives a letter from his friend at Barrackpore requesting him to go to him soon. The Raja and his Dewan Mohan Lal, however, still detain him there for some days in order to enlighten him more on Hindu life and society. Mohan Lal takes him again to Allahabad, this time to introduce him to one of his intimate friends Radha Nath Sircar, an advocate of the Allahabad High Court and editor of an English paper Oriental News. From Sircar Tara learns a lot about the grievances of the Indians under the British rule. Coming back to Hindupore, Lord Tara who has all along been taken care of by Kamala but who has never had even a glimpse of her, sees a photograph of the maiden and at once falls in love with her who had so long impressed him with her loving care.

Meanwhile Harvey has to visit Simla on business; and on his way he visits Hindupore after an invitation from the Raja. Harvey the I.C.S. officer learns a lot at Hindupore about the grievances of the Indians under the British rule.

Lord Tara gives a formal proposal to the Raja for marrying Kamala. Raja Man Singh who bears a very high esteem for Lord Tara is very glad. The Raja, the Dewan Mohan Lal and his friend Sircar discuss the marriage and decide to perform it at the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri during the auspicious Car Festival there. Soon they take their journey by train to Calcutta on their way to Puri. As the party arrive at Calcutta, the Nabob of Hajipur places his beautifully furnished house at Chowringhee at the
disposal of the royal party. Harvey invites Lord Tara now to visit Barrackpore and Tara leaves for that place for a few days. Here he has some idea about the unrest in the minds of the Indians and also about the revolutionary activities of the Terrorists.

A few days after Lord Tara's return from Barrackpore, the Raja and his party leave for Cuttack. Mr. Sircar goes ahead of the party and arranges for their stay at Cuttack. The Raja of Jagannath gives a reception to the royal party at Cuttack. The party then start for Puri on the eve of the Car Festival which lasts for three days. Lord Tara is very much impressed by this great festival of the Hindus in this great temple.

After the Car Festival, the marriage of Tara and Kamala is solemnized at the temple with both Hindu and Christian priests. The marriage festivities are, however, reserved for the future. The marriage party then return home. On their way home, Lord Tara and his bride spend a week as Harvey's guests at Barrackpore. When they return from there to Hindupore, thousands of Indians express their best wishes to this married couple by standing on both the sides of the road from Allahabad to Hindupore. At Hindupore, the marriage festivities are celebrated with pomp and grandeur. This being over, Lord and Lady Tara leave India.

Through this story, it is not difficult to understand how the author intends to show an ideal friendly relation between the two countries. Against the background of such a story, the main British characters are made to see only events and incidents
causing unrest in India for which the conducts and behaviours of
the British officials alone are deemed responsible. The ideal
relation between the Indians and the British has been shown through
the relation between the main Indian and British characters. These
main British characters are always full of love and respect for
the Indians and their age-old tradition as seen through the story.
Through minor incidents and conversations of the characters, too,
the author shows this. For example, Mr. Long the missionary pra­
ises the Hindus before Raja Man Singh:

I assure you, the more I know of that country, the more in­
tensely I feel the difficulty of winning over to Christianity
a people so devoted to religion undoubtedly based upon faith
in one supreme God. A vast hierarchical system is firmly
rooted throughout the length and breadth of the land, perfect
in its organization notwithstanding all the changes that pass­ing ages have brought upon religions and social institutions.

Lord Tara also in the course of the same conversation

says:

It is our simple duty to study the characteristics of a land
and people bound to us by the strangest ties of interest and
affection. As it is, Anglo-Indians, too, often waste their
leisure in idle and frivolous amusements so cruelly shown
upon by Rudyard Kipling and other observers of life in the
East. We do not rightly use our most precious Eastern posses­
sion.

In Herbert Harvey we see an ideal I.C.S. officer bearing deep love and respect for the Indians and speaking even in the Indian languages with the natives. The writer is careful enough to inform his readers how from his very childhood Harvey loved India. At Oxford when Harvey's friends discussed the grandeur of Greek and Roman Empires, Harvey pointed out to them:

See Gibbon. The Roman Empire at its zenith did not contain more than 125 millions of people; the Greeks perhaps hardly so many. Our Indian Empire contains 300 millions. There we have more subjects than the Greek and the Roman Empires put together. And yet how little we care to know of our own Empire. 24

Later as an I.C.S. officer, he reveals his mind to Lord Tara:

The unity of our Indian Empire depends upon our consideration and respect for the feelings and religious convictions of the countless subjects who have placed themselves under our protection. The wisest of our statesmen have recognized that fact - Lord Beaconsfield most of all in his wide Eastern sympathies. The Christianity we have to teach is by personal example, and how lamentably we often fail to convince the strangers in race and language of our boasted superiority as a nation. 25

How such a British administrator is loved by the Indians can be understood from Mohan Lal's comment on him, "Mr. Harvey is one of

24. ibid. p.113. 25. ibid. p.223.
the most valuable officials we have. If there were more like him, we would have no unrest in India." 26

Miss Celitia's life-story also reveals to us the love and respect of the one race for the other. As she herself says, just after the Indian Mutiny of 1857, her mother who was then only three, was found in a deserted house at Cawnpore by a Hindu priest. The priest out of his love for this three year old British baby, took the child to one of his Hindu friends in a remote province. Upto seventeen years of her age, the girl was brought up dearly by the Hindu; and then he gave her in marriage to a British military personnel serving in India. The military man took his newly wedded wife to Scotland where Celitia was born. Celitia's mother being saved and brought up by the Hindus, bore a great love for them and their country. It was thus that Celitia also came to love and respect India and took a vow to serve that country.

After showing such an ideal relation between the sober sections of the two races, the author gives us many examples of rude and inhuman behaviours and thoughtless actions of some of the British officials. For example, how the unnecessary suspicions of the British often make the Indians restless has been hinted at through the conversation of Mohan Lal and Lord Tara at Hindupore. Mohan Lal says:

The manners of espionage in British India is so much to be regretted. It estranges the masses of the people when one of

26. ibid. p.111.
their Princes of ancient and honoured descent, whose loyalty to the Sovereign power has been proved to be willing submission of his followers for more than a century, is subjected to slight and indignity. For instance, just before the Raja Ram Singh went to Europe his name was actually entered in what is called the 'Black Book' of the Secret Branch of the Intelligence Department as a person not above suspicion. 27

How the British superiority complex and their fancy that they would always be adored by this subject race, often create troubles is revealed from the words of Mohan Lal about Radha Nath Sirkar, who is hated by the British. Mohan Lal says about Sircar, "He was never seen on the platforms when proud officials of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy were in glorious transit." 28 Colonel Ironside, the Political Agent, wanted to suppress this Bengali Babu; but Mr. Harvey came to his assistance. Still Ironside went on hating Sircar. Because, as Mohan Lal says, "the latter did not waste his time in running after him, and refused to join the non-entities who flitted about him." 29 Mohan Lal's remark about Ironside is, "Colonel Ironside was incapable of appreciating the rare gifts and cultivation of a learned Hindu; these were incomprehensible to him." 29 To Mohan Lal, this British Political Agent whose name Ironside is almost allegorical

... had hardly a definite policy. His idea was to see that every English man in India was respected, but the result of

his actions was that, instead of the English name being respected, it was cordially disliked. 30

After hearing all these, Lord Tara expresses his surprise at the British inactivity against such misconduct inspite of so many Royal Commissions. Mohan Lal holds the bureaucratic official routine responsible for this and says, "Unless Royal Commissions can check the vagaries of the Ironsides that disgrace the name of the Englishmen in the East, Britain will fail to keep a moral hold on India." 31

How the brutalities of the Englishmen in India are also responsible for the Indian insurgence is exemplified by an incident which occurs when Raja Man Singh and his associates go to Calcutta in a train. When the train is about to start from Benares, the Raja and the Lord who had alighted, come to get in. But a Britisher, Mr. Jonathan Toddy, an ordinary manager of a distillery, had got into that compartment in the meantime though that compartment was reserved for the Raja. The Britisher bars the way for the Raja and shouts, "Out you go, black man!" An Indian signs the distillery manager to move away and let the Raja in. But the Britisher is so much offended at this that he aims a blow at the Indian and calls him "son of a pig". When the Indian moves back to escape from Toddy's blow and Toddy falls on the hinges of the door and wounds himself, the Indian is arrested by police. At this, Lord Tara and a missionary Father Brown are ashamed of the Englishman's

30. ibid. pp.121-122.
31. ibid. p.124.
behaviour, especially when the Raja says, "Pray don't trouble yourselves anymore about it," and Mohan Lal adds, "We are used to that sort of thing in India." Mr. Long's comment on this is, "No wonder, it causes a feeling of unrest."

How repressive measures of the Government are also responsible for the Indian insurgency of the time has been hinted at through the following piece of conversation between Long and Harvey:

"A friend of mine, who called one day in Downing street before the change of Ministry, told me that the present unrest is due to the rise of Japan."

"There is a great deal of truth in that", said Harvey. "The Rajas earn the goodwill of the people by allowing them freedom in using arms - a gift appreciated by everyone. With us, it is just the reverse. Our Arms Act in its rigour deprives our subjects of a right to use arms allowed in all Native States."

It is interesting to note here that the great Indian nationalist leader Lala Lajpat Rai had also made the same Arms Act responsible for the Indian unrest in 1916, seven years after the publication of this novel.

Showing the causes of the Indian unrest thus in the novel, S. M. Mitra has suggested the way in which the Insurgence has broken

32. ibid. Chapter XX. 33. ibid. Chapter XX. 34. ibid. p.222. 35. Lajpat Rai, Young India, Publications Division, Government of India, Delhi, 1968 edn. pp.82-83.
out. It has to be noted here that the way of the agitation has been suggested only, not described. For instance, the way people agitated in Bengal has been hinted at through a letter written by Harvey to Lord Tara. In this letter written from Barrackpore, Harvey informs how on a fixed day the Hindus have arranged to hoist their flag on the plains of Plassey. Then again, when Harvey had been to Simla, his business there was to consult the higher authority on the problem of "the Bandemataram of the Bengali Babus being shouted at public meetings in Calcutta." 37

When Lord Tara is at Barrackpore, Harvey discusses with him the Indian Swaraj Movement and compares it to the Irish Fenian Agitation. "In Ireland they consider it a duty to sing Irish patriotic songs. The Bandemataram is no more seditious than the Irish ones were" 38 - comments Harvey. In the same context they discuss the contemporary Home Rule Movement also and hints at the serious consequences the British Empire might have to face for it. 39

It is, therefore, clear that the author here, like the political leaders of the time as well as like the contemporary writer S. K. Ghosh, regards the British rule as beneficent for India and shows the actions and behaviours of the British rulers as the cause of the Indian agitation.

37. ibid. 142.
39. ibid. pp.219-224.
A word about the author's concept of the Indian nationality here. It is obvious from the above analysis of the novel that the author is pre-occupied with the Hindu community only, though there are occasional glimpses of the grievances of the Muslims, too, here and there. The two communities are always shown separately whenever they are shown talking about their political grievances. It seems, therefore, that the author regards the two communities as two separate nationalities with their own grievances, though of the same nature. He has shown, of course, the unity of the two communities in their non-political affairs. But even then, that the author regards the two communities as completely separate nationalities, is clear. It is also to be noted here that the title of this novel with the Indian unrest as its theme is Hindu-oore.

How the author shows here the Muslims quite separately with their own separate interests as if they are a separate nationality will be clear from the example of the Nabob. When the Delhi Durbar is held by the Government during the month of the Muslim religious fast, the Muslim religious sentiment is wounded. The Nabob voices the wounded sentiments of the Muslims in this context:

My father's sword cut down many a rebel during the Mutiny.

... In my own small way I have always shown my loyalty, but with what result? When the Bara Sahibs (high officials) want subscription for anything, they think of me; otherwise
I have to 'tip' the Commissioner Shibli's jemadar (orderly) with five rupees before I can see the Bari Shahib myself. 40

As in the main story, the Hindus are confined to their own interests only, here we see the Muslim Nabob thinking about the Muslim community and the Muslim interest only.

In non-political matters, however, the author shows the prevalence of a unity between the two communities. For example, in the context of Raja Man Singh, Lord Tara and their entourage visiting the important places around Cuttack, the author shows them visiting the Assia range of hills where there is Alamgir with a Mahomedan mosque 2500 feet above the surrounding country, where every morning and every evening the Hindus as well as the Mahomedans around offer homage to the shrine. 41

It is to be noted here that S. K. Ghosh in his novel The Prince of Destiny has shown only the disgruntled Hindus under the British rule; and he has kept the Muslim community completely out of picture. But even then in case of The Prince of Destiny, we are free to conclude that Ghosh includes the Muslims, too, in the Indian nation since he has not shown the Muslims as a separate entity. But our conclusion cannot be the same in case of S. M. Mitra's Hindupore where Mitra has shown the Muslims also as a separate entity with their own grievances, though he has written mainly about the Hindus only. This leads to the conclusion thus

40. ibid. p.81. 41. ibid. p.247.
that Mitra regarded the Hindus and the Muslims as two separate nationalities. Such a concept was possible in 1909 since towards the end of the nineteenth century a section of the Muslims under the leadership of Syed Ahmed Khan had a separatist tendency.

To judge *Hindupore* as a work of literature now, the plot of this novel is very simple as it has been already pointed out. Even then, it has a sub-plot, too, in the form of the episode of love of Jamuna Bai, the aged widow of Benares for Mohan Lal. But this sub-plot serves little purpose in the novel either in the development of the main plot or in the exposition of the main theme like the sub-plot in Sarath Kumar Ghosh's novel.

The characters of the novel are all flat, the good ones being always good and the bad ones, always bad. In purpose similar to S. K. Ghosh's novel, in style and technique the present novel is dissimilar and inferior to the novel by Ghosh. With his ornamental language steeped very often in emotion, Ghosh had attained occasionally a poetic exuberance in style from which S. M. Mitra remains far away. S. M. Mitra's novel remains out and out a political novel studying the contemporary political problem in a rather superficial manner. The author's sub-title to the novel, *A Peep Behind the Indian Unrest* is, therefore, appropriately chosen, though the same thing cannot be said of the additional sub-title *An Anglo-Indian Romance* since this dry, drab political novel can hardly be called a romance. Neither the Irish M.P.'s love for the Indian maiden nor the love of the aged widow for the aged Dewan has been so developed as to justify the term romance for this novel.
There is, however, no denying the fact in conclusion that S. K. Ghosh's *The Prince of Destiny* and S. M. Mitra's *Hindupore* together delineate the second phase of the Indian freedom struggle exhaustively and well with all their faults as works of art. Dr. Meenakshi Mukherjee's charge against them, therefore, that "the 'history' in these novels, ... is essentially romantic with no basis in actual facts"⁴² is quite baseless. It only points out to her ignorance of the political or historical background against which these political novels regarded by her wrongly as historical fiction, were written. It also shows how she could assume that the Indo-Anglian novels before 1920 lacked "direct involvement in values and experiences which are valid in the Indian context."⁴³

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⁴³. ibid. p.19.