The news of Tilak's release from the jail came as a matter of great pleasure on the part of the people. He was received by his country-men as a great prophet. He was accorded a great ovation. He was the new Moses destined to bring his flock to the goal of freedom. Now he appeared to his people as their Saviour. People in Poona rushed to his residence to get a darshana of the leader. On June 21, 1914, a meeting was arranged to give him a public reception. An enthusiastic welcome was given to him by a large number of people assembled in front of the Gaikwad Wada. In reply to the welcome Tilak said:

"When after six years' absence, I return home and begin to renew my acquaintance with the world, I find myself in the position of Rip Van Winkle. I was kept by the authorities in such a rigorous seclusion that it seemed that they desired that I should forget the world and be forgotten by it. However I have not forgotten the people, and I am glad to notice that the people have not forgotten me."  

He further said: "I can only assure the public that separation for six long years could not diminish my love for them and that I am willing and ready to serve in the same manner and in the same relation and in the same capacity which belonged to me six years before, though it may be, I shall have to modify the course a little."²

Tilak was fifty-eight years now. By the Indian standards he was to be considered an old man. That was a time for him to retire from public life and take the much needed rest. That was what some of his friends suggested to him. He was advised to devote the rest of his life in studying and writing. But Tilak turned a deaf ear to such advice. So long as India was not free, he could never deviate from politics. He remarked: "It seems that I am destined to die as a politician, and I have ungrudgingly accepted the decree of my fate."³

The bureaucracy had expected that after return from jail Tilak would be forgotten. But their prophecy came to be false. The officials were taken aback when they found Tilak receiving a hero's welcome. They took alarm and decided to strike again.

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2. Ibid.

Tilak again formulated a plan to be implemented as quickly as possible. He placed before himself a three-fold task — a compromise with the Congress that was dominated by the moderates, revival and re-organisation of the Nationalist party and starting the Home Rule Movement. Side by side he also encouraged the Indian youths to enlist themselves in the army and fight the World War in favour of England. This would give them military training.

Tilak declared: "Home Rule is my birth-right and I will have it." The formation of the Indian Home Rule League was the crowning achievement of Tilak's political career. He wrote a number of articles on Home Rule in December 1915. Of the two terms 'Swaraj' and 'Home Rule', Tilak preferred the latter. In his opinion, 'Home Rule' was a parliamentary, legal term. He deliberately gave up the term 'self-Government' or 'Swaraj'. Home Rule was perfectly legal and implied all those terms.

The Home Rule League

The year 1916 was significant in the history of India. In a sense, two Home Rule Leagues came to be established — one by

Tilak and the other Annie Besant. The Leagues soon became so popular that the Government had to adopt severe repressive techniques. However, Tilak was the first in forming the Home Rule League on 28th April, 1916. Besant's came later on the 3rd September, 1916. Tilak's Home Rule League aimed at intensifying the consciousness of national right among the people.

After his release in 1914, Tilak wanted to move on with the Congress, if possible, and without it, if necessary. He honestly tried his best to bring the two wings of the Congress together. It was achieved in 1915 after a great deal of difficulty. The union was brought about only by the accidental death of Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Pheroz Shah Mehta. Tilak was, however, convinced that so long as the Congress was led by the moderates, they would not take up Home Rule as their war cry. Subsequent events showed that he was right in his judgement. Tilak now was outside the fold of the Congress, and so he could give effect to his ideas without any reference to that body. He therefore prepared the ground for instituting the Home Rule League.

Accordingly Tilak summoned a conference of the Nationalists of Bombay, and Central Provinces and Berar at
Poona on 23 and 24 December, 1915. The conference appointed a committee and the said committee prepared a report. This report was placed before the Bombay Provincial Conference held at Belgaum on 27-29 April, 1916. On the basis of this report the conference resolved to establish the Indian Home Rule League. Thus, Tilak's Indian Home Rule League was formally inaugurated at Belgaum on April 28, 1916. Its objective 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."

Though the League was the child of Tilak, he refused to be its President. Joseph Baptista was made the President of the League. N.C. Kelkar was appointed as Secretary. The members included G.S. Xhaparde, B.S. Moonje, and R.P. Karandikar. It was thus clear that the Provincial Conference and the Indian Home Rule League were the two distinct bodies.

Tilak wrote a leading article in the Mahratta explaining the reasons for the necessity of forming the League. It read:

"It was generally recognized that the time had positively come for an organization to be started for educating public opinion and agitating for Home Rule throughout the

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country. ... But the Congress, it is generally recognized, is too unwieldy to be easily moved to prepare a scheme for self-Government and actively work for its political success. The spade work has got to be done by someone. It can afford to wait no longer. The League may be regarded as a pioneer movement and is not intended in any sense to be an exclusive movement. 8

Tilak delivered his first speech on Home Rule on the 1st May, 1916 under the auspices of this new organization. From now on, Tilak adopted a typical technique for canalising public opinion on the Home Rule. He was for Home Rule within the Empire. The present Government was not in the interest of the people. Because the bureaucracy was standing in the way. Therefore it was necessary to replace this bureaucracy by an administration, responsible to the people. It was, thus, Home Rule that could bring about such a popular administration. So it was not seditious to propagate the idea of such a Home Rule.

Tilak spoke for the masses. He spoke in a homely manner in short sentences. He often quoted illustrations so that a common man could easily understand. His language was simpler

8. Ibid., p.252.
than any used on the public platform. He always avoided elaborate arguments. He drew the attention of the people on one single point – the need for achieving Home Rule. He thought it to be necessary for realizing public good.

Delivering a speech on Home Rule at Belgaum after the conference of 1916, Tilak said:

"What is Swarajya? Why do we ask for it? Are we fit for it or not? ... The idea of Swarajya is an old one. Of course, when Swarajya is spoken of, there is some kind of rule opposed to 'Swa' (i.e. 'Our'), and this idea arises at that time. ... Those who are ruling you do not belong to your religion, race or even country. The question, whether this rule by English Government is good or bad is different. The question about one's own and 'alien' is different."

Referring to the point that Swarajya is the only solution to their difficulties, he said: "We want this one thing, today. When this one is got, the remaining things come into our possession themselves. This is the one root of thousand things

which we are asking for. When we get this key into our hands, we can open not only one but five or ten doors at once."  

About India's fitness for self-Government, he said:

"Why are we not fit? Have we no nose, no eyes, no ears, no intellect? Can we not write; have we not read books, can we not ride a horse? Why are we not fit? A Jew in one of Shakespeare's dramas asked, 'I ask you, what have we not?'

'You have not done work'. It is not given at all, when are we to do it? Cheers."  

He continued: "... What I say is, do not apply the words, 'Not fit'. At least we shall know that it is not really to be given. ... It is indirectly said, that we are not fit. It is to teach you that we have come here. This is admitted. But how long will you teach us? For one generation, for two generations, or three generations? Is there any end to this? Or, must we, just like this, work under you like slaves till the end?"  

10. Ibid., p.251.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., pp.251-252.
Dwelling on the point that it is not sedition to ask for rights, Tilak said: "What do we ask for? Do we say, drive away the English Government? ... The rule still remains, the Emperor still remains. The difference would be, that the white servant, who was with him, would be replaced by a black servant. ... What does sedition mean? Hatred of the king. Does king mean a police sepoy?" 13

Referring to the nature of Swaraj, he said: "To put it briefly, the demand that the management of our affairs should be in our hands is the demand for Swaraj." 14 "I again say," he continued, "if the nation is to get happiness, if the thousands of complaints that have arisen today are to be removed, then, first of all, change this system of administration. Complaints about forests, complaints about Abkari, complaints about the Kulkarni Vatans have arisen because the authority is not in our hands. To state/in slightly changed words ... because we do not have Swaraj. That we should have Swaraj for us is at the root of our demand. We need not then dance to anybody's tune. The demand for Swaraj has nothing to do with sedition." 15

13. Ibid., p.252.
15. Ibid.
In his final appeal to the Belgaum audience, Tilak said: "The effect of the action may not be obtained in my lifetime; perhaps I may not be benefited by it. But this action must have its fruit. I am sure that by the grace of God your next generation will not fail to obtain the fruit of this work, though it may not be obtained in your lifetime." 

Henceforth Tilak's Indian Home Rule League started playing a significant political role. The Congress was still inactive. Its activities were mostly occasional. The Home Rule League was established with the intention to fight actively for the national cause. It could be truly said that this League was primarily responsible for giving a broad basis to the nationalist movement. Tilak especially gave a great impulse to the Home Rule Movement. Due to that an entirely new political spirit began to be aroused. Tilak worked incessantly to popularise the Home Rule Movement. His entire time was devoted to the propagation of the idea of Home Rule. It became his life and his passion. His friend Gangadharrao Deshpande said: "The idea of the Home Rule League consumed the Lokamanya's every wakeful moment." 

16. Tilak, Bal Gangadhar, His Writings and Speeches, pp.104-133.
17. Quoted in Tahmankar, op. cit., p.231.
One may note here the new method of his propaganda. By this time the intellectuals in general had been converted, and the Moderates were being reduced to a minority. It was for the masses that Tilak spoke, and the masses looked upon him as their Saviour. He was to them the Loka Manya ... The Peoples' Tribune. ¹⁸ "A District Magistrate had reported to Government that the people now worshipped Tilak as a God."¹⁹ When he spoke, they felt that it was not an individual, but a principle, a cause and an institution that spoke to them. And hereafter Tilak's career was a career, not of an endeavour, but of an achievement and a triumph.

From Belgaum Tilak returned to Poona via Satara, where the citizens presented him with an address. In his speech he urged his audience to imbibe the virtues of patriotism, courage, self-sacrifice and indifference to danger. They had to acquire these virtues, by constantly keeping before their minds, the exploits of Shivaji and his compatriots. If they were pessimists and dreaded the law of prosecution, they must be content to remain in perpetual bondage.

²⁰. Ibid.
On May 20, 1916, Mrs. Besant delivered a lecture on Home Rule in Poona during the Shivaji Day Celebrations. Tilak was in the chair. Besant's eloquence proved to be a great success. As stated earlier, Tilak had founded the Home Rule League on the 28th April, 1916. About five months later, on the 3rd September, 1916, Annie Besant founded her Home Rule League. Both the Home Rule Leagues wanted to intensify the consciousness of national right among the people. They tried to train them in the political art of conducting a movement for getting legal recognition for their rights. Although there were two Home Rule Leagues of Mrs. Besant and Tilak, they acted in close co-operation. They worked hand in hand.

Week after week Tilak wrote stirring articles in his two Weeklies, urging for Home Rule.

About the middle of 1916, Tilak undertook an extensive lecture tour for instructing masses on Home Rule. He exhorted them to become members of the Home Rule League. He appealed mainly to the masses and spoke to them in homely language. Tilak's homely speeches and direct appeals made him not only popular but a hero among the masses. Wherever he went he received a right royal reception. He appealed to the people to imbibe the virtues of patriotism, fearlessness and sacrifice.
Tilak visited Ahmednagar and attended the Ahmednagar District Conference. There he addressed a meeting on Home Rule on May 31, 1916. He emphatically declared that the British administration was as a matter of fact alien. There was no sedition in calling them so. He observed: "By alien I do not mean alien in religion. He who does what is beneficial to the people of this country, be he a Mohammedan or an Englishman, is not alien. The king's duty is to do all those things whereby the nation may rise, prosper and become the equal of other nations. That king who does this duty is not alien. My opinion is that whatever be the government, whether British or any other, it has, as Government, a sort of duty to perform. Government has a sort of religious duty to perform; a sort of responsibility lies on its shoulders. I say that when a Government evades this responsibility it is no Government at all."  

Shrewdly explaining the meaning of Swaraj, Tilak said: "The meaning of Swaraj, as stated above, is the retention of our Emperor and the rule of the English people, and the full possession by the people of the authority to manage the remaining affairs. This is the definition of Swaraj."  

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21. Ibid.
Tilak particularly mentioned in his Home Rule speeches the exorbitant salaries of the Government officers. He proceeded: "The Viceroy who comes to govern India gets twenty-thousand rupees a month while the Prime Minister of England gets five thousand rupees. He who has to live in England and manage the affairs of the whole Empire gets five thousand rupees, while he who carries on the administration of India here gets twenty thousand rupees. Why so? This is because the latter is managed at the cost of others. (Cheers). This is India. Go and eat." He concluded: "There is no other remedy than that the power should pass into the people's hands and rest in the hands of the people."

On June 1, 1916, Tilak delivered another speech at Ahmednagar on Home Rule. He told the people that if they did not attain Swaraj, there would be no industrial progress. Besides, there would be no kind of education useful to the nation, either primary or higher. He further declared that the world situation was such that soon England would be forced to grant liberty to her colonies.

22. Tilak, Bal Gangadhar, **op. cit.**, pp.138-52.
23. Ibid.
Tilak asked the people to say resolutely that they wanted what was theirs. He said: "What is there to fear in saying that you want Swaraj?" That was a lawful way. The Goddess of Liberty would descend from above if the people were firm and courageous. He asked the people to take what would be given and to ask for more. He appealed to the businessmen to contribute funds. He told them that the Congress assembled only once a year and then they had to wait till the next year. But the object of the Home Rule League was to work all the year round. That was a work for the protection of religion and for the protection of the cow. That was the work of the nation and political progress. "If the sons of the cow would not care about that, then they would have to be called bullocks, as the sons of the cows were called." 

In this way, Tilak's Home Rule League played a revitalizing political role. He had the magnetic personality and tremendous activism. This gave a new spirit to the Home Rule Movement. The whole of Western India came under the spell of this new political spirit. People flocked to become the members of his Home Rule League. Even Shaukat Ali and his

brother Mohamed Ali who were interned in Chhindwara became members of the league. The Ali brothers also contributed their mite towards the purse that was presented to Lokamanya in Poona. But the success of the movement was intolerable to the bureaucracy. Hence a policy of repression was decided. Once again Tilak and the Government were at war.

The Third Sedition Case Against Tilak

The establishment of the Home Rule League was a threat to bureaucracy. The Government had thought that Tilak would be forgotten by the people after his return from Mandalay. But the Government's impressions proved to be false. Tilak once again resumed with great vitality his campaign of nationalist work. Hence the government decided to check his activities. It was the peculiar mentality of Indian bureaucracy to ignore the underlying causes and strength of a public movement, but to look upon one or more persons as solely responsible for it.

The 23rd of July, 1916, was Tilak's 61st birthday. A grand reception was organised in Poona in his honour. Five to six thousand persons were present including representatives from Karrataka, Berar, Gujarat and Bombay city. Speeches eulogising Tilak's work for the Motherland were made. On this
occasion a purse of one lakh of rupees was presented to him as a token of the people's high esteem. It was at this time of the function that a police officer came to serve Tilak with a notice from the Poona District Magistrate. A case was instituted against Tilak for certain speeches he had delivered at Belgaum and Ahmednagar on Home Rule. Now he was ordered to furnish a personal bond of Rs.20,000 with two sureties of Rs.10,000 each, to be of good behaviour for a period of one year. "This was a birthday present from the Government!" Tilak welcomed the officer with a smile. He said he was glad that the Government should offer him a present on the auspicious day. Tilak was a man with an iron will. He always took victory and defeat, pain and pleasure, in a spirit of resignation. He signed the papers and accepted the notice. Nevertheless, the birthday celebration was performed with great dignity and pomm. Tilak was touched with the great regard and honour the people showered on him.

He rose to reply. His reply was characteristic. He said: "The national work before all of us, is so comprehensive, and so urgent, that you must take it up, with a greater determination and zeal, than I have done. It cannot be postponed."

Our Motherland is calling upon all of us to undertake this work, and I do not feel that her sons will not respond to that call. I have only to appeal, listen to this call of the Motherland; let us sink all differences; let us all become Rashtra Devas (One to whom the country is a God).”

The celebration was over, and the proceedings of another trial commenced. At every trial of Tilak, there were new officers, new governors, new circumstances; but Tilak was never to be cowed down.

Tilak was now to make all the preparations. This time, he wanted Jinnah to take up his case. Accordingly, Jinnah accepted the brief. The inquiry began before the District Magistrate of Poona on August 7. Tilak was present in the court. On behalf of Government, Mr. Binning made his appearance. At the outset, Jinnah wanted to know which statements of Tilak were considered objectionable. Binning said that the speeches made by Tilak on the subject of Home Rule at Belgaum on May 1, and at Ahmednagar on May 31, and June 1, 1916 were generally considered objectionable, and seditious. He further informed the court that Government did not object to the demand of

Home Rule. But the manner in which Tilak demanded Home Rule betrayed disloyalty to Government on his part and were therefore seditious. Binning dubbed Tilak's declaration of loyalty a mere cloak to save himself from the clutches of law. He questioned Tilak's bona-fides and pressed for his conviction. Tilak was examined. In his examination he told the court that his object was to explain to the people what the Home Rule meant. Jinnah argued the case. The District Magistrate held that Tilak wanted to disaffect his audience towards the Government. The District Magistrate, Hatch, therefore, under section 108 of Criminal Procedure Code, directed Tilak to enter into a bond for a sum of twenty thousand rupees with two sureties each in the sum of ten thousand rupees to be of good behaviour for a period of one year. Tilak signed the bond and tendered Trimbak Hari Avate and Ganpat Vithoba Morval as his sureties.

On August, 23, Tilak appealed in the High Court of Bombay against the decision of the Poona District Magistrate. The court admitted the appeal. The hearing began on November 9, 1916, before Judges Batchelor and Shah. Messrs M.A. Jinnah and Erulkar appeared as Tilak's counsel. M.R. Jardine with Binning appeared for the Crown. The terms "Government" and "disaffection" were discussed at length. Jinnah submitted
that Tilak's speeches were directed to the part of the civil service which formed a part of the bureaucracy of the whole system. He attacked only the bureaucracy that had the monopoly of power and were not responsible to the people. His object was to popularise the Home Rule League and motivate people to become its members. The Home Rule Movement had never been objected to. Binning himself had made it clear in the lower court that it was not illegal or unconstitutional. Trying to change a system of administration could never be interpreted as hatred or disaffection. His speeches thus conclusively showed that he had no intention of spreading disaffection towards Government established by law in British India.

Jardine said that Government meant persons who had the power to carry on the Government. Jinnah's defence was quite able. Besides his task was rendered much easier by the soft attitude of the Judges. On November 10, both the judges delivered separate but concurring judgements and set aside the order of the District Magistrate of Poona.

In his judgement, Justice Batchelor stated: "... But apparently Tilak's motive or main objective does not appear to be to create disaffection against the civil service. He has been pleading for progressive political rights for the people and that in itself could never be seditious. ... Taking
Tilak's total argument into consideration, it is clear that he wanted to express disapproval of the system of government but did not want to create hatred and disaffection. ... All that he has said about the civil service is fair criticism or even unfair criticism but not defamation or denunciation. I, therefore, set aside the order of the District Judge."

Justice Shah's judgement is still more liberal. He said: "... it appears that Tilak's object is to make a demand for Indians getting Home Rule, educating public opinion in support of the demand and enlisting membership for the Home Rule League. Tilak has not advocated any unconstitutional or unlawful methods in pursuit of this objective ...."29

The entire Indian press hailed the acquittal of Tilak and congratulated him. He was overwhelmed with congratulatory letters and telegrams. His triumph was the triumph of the Home Rule cause. With this decision of the Court, Tilak was restored his liberty of speech. Hence he concentrated his energies on the spread of the Home Rule Movement. On learning the news, the Home Member of the Government of India observed that, "the results have been very mischievous."30


29. Ibid., p.343.

30. Quoted in Karmarkar, op. cit., p.255.
Home Rule Movement became a legal demand. Those who were hesitating to join the Home Rule League now immediately became its active members.

The bureaucrats were humiliated in the High Court. But still they did not sit silent. They were waiting for the opportunity to trap and trouble Tilak. An important incident at Gadag is worth mentioning here. On 18th November, 1916, Tilak went on some private business to Gadag, a town in Dharwad District. He was accompanied by his friend, Sir Marmohanad Ramji. A huge audience had gathered to have the darshana of Lokamanya. They had arranged a reception. But the District Magistrate of Dharwad, D.G.Turner, who happened to be at Gadag, issued orders prohibiting Tilak from delivering any speech. The Mamlatdar demolished the platform erected, for the function, by the local leaders. The organizers of the function met Tilak just before the time of the meeting. Tilak said he would attend the meeting. When Tilak reached the place, the Mamlatdar served him with the order. Tilak took this order and pocketed it. Tilak argued that the order applied only to him and not to the public. Hence, he protested against the dispersal of the public by the police. He wanted to know if the prohibition order referred only to a public speech or also
the "pansupari". Ultimately he was allowed five minutes for reception. Thus the proceedings started. Mr. Alur, a Dharwad pleader congratulated Tilak on his acquittal and offered him "pansupari", a coconut and garlanded him. In reply Tilak spoke for about three minutes. He thanked the people for the honour showered on him. He further said that the Home Rule had been declared as fully just, right and legitimate and the people should lend their support by becoming members of the Home Rule League. Although a big speech was banned, Tilak was seen off at the station by a big crowd. People illuminated temples, shops, and houses and demonstrated to the District wholly Magistrate that they were behind Tilak. "This incident is only one small link in the great chain of the protracted struggle between the Indian Government and Lokamanya Tilak, carried on for over a quarter of a century." 

On his way to Poona, Tilak stopped at Hubli and Belgaum also. Here meetings were held and branches of the Home Rule League established.

Thus it may be noted that the various tactics of the Government failed to cripple the activities of Tilak, Tilak continued his efforts with re-doubled vigour. Tilak and his associates unweariedly propagated the idea of Home Rule far

and wide. They made it practically the only living issue in Indian politics. The movement had its repercussion on the Indian National Congress. The movement infused the Congress with new strength and vigour.

Even while the appeal in the third sedition case was pending, the Home Rule Movement continued unabated. The idea was never to stop it. However, the protagonists of Home Rule were asked to write out their speeches before they were delivered. This was done to secure accuracy and precision in statement and argument. A series of lectures was deliberately arranged to give new vitality to the movement. N.C. Kelkar, Secretary of the Home Rule League, delivered the first speech of the series on September 24, 1916 at Kirloskar theatre, Poona. Joseph Baptista was in the chair. On October 1, R.P. Karandikar delivered a similar lecture under the presidency of K.P. Khadilkar. Mrs. Besant had started a similar campaign in Madras. Mrs. Besant's voice echoed in India. She wanted a dynamic political body, and had organised an auxiliary Home Rule League in London on June 12, 1916. On September 1, 1916, her Home Rule League in India was founded in Madras. She now raged a waging and tearing campaign for Home Rule. S.J. Rai spoke on Home Rule at Calcutta, with Surendranath Banerjee.
in the chair. In his presidential address, Banerjee insisted that after the war, India must get Swaraj or Home Rule. On October 8, the U.P. Provincial Conference was held at Gorakhpur. C.Y. Chintamani presided over the conference. He insisted on the conferment of complete self-Government on India. On the same day, R.G. Pradhan of Nasik delivered a lecture at Poona with Kelkar in the chair. On October 15, H.K. Patwardhan followed. Baptista published a comprehensive draft of a Home Rule Bill for India for introduction in the parliament.

On October 21, 1916, the Bombay Provincial Political Conference was held at Ahmedabad. On this occasion, both the Militants and Moderates were present in large numbers. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was the president. Tilak attended this conference. The people of Gujarat accorded to Tilak a magnificent reception. This conference showed that unity had been restored between the two groups. In this sense the conference was a great success. At this conference Jinnah's speech was full of advocacy for the memorandum of the 19 elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council in favour of immediate political demands made therein. Tilak supported the memorandum and exhorted the conference to accept it. Tilak's support of the memorandum was a significant step as the Bengal Extremists were opposed to it.
The memorandum of the nineteen members was a step towards the formulation of the Congress-League Scheme. Tilak was a staunch supporter of the Congress-League Scheme. To be true, the scheme represented the detailed administrative plan, accepted by the Home Rule League. In November 1916, Tilak was elected as a member of the All-India Congress Committee which gave a final touch to the Congress-League Scheme. According to the Congress-League Scheme, the Moslems agreed to self-Government and the Congress agreed to communal electorates for the Moslems.

The Congress-League Scheme was accepted by the Lucknow Congress. This was primarily due to the influence of Tilak. M.A. Ansari says: "It may be asserted without any doubt that Tilak's generous attitude was a great factor in winning over the Mussalmans, and including them to accept the proposals which formed the Lucknow Pact." 32

**The Lucknow Congress of 1916**

On December 23, 1916, Tilak started by a special train to Lucknow from Bombay. He was accompanied by three hundred delegates of the Home Rule League. The Lucknow Congress had

32. Ibid., p.356.
created a tremendous enthusiasm among the people, because Tilak was going to attend it after a gap of eight years. Besides, it was to be the first united Congress after the split of 1907. There were huge demonstrations and receptions for Lokamanya at various stations. "The Times of India, Bombay, warned the Moderates that Tilak was going to capture the Congress."33 The most remarkable among all the receptions was the one at Bhopal where 500 Muslims were present. The special train, that had left Bombay at 9-40 A.M. on the 23rd December, reached Lucknow at 12 noon on the 25th December. A vast crowd was awaiting the arrival of the train. A thundering ovation was accorded to 'Bhagvan' Tilak. People were excited beyond measure to see Lokamanya and pay respect to him. Tilak was literally forced to get into a carriage which the young people drove themselves. In the procession he was led through the bazaar to Chhedilal's Dharmashala at about 2 p.m. Tilak ascended the terrace of the building and from there addressed the people. He said that the Home Rule Flag would be flown the next day in their 'Lucky' city.

34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
The Lucknow Congress was unique in many respects. The Nationalist Party returned to the Congress; Tilak attended the session; the two wings of the Congress were united; after the Calcutta Congress of 1906, the Lucknow Congress was the first united Congress. This session was largely attended. Formulation of a scheme of self-Government and fraternization of the Hindus and Muslims were its distinct achievements.

On December 26, 1916, the session of the Congress commenced. Ambikacharan Majumdar was the President. There were about twenty-three hundred delegates and thrice as many visitors. Lokamanya Tilak and RashBehari Ghose were seated on the same platform. Surendranath Banerjee, Khaparde, Jinnah, Besant, Gandhi and others were on the dias. But in spite of the presence of so many leaders, Tilak's personality was dominating. To quote Sir Valentine Chirol: "Tilak in company with Besant stepped on to the platform for the first time since his six years' transportation to Mandalay. They were both acclaimed almost like incarnations of the deity."36 The Chairman of the Reception Committee, Pandit Jagat Narayan expressed great joy at the return of the Nationalists to the Congress and the participation of the Muslims in the Congress.

36. Ibid., p.373.
The Congress President, Ambikacharan Majumdar proudly declared that the united Congress, which was buried at Surat, was reborn that day at Lucknow. Referring to Tilak, he said: "I most cordially welcome Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Motilal Ghose and other brave comrades, who separated from us at Surat and have been happily restored to us at Lucknow. I rejoice to find that they are after all 'of us' and 'with us' and let us hope never to part again."[37] In the evening Tilak attended the joint conference of the All India Congress Committee and the Muslim League. On this occasion he said: "We are entitled to the possession of the whole estate at once. If we allowed you to share in that possession, it was in the hope that you would clear off. You must acknowledge that we are the masters."

Next day the members of the subjects committee were to be elected. Tilak's Nationalist Party was dominating. So great was the hold of Tilak that in the election an ordinary member of Tilak's Nationalist Party defeated Mahatma Gandhi. But still Tilak proclaimed that Gandhi had been elected.[39]

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37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., p.374.
39. Ibid.
When the draft of the proposed Congress-League Scheme came up for consideration before the subjects committee, a storm raged over it. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and other Hindu leaders were quite opposed to it. The Moderates had lost the initiative. But the only organized party in the Congress was under Tilak. He was determined to carry the scheme through. C.S. Ranga Iyer, the then editor-in-charge of the Advocate, writes of his reminiscences of Tilak: "When angry speakers were fuming on all sides, he was calm as a rock. The leader of Maharashtra who was the most religious, the most learned in the Vedas and among the most orthodox of the Hindus would not listen to any arguments against the pact. Not that he was enamoured of it himself, but if it would satisfy the Muslims, if it could bring them to the Congress, if it could replace their extra-territorial patriotism by Indian Nationalism, the agreement was worth reaching. **Lokamanya Tilak's attitude was the deciding factor in the Hindu-Muslim settlement, the last word on the subject so far as the Hindus were concerned."[40]

On the morning of December 29, Tilak told D.G. Dalvi, a Bombay delegate, that if the latter had studied the history of India carefully he would remember that the Hindus had

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overthrown the Muslim rule twice and would do so again if such a situation arose. But in the existing circumstances, he added, there was no other go but to avoid a triangular fight and win over the Muslims to the national struggle to drive away the Britishers.41

On December 29, 1916, the resolution on self-Government was discussed. Tilak spoke in support of the resolution on self-Government. His speech was especially known for its simplicity, clarity, effectiveness. He said that Swaraj, home-rule and self-Government were synonyms. He referred to the decisions of the Calcutta and Bombay High Courts which had decided that propaganda for Swaraj was legal. He said: "You can criticise, you can make any criticism in order to further your object, in order to justify your demand, perfectly within the bonds of law."42

Tilak proceeded, "The British tell us that we the descendants of the Aryans are not the original owners of the soil. We Aryans took the country from the Aborigines; the Muslims conquered it from the Aryans, and the English conquered

42. Quoted in Varma, op. cit., p.357.
it from the Muslims. Hence the English are the guardians of the Aborigines. Well, I agree to this and ask the English to go away delivering the possession to Bhils, Gonds, and Adi-Dravids. We will gladly serve the original owners of the soil." At this the whole pandal sank in laughter and cheers. Further he said in his natural simple voice:

"Home Rule is my birth-right and I shall have it." This the whole pandal resounded with one resonant voice. After Tilak’s speech Baptista and Mrs. Besant spoke on the resolution, and it was carried.

On the evening of December 30, a conference of Home Rule was held in the pandal of the Theosophical Federation, Lucknow. About one thousand Home Rulers were present. Mrs. Besant who was in the chair delivered one of her best speeches. Tilak too made a powerful speech. His speech was so effective that some members of the audience said: "Here is the incarnation of Shivaji." Reviewing the happenings at Lucknow Tilak said:

45. Quoted in Varma, op. cit., p.358.
"There is a feeling among the Hindus that too much has been given to the Muslims. As a Hindu I have no objection to making this concession. When a case is difficult, a client goes to a lawyer and promises to pay him one half of the property if he wins the case. The same is the case here. We cannot rise from our present intolerable condition without the aid of the Muslims. So in order to gain the desired end there is no objection to giving a percentage, a greater percentage, to the Muslims. Their responsibility becomes greater. The greater the percentage of representation you give to them, they will be doubly bound to work for you and with you, with a zeal and enthusiasm greater than ever. The fight is at present a triangular one." \(^{46}\)

He continued, "History and reason are against the difficulties created by the bureaucracy, and we must triumph in the end. Be prepared to say that you are a Home Ruler. Say that you must have it and I dare say when you are ready you will get it. There is nothing anarchical in this demand." \(^{47}\)

He concluded, "Home Rule is the only remedy. Insist on your rights. India is your own house. Is it not? (Cries of

\(^{46}\) Quoted in Keer, Dhananjay, *op. cit.*, p.376.

\(^{47}\) *Ibid.*
yes!). Then why not manage it yourselves? (Cheers). Our domestic affairs must be in our hands. We do not want separation from England.  

On December 31, Tilak drove to the Royal Hotel in Lucknow and saw Miss MacLloyd of the Ramakrishna Mission. He decided, with the help of Malaviya, Surendranath Banerjee and Jinnah, to launch a vigorous Home Rule campaign.

Thus, the year 1916 found Tilak at the height of his eminence and popularity. So far, the Congress was always under the control of the Moderates. But now Tilak was able to be at the helm of the Congress. As a political sage he had given to the country the immortal Mantra of Swaraj.

On January 1, 1917, Tilak visited the industrial city of Kanpur. He was received almost like a demi-god. At every turning of the streets he was honoured in the Hindu fashion with "arati". There was a big crowd and over twenty-thousand people were present at the parade ground. Tilak addressed them in English. The Lokamanya explained to the people the

48. Ibid.
ethical and economic significance of Home Rule. He said that Home Rule was nothing else but to be the masters of their own houses. Prayer meant cultivation of mind. He asked them to pray for Home Rule. "There is no use praying merely for nothing. God does not want prayer for Himself. God does not want praise from you," he added. Tilak then went to Calcutta to meet Babu Motilal Ghose of the Amrit Bazar Patrika. B.C. Pal came to see Tilak. They discussed the Home Rule Movement, C.R.Das also met him and was attracted towards the philosophy and techniques of political action of Tilak.

After the Lucknow Congress of 1916, Tilak carried on intensive propaganda work for Home Rule. He toured extensively and visited many parts of India. These visits were referred to in police reports as "triumphant tours." Largely attended meetings were addressed by him. Many leaders who had hitherto belonged to the Moderate party joined the Nationalists. Thus, the Home Rule Movement was spreading over India like a wild fire. The movement had two characteristic features. One was the active participation of women; the other was the religious colour given to it as in the case of Swadeshi movement in Bengal.

49. Ibid., pp.377-378.
50. Majumdar, op. cit., p.253.
On his way back from Calcutta to Poona, Tilak reached Nagpur on January 6, 1917. A public meeting was held at Chitnavis Park over which Dr. Harisingh Gour presided. Tilak delivered an effective speech on Home Rule, and the audience was greatly impressed. He said, "We must carry on our agitation with redoubled vigour and remember that God helps those who help themselves."  

Then the party reached Amraoti. The whole city was decorated and illuminated in honour of Tilak's visit. At the Jog Square in a public meeting, Tilak spoke for about twenty minutes. He told the people that the goal was settled at Lucknow by the leading men of all the parties and creeds. It was Home Rule or Swaraj. Everyone should ask boldly for Swaraj. The ideal of Home Rule for India was held legal. To preach it was no sedition.   

The next day Tilak and his party started by train to Yeotmal. Wherever Tilak went, he was accorded a grand reception. At every station the people garlanded him and were pleased to hear a few words from his lips. At Yeotmal, he was accorded an enthusiastic welcome. Speaking at a function he said that the   

51. Quoted in Parvate, op. cit., p.354.
word Swaraj had a limited meaning that day. It was right to have Home Rule but it was a historical and a European way of putting it.\textsuperscript{52} He observed that Home Rule was Dharma; and just as they could not separate heat from fire, so they could not separate Home Rule from the people.

At Darwha, Tilak spoke a very few, but meaningful words. He said that one need not buy railway tickets for each station when one buys a ticket from Darwha to Bombay. Similarly, they need not make any other demands when they made the single, wholesale demand of Swaraj. At Murtazapur at the public meeting Tilak said: "We tried to storm the fortress of Swaraj from various corners and directions but that was so much waste of effort and it is now decided to storm the main entrance, to capture the entire fortress of Swaraj. It is no use plucking leaves and buds and flowers and fruit if we want the tree itself. We must get at its bottom and even its roots."\textsuperscript{53}

From here Tilak went to Akola where a small sum of Rs.250/- was presented to him for the work of the Home Rule League. At the Akola public meeting, he said: "Now, even Government says it is in favour of granting us rights of Swaraj. The demand has

\textsuperscript{52} Tilak, Bal Gangadhar, \textit{op. cit.}, p.230.

\textsuperscript{53} Quoted in Parvate, \textit{op. cit.}, p.354.
been declared lawful and constitutional. But Government says we must use measured words while asking for Swaraj. It is something like asking one to eat a nut without cracking it by one's teeth." From Akola Tilak went straight to Poona.

When Tilak reached Poona he fell ill. In spite of his ill health, Tilak convened a meeting of the Home Rule League Council on January 28, 1917. He took stock of the work done till then. Six branches were formed, three thousand members were enlisted and subscriptions and donations to the tune of Rs.7000/- were collected. It was decided to appoint propagandists to spread the gospel of Home Rule. It was also decided to collect a fund for sending a deputation to England for educating the British public opinion in favour of Home Rule for India. On the 29th, January, 1917, a lecture on Home Rule was organized at the Kirloskar theatre. Tilak, in his presidential address, said that if Swaraj was granted to India, the Indians would fight to defend the British Empire.

Tilak's papers, the Kesari and the Mahratta were concentrating on the Home Rule propaganda. His colleagues and followers were using the platform for the same purpose.

54. Ibid., p.355.
The Government was perturbed at these developments. In January, 1917, the Home Member of the Government of India wrote in a confidential report: "The position is one of great difficulty. Moderate leaders can command no support among the local masses who are being led at the heels of Tilak and Besant." He therefore expressed his opinion that the Moderates should be placated by an early sanction of the reform proposals of greater Indianization of the local bodies and increase of Indian element in the Legislature. The Government had placed restrictions on the activities of Mrs. Besant. She was ordered not to enter the Punjab. A similar order was served on Tilak also by the Government of the Punjab. Even its words were harsh. It said: "Government is informed that Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the Chitpavan Brahman of Poona, intends to visit the Punjab and endanger peace and public safety by his behaviour. So he is advised that he should not enter the Punjab. If he violates this instruction he will be liable to three years' imprisonment and fine." From this it was apparent that Government felt very sore at the successful tours of Tilak all over the country.

55. Quoted in Majumdar, op. cit., p.253.
57. Quoted in Parvate, op. cit., p.356.
On February 17, 1917, a public meeting was held in Poona with Principal R.P. Paranjpye in the chair. This was with the intention to appeal to young men of India to join the army. Tilak appealed to the youth to join the army for military training. He said they should not think that life in the military was a waste. Whatever the hardships and however unsatisfactory the conditions for military service might be, it was in the interest of their country that they should learn modern warfare. To him it was a sacred duty to become a soldier to defend the Motherland. If they were not prepared to defend the country, they should not talk of Swaraj. He said it was an opportunity because there was the war on. He told that it should not be difficult to raise a volunteer army of 20,000 from Maharashtra and Karnataka. The proclamation prohibiting Tilak from entering the Punjab was served on Tilak on February 17, after the above mentioned meeting was concluded.

In a few days, Tilak was also prohibited to enter Delhi. The order served on him stated that he had already been in Delhi once. But as a matter of fact, he had never gone there. All these orders showed that Government had no faith in Tilak's bona fides. On the one hand, Government was carrying on a recruiting campaign and on the other, it was placing restrictions on Tilak's activities, which were calculated to
promote the same objective. But Tilak went on with his work undeterred. On March 2, 1917, a mass meeting was held in Bombay, over which Tilak presided. He re-iterated his views and urged the people to join the army and serve the country. He asked them to work hard and risk their lives in the army. Tilak declared that his son had already volunteered. This made a great impression on the public. About eight hundred people enlisted themselves among whom many were university graduates.

In the first week of April, 1917, Tilak left for Calcutta to attend the meeting of the All India Congress Committee. At the meeting the personnel of the delegation to be sent to London was discussed and settled. Calcutta was chosen as the venue of the next Congress. From Calcutta, Tilak started his Karnataka tour and came directly to Belgaum, without stopping at Poona on the way.

He attended the Belgaum District Political Conference on April 12, 1917. R.P. Karandikar presided. Tilak was taken in a procession and he addressed a public meeting. The address was couched in philosophical terminology. On April 13, Tilak

58. Ibid., p.357.
attended a conference of the Maratha community. Stressing
the need of education Tilak said: "It is Government's duty to
spread education. But Government is afraid that if people
receive education their aspirations will grow and they well
demand self-rule and so it is tardy in its efforts. If we get
Swaraj and if I am somebody in it, I promise that I shall at
once introduce universal, free and compulsory primary education
to begin with. If you want this, you must develop your strength
and compel Government to concede what you want."59

Thus Tilak was entirely taken up by the single idea of
work for Swaraj. Addressing another public meeting at Belgaum
he said: "We now propose to go to England and knock at the door
of parliament and demand Swaraj."60 From Belgaum Tilak went to
Chikodi. A meeting was held under the auspices of the Home
Rule League with D.V. Belvi in the chair. Tilak appealed to the
people to contribute money. He said: if he wanted Rs.5000/- for
the Home Rule League, even a single individual might have given
that sum; but he was anxious to have a rupee each, from 5000
people because that meant that as many people were anxious to
have Home Rule.

59. Ibid., p.359.
60. Ibid.
From Chikodi, Tilak was taken to Nipani, a centre of sugar-cane and tobacco cultivation. There he protested against his being styled as 'Mahatma Bhagwan Tilak'. He asked them to stop that fad. What he knew he told the people. He did nothing extraordinary. He appealed to the citizens to join the military. During Peshwa Rule the Desais at Nipani could raise a battalion in one day. But their present condition was very pitiable. Citizens fled at the sight of a recruiting officer. That was the pitiable state to which they had been reduced by the British Government. He added that it neglected the Nipani tobacco also and imported it from Egypt. He concluded: "This must stop and Swaraj can put a stop to these things in a very short time because the will to stop them will be there. Where there is a will there is a way." 

The First Anniversary of the Indian Home Rule League

The first annual conference of the Home Rule League was held at Nasik on May 17 and 18, 1917. Srinivas Sastrī was the President. Baptista, the President of the League, reviewed the work of the year. After that, the Secretary submitted the

61. Ibid.
62. Ibid., p.360.
report of the year's activities. Tilak's League had more than 14,000 members. The collection from membership fee amounted to ₹9,000/- and donations to ₹6,000/-. Mrs. Besant and a number of her leading followers enlisted themselves as members of Tilak's Home Rule League. Tilak and his followers, in turn, joined Besant's Home Rule League. Thus there was perfect co-operation between the Tilak and Besant Leagues.

Speaking at the conference, Tilak said that the Mission of the Home Rule League was not to propagate social reforms or industrial reforms, but to propagate the rights of Swaraj, Home Rule. The object of the Madras Home Rule League and that of his Home Rule League were not different. He said that the spirit behind the Home Rule movement was eternal and indestructible. Soul meant God, and mind would not rest till it got identified with Him. If one body was worn out, the soul would take another. "No weapon could cut the spirit, no fire could burn it, no water could wet it, no wind could dry it." He declared: "We will follow Shri Ramachandra in obeying the order of our father, the Congress. We are determined to make efforts to get this resolution enforced even if the effort leads us to the desert, compels us to live incognito, makes us suffer hardships and even if it finally brings us to death."63

Winding up his speech, Tilak emphasized the role of the League and its difference from the Congress. He said the Congress was merely a deliberative body. Its only or main function was to pass pious resolutions. On the other hand, the Home Rule League was pledged to work zealously throughout the year for the sole object of achieving Home Rule. He did not thank those who wished the League a long life. But he would prefer that the League be dissolved in two years after the grant of Home Rule to India.

The Government's Repression

After the annual conference was over, the workers redoubled their efforts to motivate people towards the Home Rule Movement. They carried the propaganda to the remote villagers. The local officials sent alarming reports of their seditious teachings. And they urged the Government of India to take strong measures. Even the Viceroy was impressed by the strength and popularity of the movement. He submitted a report to the Secretary of State for India presenting the real situation in India. The Viceroy observed in his report: "Mrs. Besant, Tilak and others are fomenting with great vigour the agitation for immediate Home Rule, and in the absence of any definite announcement by Government of India as to their policy in the
matter, it is attracting many of those who hitherto have held less advanced views. The agitation is having mischievous effect on public feeling throughout the country."

The Government, true to its policy of repression was keen on curbing the activities of the Home Rule Movement. It warned the people against the extravagant demands of Home Rule. On 15, June, 1917, the Government of Madras issued orders of internment against Mrs. Besant and her two co-workers, G.S. Arundale and B.P. Wadia. All this had an effect on political India just the opposite of what was intended.

The Government's determined hostility against the Home Rule Leagues stirred the whole country. Its evident desire to declare them as illegal associations was deadly opposed all over the country. Sir Subramaniya Aiyar, recognised throughout India as an eminent lawyer and also a retired Judge of the Madras High Court, boldly stood forward as the champion of the Home Rule League. As a protest against the Government, he renounced his title of Knighthood.65 He wrote to President Wilson of America protesting against the internment of Besant


and declaring that it was the attitude of the bureaucracy that was coming in the way of militarisation. Subramaniya Aiyar challenged Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, to proceed against him and hundreds like him who demanded Home Rule. His lead was followed by thousands and they offered to be prosecuted for demanding Home Rule.

The internment of Mrs. Besant was adversely criticised even in Britain and other foreign countries. A storm of indignation swept India from one end to the other. Protest meetings were held all over the country. Those nationalist leaders, who had hitherto stood aloof, joined the Home Rule Leagues and actively participated in their campaigns. Even the placidity of the Congress was disturbed.

In such a situation, Tilak issued a general appeal to all to support the single demand of Home Rule. He exhorted the people to forget all other differences in a crisis like that. That appeal went home. Meetings began to be held in important centres to protest against Lord Pentland's attitude. More and more people enlisted themselves as members of the Home Rule League. C.Y. Chintamani, editor of the Leader of Allahabad, became a member of the Home Rule League. Surendranath Banerjee and Jinnah joined the League.
Tilak declared in an article in the Kesari that the only way to settle the Indian problem was to grant Swaraj to India, that the first step after the war towards that end should be taken immediately, and that India would be raised to the status of a self-governing member within the Empire. Tilak wanted to take advantage of the war situation and to push ahead the demand for Swaraj. He therefore sent Joseph Baptista to London on July 14, 1917, to propagate the idea of Home Rule for India.

On July 28, 1917, a joint meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and the Council of the Muslim League was held at Bombay. Under the inspiration of Tilak the All-India Congress Committee made a vigorous protest to the Viceroy against the repressive policy. It asked for an official declaration accepting the political demands of the Indians. They also pressed for the release of Mrs. Besant and her associates. They placed on record their appreciation of the work carried on by the Home Rule Leagues. In recognition of it, they elected Mrs. Besant as the President of the Congress session in 1917. Meetings were held all over India for the release of Mrs. Besant and Ali brothers. The Home Rule League of Madras was pleased with enthusiasm and courage. It awarded medals to those who suffered jail for the cause of the nation. Sir Subramaniya
Aiyar sent such a special Golden Medal to Tilak with the word to accept it. "The Award bore an inscription of a Lock with two letters 'F.I.', meaning Fellowship of the Interned."  

Tilak and his Home Rule League were anxiously waiting for the official declaration of their policy. In England, Lord Pentland had ridiculed the idea of Home Rule in a public speech. Tilak took up the challenge. He advised the Congress organizations all over India to make vigorous protests. And he asked them to send petitions urging upon the Secretary of State to grant Home Rule to India. There was already a suggestion to resort to Passive Resistance in order to secure the release of Mrs. Besant. And now Tilak proposed to broaden it on the main political issue of Home Rule.

Under the influence of Home Rule Movement, the joint meeting of the Congress and the Muslim League considered the proposal of starting Passive Resistance. The matter was referred to the Provincial Congress Committees. These committees considered it in August and September. The Madras Committee fully approved of the idea on 14 August, 1917. It appointed a sub-committee to formulate practical steps to give

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effect to it. Six days later, on 20 August 1917, the Secretary of State, E.S. Montagu, made his historical pronouncement in the House of Commons. He declared Responsible Government as the goal of British policy in India. There can be hardly any doubt that it was the direct result of the Home Rule Movement. In any case it altered the political situation in India. The Congress and the Muslim League dropped the idea of Passive Resistance. They decided to send an All-India deputation to the Viceroy. Mrs. Besant also dropped the Home Rule Movement. Within a month of Montagu's announcement, that is to say, on September 17, 1917, Mrs. Besant and her colleagues were released.

Tilak did not suspend the Home Rule agitation. He knew that it was this agitation that had forced the Government to meet the Indian demands at least partially. It was therefore necessary to keep it alive in order to obtain substantial concessions from the Government. The Home Rule Movement became more and more popular. It tended to become a mass movement. Indeed both the people and the Government now began to look upon Tilak as an unbeatable leader in politics. Tilak's activities after Montagu's statement were described in

an official report as follows: "The capture of the Congress organization by Mrs. Besant and Tilak is complete. The Moderate party in the Congress is extinguished. The Congress is completely identified with Home Rule." The Moderate leaders dominated the Congress till the return of Tilak to active politics in 1914. But now Tilak's Home Rule campaign practically ousted the Moderates from political field.

On the 24th September a meeting was held at Bombay. It was organized to protest against the demand of a security of Rs. 2,000/- from the Bombay Chronicle. The Lokamanya attended the meeting with Kelkar.

On October 3, 1917, Tilak addressed a meeting in Bombay. In his speech he demanded the release of the Ali brothers. He said: "Government has not proved the charges it has made against the Ali brothers nor has given them a hearing. On the one hand Government gives a certificate to the Muslim community for loyalty and on the other it keeps under detention their trusted leaders without trial." This sentiment was later echoed everywhere. At the same meeting, Tilak and others

68. Quoted in Majumdar, op. cit., p.256.
69. Quoted in Parvate, op. cit., p.369.
decided to send a public memorandum to the British Government demanding Swaraj. The signature campaign for the Congress-League Scheme of self-Government was begun by all the Home Rule Leaguers. This was to convince the British public and the parliament that not only the vocal leaders but the masses were demanding the Home Rule.

On October 6, 1917, a joint meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and the Muslim League Council was held at Allahabad. On his way to Allahabad, Tilak stopped at Broach. Here, Haribhai Amin had taken the lead in starting a branch of the Home Rule League. The meeting, there, was very crowded. Four different speakers from four corners had to speak simultaneously. Tilak addressed two meetings at Allahabad preaching the doctrine of Home Rule. He created a great stir in the city by his powerful speeches on Home Rule.

On the 7th October, 1917, he spoke in the premises of the Home Rule League, Allahabad. Mrs. Annie Besant presided over it. Tilak declared that Home Rule was the birthright of Indians. He held that Indians had as much right to represent the King-Emperor as the bureaucrats. He pleaded that a time limit should be fixed for the grant of self-Government. He
declared he was not satisfied with the vague promises of Montagu's announcement.

On the 8th October, 1917, Tilak delivered another speech at Allahabad. Malaviya was in the chair. Tilak analysed the factors that led to the establishment of the Home Rule League. He made it clear that there were no differences between the League and the Congress. He clarified that the Home Rule League had only been the instrument in realizing the objective of self-Government of the Congress. In his speech Tilak also referred to the concept of passive resistance. He categorically said that people could not obey laws which were repugnant to justice and morality. He also declared: "Passive resistance was the means to an end but was not the goal in itself."

From Allahabad Tilak went direct to Pandharpur to attend the Sholapur District Conference. It was chaired by N.C. Kelkar. On his return to Poona, Tilak attended a meeting in Poona, to support the Congress-League Scheme of self-Government. Addressing the meeting, he pleaded for secularism. He said that India did not want the old system of Swaraj. She wanted

70. Quoted in Varma, op. cit., p.370.
to establish her Swaraj on the Western pattern. The caste system was brought on by the British Raj over India. If the past dissensions continued they would be obstacles on the way of Swaraj.

On November 4, 1917, the Gujarat Political Conference was held at Godhra under the presidency of Gandhiji. Tilak attended it as a special guest. After the conference, a meeting of the Home Rule League was held there itself. It was a unique meeting. Gandhiji was its President and Tilak was the speaker, and the subject was Swaraj. Tilak interpreted the term Swaraj which meant that power should be vested in the people. People were no longer prepared to put up with the Governors who were busy laying foundations of buildings. He affirmed: "All over the world self-Government was on the anvil, and India alone could not be expected to sit idle."\(^7^1\)

On November 6, 1917, Tilak came to Surat. There was a huge demonstration. A big procession was taken in honour of the great leader. In the meeting more than twenty thousand people were present. Tilak had to address the people from six different platforms, moving from one to the other. In the

\(^7^1\) Ibid.
evening an entertainment programme was organised for the benefit of the local Home Rule League. The Lokamanya addressed the audience.

Tilak's Meeting with Montagu

Montagu came to India. When he landed at Bombay, Tilak sent him a telegram, welcoming him to India. Montagu began from the 17th November 1917 to interview the Indian parties and institutions as regards their views on political reforms. Montagu invited Tilak and Mrs. Besant for special personal interviews. Accordingly Tilak and Besant led the deputations of the Home Rule Leagues. They met Montagu in Delhi on November 26. The restrictions on Tilak's visit to Delhi were temporarily waived. Besides he was ordered not to join any procession, or to address any meeting in Delhi. Tilak created lasting impression upon Montagu. Referring to his meeting with Tilak Montagu said: "... and then Mrs. Besant and the great Tilak came with their Home Rule League and read us a more extreme and bitter address, but one which was undoubtedly good and interesting." 72

On November 27, 1917, there was an interview between Tilak and Montagu, the Secretary of State, who considered Tilak 72. Ibid.
as the most powerful personality in India of those days. He writes in his book, *An Indian Diary*: "... He (Tilak) was really the author of the Congress-League Scheme ... he is a scientific man of great erudition and training." Montagu told C.Y. Chintamani that he had read the full record of Tilak's opinions and activities and come to the conclusion that there was one genuine extremist in India, and that was Mr. Tilak.

On his way back Tilak was compelled to get down at Agra. The vice-president of the Home Rule League lifted him up bodily and carried him across the station. They took him out in procession, and students drew his carriage. He spoke at Agra. Besides, he delivered speeches in a number of other places. While touring he received a message from Baptista. Baptista reported that his work in England in connection with Home Rule was satisfactory.

The Calcutta Congress of 1917

In the last week of December 1917, Tilak went to attend the Calcutta Congress session. As said earlier, at Tilak's instance, Mrs. Annie Besant was elected as the President of the

Congress. This Congress session was a great triumph for the Home Rule Movement. There was a record gathering of nearly five thousand delegates. An equal number of visitors, including four hundred ladies formed the most significant feature. The general view was that it was "the Congress of Mrs. Besant and Mr. Tilak." 75

On his arrival at Calcutta, Tilak was accorded a royal reception. When he entered the Congress pandal the whole assembly got up and cheered Tilak. Mrs. Besant delivered a very brilliant address. It was an elaborate thesis on India's Self-Government. She said, "I once said in England: 'The condition of India's loyalty is India's freedom'. I may now add: 'The condition of India's usefulness to the Empire is India's freedom'." 76 In her address, Mrs. Besant paid an eloquent tribute to the Lokamanya. She said, "At last she (India) sprang to her feet and cried in the words of one of her noblest sons ... 'Freedom is my birth-right; and I want it'. The words 'Home Rule' became her mantram." 77

75. Majumdar, op. cit., p.257.
76. Ibid.
77. Quoted in Varma, op. cit., p.372.
Tilak made a powerful speech on self-Government. He supported the resolution of self-Government. He warned the Congress and the country against accepting any scheme other than that of the Congress-League. He said, "I hold that the Congress-League Scheme is the minimum which might be granted to us to satisfy our aspirations at present and to make a decent beginning in the introduction of Home Rule in India."\(^78\) Tilak urged the fixing of a time-limit for the establishment of self-Government. The Scheme of Curtis\(^79\) that power would be transferred gradually was rejected by Tilak. He said that it was unacceptable. Tilak said, "We are entitled to the possession of the whole house, and if we allow you to share our power with you in that house, it is a concession made for you in the hope that you will soon clear out of it."\(^80\) Tilak delivered a touching speech for the release of Ali brothers, interned under the Defence of India Act. Pointing to the mother of Ali brothers, who was present at the meeting, Tilak said, "I pray to God that we may have many more mothers like

\(^78\) Ibid., p.373.

\(^79\) Liobel Curtis was a member of a British "Round Table" group of students. He had been to India in 1916. Curtis held the view that power would be transferred to India gradually.

\(^80\) Quoted in Varma, *op. cit.*, p.373.
her in this country." At Calcutta Tilak also delivered a lecture on Swaraj at the Beadon Square.

At the Calcutta Congress, Tilak was the most dominating figure. He appeared as a tower of strength. He became the trusted tribune of the people. His words carried an implicit and undisputed obedience. Referring to the Calcutta Congress of 1917, Subhas Chandra Bose said, "At that time Tilak was at the height of his fame and popularity."82

**His Home Rule Tour of 1918**

The year, 1918, for Tilak, was a year of constant activities and he moved from place to place. On January 16, 1918, the Poona District Conference was held at Lonavala. M.R. Jayakar was the President. Speaking at the meeting, Tilak gave an outline of the political movement in the Bombay Presidency.

Tilak was planning to take a deputation to London to plead the cause of Home Rule for India in England. So he wanted funds. Now he decided to make a tour of the Central

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Provinces and Berar. The tour is known as the Home Rule Tour. This historic tour began from Bombay on February 5, 1918 and lasted till February 20. For these 15 days, Tilak was constantly on the move from morning till 11 late at night either in train or motor car. Tilak, a diabetic, was not keeping well. Still he had to put up with almost an unbearable strain in this tour. He had to address three to four times a day, big or small gatherings. But he went through it ungrudgingly. At the time of planning the tour it was agreed that he should travel for only about three or four hours a day and deliver only one speech. But these terms could not be observed for a day.

People showed tremendous enthusiasm. They received and revered him like a God. Civic addresses at different places were presented to Tilak. Purses were given at many places, the amounts ranging from two rupees to seven thousand rupees. One man transferred his insurance policy to the Home Rule League. Women handed over to Tilak their savings. A Jain gave his locket to Tilak as blessings of God! Some villagers gave small purses of a few rupees with their blessings. Once, while he was crossing a river in a boat, a poor cobtler gave him ₹2/- as his contribution. During his tour Tilak visited Malkapur,
Buldhana, Khamgaon, Nandurbar, Jalgaon, Akola, Wardha and many other places. About Rs.1,50,000/- were collected during the tour, for the work of the Home Rule Delegation.

Tilak was forthright in all his speeches. Addressing a meeting at Wardha, he said, "Under the present bureaucratic Government, Indians have lost all their prestige; an Indian is not allowed to sit with an European in a train. Indians are clearly regarded as cattle. We have every right to weed out the grass, which grows in our fields." Further he said, "We can tolerate the state of things no longer. The foreigner has entered into your house. He tells you to sit in the corner, orders you when you shall take your meals, and does not even allow you to control your children yourself. Do you call this justice? Why should we not check these bureaucrats out, as unworthy of holding the reins of Government?"

Tilak was very much tired of this tour. He travelled over two thousand miles. He once said, "People cannot possibly realise that I feel so weak. When the moment comes I make a speech. But the body is all the while under strain. The

83. Quoted in Karmarkar, op. cit., pp.268-269.
84. Ibid., p.269.
speech over, I return from the crowds and sleep over my fatigue. Only my will to live sustains me."85

In fact this was more in the nature of a triumphant rather than a propaganda tour. Repeatedly he gave the message, 'Home Rule is my birth-right' and I shall have it.86 At last, Tilak had brought this message to the people. He was a true mass leader. People almost regarded him as their God who had come down to earth for their deliverance.87

On his return to Poona, Tilak presided over a meeting on Home Rule, on March 6, 1918. It was addressed by Mrs.Besant. Tilak said that the Home Rule League were in favour of the policy of recruitment.

The Home Rule Mission to England

The Home Rule League deputation consisted of Lokamanya Tilak, B.C.Pal, Khaparde, Karandikar and Kelkar. Tilak started on March 23, 1918, from Poona via Bombay for Colombo to take a steamer there for England. He was given a hearty send-off by

86. Quoted in Karmarkar, op. cit., p.269.  
87. Ibid.
the citizens of Poona. On reaching Bombay, a similar programme awaited him. At Bombay he was given a right royal farewell. The Marwari Community presented a purse of Rs.15,000/- to him. The mill workers gave him a reception and presented him a purse of Rs.1,000/-. It was a contribution of 16,000 labourers contributing one anna each. On the 26th March, 1918, a conference of the Home Rulers was held at Bombay. It was attended by 1000 active delegates. A report of the working of the Indian Home Rule League was presented. It showed that 33,854 persons had enlisted themselves as members of the League. Branches were formed all over the country. Of the total 435 lectures on Home Rule, 88 were delivered by Tilak alone. Tilak addressed the delegates. He said he felt that God himself was impelling him to work in the way he was doing it. He left Bombay for Colombo on March 27, 1918. On his way to Madras, Tilak stopped for a few hours at Bijapur. The invitation to pay a visit to Bijapur was a long over due. On the 30th, Tilak and party reached Madras. A very moving reception was given to him at Madras by Mrs. Besant and others. On March 31, a big meeting was arranged at Madras under the presidency of Dr. Subramaniya Aiyar. Dr. Aiyar hailed the Lokamanya as "The greatest living Indian." 88 Tilak

88. Quoted in Varma, op. cit., p.375.
spoke as a reply to the address. He said that times had changed. Responsible Government had now become the necessity of the hour, the necessity of the Empire, and the safety of the Empire. In another meeting, he said, "I am confident that if we are now going with determination, it is not impossible for us to obtain home rule."89

Tilak and his party left Madras on March, 31, 1912, and reached Colombo on April 2, 1918. In Colombo also, the Indians and the Sinhalese gave him a warm joint reception. Tilak delivered several public lectures. In one of the public meetings Tilak was introduced to the audience as an educationist, a scholar, a journalist and a politician. Further, "It was a rare privilege to listen to a scholar of his distinction and to see in the flesh one whom all India reveres as among the noblest of her sons."90 For three or four days, Tilak and his party had a very happy time. They were busy preparing for leaving by steamer, due on April 5, 1918. But all of a sudden, their pass-ports were cancelled. Telegrams were sent to the Viceroy and the Home Member of the Indian Government to restore

89. Ibid.
the passports. But nothing availed. So Tilak had to go back to Bombay. The cancellation of passports gave rise to universal protests in all parts of India.

The war was now entering on a crucial phase. So to seek the co-operation of the Indian people, the Viceroy convened the war conference at Delhi on April 27, 1918. Delegates from all provinces were invited but Tilak and Mrs. Besant were not among the invitees. Gandhi strongly protested against this action of the Government. He told the Viceroy that in the absence of co-operation from Tilak, he could not get the co-operation of the people in his war efforts. Writing about this conference Montagu observed, "With regard to Tilak, if I were the Viceroy, I would have had him at Delhi at all cost. He is at the moment probably the most powerful man in India, and he has it in his power, if he chooses, to help materially in war effort."91

On May 3, 1918, the All India Congress Committee met in Bombay. It condemned the exclusion of Tilak and others from the Delhi conference. It also supported Khaparde's proposed resolution on self-Government. On June 10, 1918, the Government:

91. Montagu, E.S., op. cit., p.381.
of Bombay also convened a war conference at the Town Hall in Bombay. Among the invitees were Tilak, Gandhi, Jinnah and Kelkar. On the previous night, Gandhi and Tilak had a discussion. During the course of the discussion Gandhi said that Tilak's methods were devilish. Tilak replied that if Gandhi had undergone the tribulations and trials he had, the latter would have been more devilish than he was. He added that Gandhi would go ahead of him after undergoing more trials.

The conference began in the Town Hall, Bombay, under the chairmanship of Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Bombay. In his speech, Tilak expressed loyalty to the Government. He said Indians would lay down their lives for defending India, but defence and Swaraj were inter-linked. The Governor immediately interrupted Tilak. He returned to his seat. Kelkar, in his speech, said, "... when we start appealing to the people to join the colours, we must be in a position to tell them that Government was anxious and serious about raising their political status." Lord Willingdon again objected.

93. Ibid.
So Tilak, Kelkar and others silently walked out. So after the war conference, Tilak told Gandhi at a meeting in Bombay on June 16, 1918, that Government was not sincere about their military policy. If they were sincere and granted commissions to Indians, he would recruit five thousand youths; if he failed to do so he would pay Government a fine of Rs.100/- for each. Tilak actually sent a cheque for Rs.50,000/- to Gandhiji. But Gandhiji returned it because he did not want any terms to be attached for the help given to England during the war. Shortly after this, a public meeting was held. Mahatma Gandhi was in the chair. He declared, "I protest emphatically against the behaviour of Lord Willingdon who as President of the war conference interrupted the speeches of Tilak, Kelkar and others. ... Lord Willingdon has grievously erred. His attitude is ungenerous and indefensible. Such insult to a tribune of the people like Tilak can do only harm to the cause of the British Empire." Jinnah, in his address, sharply condemned the behaviour of the Government towards the Lokamanya.

On July 8, 1918, the Montagu-Chelmsford Report was published in India. The main provisions of the report were a

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95. Ibid., p.385.
partial devolution of power in the provinces on the basis of dyarchy, a majority of elected members in the Central Legislative Assembly and the creation of an additional Upper Chamber with an official majority. Tilak studied the report a whole day. He wrote in the Kesari of July 9, an article. In the article he asked: "It is dawn, but where is the Sun?" He described the scheme as quite useless and unacceptable. He said they were Montagu-Curtis Reforms and not Montagu-Chelmsford report. In the Kesari of July 16, he wrote another article. In it he said, "Sir, Delhi is still very far off." These reactions of Tilak invited the wrath of the Government. An order was served on him prohibiting him to address public meetings.

The Bombay Special Congress

The Bombay Special Congress met on August 29, 1918. At the instance of the Lokamanya, Vithalbhai Patel accepted the chairmanship of the Reception Committee. Vithalbhai himself said, "... Since then till the day of his (Tilak's) death, I work with and under him." The purpose of the session was to

96. Ibid.
97. Ibid., pp.386-387.
98. Quoted in Varma, op. cit., p.382.
consider the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. Tilak attended the Congress Session. Hasan Imam was the President of the Session. In the session, the Congress re-affirmed the principles of the reforms contained in the Congress-League Scheme. It declared that nothing less than self-Government within the Empire would satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Indian people. It asked for simultaneous advance in the provinces and the Government of India. It characterised the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals as disappointing and unsatisfactory. It suggested substantial modifications in the scheme as put forward.

Speaking on the reforms, Tilak said, "The Montford Report is a beautiful, very skilful and statesmanlike document. We asked for eight annas of self-Government. That report gives us one anna of responsible Government and tries to tell us that it is more precious than eight annas of self-Government ... The future path is clear and I hope that what we have done will be of material help in carrying on our struggle to the desired end." 99 Tilak's stand was, "I would accept what is given and fight for more." 100 "Take half a loaf than have no loaf at all, was Tilak's motto in politics." 101

100. Ibid., p.389.
After the session of the Special Congress, Kelkar invited the prominent delegates to visit Poona. In response to it, Motilal Ghose, B.C.Pal, C.R.Das, B.Chakravarti and others went to Poona. On the 3rd and 4th September 1918, they spoke in the Gaikwad Wada. Tilak was in the chair. But as he was under an order not to speak in public, he was a mute president. All the speakers spoke about the special Congress, Tilak's role in it and Home Rule. Motilal Ghose said he looked upon Tilak as his younger brother. Ghose was overwhelmed by the sight of this gathering of veteran Nationalists from Bombay, Bengal and Madras. After Tilak's hospitality for two days they left Poona.

Tilak was relieved that the Congress had defined its attitude towards the Reforms. Now Tilak began to make plans for going to England. He was granted a passport because of public pressures. But the passport was conditional in the sense that he would not do any kind of political work or make speeches in England. He accepted as he had to attend a case there against Sir Valentine Chirol. He left Poona and reached Bombay on 20th September 1918. He was accompanied by his legal advisor, R.P. Karandikar, his friend Vasudeorao Joshi and his personal attendant G.M.Namjoshi. In Bombay, he was given a send off where Mrs.Besant and other Home Rule Leaguers were present.
Tilak left Bombay for London on September 24. He reached London on October 30, 1918. While Tilak was on his way, he was elected President of the Delhi Session of the Congress, 1918. His unanimous election was remarkable in view of the Government order which forbade him to enter Delhi. He thanked the Reception Committee and declined the honour. Obviously the real purpose of this election was to strengthen his hands in England. The Annual Session of the Congress met in Delhi in December, 1918. Malaviya was its President. The Congress declared that the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme was unsatisfactory and disappointing.

In the latter part of 1919, two delegations, on behalf of the Home Rule League and the Congress came to London. Tilak was a member of both. As a matter of fact Tilak was now the leading figure in the Congress. The Congress was completely dominated by the Nationalists after the Moderates had boycotted it in 1918. In spite of this change, the British Congress Committee and its newspaper India continued on the old line. They supported the Montford Report on the line of Moderates. As a consequence the Congress had stopped the financial aid to the Committee. Tilak now compelled the Committee to fall in line with the Congress. During his stay
in England, Tilak established intimate contacts with the Labour Party and its leading lights. He also addressed many public meetings. In his speeches, Tilak favoured a middle course between the extremists and the moderates, that is, between an outright rejection and a whole-hearted support of the report.

As may be seen from above, the appeal of the Home Rule Movement was not confined to India alone. Because of the efforts of Tilak and Subramaniya Aiyar, 'An Indian Home Rule League' was established in New York. Tilak strongly felt the need of propaganda in the U.S.A. as the American democratic ideals were highly admired in India. Accordingly, Lajpat Rai, N.S. Hardikar and K.D. Sastri, proceeded there on behalf of the Home Rule League. A branch of the League was established at San Francisco. Lajpat Rai and his colleagues had been successfully carrying on the Indian Home Rule propaganda in America. Tilak, who was in continuous touch with his friends in America, was quite satisfied.

Tilak had been nominated by the Delhi Congress to represent India at the Peace Conference to be held at Paris, along with Gandhi and Hasan Imam. But Tilak was refused
permission to go to Paris. Therefore, he submitted a petition to Mr. M. Clemenceau, the President, Peace Conference of Paris in 1918. Tilak requested him to solve the Indian problems so that India might "be a leading power in Asia" and "a powerful steward of the League of Nations in the East for maintaining the Peace of the World." 102

In short, the activities of the Indian Home Rule League bore fruit. Eminent Americans and Englishmen wrote and spoke for self-Government in India. The British Parliament formed a Parliamentary Committee in London to press for the claims of India to self-Government. The Labour Party Conference at Nottingham early in 1918, unanimously passed a resolution in favour of Home Rule for India.

The Home Rule movement marked the beginning of a new phase in India's struggle for freedom. It placed before the country a concrete scheme of self-Government. It also emphasized that to achieve this goal the Congress must strive hard. The Congress must cease to be a club of arm-chair politicians working only when time permitted. Instead its

102. Quoted in Ram Gopal, op. cit., p. 423.
leaders should dedicate their whole time at the service of their country. This new ideal developed a new standard of public life.

The Home Rule movement was the fitting tribute to Tilak's noble career. This great movement proved him as the best, sincere, fearless and staunch patriot. He fought for his country with a religious zeal. In his fight, he did not care for favours or frowns, either of the people or of the Government.

It may be concluded thus: "An intellectual aristocrat, he brought himself down to the level of the common people, and initiated that mass movement in the political field which worked such a miracle in the hands of Mahatma Gandhi." 103