

CHAPTER IX

THE POLITICAL IDEAS AND ORGANISATIONS

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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Establishment of British Rule

The genesis of the British rule in India is to be found strictly speaking from 1757, when the Battle of Plassey decided the issue between the Mughal authority and the East India Company. It can be said that "Commercial adventure combined up with political ambition, resulted in economic exploitation and territorial acquisition."^① The territorial conquest was followed by political domination, a process that continued unabated till 1857, when a great upheaval took place. The East India Company, "the commercial conqueror of India," was replaced by direct government of the British Crown. Queen Victoria became the Empress of India. Though this change did not alter any existing political complexion of the country, it did eliminate the commercial aspect that prevailed before.

After 1857

After the suppression of great upheaval of 1857, peace and order was restored. The re-organisation of the financial system was started. The work of codification of laws begun by Lord Macaulay about three decades ago, materialised. The Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code came into existence in 1860 and 1861 respectively. By the Indian Council's Act of 1861, the centralisation of the legislative machinery was achieved. Some representative and influential Indians were admitted in the Legislative Council as a necessity. The structure of Legislative Council both at the central and provincial level began to assume a proper shape.

Relations with Indian States

In the wake of suppression of the Revolt of 1857 came the famous Queen's Proclamation of November 1, 1858, wherein the

1. M.V.Ramana Rao, A Short History of the Indian National Congress (Delhi, 1959), p. 3.

the Queen assured the Indian Princes that all treaties and engagements made with them by the Company would be 'scrupulously maintained.' The principle of religious toleration was to be followed and no distinction was to be made in the public service on the basis of race or creed. The Government of India openly repudiated the 'Doctrine of Lapse' and permitted the Indian Princes to adopt heirs as a matter of course.

After the transfer of power by the Company India to the British Crown, the British control over the Indian Princes tightened much. With the passing of the Royal Titles Act in 1876, Queen Victoria on January 1, 1877 proclaimed herself as Queen Empress in 'a durbar of unsurpassed magnificence' which was presided over by Lord Lytton. "The assumption of this new title by the Queen brought the Indian States within the boundary of the British Empire. The Princes ceased to be allies; they became vassals."^① The position of the Indian Princes is best expressed in the speech of Lord Curzon. He pointed out that the Princes were "... the colleagues and partners" of the British rulers of India. At Gwalior he said, "The native prince cannot remain vis-avis the empire as loyal subject of His Majesty the King Emperor and vis-a-vis his own people as a frivolous and irresponsible despot... He must be the servant as well as the master of his people."^②

The condition of the Indian Chiefs and Princes was not happy. On one side they were continually warned by one Viceroy after another - from Lord Lansdowne to Lord Linlithgow - to govern their States well. On the other side the gradual introduction of political reforms in British India and the demand of the people in the States for political reforms on the model of British India, put the Princes in an unusual position. The British

1. Sinha and Bannerjee, op. cit., p. 651.

2. Earl of Ronaldshaw, Life of Lord Curzon, Vol.II, (London, 1928), p. 28. Quoted.

Government deliberately left these Princes free to continue the mediaeval system of autocracy as long as they remained submissive to the British. These Ruling Chiefs and Princes had no independence to speak and act against the British. In fact, they were made powerless to do anything which would go against the policies of the British. At the turn of the nineteenth century and mainly after the passing of the Act of 1919 that they cherished to make the Chamber of Princes their mouthpiece for ventilating their grievances with a view to safeguard their position, rights and privileges vis-a-vis the Paramount Power in India.

Emergence of Public Opinion

After the suppression of upheaval of 1857, the feelings of the people had not been cooled down. The temper of the people found a vent in the columns of a number of journals and newspapers and in the establishment of political associations, which increased both in number and work. In the journals and newspapers the feelings of the people, particularly of the urban middle class, were expressed. They represented the pressing needs of the people and sought to remove their grievances.

Besides the press, a number of political associations established at the various provincial centres, submitted representations to the authorities. These institutions comprehended the problems of India as a whole and endeavoured to solve them by peaceful methods. It can be surmised that the public opinion expressed, was in fact an appeal to the conscience of and spirit of liberalism which then prevailed in ~~the~~ ^{England.} ~~country.~~

The activities of regional political associations in the 1870's culminated in the establishment of the Indian National Congress. This institution provided slowly and gradually a forum for expressing the grievances of the Indian people and putting forth the demands of a political and economic nature for altering soon the character of the government. The political associations also aimed to press for constitutional

development that would lead to the increasing participation of the Indians in framing state policies and implementing them.

Beginning of Political Thought : Raja Rammohan Roy

The history of political thought in modern India begins with the name of Raja Rammohan Roy.^① As in many other fields, he took a leading part and set an example in demanding for political rights. The political movements all over the world interested him deeply and he sympathised with them greatly. He gave a public dinner at the Town Hall when he heard the news of the establishment of constitutional government in Spain. He was overjoyed on hearing the success of the Second French Revolution. But he was much depressed and grieved on the news that the constitutional government of Naples was overthrown in 1821. Consequently he cancelled his engagement with Buckingham, the editor of The Calcutta Journal.

His fervent feelings expressed in his letter to Buckingham reflect his love of liberty. "From the late unhappy news," he wrote, "I am obliged to conclude that I shall not live to see liberty universally restored to the nations of Europe, and Asiatic nations, especially those that are European colonies. Enemies to liberty and friends of despotism have never been and never will be ultimately successful."^② This shows how closely he watched the history of the European nations. Rammohan firmly held that if an era of liberalism and nationality dawned upon Europe, the logic of history would carry the liberal movement to India in due course. However, it did not come as he expected but came very late in the early part of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, he may certainly be regarded as a great political

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1. Bimanbehari Majumdar, History of Indian Social and Political Ideas, From Rammohan to Dayananda (Calcutta, 1967), p. 22.
 2. Ibid., p. 28. Quoted from Works of Rammohan Roy, p. 923.

thinker and a pioneer of political movement in India.

At the time, when Raja Rammohan Roy was disseminating his fruitful ideas, Western culture and civilization were being spread through the medium of education, in the Hindu College, Calcutta, in whose foundation the Raja had taken a prominent part. Tarachand Chakravarty, Dakshinaranjan Mukhopadhyaya, Rasikkrishna Mullick, Ramgopal Ghosh and Pearychand Mitra were prominent amongst the political minded students of this College. They were greatly influenced the Revolutionary doctrines of 'natural rights' and 'equity'.^① They were highly affected by the political ideas of Raja Rammohan Roy.

Rammohan Roy left behind him not only a philosophical school and religious sect, but also a school of politicians ~~who~~ who made efforts to carry out the political programme of their revered 'sage.'

Prasannacoomar Tagore (1801-68), Dwarkanath Tagore (1794-1846), Debendranath Tagore (1817-1905), Ramgopal Gosh (1815-68) were among those who influenced greatly the public life in Bengal during 1830 and 1861. They prepared the ground for the rise of the Democratic and Nationalist movement in Bengal. The movement started by Raja Rammohan Roy received great ". impetus from the simultaneous operation of five correlated forces - a wider diffusion of English education, researches of the Orientalists into the past history of India, reaction against Western civilization in favour of Hinduism, rapid improvement in the means of communication, and political movements in Western countries."^②

Political Thinkers and Organisations : Bengal

A reference of political organisations would be worthwhile in understanding the political ideas of leading citizens ~~of the~~ ~~political~~ ~~ideas~~ ~~of~~ ~~leading~~ ~~citizens~~ of the period. In 1837 the landholders of Calcutta and of its neighbourhood met at Calcutta

1. B. Majumdar, op. cit., p.50.

2. Ibid.

and formed an association called "Zamindari Association" but it soon changed the name as the "Landholders' Society." It was open to all persons having any stake in the land, irrespective of caste, creed, or country. Its activities were not confined to Calcutta but included those of the other districts as well. The importance of this Society is to be found in the words of Dwarkanath Tagore who at the meeting of this society said, "The time would soon come when his young friends, the Hindu Collegians, would organise themselves into a compact band of patriots for the assertion or preservation of their political rights and the redress of their grievances."^① Although the object and achievements of this political association were very limited in character, it set an example of an organised constitutional agitation for redress of grievances by a public body.

In London, William Adam the editor of the 'British India Advocate' established the "British India Society" in 1839 with a view to rouse the interest of the English people in Indian affairs.

In 1843, at the instance and inspiration of Thompson, an Englishman, the "Bengal British India Society" was established. The aim of the Society was "... the collection and dissemination of information relating to the actual condition of the people of British India and to employ such other means of a peaceable and lawful character, as may appear calculated to secure the welfare, extend the just rights, and advance the interest of all classes of our fellow-subjects."^②

Though these two political associations in Bengal did not achieve great popularity, they did serve to rouse the political consciousness of the people. In 1851, they silently merged themselves and founded the "British Indian Association." From the very beginning it bore an all-India outlook. The establishment

1. BPIR, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 446-47. Quoted.

2. Ibid., p. 448. Quoted.

of associations of a similar character were to be found at Poona, Madras and Bombay.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century there was a forward movement in political ideas and organisations as an inevitable growth of nationalism. The Indians aspired higher ambitions which did not go much beyond administrative reforms. These ambitions are best expressed in the speech of Surendranath Banerji who said: "It was not enough that we should have our full share of the higher offices, but we aspired to have a voice in the councils of the nation. We not only wanted to be members of the bureaucracy and to leaven it with the Indian element, but we looked forward to controlling it, and shaping and guiding its measures and eventually bringing the entire administration under complete popular domination."^①

W.C. Bonnerjee, who later became the President of the first Indian National Congress (1885), on July 25, 1867 delivered in England a long speech on "Representative and Responsible Government of India." He made a concrete suggestion of setting up representative Assembly and a senate in India with the power to veto their decisions given to both the Governor-General and the Crown.^② Anand-mohan Bose in March 1873, in a speech at Brighton, advocated the establishment of representative Government in India by gradual stages. Similarly in 1874, a veteran politician of Bengal, in an article in the Hindoo Patriot, stressed for having a Home Rule for India and for introducing constitutional government for India in India.

From these ideas it would seem that the idea of representative government was not a new thing in the Bengal politics. July 26, 1876 a new political organisation named "Indian Association" was established and was headed by Surendranath Banerji. Explaining the reasons of establishing this association, he

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1. A Nation in Making, p. 67.
 2. BPIR, Vol. X, Part II, p. 499.

said, "The idea that was working in our minds was that the Association was to be the centre of an all-India movement. For even then, the conception of a united India, derived from the inspiration of Mazzini, or, at an rate, of bringing all India upon the same common political platform, had taken firm possession of the minds of the Indian leaders in Bengal."^①

The Indian Association took up the burning problem of the day. The age limit of the competitors for the I.C.S. Examination was reduced from 21 to 19 by a regulation in 1876. The Association held a public meeting in 1877 to protest bitterly against it and to launch an agitation. In order to give an all-India character to the agitation, the Association sent letters to the different provinces of the country asking for their opinion. The letters and telegrams received from the different regions of India expressing protests against the reactionary measures, were read at the public meeting.

As decided in the Calcutta meeting, a memorandum to the British Parliament protesting against the measure and praying to raise the age limit to twenty-two years for the I.C.S. examination, was sent. It was also demanded that the examination should be simultaneously held in London and at one or more centres in India. Thus the importance given to this question had ulterior motives. Surendranath said, "... the underlying conception, and the true aim and purpose, of the Civil Service agitation was the awakening of a spirit of unity and solidarity among the people of India."^②

The important outcome of the ill-conceived measure namely I.C.S. Examination, was the organisation of "the first political movement on an all-India basis."^③ Surendranath was appointed a special delegate to visit the different parts of India to perform the task of higher purpose namely to unite the people for a

1. Ibid., p. 44.

2. BPIR, Vol.X, Part II, p. 502.

1. A Nation in Making, p.41.

common political objective. He made a prolonged tour in upper India, visiting Banaras, Allahabad, Kanpur, Lakhnau, Aligarh, Delhi, Agra, Meerut, Amritsar and Lahore in 1877. Next year, he toured the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay. Wherever he went he addressed crowded public meetings which endorsed the resolutions passed at the public meeting at Calcutta. At Allahabad, Kanpur, Lakhnau and Meerut, he organised political associations which were to work in concert with the Indian Association.

Thus the propaganda tour of Surendranath Banerji ushers in a definite landmark in the history of India's political progress. "It clearly demonstrated that in spite of differences in language, creed, and social institutions, the peoples of this great subcontinent were bound by a common tie of ideals and interest, creating a sense of underlying unity which enabled them for a common political objective."^①

The Indian Association soon found a new scope of activity. With the passing of the Vernacular Press Act in 1878 by Lord Lytton's Government, the Association held public meetings to lodge protests against it and carried out a vigorous agitation against it in India.

In 1879 the Association took up the question of financial implications of the Afghan war and the reduction of import duties on cotton goods by way of favouring Manchester against the indigenous industry. In 1880, it took up the question of representative government in India.

But the efforts of the Indian Association to stimulate political consciousness of the people were helped by the two notable events - the agitation over the Ilbert Bill and the imprisonment of Surendranath Banerji in 1883. In those days, the European British subjects enjoyed the privilege of trial by a judge of their own race. On the other hand, Indian Civilians, even though they might hold the rank of Majistrates or Sessions Judges, could not try any European criminal. The Ilbert Bill

1. Ibid.

aimed to withdraw this privilege in order to remove this discrimination that represented racial inequality.^① Though the Ilbert Bill agitation proved a failure and left a feeling of defeat, disgrace and humiliation, it greatly helped the cause of the Indian political advancement.

The imprisonment of Surendranath Banerji came when the agitation over the Ilbert Bill was slowing down. Surendranath was charged for the contempt of court on account of some comments he had made on the conduct of Mr. Justice Norris of the Calcutta High Court, who ordered a Hindu to produce in the Court the image of his deity which he was worshipping. The imprisonment evoked ~~excite~~^{excite}ment, spontaneous protests and led to the suspension of the business.

The significant aspect of Surendranath's imprisonment was that it evoked sympathy and protest in remote parts of India also. Public meetings were held at many places. This trend in the words of Anand-mohan Basu manifested a "sense of unity among different Indian races."^② This affair ultimately led to the formation of the First National Conference in Calcutta at the end of 1883, with the approval of all the branches of the Associations and leading political organisations of Bombay and Madras. Two years later when the National Conference had its Second Session at Calcutta, another political organisation independent of the former, known as the Indian National Congress was about to meet at Bombay separately for its first Session^{on} December 28, 1885. A mystery hangs round the holding of these two all-India national organisations, one at Calcutta and another at Bombay almost at the same time. The National Conference came to a sudden end, while the Indian National Congress came out as the only national organisation in due course.

1. Ibid., Vol. IX, ^{Part I,} p. 346.

2. Surendranath Banerji, op. cit., pp. 80-81.

Political Thinkers and Organisations : Bombay

Next to Bengal, the growth of political consciousness was more visible in Bombay than in any other part of India. This was because of historical background of Maharashtra as distinguished from that of Bengal. "The Bengali Hindus felt the establishment of the British rule as a providential dispensation to make them free from the tyrannical rule of the Muslims. This was not the feeling of the people of Maharashtra because they had freed themselves from the Muslim rule long ago, and looked upon the Britishers as foreign enemies who had defeated them and baulked them of their ambition to establish their supremacy in India."^① In this way the basic difference in the attitudes of the liberal political thinkers in Bengal and Maharashtra, rests in the historical factors of the two regions.

The difference is voiced in its extremes in the writings of Bhaskar Pandurang Tarkhadkar in the Bombay Gazette. Writing to the Editor as early as 1841, he said, "If I were to give you credit for your having saved us from the Pindaris and Ramosis, your trading system stands in the way which has indeed more effectually emptied our purses in a few years than the predatory excursions of these tribes could do in some five or six hundred years. In short it must be acknowledged that your progress in cunning and craftiness has kept pace with your advancement in knowledge and wisdom."^②

In another letter he wrote, "We cannot look upon your Government in any other light than that of the most bitter curse India has been visited with. The whole wealth of India has now been transported to Great Britain and we have no employemnt left to us."^③

Jagannath alias Nana Shankershet (1803-1865), was another staunch upholder of those ideas and institutions which promoted

1. BPIR, Vol. X, Part II, p. 456.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 457.

the feeling of nationality amongst the people. As early as 1829, he succeeded in procuring for Indians the privilege of sitting on the Grand Jury - 'the first Municipal privilege, the natives obtained.' In 1862, a proposal was made to give exemption to the European convicts in Indian Jails from being handcuffed. Shankershet stoutly opposed it and held that "All Her Majesty's subjects in India should be treated alike."^①

He was appointed a member of the Board of Education in 1840. He induced the other members of the Board to pass a resolution admitting the necessity of making special efforts for the spread of education amongst the children of lower castes. He was one of the earliest champions of female education in Western India.

Jagannath was an advocate of English education but he did not like that English should become the medium of instruction. In 1874 he wrote an able Minute as a Member supporting the cause of Marathi and Gujarati as the media of higher education.

Shankershet played a prominent role in the establishment of the Bombay Association. He invited a few leading citizens of Bombay at his residence on August 18, 1852 and delivered an inaugural address. The views expressed at this time show that the leaders had entertained ideas of offering some kind of resistance to the Government. They wanted to promote the interests of the people by co-operating with the authorities. Shankershet in relation to this ideal said, "... the Government will be glad to receive suggestions from an Association of respectable Natives, who intend to enquire carefully what the interests of the people may require, and seek to promote those interests in a temperate manner through the co-operation of the authorities themselves."^②

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1. B.B.Majundar, op. cit., p. 194. Quoted from The Bombay Gazettee, August 1, 1862.
 2. Ibid., p. 195. Quoted from the Minutes and Proceedings of the Bombay Association, 1853.

Gopal Hari Deshmukh (1823-1892) better known as Lokahitawadi, a Government employee in the judicial service, wrote a series of letters to the weekly Marathi paper Prabhakar of Bombay during 1848-49. He issued a solemn warning to the British administrators in the following terms "If you try to impose any legislation on us, against our wish, we will unite and ask you to quit. Please therefore be careful and administer the law considerably." He favoured the use of indigenous goods or Swadeshi goods in preference to foreign manufactured goods and suggested to start regular movement with a view to helping the Indian industries and to counteract the spread of poverty and unemployment in the country.

Lokahitawadi also suggested that Parliamentary institutions should be established in India and that the Indians should have a right to sit in the British Parliament. As early as 1848, he visualised the distant prospect of India becoming completely independent like the United States of America after having learnt the lesson of parliamentary government under the guidance of the British people.^① Like Raja Rammohan Roy, he regarded the British rule in India as a great boon, because it brought into India the ideas of equality and social justice.

Vishnu Bawa Brahmachari (1825-1871), a recluse and a student of Vedic lore, was a pioneer of the revivalist attitude of mind towards the social and religious movement. He upheld the superiority of the Indian culture over the Western civilization. He advocated collective ownership of land, socialisation of factories, and equal distribution of their produce among the masses. His social ideal was that of human brotherhood and a welfare state.^② He looked to the State as the universal employer and the sole producer.

In the international field, the bitter feuds that were

1. BPIR, Vol. X, Part II, p. 458.

2. Ibid.

prevailing among the big powers of the world were observed by Vishnu Bawa significantly. He believed, "The main reason for this calamity is that the system of Government and its policy of considering all people as one,... is not found anywhere in the world. But if it were followed, then all people would be happy. The sin of people's crimes, misery and poverty rests on the head of the rulers, because their system of government and policy are not based on right principles."^① He cherished a noble ideal that the basic principle of politics, political thought and organisation should be fellow feeling and love for one another. The era of peace, happiness and prosperity of all the peoples of the world cannot be ushered by merely economic and political devices or institutions.

In the development of political ideas and political associations, Dadabhai Naoroji's name is closely connected. After his college education he devoted himself to social reform particularly the education of women. "Students' Literary and Scientific Society" founded under his Presidentship undertook the cause of national regeneration. He became the living spirit behind the political organisations in Bombay. When he shifted his residence to London, he organised several associations there to work for the cause of India.

As referred to before, the first political association in the Bombay Presidency, named as "The Bombay Association", was founded in 1852 soon after the establishment of the British Indian Association in Calcutta, and was presided over by Jagannath Shankershet. Like the two Associations of Calcutta and Madras, the Bombay Association also sent a petition to the British Parliament in 1853, criticizing the system of administration and suggesting remedial measures more or less on the same line. At the inaugural meeting Dadabhai and others clearly expressed unflinching faith in the British Government. Dadabhai

1. B. B. Majumdar, op. cit., p. 208. Quoted.

felt that all the errors of the British Government were believed to have been due to ignorance and the remedy lay in agitation. He expressed that though the efforts to get redress from the local authorities repeatedly received a rude rebuff, a belief grew that the liberty-loving people would extend a helping hand to their Indian follow-subjects, even though the local officials might not be sympathetic.

Dadabhai Naoroji has been styled as the founder of the Moderate School of Politicians in India. His cardinal principles can be found in this assertion: "If the British people were true to themselves, true to their inbred sense and traditions of equality, justice and fair play, they would help India to obtain freedom. The Government of India may be unsympathetic or even hostile, but the real masters are the people of England."^①

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, next to Bengal, the evolution of political ideas and organisations was more marked in Bombay than in any other part of India. The general trend of political ideas may be known from the speeches and activities of Pherozeshah Mehta. He had a sincere faith in the sense of justice and fair play of the British and completely relied upon them for the political salvation of India. This can be observed from his speech: "When in the inscrutable dispensations of Providence, India was assigned to the care of England, she decided that India was to be governed on the principles of justice, equality and righteousness without distinctions of colour, caste or creed."^②

Pherozeshah did not modify his views when European agitation over the Ilbert Bill raged the country and its withdrawal by the Government of India. Yet, he severely criticised the autocratic

1. R.P. Masani, Biographical Sketch of Dadabhai Naoroji
(London, 1939), p. 96.

2. H.P. Mody, Sir Pheroze Shah Mehta, A Political Biography
(Bombay, 1921), Vol. I, pp. 130-131.

measures of Lord Lytton who substituted a "narrow-minded policy of autocratic imperialism " in place of the traditional British policy of "initiating oriental nations into systematic political life and existence." He had a strong faith in the capacity of the Indians to manage representative institutions and also believed that "... the time was past when strong popular opinion on any subject could be successfully resisted by Government for any length of time."^①

A new political association named as the Bombay Presidency Association came into being as an outcome of the Ilbert Bill agitation in Bombay. The old Bombay Association, which was founded in 1852 and revived in 1870 by Naoroji Furdunji, became practically extinct in 1873.^② Pherozeshah Mehta, Badruddin Tyabjee and K. T. Telang after making vain efforts to put fresh life into the Bombay Association and a branch of the East India Association of London (established in 1871), conceived an idea of starting of new political association in Bombay. The result was the establishment of the Bombay Presidency Association. This Association showed considerable activity in the early years of its existence by making resolutions, sending memorandums and holding public meetings. It focused the general feeling of the community on all matters of common interest. But, it soon lost its force after the foundation of the Indian National Congress in December, 1885.^③

Another association, originally a Poona Association, started in 1867 on the lines of Bombay Association, was named as the Sarvajanic Sabha, Poona in 1870. Sabha's main objective was to serve as a bridge between the Government on the one hand and the people on the other. The work and importance of the

1. Ibid., p. 166.

2. A. G. Mazumdar, Indian National Evolution, (Madras, 1917), p. 6.

3. Mody, op. cit., pp. 166-68.

Sabha lay in the fact that in the early stages of awakening of the people, it roused them to the political consciousness of their rights, and inculcated in their minds the necessity of fighting constitutionally to achieve them. The Government of Bombay was prompted to withdraw its recognition. In the Sabha's Quarterly Journal, started in 1878, authoritative and representative views on important public topics like agricultural and financial problems of the day, were expressed in a dignified manner. The expositions in the Journal were even appreciated in high official circles. Though the Government had withdrawn Sabha's recognition, it could not ignore its activities.

M. G. Ranade, G. K. Gokhale and B. G. Tilake made the Sarvajanic Sabha a training school for many politicians and agitators of the day.^①

Political Organisations : Madras

The political association started at Madras was originally a branch of the British Indian Association of Calcutta. Afterwards it became an independent political organisation. The Madras Native Association as it was called, also sent two petitions to the House of Commons in 1853, enumerating the grievances most keenly felt by the people. These petitions throw a great deal of light on the progress of political ideas in the Madras Presidency.

'Mahajan Sabha' another political association was founded in Madras in 1884. In its session of four days (1884-1885), a paper was read recommending the expansion of the Legislative Council given under the Act of 1861 and the appointment of non-official members on a representative basis. The Sabha also discussed the separation of the judicial from revenue functions.^②

1. BPIR, Vol. X, Part II, p. 522.

2. Ibid., p. 517.

In addition to the political associations there were many political organisations in different parts of India. These organisations worked as feeder institutions and were mostly of local importance. But with the founding of the Indian National Congress in 1885, a new era in the Indian political life dawned. Twenty years after it dominated completely the political life and gave a shape and form to the ideas of administrative and constitutional reforms which formed the main basis in the political programme of India.
