In his utter helplessness and colossal frustration of life Savarkar was striving superhumanly to wring some good out of it. A true ascetic and man of action as he was, he resolved to make the most of life and to make the best of it. Such men of supreme courage and indomitable will make appearance from age to age. Stone walls do not imprison them, nor do iron bars encage them. Their angelic souls rise above and soar. Earnestness is the breath of their life. Grave is not its end. Their souls are indestructible. A cruel destiny was weaving and tightening round the neck of Savarkar. Despite the horrible and indescribable agonies, his genius threw in jail.

Ever since his childhood, when he was quite ignorant of what an epic was like, Savarkar had a mind to compose an epic on 'Panipat', but, being a poet of action, he could not find time for this great work. He seized this opportunity and almost achieved his goal. He performed this marvellous feat in the dark Andamans where reading and writing was a crime. He had no paper or pencil. In prison life philosophy is the ultimate refuge of a troubled soul. And we know how all distinguished political prisoners of world fame wrote famous histories, autobiographies, works on philosophy and other kind of great works.

John Bunyan wrote his immortal Pilgrim's Progress, Thomas Moor wrote his Utopia, Sir Walter Raleigh, his History of the World, Tilak, his Gita Rahasya, and later, Hitler, his Mein Kampf, and Nehru, his Autobiography and Glimpses of World History. Fortunately all these eminent men were supplied with writing and reading facilities. But Savarkar was the only eminent political prisoner of world fame who composed some ten thousand and odd lines of poetry of great imagination and of great thought, wrote them on the prison walls with thorns and pebbles, learnt them by heart secretly, and astounded the world,
giving a convincing proof of how the Vedas were handed down ever since the dawn of civilization! Just imagine the unbending tenacity and undying will power of a young man undergoing a sentence for half-a-century, who, while hanging in handcuffs during the punishment hours of jail life, recited, revised and learnt by heart his poems. Add to this, his untiring energy and ingenuity in making the wild criminals and devoted colleagues learn some of those poems by heart.

One of such men was Ram Hari from Prayag. He was editor of a Hindi weekly, Swarajya. Once he was removed to Savarkar's cell and there he learnt by heart Savarkar's Marathi poems which he had written on the walls of his cell. On his release Ram Hari recited the poems to Narayanrao Savarkar at Calcutta. The poems were first published in the latter part of the year 1922 under the title Kamala.

Savarkar is a term synonymous with patriotism in the domain of Indian politics and poetry. The parent thought of his poetry is the worship of the Goddess of Freedom. He sings:

We dedicated to thee our thoughts
Our speech, our eloquence to thee, Oh Mother!
My lyre sang of thee alone and
My pen wrote of thee alone, Oh Mother!

And

For thy sake death is life
Without thee life is death.

And

O Mother, who will dare insult thee in the world
We will give thee bath of his blood.

And

Even so this our Motherland craving the assistance
Of the Lord that she too be rescued from the crocodile
Clutches of Bondage enters our Garden, plucks
A fresh flower from the bough and offers
It at His feet in worship.

And
Deathless is the family that falls to a man,
For the emancipation of its Motherland,
Filling the skies with the fragrance of their sacrifice,
Made in the welfare of Man's rise.

Abject slavery and crushing foreign yoke are the source of his note. Glorious past is its inspiration. Patriotism is its song, Swaraj its aim and Humanity its goal. His poems and ballads have enchanted and inspired numerous patriots, and, though suppressed by Government, were secretly circulated from sire to son. No Bharatiya poet except Valmiki, Vyas and the great poets Chand and Bhusan—the latter pair sang the declining glory of the Rajputs—has sung of glorious victories of the Hindus, Hindu life, history and culture so immensely and epically as Savarkar has done. No modern Hindu poet except Savarkar has preached and propagated love for Swaraj and Swadharma so intensely, fervently and stirringly. Savarkar represents an admirable fusion of the valour of a warrior and the genius of a poet.

G. T. Madkholkar, an eminent Mahratta literary critic, describes Savarkar as a poet who rivals Kalidas in the use of similes, a poet on the war path bristling with vigour, genius, learning. He combines in himself the lustre of the spear of the Mahratta warriors, who hammered the Mogul throne of Delhi to pieces and the sweetness of all the emotions of the Mahratta saint-poets who have raised this mortal world to the level of the abode of Lord Vishnu. "It is because of all this," observes Madkholkar, "that I make bold to say that Savarkar occupies the first and foremost place in the galaxy of Marathi poets."

According to Madkholkar, Savarkar is perhaps the only poet who has during the last thirty years made conscious efforts to inflame the urge for independence and the sense of self-respect by holding before the Hindus, who were deprived of their freedom, the grand picture of the ancient glory and the valiant deeds of the past. The reason why all of Savarkar's literary productions have assumed such a fascinating and sublime quality is that Savarkar has so beautifully and lavishly made use of the Vedic, epic and historical ideas in his poetry, plays and other works. Madkholkar concludes: "In his poems he has strung
together so many beautiful and sublime ideas about Hindu life, culture, philosophy, and history that in the poetry of no other modern poet of the last hundred years can they ever be found.”

Savarkar’s poetry has an autobiographical ring and is subjective *par excellence*. He is a poet of action, of great personal experience, of lofty imagination, of noble emotions, of great sincerity and of great personality. His poetry bears a unique charm. His is great poetry of rare thrill, epic sweep, sky-high range, and grand metre! His thoughts breathe, his words burn. Though hurled from the summit of a mountain into the limitless ocean, or into the frying-pan, the undying soul of Savarkar survives and sings songs of God and Man. Himself a subject of an epic, he has produced an epic. Poet Savarkar belongs to the line of great poets. It is easy and safe for a poetical soul to sing mystic and vague songs of grand eternity, eyeless fraternity and aimless liberty at a time when his own kith and kin are ground under the heels of slavery and poverty. But it is given to a few poets of Savarkar’s nerve and mission to raise the fallen in revolt and to drive a slave country to a fight for freedom. The reward for the former class is some coveted prize. The prize for the latter class is the rope! Only the definite, daring and self-experienced poetry can soar in the realm of this inspired class.

There are good poets in Marathi. But in the words of Dr. K. N. Watwe, Ph.D., and Acharya Atre, two foremost authorities on Sanskrit and Marathi Poetry respectively, even a dozen of that class would not together make one Savarkar. The difference between them and Savarkar is the difference between the simile and the metaphor. Some of them have repeated or expressed the thoughts of others, the sensations of others, the emotions of others. Savarkar has expressed his own emotions, his own sensations, his own thoughts. His style may, at some places, lack the ‘correctitude’ of strict school-masters and dry professors. In that Deathland he could not prune and polish it! Yet, in personality, in sincerity, in style, and in prophetic vision, he is superior to them all. In greatness of sweep, in loftiness of imagination, in the gift of prophetic vision, he scarcely yields to the great ones of world poetry. Take, for example, Savarkar’s *magnum opus* in poetry, the *Kamala*. His
Kamala rivals in delineation and delicacy with Shakespeare's Miranda or Shakuntala of Kalidas.

Savarkar's creative imagination is powerful and is ever on its wings. In the twinkling of an eye it perches on the tower of the universe. "It surveys the royal procession of the Lord of the Universe marching in pomp and splendour. The ages are its miles and through the friction of the wheels of His Chariot have sprung dusty sparks that are shining as stars. In its pomp and splendour the procession is climbing down the endless path of Time. The comets are its arrows, the solar system is the row of fireworks going on. Sun and Moons are torches and Life is its energy!" To Savarkar's lofty imagination the whole universe is the image of the God Shiva. The limitless sky is its hair and in it are the Moon and the Milky Way!

Savarkar compares lotuses in water to half-nude Gopikas bewitched by Krishna, bathing in the Yamuna. To him Kamala, the heroine in his long Poem, looks as fascinating in a porched sofa as does a simile in the poetry of Kalidas. He describes her beauty in a marvellous simile. To him Kamala looks like the sweet dawn between fading moonlight and blooming of the day. To him at dawn stars look like the frozen drops of dew. He calls the bee an agent of the God of Love or Cupid that flies from flower to flower transporting kisses. Flowers are the imprints of kisses taken by the watchman of the nymphs who enter the garden secretly. In his famous Ballad on Sinhagad, the sea, the mother of gems, envies the lot of the earth because it has sheltered the invaluable jewel Tanaji, who fell fighting on the Kondana Fort.

What a good, great and grand poetry! The wonder of it is that it blossomed in the wild Andamans! The collection of his poems are aptly named as "Wild Flowers." These flowers have not met with world-wide appreciation for want of an agency that would distribute these flowers among the appreciating public of the world at large. Though complete in themselves, 'Kamala', 'Gomantak', 'Saptarshi', 'Virahochhvas', 'Mahasagara' are parts of the incomplete epic. His other poems, 'Chauk', 'Cell', 'Chariot Festival of Lord Jagannath', 'Oh Sleep', and 'On Death Bed' have a philosophical basis. These poems shed a searchlight on the innermost corner of the heart of Savarkar who loved entire secession from worldly affairs and
who was in his heart of hearts an ascetic loving a retired and contemplative life intent on soul-contemplation! To Savarkar engaged in such soul-contemplation the very Shanivar Wada, the perennial source of political inspiration, appeared a heap of stones! But the world around had not reached that detached stage of viewing things through such an angle! Peoples were crying for food, freedom, and faith. The worldly man comes out and he was Savarkar, the revolutionary realist!

Hence it was clear that Savarkar's outlook on life was that of an ascetic moving in great events. Love of action and not renunciation of action was the predominant and positive note of his life and literature. His views on the Vedant philosophy are ever to be remembered. He writes from the Andamans to his brother: "The Americans need Vedanta philosophy and so does England, for they have developed their life to that fullness, richness and manliness—to Kshatriyahood and so stand on the threshold of that Brahminhood, wherein alone the capacity to read and realize such philosophy can co-exist. But India is not. We are at present all Shudras and can't claim access to the Vedas and Vedanta. . . . We, as a nation, are unfit for these sublime thoughts, for it is well known that Bajirao II was a great Vedantist and that is why, perhaps, he could not see the difference between a kingdom and a pension. Let us study history, political science, science, economy; live worthily in this world, fulfil the householders' duties and then the philosophic dawn might come."

To him life on this earth was like a three petalled flower. One is coloured with pleasure, the second with the colour of pain, the third mixed or colourless. Now the petal of pleasure and then that of pain gets warmed and thus this vain round of recurrence goes on. According to him the true picture of the world is one wherein a tigress with a piece of flesh of deer in its mouth is suckling its babe, a picture of pity and cruelty.

Savarkar was not a bloodthirsty man. He was guided by the noble precept laid down by Lord Krishna: "Do unto others as thou wouldst be done by." He said he was a revolutionary under necessity and not by inherent choice. He sincerely abhorred absolute violence. Where is the man who would run the ordeals of fire or would tread the paths of furies with bleeding feet for sheer amusement, he asked. He was a man who
always fought for a just and righteous cause, for the protection of the good and for the destruction of the evil-doers. "For it was this very principle," he stated, "that humanity was a higher patriotism that made us so restless when we saw that a part of it should aggrandize and swell like a virulent cancer in such wise as to threaten the life of the human whole, and forced us, for want of any other effective remedy, to take to the surgeon's knife and feel that severity for the moment would certainly be mercy in the long run."

He said in his poem which he wrote in April 1919 when he was in the jail hospital for diet and treatment. ‘On Death Bed’: "If ever I deemed it legitimate to have recourse to the exceptional swift and severe rules of emergency, it was only because duty led me and my generation into circumstances so abnormal and urgent as to render them indispensable in the interest of righteousness itself." Duty for the sake of duty! He interpreted that duty of man. He said: "Though the wise men, priests and sooth-sayers speak differently and in diverse accents, yet whatever conduces to the progress of Man, whatever contributes to the greatest good of the human soul and had been approved by the pious and the pure that alone I took to be the Duty of Man."

Death had no horrors for Savarkar. He said that he had paid the debt he owed to his Motherland by facing the furious fire, getting himself consumed bone by bone and flesh by flesh; he had paid the debt of God by fighting under ‘His Banner,’ and that he had adopted the Abhinava Bharat to continue the line of his family. He realized the kinship with all that breathed in the Universe and at times was so overpowered with a sense of Universal sympathy that his feet would get stuck to the spot lest he should trample to death under his feet some blades of grass, or worms. Often in a pensive mood he held the morsel in his hand, thinking that it contained seeds which were flesh and life striving to grow and enjoy the air they breathed. Man is an unfolding God says the Hindu philosophy and Savarkar in his pensive mood typified its spirit.

If he died in despair, he said, he would not feel sorry for there was no end to one's desires and ambitions. If the end of life was shifting to another life according to merits, he was confident that a good place would be reserved for him as he possessed the
best testimonials from Lord Krishna himself that he served selflessly for the cause of Man, God and Country. If life meant disintegrating into fragments and atoms, death would be to him a sound sleep in that case; or let those atoms, he said, forget themselves and let the ‘I’ in him disappear into the Universal oneness!

Yet there is one more point notable about Savarkar the poet. He introduced blank verse metre called ‘Vainayak’ into Marathi poetry. The Anushtubha metre of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata fame, Milton’s blank verse metre which poet Madhusudan of Bengal popularized in Bengal, charmed him exceedingly in his school and Andaman days.

The romanticism in Savarkar’s poetry was properly bridled by a sense of realism, a love of service and sacrifice, and a goal of universalism. His head is towered up in the Universe, his mind weighing good and evil, and his eyes watchful for the greatest good of Man. Front-rank critics and great ones of Marathi literature from Kelkar to Madkholkar, from Daji Nagesh Apte to P. K. Atre, all paid glowing tributes to his genius as they were fascinated by the flights of Savarkar’s imagination conveying great and good thoughts!

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In the Andamans Savarkar had ample time to philosophize his political theories and theorise his political philosophy. His thoughts, reading and experience evolved into a definite ideology. The seeds of his ideology took firm root and sprouted into a tree. The decrease in the population of the Hindus and the consequent danger to Hindustan by the rise of rival and alien proselytizing faiths absorbed his mind. In Europe people belong mostly to one religion. There the strife between races aimed at predominance and domination. In India it is a question of rival religions, where kidnapping and conversion are ostensibly done in the name of religion to strengthen a rival faith. The danger Savarkar scented was clear, straight and real.

Though the British Government had to resort to a policy of non-interference in religious affairs, they were in a way not inclined to curb the proselytizing activities of the Muslims. Mosques, markets, dens of Muslim robbers and prison houses were free for the conversion of Hindus. Whenever news came
to Savarkar about the conversion of a Hindu lad or a prisoner, he was restless and he turned his mind devotedly to the serious threat, outwardly a religious but inwardly a crucial problem of national importance and existence.

Almost all Indian jails had a majority of Hindu prisoners. The authorities naturally would appoint non-Hindus to watch and control the prisoners. Hence Muslims easily rose to the posts of petty officers and havaladars and warders. Those Pathans, to quote the verdict of the Cardew Commission, ‘enjoyed a bad pre-eminence as the active agents in the matter of unnatural vices.’ They turned these opportunities to bad account and harassed and forced Hindu convicts to embrace Islam. The revolutionaries in the Cellular Jail were almost exhausted due to their great efforts in agitation and action in India and sufferings in the Andamans. In those hard, helpless, and hopeless days none of them desired to aggravate their lot by opposing the religious fanaticism of the wicked and vile Pathan petty officers. Obviously from fear some of them tried unworthily to cloak their cowardice with a philosophy of tolerance and broad-mindedness. It mattered little to those progressive men whether that vile and fallen lot of wretched Hindus remained in or went out of their fold and field! ‘Let it be so,’ summed up their social and individual psychology. What was worse, some even miserably passed days, giving the Muslim warders high hopes of their self-conversion.

Suffering for a nation's welfare is a public and personal duty. Savarkar was doing it in jail. Why this additional burden? But then a report of the conversion of a Hindu or an injustice done to a prisoner would inflame him. Like a lion helpless in a cage, he restlessly fluttered over the insult and injustice done to the racial, national, or religious soul. So with curses on his head, cares in his heart, burden on his back and troubles under his feet, he resolved to put a stop to the conversion activities of the Muslims.

With that aim in view he began to shake off the passivity in Hindus, change their tone and tendencies, mould them into an organism alive to every injury, and make them masters of their fate and land. To the broad-minded and wiseacres he asked why the non-Hindus tried to win over to their fold that base, wicked, corrupt lot of dangerous drunkards and murderers.
They said the Muslims were fanatic and with them reason did not weigh. Well, why did these cool and cultured Europeans use the hoe of gold for removing that mud in Indian villages, woods and valleys? Of course, to fertilize their lands of influence with the manure! Savarkar asked his colleagues why those Westerners polluted their holy religion with that vile and worthless lot of humanity? Why should the Missionaries and Maulavies render service or offer food and shelter as a price for religion and never from a humanitarian angle? If the ulterior motive of these Missionaries and Maulanas was to increase the strength of their religion and to dominate the world, then let the Hindus have the freedom to serve Humanity in their own way. Let the Hindus aim at increasing their numerical strength to fight their struggle for existence and material well-being. Thus went forth his chain of arguments.

Savarkar impressed upon the minds of his colleagues that it was not a fact that a vicious man necessarily gave birth to vicious men. New Australia and Canada had sprung up from such vile and base elements thrown away from their mother countries. He reminded them that the Ramayana, one of the best epics of the world, was given to the world by Valmiki, a man fallen in early life. To Savarkar losing one man was losing numerous future families and increasing the numerical strength of the rival faiths in India!

Allured by comforts, enticed by passion, baited by vices and dreaded by tortures, a few Hindu prisoners in the Andamans were driven into the fold of Islam. The jail administration did not take these conversions seriously. One day Savarkar came to know that a Hindu boy was on the verge of conversion. When the Superintendent came on his rounds, Savarkar cried out, "Application, Sir!" The Superintendent asked him to see and speak for himself. Savarkar tauntingly asked him whether the Superintendent had ordered the other prisoners also, who caught their letters or trapped the revolutionaries, to mind their own business. Savarkar said angrily that he would make a complaint; let him hear or not. The Superintendent toned down. He then informed the Superintendent about the likely conversion. The Superintendent asked him why the Hindus did not convert Muslims instead of making complaints against them. Savarkar stated that Hinduism was a non-proselytizing religion.
He told the officer that Hinduism was based on the noblest possible principles. To Hindus, he said, religion was not like the colour of the chameleon. He concluded: "It is their received and noble belief that all the religions of the world are at bottom one and have the same aim, namely the welfare of humanity. The Hindus never look upon religion as a means of worldly strength and social solidarity. That is in my opinion their fundamental blunder from the point of view of national strength and solidarity."

The Superintendent understood Savarkar's stand well. He asked Savarkar what he expected the authorities to do. Savarkar stated that no prisoner should be converted to any other religion by fraud, force, deception, or enticement without the knowledge and consent of the jail authorities, who on their part should certify the bona fides of every case. He added that all minors should be brought up in their parents' faith until they were able to judge the things for themselves. The Superintendent agreed. And while departing he rated the Pathan warden who was about to execute the conversion in question.

The boy in question was saved, but the Hindu prisoners would not allow him to sit in their file for meals. He sat beside Savarkar. So they called Savarkar Bhangi Babu. In the end Savarkar persuaded some of them to discard that suicidal attitude and by and by the Shuddhi spirit came to stay. It was a piece of great news all over the Andamans that Savarkar had stopped the conversion of a Hindu. Upon this some convicts, who had come across the creeds and propaganda of the Arya Samaj while in India, were organized. With the help of some fearless and bullying prisoners, some prisoners were reconverted to Hinduism, their mother fold. Those Sanatanists who had called Savarkar Bhangi Babu now began to look at the problem from a new angle of vision, realised the value of solidarity and strength and appreciated the farsighted aim of Savarkar and supported him. Even a Christian of long standing was reconverted to Hinduism; later on several Muslim attempts were foiled by an eleventh-hour intervention or early precautions. The Muslims complained against Savarkar that he converted even born Muslims to Hinduism. Hindus realised now that Muslims could be converted to Hinduism. Muslim converts and
warders reviled Savarkar incessantly, but were silenced by the turbulent Hindu convicts drilled in the art of railing.

A new idea caught the imagination of the Hindus. They now learnt that no man lost his faith because he took food, drink and shelter outside his faith. The new-comers began to bear Hindu names, read Hindu scriptures and take meals with their co-religionists. Hindu temples in the colony were opened to them by and by. Formerly at the wharf of Port Blair Hindu prisoner-workers sometimes had to starve as they refused to take food from the bags mischievously touched by Muslims. Savarkar showed them their humiliating plight and suicidal foolishness and encouraged them to touch the bags of food first themselves. They did so and the Muslims, knowing the reaction and the double edge of the weapon, stopped the mischievous nonsense!

Despite the danger of personal violence, Barrie's intrigues and incitement against him and the threats of murder from Barrie's lackeys, Savarkar could succeed in infusing an organic feeling among the Hindu prisoners and even catching the imagination of Hindus in the Colony. Once a Muslim ruffian incited by Barrie struck a blow on Babarao Savarkar's head. Babarao bled profusely. Barrie rejoiced at the incident. Savarkar remarked: "Where dreaded gallows failed to subdue the spirit of the Savarkars, can these goats ever succeed?"

Just then the census hour struck and Savarkar persuaded the Arya Samajists and the Sikhs to record their caste and religion as Hindu or at least Hindu, with the words Arya or Sikh in the bracket. Ever since his London days Savarkar was thinking over a national definition of a 'Hindu' that would embrace all the folds of Hindus—the Sanatanists, the Sikhs, the Brahmos, the Arya Samajists and others. At last he, in a divine moment, composed his famous definition in a melodious couplet. According to it 'A Hindu means a person who regards this land of Bharat-Varsha from the Indus to the Seas as his Fatherland as well as his Holyland, that is the cradle land of his religion.' That definition he developed and brought out in a thesis after his transfer from the Andamans to the Ratnagiri Jail. The chaos and confusion created by nearly fifty current definitions of the word Hindu including the one made by Tilak, which was mainly religious, were brought politically, socially, religious-
ly in order, method, historic perspective and scientific thought. This definition of the word Hindu by Savarkar is held by many as the greatest contribution to Hindu thought, history and polity.

Savarkar held that Reconversion (Shuddhi) consolidated and strengthened the Hindu Society. He asked the Hindus to shed inferiority complex and the idea of contamination by non-Hindus in respect of food, water, shelter and touch so that there might be less cause for friction and fight between Hindus and Muslims; because the Muslims being deprived of their throne and sword, the only means that remained for them was rationalism. He was of the opinion that every one should be allowed to propagate the cause and mission of his religion by a rational and peaceful way. He never hated the Muslims because they belonged to a different religion. He abhorred the aggressive, unjust and wild designs of the Moslems and Missionaries. Except for these points, Savarkar fought for all prisoners alike and the facilities wrested were enjoyed by Muslims too.

When a few years after, in November 1920, Savarkar was appointed foreman in charge of oil godown, he never harassed the Muslim prisoners because they were Muslims. He treated them justly and kindly, but warned them not to harass Hindu prisoners, or to soil the water in the tank by cleansing their feet in it, or to do purposely less work and bring him into trouble. Muslims began to say ‘Ram Ram’ and a tiny Hindu Raj came into being in the Andamans. No mischief, no trouble, no punishment. Merchants, traders, or wealthy men under the guise of merchants, went to have a glimpse of the Foreman of the tiny Hindu Kingdom whose capital was the oil-depot. Untouchability had disappeared from the kingdom. Pan-Hindu consciousness was pulsating through Hindu veins.

Savarkar had been hammering into the heads of his colleagues and convicts that among the social institutions, the greatest curse of India was the caste-system. “The mighty current of Hindu life,” he said, “is being threatened to perish in bogs and sands.” He added: “It is no good saying, ‘We will reduce it to four caste system first’. That would not and should not be. It must be swept away root and branch.” ¹ Many a time he would touchingly remark that the curse of caste-system had deprived India of several great brains.

¹ Savarkar, _An Echo from Andamans_, p. 32.
Savarkar strongly disapproved the Andhrasabha movement and similar disintegrating moves. He disliked that every province should desire separation and shout and invoke long life to itself. How could the province live unless the nation lived, he asked. "They all—Maharashtra, Bengal, Madras—are great and will live long but through Her, India! So let us not say 'Andramataki' but 'Bharatmataki Jai' of whom Andhra is a limb and let us sing not 'Vanga Abhar, but Hind Abhar'," he warned.

In one of his annual letters Savarkar said that he was strongly in favour of inter-provincial marriages among the Hindus. He was deadly opposed to the practice of marrying the European girls at that stage of the nation.²

World War I broke out in August 1914 as forecast by Savarkar in his London days. But alas! He was not free to utilize the golden opportunity to free his nation. Yet he felt the situation advantageous to India in many respects. "It sent a thrill of delight," he wrote in March 1915 from the Cellular Jail, "in my heart to hear that the Indian troops were allowed to go to Europe, in their thousands to fight against the best military power in the world and that they had acquainted themselves with such splendour and were covered with military glory. Thank God! Manliness after all is not dead yet in the land."⁴

Considering that the needs and difficulties of the British Government were the opportunities for Indian progress, Tilak strategically supported the militarisation policy of the Indian Government. But, strangely enough, Gandhi, the apostle of peace and non-violence, who was back from Africa, surprised the country when he girded up his loins, trod and toured the country and panted for recruiting unconditionally soldiers for the British Government to give bloodbath to the Germans. Tilak's step was responsive and statesmanly. Gandhi's step was emotional and loyal. He had helped the British Government during the Boer war and received a reward for his loyal services to the British Empire.

² Savarkar, An Echo from Andamans, p. 36.
³ Ibid., p. 17.
⁴ Ibid., p. 33.
The Indian revolutionaries in Europe and America now decided to throw their whole weight into the direction of a revolt. They prepared themselves for an all-out struggle for overthrowing British rule in India. To that end the revolutionary leaders like Lala Hardayal, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya of the Abhinava Bharat, and Raja Mahendra Pratap were busy discussing plans and spinning negotiations with Germany. With the full support of the German War Cabinet they set up in Germany the Indian Independence League called the Berlin Committee led by leaders like Dr. Champakaram Pillai, Hardayal and Chattopadhyaya. Dr. Pillai also was a great revolutionary, who stood for a united greater India and had won two doctorates in Berlin, one in Engineering and the other in Economics and Politics. The Committee issued manifestos and founded anti-imperialist organisations. The Kaiser of Germany and the Sultan of Turkey pressed the Indian princes to rise in revolt against the British rulers.  

Accordingly, global plans were devised by the Berlin Committee to smuggle lakhs of rifles and ammunition through the Muslim countries and Tibet for the revolutionaries of the Ghadr party in the Punjab, to land the revolutionaries of the Ghadr party in Bengal and attack the Eastern Frontiers of India. One of the major plans was to raid Port Blair and pick up their leader Savarkar and other revolutionaries from the Andamans. The Sedition Committee Report tells us that a third steamer was to sail to the Andamans, shipping a cargo of arms at sea and raid Port Blair, pick up anarchists and convicts.  

Mr. J. C. Ker, referring to the plans of the German Government, states: "During the war efforts were made by the Germans to use the Indian revolutionaries for their own purposes. Elaborate and world-wide plans were devised to land arms in Bengal for the use of the revolutionaries there, and emissaries proceeded between the leaders in India and German representatives in Batavia and elsewhere to complete the arrangements."  

The revolutionary leaders recruited and inspired Indians abroad to fight for the Independence of their Motherland under the banner of Ghadr party initiated by the leaders of the Abhi-

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5 The Times of India, 2 June 1955.
nava Bharat and inspired by Savarkar's slogans, Savarkar's book *War of Independence of 1857*, his pamphlets and his personality. Pictures showing Savarkar at the oil-mill were flashed in American papers and in the Ghadr papers started by Hardayal on November 1, 1913, at San Francisco. Hardayal's papers preached the formation of secret societies to start a revolution to expel the British by any and every means, murder or mutiny. Thus the oil Savarkar pressed out at the oil-mill in the Andamans did not fall into the bucket down below, but outside it and inflamed the fire and wrath of the Ghadr revolutionaries. And so the remark made by Sir J. C. Ker that "with his (Savarkar's) removal, the society in London ceased to be of any great consequence, and on the outbreak of the Great War it was broken up," is not wholly true; for the heads of the Ghadr were the lieutenants of Savarkar. Simply for the sake of safety and strategy the headquarters was shifted to the United States of America.

At the instance of the British Government Hardayal was arrested in America on March 25, 1914, but he was released on bail and he fled to Europe. The heartlessness of Barrie was unending. One day he informed Savarkar that his friend Hardayal was due to come to Andamans. After many secret inquiries Savarkar learned that Hardayal had in fact given the Government of the U.S.A. the slip and fled to Europe.

At times when in good humour, Barrie would of himself break shocking news to Savarkar. One day in February 1915, Barrie told Savarkar that G. K. Gokhale was dead. Savarkar paid his meed of tributes to the memory of the great patriot. Hearing the glowing tributes paid by Savarkar to the selfless service and sterling patriotism of Gokhale, Barrie was taken aback and he noted in his diary that though outwardly the Maharashtrian leaders differed, inwardly they were of one mind. Hardayal also held the same opinion. Gokhale also admired Savarkar's intellect and patriotism and talked about him very highly many a time to N. C. Kelkar.

As pre-planned by the revolutionaries with the German Government, the German war machine began to operate. The

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German submarine, *Emden*, with Dr. Pillai in it, moved in the Bay of Bengal raiding British cargo-ships, bombarding some of the places on the Eastern coast of India, striking terror into the hearts of the authorities of the Andamans and causing sleepless nights to the Indian Government. Once Dr. Pillai landed and in the guise of a fisherman saw the Maharaja of Kochin!  
There was a rumour in the Andamans that the *Emden* was to pick up Savarkar and send him in a German aeroplane to the headquarters of the Ghadr. Savarkar had also discussed this possibility with his colleagues in the Cellular Jail and was fully aware of it. But at this moment he was removed to the tower of the central building of the jail, and was strictly watched. Meanwhile, on November 11, 1914, the famous *Emden* was destroyed and the escape of Savarkar could not be effected. The French Government insincerely handed Savarkar to the British Government and the German Government struggled for his rescue.

In their other plans the revolutionaries succeeded considerably. About 8,000 Sikh revolutionaries arrived in India from America, Canada and the Far East in 1915, and the situation in the Punjab became tense and threatening. “The internal situation began to grow menacing,” writes Lord Hardinge in his memoirs, “owing to the revolutionaries realising the military weakness consequent on depletion of the Indian troops.” Alarmed by the growing menace, pressure and incursion of the revolutionaries, Lord Hardinge, the Governor-General of India, got the Defence of Realms Act passed by the Legislative Assembly. Describing this critical situation, Mr. J. C. Ker says: “Early in the war a serious situation developed in the Punjab, arising out of the return from America of Sikhs who had been demoralized by the teaching of the Ghadr party. During the first three years of the War some 8,000 Sikhs came back from the United States, Canada, and the Far East. . . . Several risings were attempted, and efforts were made in two or three instances to seduce the Indian regiments. A large number of dacoities and murders were committed in many of the Punjab districts, and efforts were made to raise a rebellion.”

The War of Independence of 1857 had been suppressed with

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the help of the Sikhs. To wash out the stigma from the history of 1857 this Second War of Independence was started by an overwhelming number of Sikh revolutionaries. They buzzed to undermine the loyalty of the Indian troops in India and Siam and induce them to take up the cause of freedom. There was trouble with the 10th Baluchis of which the Mashud company shot their officer in Bombay on their way to Mesopotamia. Revolutionary strongholds were discovered at Delhi, Lahore and Meerut. The brilliant Vishnu Ganesh Pingle from Maharashtra was arrested with ten loaded bombs inside the line of the 12th Cavalry at Meerut and was hanged. Conspiracies aimed at robbing the armoury and magazine of certain regiments were discovered at Lahore, Pindi and Ferozepore. In Bengal, too, revolutionaries like Narendra Bhattacharya, afterwards M. N. Roy, were striving their level best to achieve their goal. The Komagatamaru, a chartered steamer with 500 passengers, called at the mouth of Hooghly on September 26, 1914. Next day the Bengal police seized it. Its leader Gurdit Singh was arrested on November 15, 1921. Writing about this Mr. J. C. Ker observes: "Money (from Germany) was sent to the conspirators in Calcutta, and the nucleus of a training camp was set up in a remote spot in the jungle. This hiding place was discovered, and in a fight between the police and a party of the Bengalis armed with Mauser pistols, the leader was killed, and the plot collapsed. Another plan organised with the help of the Ghadr party was to enter Burma through Siam, and after gaining over the military police to proceed to the conquest of India." 12

Armed with extensive powers and with the help of the 6,000 troops from Nepal, the British Government ruthlessly suppressed this heroic rising. There was a holocaust of victims at the altar of freedom. Some five thousand men were put on trial for treason in the Punjab alone. Five hundred revolutionaries were tried by court-martial and executed, eight hundred were sentenced to transportation for life, ten thousand were interned without trial, and a large number had to remain underground for years. Rivers of blood flowed. Yet the leaders and historians of Gandhian persuasion are drumming into the ears of the people that they won Independence without shedding blood!!

Setting aside its previous decision of not transporting the prisoners to the Andamans, the British Government transported about 500 revolutionaries, who had thus taken part, fought and failed in the Second War of Independence, to the Andamans. Prominent among them was Bhai Parmananda, who had already come into contact with Savarkar during the latter's London days. On their arrival in the Cellular Jail the revolutionary leaders narrated to Savarkar how his writings and the great book on '1857' and his sacrifice had a magic effect in changing them overnight into patriots and warriors! The new batch of the prisoners consisted of farmers, workers and businessmen. It was difficult for the jail authorities to bend them to their will. There were point blank refusals. Nobody would do hard work. For a time the jailer and the Superintendent seemed to lower their voice and the standard of work, and requested them to work as best as they could. There were scuffles and broils over bad words. Words of abuse were returned with blows, and consequently many noble and spirited patriots from this group perished in their helpless fight with the cruel jail authorities in their prime of youth.

During the war period Savarkar made vigorous attempts to effect his release. He made petitions and appeals to the Government of India that he should be released with or without conditions or at least be enlisted in the volunteer corps. The authorities knew his intention and were not at all willing to do so. To them a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush! Savarkar's wife also petitioned the Indian Government for his release. She said that his case went undefended as he relied on the French Government for the right of asylum. Savarkar asked his younger brother Dr. Savarkar in his annual letter why the Indian National Congress had not uttered a word of sympathy and fought shy of speaking about the release of political prisoners when responsible leaders like General Botha released all Boer rebels or John Edward Redmond struggled and succeeded in getting all the Irish prisoners released. He wrote to his brother to agitate in the matter and send a public petition so that, if at all the release came at any time, it would be acceptable as a token of the countrymen's love and remembrance for those who never ceased to love their land of birth and rightly or wrongly fell fighting for her.
Thereupon provincial conferences passed resolutions demanding the release of 'political prisoners.' But it was seen that there was some vagueness about the phrase 'political prisoner,' prevailing in the press and the statements of politicians and resolutions of the conferences. Savarkar, therefore, asked his brother to note that the term political could be distinguished from 'private' only by the criterion of the motive of the act and not by the act itself. He said: "No act is or can be by itself political. For even a rebellion, if that proceeds entirely for my own bread and butter, is not political and ought not to create any sympathy in others." So he informed his brother that the point should definitely be pressed that "political prisoners means all those undergoing imprisonment whether convicted or not, whether for individual acts or acts in general, for actions which proceeded from purely and admittedly political motives." 13

In his petitions to the Viceroy and Mr. E. S. Montagu, Secretary of State for India, Savarkar submitted to them that while they were considering the question of Reforms in India they should release all political prisoners. Grant of reforms and grant of amnesty for all prisoners and exiles in foreign lands should go hand in hand. He said: "How can there be peace and contentment and trust in a land where a brother is torn away from a brother, where thousands upon thousands are rotting in cage cells and stand exiled and in jails, and where every other family has a brother or a son, a father or a friend, or a lover snatched away from its bosom and kept pining away his life in the parched and thirsty Saharas of separation!"

"If progress is made easy," Savarkar asked, "Where is the man who would run the ordeals of fire or would tread the paths of furies with bleeding feet for sheer amusement! That is rare and rarer it is to find a true patriot and humanitarian who would indulge in reckless and bloody and necessarily outrageous revolutions—if but and even when, a safer, nobler, more certainly moral because entirely effective and employing least resistance—if but such a path, the path of constitutional progress be open and accessible to him?" He added: "It is a mockery to talk of constitutional agitation when there is no constitution at

13 Savarkar, An Echo from Andamans, p. 66.
all, but it is worse than a mockery, a crime, to talk of revolu-
tions as if it were a work of rose water even when there is as
elastic and progressive a constitution as, say, there is in England
or in America." 14 In another letter he said: "If the Councils
are made to represent the voice of the people there would be
no hesitation on my part to stand by law and order which is
the very foundation and basis of society in general and Hindu
polity in particular. The man is a social animal; so is the
State."

Needless to say, this petition was indirectly and obviously a
pressure on the Government and a support on behalf of the
revolutionary party to the national forces that were demanding
responsible Government in India. Indian Government wanted
to know the views of the revolutionary party on the proposed
Reforms and so its accredited leader, Savarkar, was asked by
the authorities to offer his views on the drafts of the Montagu-
Chelmsford Reforms. Even in the published draft of Mr. E. S.
Montagu's scheme was expressed the hope that the revolution-
ists would now find something to be done constitutionally for
the realization of their hopes and aspirations and would change
their minds and return to useful paths of activity. 15 The blood
of martyrs never drops in vain. They die so that humanity may
prosper.

Savarkar gave in his letter of July 6, 1920, a brief summary
of his new petition which he had submitted on April 6, 1920,
to the Indian Government depicting his ideal of Human
Government or World Commonwealth. Viewed from the angle
of truth, sympathy, justice, impartiality and looking to the times,
this letter revealed why Guy A. Aldred of Britain claimed for
Savarkar a place in the line of prophets and humanists of the
world. Those who boast of their broad-mindedness and large
sympathies and dream of world Federation should pause for a
while to read the following passage from Savarkar and compare
it with their present ideal, for Savarkar declared his ideal when
they were, speaking politically, in their swaddling clothes.
Savarkar observed in 1920:

"We believe in a universal state embracing all mankind and
wherein all men and women would be citizens working for and

14 Savarkar, An Echo from Andamans, p. 72.
15 Ibid., p. 71.
enjoying equally the fruits of this earth and this sun, this land and this light, which constitute the real Motherland and Fatherland of Man. All other divisions and distinctions are artificial though indispensable. Believing thus that the ideal of all political Science and Art is or ought to be a Human State in which all nations merge their political selves for their own fulfilment even as the cells in an organism, organisms in families and tribes, and tribes in nation states have done, and believing therefore the humanity is higher patriotism and therefore any Empire or Commonwealth that succeeds in welding numbers of conflicting races and nations in one harmonious, if not homogeneous whole in such wise as to render each of them better fitted to realize, enrich and enjoy life in all its noble aspects is a distinct step to the realization of that ideal. I can consciously co-operate with any attempt to found a Commonwealth which would be neither British nor Indian but which may, till a better name be devised, be styled as an Aryan Commonwealth.” Savarkar concluded: “With this end in view I ever worked in the past. With this end in view I am willing to work now. And therefore I rejoiced to hear that the Government have changed their angle of vision and meant to make it possible for India to advance constitutionally on the path to Freedom and strength and fulness of life. I am sure that many a revolutionist would like me cry halt under such circumstances and try to meet England under an honourable truce, even in a half-way house as the reformed Council Halls promised to be, and work there before a further march on to progress be sounded.” 16 Whenever Savarkar turned introvert the philosopher in him dominated the politician and he breathed such great thoughts.

16 Savarkar, An Echo from Andamans, pp. 88-89.
Out of His Grave

World War I terminated in 1918 and soon after a systematic and persistent propaganda was carried on throughout the country for the release of all political prisoners. People, popular leaders and the press voiced their demand for the release of political prisoners through petitions, meetings, conferences, congress sessions and in Councils. The National Union of Bombay, Anantrao Gadre, Senāpati Bapat and Shivrampant Paranjpe took a leading part in collecting signatures of the people on the petition and the great petition was forwarded to Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India. The Secretary of State for India rejected it. Under a special resolution the Amritsar Congress demanded the release of all political prisoners. The District Home Rule Leagues from Maharashtra, too, wired to the Viceroy demanding the release of the Savarkar brothers. The royal proclamation in connection with the royal clemency to political prisoners issued on December 24, 1919, stated in clear terms: “I therefore direct my Viceroy to exercise in my name and on my behalf my royal clemency to political prisoners in the fullest measure which, in his judgment, is compatible with public safety. I desire to extend it on this condition to persons who, for offences against the State or under any special or emergency legislation are suffering imprisonment or restriction upon their liberty.”

According to this proclamation, all provincial Governments opened the gates of their prisons. Many political and ordinary prisoners were set free from provincial jails and the Cellular Jail too. Even those who had come after Savarkar or were his co-prisoners were released, but the Government of India held Savarkar’s release incompatible with public safety. In his case all rules were literally and strictly, and many a time unjustly, enforced. Ordinary prisoners were allowed to settle on the
Island after five years' imprisonment, but the Savarkar brothers were singled out as an exception to this rule even after ten years. All hard-skinned convicts were given light work, but the soft-skinned Savarkars were given the hardest possible work from the beginning. Savarkar had passed through a critical illness early in 1919. He was in the jail hospital on deathbed. But he was now much improved.

After eight long years Government permitted Dr. N. D. Savarkar to see his brothers in the Cellular Jail. Savarkar's wife and Dr. Savarkar saw him in the last week of May 1919. The Savarkar brothers were startled to find the absence of Yashodabai, wife of Babarao Savarkar. The struggling flame of her noble life had flickered away just two months earlier! Yashoda Vahini was to Savarkar his earliest friend, his sister, his mother and his comrade—all in one, all at once. She really died as dies a sateel Deserted by all relatives, cursed as the wife of a convict by unpatriotic persons, separated from her husband, crushed by overwhelming grief, she had to pass her days in miserable conditions till the release of Narayanrao Savarkar on June 23, 1911. She perished in her unconscious state pining for a glimpse of her husband. Savarkar's wife was supported by her father despite the frowns of the Government. Another lady, Savarkar ever remembered with grateful tributes, was Madame Cama who had been a second mother to his younger brother and stood so nobly and so faithfully by them in the darkest hour of their life.

"At the touch of one such faithful, noble, unshaken, loving hand," wrote Savarkar, "one's heart recovers its belief in humanity—belief rudely shaken by the disappearance of the closest and by the treachery of the truest and by the indifference of the dearest." The interview terminated in an hour in the presence of the jail authorities, Savarkar being given some time to speak to his wife separately.

As regards other facilities, Savarkar was given the work of a clerk and afterwards was allowed to work as the foreman of the oil-depot and department in the latter part of 1920. The jail authorities sometimes allowed him to enjoy in the jail yard moonlit nights and starlit dawns in company with his brother Babarao. Barrie who expected to see the bones of Savarkar in the Andamans had gone away to lay his bones in safety as he
feared that any one of Savarkar's followers might blow up his head in India!

At last the heavy brunt Savarkar bore all along for his co-sufferers, the rigorous work, unhealthy food, crushing anxieties, sapping climate, and the monotonous dreary and insipid life told upon his nerves. His deteriorating health reached the lowest point of vitality and he was reduced to a skeleton. Chronic dysentery and diverse other ailments thoroughly crushed him. He was, at last, taken to jail hospital for treatment where tuberculosis of the lungs was suspected. Till the appearance of such a crisis in his health, for months he was sinking for want of medical help and hospital diet. For want of milk he softened his rice with water. Half-boiled, half-cooked food he no longer could digest. His brother Babarao, who was allowed at this stage to cook for himself, sent him 'Dal' secretly. But the illness was developing into a dangerous malady. Later, however, in the hospital he was given milk when he could not digest it. His diet dwindled to a sip of milk. His body burnt with constant fever. He grew delirious, often fell into dead faints and was under the grip of hallucinations. Forlorn, forsaken though not forgotten, he was rotting, withering and pining away in a lonely corner of the hospital, banned and barred from his near and dear ones and surrounded by unsympathetic men. Now death began to hover over his head.

Yet with a peaceful mind and composed feelings of a true yogin Savarkar invoked death. He was content with his achievements in life. He had seen the world, done his duty by his countrymen and acted in great events heroically. If the end of life was the passage to another world called heaven, then he was sure of a reserved place there as he had testimonials from Lord Krishna for having done his duty for duty's sake and if the end of life was to dissolve the composition of all elements, he was prepared to immerse them in the universal oneness! Wordsworths and Tennysons and Tagores would sing the glory of these self-experienced true feelings. Such is the grandeur, loftiness and piousness of these thoughts.

The jail life of any other Indian leader pales into insignificance before this horrible tale of Savarkar's life in the Cellular Jail. Lokmanya Tilak suffered most, but was at least enlivened
by the availability of writing material, help of a cook and a special little house. Not to speak of those who were speechless and peaceless even in ‘A’ class rich rooms called the prison! Yet unbending, upright, and exemplary, Savarkar faced jail life with great fortitude. He agitated but within the four corners of the law; he acted resolutely, but skilfully, and reformed the jail life. At times he had to face misunderstanding among his colleagues. But he persuaded them to realize the facts. Never did he speak ill of his colleagues, not even of Barrie who inhumanly harassed him. All political prisoners had respect for Savarkar. The convicts regarded him as a god. His spirit, soul and energy were of a deathless stamp. Almost all the political prisoners from the Andamans with rare exceptions bade good-bye to political life afterwards. Bhai Parmananda and Ashutosh Lahiri who respectively spent four and seven years in the Cellular Jail were, however, the shining exceptions. The permanent effect of this jail life was seen later in Savarkar's health, lonely disposition, and his aloofness from the society.

During the two years 1920 and 1921 the release of political prisoners was still more persistently demanded by Indian leaders and Indian press. Vithalbhai Patel moved a resolution in the Central Legislative Assembly on February 24, 1920, recommending amnesty to political offenders and referred to the case of Savarkar brothers. Speaking on the resolution, G. S. Khaparde dealt fully with the case of Savarkar brothers. Tilak wrote a letter to Mr. Montagu urging the release of Savarkar. In response to Savarkar's application dated the 6th April 1920, the Government of India, however, replied that they were not prepared at that moment to extend to the Savarkar brothers the benefit of amnesty.

In May 1920 even Gandhi wrote in Young India that no act of violence was proved against the Savarkar brothers. . . . The cult of violence had, at that moment, no following in India. Unless there was absolute proof that the discharge of these two brothers could be a danger to the State, he added, the Viceroy was bound to give them their liberty. Bhai Parmananda, after his release, saw Colonel Wedgewood then travelling in India and the Labour leader, on his return home, took up the cudgels on their behalf and expressed the terrible conditions in the Andamans through the British press in January and February 1921.
The Rev. C. F. Andrews, too, took up the cause and wrote a series of articles demanding the release of the prisoners of the Andamans. Savarkar’s letters from the Andamans were printed and published in all provincial organs and given wide publicity. People and leaders were moved to read the letters.

Meantime, Dr. N. D. Savarkar with his brother’s wife paid a second visit in November 1920 to see his brother. Although reduced to the backbone, Savarkar came laughing, his face looking sunken and dull like a clouded moon; his ivory-white cheekbones and skin gone darker. Yet the spirit was unbent, dominating the quivering flesh. His eyes were shining and intellect looked sharper as before.

At this time the Cardew Committee that had been to the Andamans for surveying the conditions in jail submitted its report to the Government of India and consequently Government decided to close the Andamans settlement. Savarkar propagated, even at the risk of creating temporary misunderstanding, that the colony should be fully developed and hence prisoners should not express their willingness to go and rot in Indian jails, rather they should develop and bring the colony to prosperity.

Years glided by. A sense of oneness and noble patriotism began to throb through the veins of the Andamans. At such a time the death of the great Tilak in 1920 shocked India and its repercussions reached the Cellular Jail. All prisoners observed a day of fast in memory of the Father of Indian Unrest. The fast was swiftly and silently organised to the surprise of the jail authorities. Tilak’s dramatic disappearance caused the sudden appearance of Gandhi, a man of boundless capacity and fabulous energy, on the political stage. Writing on the subversive movements in India, Mr. J. C. Ker, who was a member of the Indian Civil Service from 1901 to 1929, observed: “The death of Tilak in August 1920 removed his (Gandhi’s) strongest rival for the Hindu leadership, and early in 1921 the campaign of Mr. Gandhi and the Ali Brothers was in full swing.”

Gandhi started along with the Khilafat Movement his Non-violent Non-co-operation Movement in India. Swaraj was to be won within a year. Savarkar attacked the queer definitions of

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non-violence and truth and emphasized that the Khilafat would prove an 'affat'—a calamity. Under the influence of this movement some underground revolutionary leaders were inveigled into appearing before the police and the result was that more revolutionary leaders were exiled into the Andamans. Savarkar told his colleagues that the end of politics was neither co-operation nor non-co-operation. It always hinged on responsive co-operation; the goal of humanity was mutual co-operation, he added.

Leading members of the Central Legislative Assembly and Council began to take an active interest in Savarkar's case. In the Central Legislative Assembly Mohammad Faiyaz asked the Government on February 19, 1921, whether the Savarkar brothers were confined to cells and whether the Government contemplated taking action against the officers who ill-treated them. Mr. S. P. O'Donnell replied that they were not ill-treated, that their work consisted of light labour and that it would be dangerous to release them.

In March 1921 K. V. Rangaswamy Ayyangar, member of the Council of State, moved a resolution in the Council recommending the Governor-General-in-Council to extend amnesty to Savarkar. He said that Savarkar differed with Gandhi over the boycott of the Councils as Savarkar was willing to work the Reforms. Honourable Mr. Seddon said that Savarkar was a danger to the peace of the country. Hon. Sir William Vincent said that the Government of Bombay was stoutly opposed to his release as they feared that on the release of Savarkar excitement in the province would result in dreadful occurrences; but orders for the transfer of the brothers had been issued. Nabab Sir Bahram Khan and Mr. Hayat Khan opposed Savarkar being released and said that if Government released them they would be adding petrol to the fire. Thereupon Ayyangar said that he was ready to stand security for Savarkar to assure Government of his good intentions and honest motives. In the previous month the 'D' ticket was removed from Savarkar's chest.

At last came the day of Savarkar's return to his beloved Motherland. The unexpected happened. There was a stir among the prisoners and the people all over the island.

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2 Savarkar, Mazi Janmathep, p. 496.
3 Ibid.
Savarkar was overwhelmed with feelings at the thought of leaving those poor and patriotic hearts. One of them by name Kushaba Patil stealthily or with the connivance of the guards garlanded him! Before bidding good-bye to the anxious and devotional faces, Savarkar gave the sacred oath to the chosen few:

One God, one country, one goal,
One race, one life, one language.

And Oh! Look here he crossed out the ferocious gates of the Andamans amidst the indistinct greetings from his co-sufferers! London could not captivate him, Morea could not carry him without a furore and the Andamans could not suppress him. The Mother must feed him. What a ray of hope, a sigh of relief, and a flash of emotion must have overcome the brothers! Savarkar brothers were brought in the steamer S.S. MAHARAJAH, the same steamer that had carried them to the Deathland, and here Savarkar with his elder brother started on his voyage back to India on May 2, 1921. On board the ship a European officer presented Savarkar with Thomas A. Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*. It was Savarkar's favourite book. On the fourth day they caught sight of India. Savarkar exclaimed, “Behold Baba, the feet of Mother Bharat washed by the blue waters of the ocean.” So saying they reverentially bowed their heads and shouted, “Hail Thee Goddess of Liberty! Bande Mataram!” The same unflinching love for Mother India even after such a great ordeal!

On their arrival the Savarkars were taken to Alipore Jail. Savarkar was already a name to conjure with. A Chinese youth rotting in that Jail asked him whether any bullet could harm him, for he had heard many romantic stories about Savarkar. Savarkar replied that a bullet must pierce him! A policeman asked Savarkar how many days he had swum in the ocean! “Not more than ten minutes,” said Savarkar. Those artless simple believing souls got angry with Savarkar for belittling his own story. Savarkar belonged to the line of rationalists and not to that of mystics and hence he did not make capital of his matchless exploits.

No sooner did they arrive in Alipore Jail than the Savarkars
were hit below the belt by the *Capital*, an Anglo-Indian paper of Calcutta. 'Ditchar,' writing in the *Capital*, alleged that the Savarkar brothers had conspired with the Germans. *Messrs. Manilal and Kher, Solicitors of Bombay, acting on behalf of the Savarkar brothers, extracted an unconditional apology from 'Ditchar' and the *Capital*.

From Alipore the brothers were separated, Babarao being taken to Bijapur Jail. Afterwards Babarao was transferred to Sabarmati Jail, from which he was released after a serious crisis in his health in September 1922. Savarkar was taken to Ratnagiri Jail via Bombay. There the same rotation and repetition of the rigours awaited him. What facilities he had secured in the Andamans were now lost. The monotony and insipid life once again drove him to throw away life, but he bridled his feelings and regained his balance at nightfall.

In August 1921, the Khilafat Movement ended in the Moplah rebellion in which thousands of Hindus were butchered; women were subjected to shameful indignities. Thousands of Hindus were converted to Islam; entire Hindu families were burnt alive; women in hundreds threw themselves into wells to avoid dishonour. Yet Gandhi regarded these murderers, looters and ravishers as god-fearing Muslims.

In the Ratnagiri Jail Savarkar came into contact with Khilafat prisoners and Gandhian truth-seekers. Though brought secretly, they persisted in reading the papers openly as devotees of Truth, and secured eatables through secret illegal sources and ate them stealthily. Their perverted brains did not mind, they said, if all Hindus became Moslems but they wanted Swaraj which was now a fact in sight attainable in a few months' time. The Khilafat Pathans in the Ratnagiri Jail rioted and the Hindu prisoners were saved as they were forewarned by Savarkar.

It was in the Ratnagiri Jail that Savarkar wrote his immortal work *Hindutva* and sent it out secretly. It was published under the pen name 'Mahratta' as the author Savarkar was in jail. The whole movement for Hindu Nation and Hindu polity is based on this book which defines the principles of Hindu nationalism. Indeed, this book bore out the truth that if there was any political leader in his day in India who stood on a firm, profound and well-defined political philosophy, it was, except M. N. Roy and Dr. Ambedkar, Savarkar. Some of his con-
temporaries looked to their mystic inner voices and others acted as messengers of Russian imperialism. The last chapters of this book are typically Savarkarian in grandeur, profundity, and eloquence. The poetical genius that produced the epic poetry shines through the pages of the book with eloquent reason and looks for a gleaming future. This was the need of the hour, the prescription of an expert doctor. Reading the signs of the times, Savarkar timely pointed out the ulcer that was growing and vitiating the health of Hindustan.

The book was both a result of Savarkar's deep reflection and an intense reaction to Gandhism which had surrendered to the anti-national demands of the Muslim reactionaries and had helped to feed and fan Muslim fanaticism.

The book inspired the saintly soul of Swami Shraddhananda and he exclaimed: "It must have been one of those Vedic dawns indeed which inspired our seers with new truths, that revealed to the author of Hindutva this 'Mantra', this definition of Hindutva!" Moved by the great aim, lofty vision and inspired exposition of the book, Vijayaraghavachari, an eminent leader of light and learning, remarked, "Especially the last chapter is inimitably eloquent and patriotic. I am afraid I am unable to find suitable words to describe my ideas regarding the book. especially the last chapter." N. C. Kelkar opined that Savarkar's thesis on Hindutva unfolded a new scientific analysis of Hindutva unseen hitherto.

Later on this book became the Bible of a great movement. Savarkar's poems and parts of his unfinished epic also appeared one by one. One of them is 'Gomantak.' This is a canto describing the eighteenth century horrors in Goa. In these poems Savarkar stirs the reader to the core. The reader shudders. The poems enrage him and his face darkens with shame. The poet narrates to the reader how under the guise of love and humanity the Portuguese in India perpetrated the vilest misdeeds which were a black tyranny and a disgrace to humanity! The Kamala also was published and was highly praised.

Shortly afterwards, followed the transfer of Savarkar to the Yeravda Jail. There he devoted himself to the spread of literacy and to the development of the jail library, and propagated his views on the current political questions among the Gandhian prisoners. Gandhi was then imprisoned for sedition in Yeravda
Jail. Savarkar narrated the stories of the lives of revolutionaries to the prisoners, whose knowledge of historic events was as hollow as their caps. He described their thrilling deeds, great sacrifices and selfless services to which, he said, at least their countrymen should be grateful, humanely if not patriotically. But they were struggling to secure special classes for themselves in prison. Why should they try to understand the sufferings, sacrifices and service of those dauntless revolutionary souls? He was also watchful in the prison about the conversion of Hindus. He had performed a shuddhi in Ratnagiri Jail and here he converted a Christian officer and his wife to the Hindu fold.

The year 1922 passed by. In 1923 at the third Ratnagiri District Political Conference, Savarkar's unconditional release was demanded by a special resolution. The Savarkar Release Committee led by Jamnadas Mehta agitated and published one pamphlet 'Why Savarkar should be released'. A meeting was held at the Marwadi Vidyalaya, Bombay, and a strong demand was made for Savarkar's release. Vithalbhai Patel was in the chair. In 1923 the Indian National Congress at its Coconada session at last passed a resolution, which was moved from the chair, demanding the release of Savarkar.

Now helpful winds began to blow in his direction. Sir Rufus Isaacs, now Lord Reading, who as Solicitor-General had led for the Crown in Savarkar's extradition trial in England, was Governor-General of India. He must have felt sympathy for Savarkar. His Excellency Sir George Lloyd, the Governor of Bombay, came with his Councillors to interview Savarkar. Lt.-Col. J. H. Murray, I.M.S., who was the Jail Superintendent in the Cellular Jail, was now at Yeravda as the Jail Superintendent. The conditions of release were prepared in the light of the discussions held between Savarkar and H.E. the Governor who was accompanied by Mr. A. Montgomerie, the then Home Member. After substituting a few words, Savarkar accepted the conditions, signed the terms on December 27, 1923. On January 4, 1924, Dr. Savarkar was informed that his brother would be released on January 6, and he was allowed to make arrangements for his brother's stay in Ratnagiri in consultation with him. Accordingly Dr. Savarkar saw his brother on January 5
in Yeravda Jail. And then Savarkar was released conditionally on January 6, 1924, from Yeravda Jail. The terms read:

(1) that Savarkar shall reside in Ratnagiri district and shall not go beyond the limits of that district without the permission of Government or in case of emergency of the District Magistrate;

(2) that he will not engage publicly or privately in any manner of political activities without the consent of Government for a period of five years such restrictions being renewable at the discretion of Government at the expiry of the said term.

The release orders said that Savarkar must proceed immediately by the nearest route to Ratnagiri and report the arrival personally to the District Magistrate, Ratnagiri.

The release of Savarkar was hailed with great satisfaction all over India. Savarkar was taken by Dr. V. M. Bhat to the City of Poona where Savarkar saw N. C. Kelkar. Shivramant Paranjpe, with his changed outlook, appeared to Savarkar as a distortion of the great revolutionary apostle. Paranjpe talked to Savarkar about the proposed new daily, Nava Kal. Savarkar abruptly remarked with a pun that he knew only the old Kal!

But all was not yet well. The dark night of imperialism was still reigning. The owl, popularly known as the old dame of Bori Bunder, ominously hooted in its current topics: "At Ratnagiri he will have predecessor of a very different stamp. After the third Burmese War, King Thiba was exiled to Ratnagiri and it was there that he died." What more humane and beneficial note can an owl hoot?

The political situation in India was getting complicated since 1915. S. P. Sinha, afterwards Lord Sinha, was the last Moderate to preside over the Congress. He spoke in favour of gradual evolution and cautious progress, and his address proved to be the swan-song of the Moderates as Congressmen. The Liberals were the Moderates who had seceded from the Congress. Their big Gokhale and Mehta had passed away. The then Left Wing was growing powerful. Mrs. Annie Besant’s Home Rule League and Tilak’s grand entry into the Lucknow Congress hastened the fall of the Liberals.

* The Times of India, 7 January 1924.
On the eve of the Lucknow session the shrewd elements in
the Muslim League adopted the Congress ideal of self-govern-
ment for India within the empire. For winning support of the
Muslim League to its demands, the Congress made a pact with
the Muslim League, conceding them separate representation and
communal electorates. The Lucknow Pact, after Tilak's death,
unfortunately proved to be a rift in the lute. It was one thing
for a man like Tilak to say that he wanted Hindu-Muslim unity
and another for a man like Gandhi to say that he wanted Hindu-
Muslim unity. The former had the confidence, strength and
realism of Shivaji whereas the latter had the nervous surrender-
ing mood of the Rajputs who placated the Muslim rulers of
Delhi. The pact then reduced the political problem to a simple
equation. If the Muslim League represented the Indian Mos-
lems, whom did the Congress represent? The answer was all
those Indians minus the Muslims. The Moderates and Moonje
opposed this pact from the beginning! The Montagu-Chelms-
ford Reforms were declared on August 20, 1917, and were
published in 1918. The Congress declared the reforms as dis-
appointing and unsatisfactory. The Moderates pronounced this
scheme a substantial instalment of responsible Government to
be welcomed and improved upon.

Although Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, was
of the opinion that the "separate representation and communal
electorates were opposed to the teaching of history", and "fatal
to the democratization of institutions and caused disunion
between the Hindus and the Mohammedans", he yielded to
the Muslim demand as he feared a Moslem rising if he did not
do so. Montagu confirmed the policy of Morley and Minto
and the Lucknow Pact. Gokhale's testament also held this
view and his skeleton plan recognised the need for separate and
direct representation of Mohammedans and other non-majority
communities!  

Meantime, the Rowlatt Act was passed in 1919 and the
Government of India took power to arrest and imprison any
individual without trial. Tilak was then in London fighting
out the Chitol case. Martial law reigned in the Punjab and
roused general indignation. Then came the tragedy of Jallian-

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5 Montagu, E. S., An Indian Diary, p. 100.
6 Aga Khan, H.H. the, India in Transition, p. 44.
walla Baug and the inauguration of Gandhi’s Non-co-operation Movement in collaboration with the Khilafat Movement which was entirely religious, essentially fanatical and historically regressive. At this critical juncture Tilak passed away!

The fiasco and futility of Gandhi’s non-co-operation and the collapse of the Khilafat Movement turned C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru to the Assembly with a view to giving organized opposition to the Government. Kelkar, Jayakar and Moonje, who were sceptical of Gandhi’s political tactics and who were awakened by the Moplas’ atrocities and outrages on Hindu women, men and children in Malabar, made common cause with this party. The Liberals in the new Assembly carried a motion declaring that they wanted a revision or re-examination of the reformed constitution at an earlier date than 1929. Hence they were also not liked by Government and their wisdom with moderation was disliked by the masses who were awakened to political consciousness by Tilak and Das. The strange, enigmatic, and conquering politician in Gandhi was about to retire into oblivion for the next five years. After the failure of Gandhi’s Non-co-operation Movement and the Khilafat Movement, Sarojini Naidu declared that Mahatma Gandhi should not needlessly interfere in politics. He was a saint and he should be satisfied with the homage the people paid him.7

The Liberals were routed in the election of 1923. They lacked an organized party. The vociferous Das and Nehru occupied their places. Savarkar was willing to work the reforms. He always held that the movement for freedom should be launched from within and without!

* Lokamanya, 22 August 1924.