

Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya

Tributes by the Court

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

During the last 50 years or more our Association has produced leaders--I say so with modesty--who have distinguished themselves not only in the field of law but in various other spheres of life and shed lustre upon it, but I cannot think of anyone who worked with such devotion and spirit of sacrifice in so many fields and achieved distinction in every field as the great departed to whose memory we have assembled to pay our homage. Within a few years of the establishment of the Allahabad University Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya took his law degree and if my memory fails me not, started practice in 1893. When in 1898 I joined the Allahabad Bar, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya was looked upon as the up coming man in the profession. Within a few years of it he built up a solid and substantial practice on the civil side which placed him immediately after the leaders of those days, namely, Pandit (afterwards Sir) Sunder Lal, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru and Mr. Choudhri. In the profession he was known to be a lawyer of very keen intellect, extremely fair in the presentation of his cases, courteous to his opponents but above everything else his was the shining example which was quoted to us, the juniors of those days, of a lawyer who combined the scrupulousness in the last degree with ability of high order. I know it for a fact that successive Chief Justices--and none more than Sir John Stanley and Sir Henry Richards--held him in high regard not only for his ability but for his spotless character. There was, however, a persistent inner urge in him which called him away from the limited field of law to the larger service of the country. As a young man he had dreamt of establishing a Hindu University on a big colossal scale and while his contemporaries of those days looked upon him as a mere visionary he was building up his plans and strengthening day by day his resolve to give all his time and all his service to the realisation of that dream.

In 1911 when he was almost in the first rank of practising lawyers he felt the call and unmindful of his own interest and the interest of his large family he suddenly gave up his practice only to work for the establishment of this University and to collect funds from every quarter. His enthusiasm was infectious. He got the support of a very large number of people who believed in his earnestness and sincerity even though at times they doubted the practicability of his ambitious schemes. His persistence, however, carried the day. So great was his influence and so widely respected he was all over India and particularly among the Princes, that he received munificent donations from the Princes and from the richer classes among the Hindus. He acquired a huge plot of land at Benares and the foundation was laid of the University by Lord Hardinge. An Act of the Legislature was passed incorporating it and now for over a quarter of a century it has been imparting education to the youth of the country in various branches of knowledge. It is given to few men to see their dreams realised. I maintain that if he had done nothing else but established this University his name would go down to posterity as an integral part of Hindu history but he did a great deal more.

In the political field he shone from the very first day he joined the Indian National Congress. He entered Legislature nearly 40 or 45 years ago and there made his mark as a great orator and as a great political reformer. He commanded in an unstinted measure the respect and confidence of his countrymen. He was at the height of his fame during the Viceroyalty of Lord Hardinge and there were few men who commanded greater confidence of the Viceroy of those days than he and the late Mr Gokhale. Right up to the last moment of his life his interest in politics continued unabated.

He lived the typical life of a pious and orthodox Hindu and yet his orthodoxy never stood in his way when the country demanded that he should cross the seas and go on its behalf to the Second Round Table Conference. I was present all along with him in England and I can say from personal knowledge that there was no Indian who commanded the respect of English politicians in England in a greater measure than Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya. He was known as the 'silver tongued orator'. So great was his command of English that on one occasion a great English politician in introducing him to the audience in one of the rooms in the House of Commons expressed his surprise that without ever having been to Oxford or Cambridge as a student he should possess such wonderful felicity of expression in a foreign tongue. Deeply learned in Sanskrit and the religious lore of his ancestors he throughout his life led a life of extreme purity which gave him a great hold over the Hindu mind. The one thing for which he was noted was not his intellectual gifts great as they were and his political fervour which knew no bound but character pure, high and solid, and sense of devotion and sacrifice in the service of his motherland. I sincerely hope and trust that his great example will continue to influence us all our life to the interest of the country.

HON. MR. KAMLAKANTA VERMA

THE CHIEF JUSTICE

The death of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya means not only the disappearance from our midst of a truly venerable figure, but also the closing of a life which, while it was long, was crowded with achievements that can truly be described as noble as well as notable. It was a life full of ceaseless activity and devoted to service. You have referred to the various spheres in which he achieved distinction. We are here concerned with his eminence as a member of the legal profession practising in this Court. As has been said by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, he was, when he decided to retire from the profession, only just next to

the great leaders, Mr. J.N. Chaudhri, Sir Sunder Lal and Pandit Moti Lal Nehru. It is well recognised that, if he had not decided to retire, he would have become within a short time one of the great leaders of the profession, and there can be no doubt that there was no prize which was open to a lawyer which could not have been his.

It is, however, impossible to speak of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya without mentioning one more of his achievement, namely, the Benares Hindu University. It owes its origin entirely to his vision, courage, devotion to his ideal and his perseverance and hard work. As Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has said if Malaviyaji had done nothing else in his life except establishing this University, he would have gone down to posterity as a truly great man. I cannot here refrain from mentioning also the name of Sir Sunder Lal, who together with Malaviyaji, was responsible for laying the foundations of that University well and truly. There are many of us who believe that Sir Sunder Lal would not have died so soon if he had not worked so hard in connection with the affairs of the Benares University.

If I may here digress a little, I should like to say that we lawyers have every reason to feel proud of the great services which lawyers in this country have rendered. Confining myself only to the field of education, I wish to remind you that the Aligarh Muslim University also owes its origin to the vision, courage, perseverance, hard work and devotion to high ideals of a lawyer. It was the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College which in the fullness of time, grew into the Muslim University and that College was founded, you will remember, by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, who was also a lawyer. Although he was not a practising lawyer, being a member of the Judicial Service of these provinces, he was still a lawyer. We all know of what Sir Tarak Nath Palit, Sir Rash Behari Ghose and Sir Asutosh Mukerjee have done for the Calcutta University. I could give you further instances, but I do not consider it necessary to do so.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has died full of years and honours, but there can be no doubt that his passing away leaves a void which it would be impossible to fill. He lived nobly, worked nobly and has died nobly. He was an inspiration at least to two generations of his countrymen and we have assembled here today to pay our respects to the memory of a truly great man. Gentlemen, my brother Judges and I join you in paying our tribute to the memory of such a man and in offering our condolences to the members of the bereaved family.