

the Indian community will develop in intelligence and political aptitude and acquire a greater and greater voice in the councils of the Empire. The whole process is a process of growth without any violent departure. The agreement even deepens the more the Indians develop: because domination gives way to genuine partnership. This seems to be the meaning of the ideal of Swaraj within the Empire.

The Extremist ideal is entirely different. There was no conflict between the ideals of good government and self-government in the minds of the Liberals; and in any case there was more emphasis on 'good' than on 'self'. The two merged in each other; the one was to lead on to the other. The Moderates would never prefer the rule of a native Rajah or Nabob to the present administration. But the Extremist was clear about it; he would prefer any indigenous government to the most enlightened foreign rule. Beneath the identity of words, a very real difference is hidden. For practical purpose the two parties may unite as they did unite in 1916; there may be eventual modifications of the creed in the light of practical experience; but the attitude of the Nationalists who organised a new party in 1905 was entirely different from the attitude of the old Liberals, not only as regards methods but even as regards the ideals.

### 13. *WHY SWARAJ ?*

The case for Swaraj essentially rests on the nature of the human mind. The desire for freedom is a part of the essential nature of man: it is the desire to express one's self, the desire to live one's own way, the desire to be one-self. In the *Bande Mataram*-an Extremist paper-we have a beautiful presentation of this ideal.

"It is not in human nature to rest eternally contented with a state of sub-ordination or serfdom. God

made man in his own image, essentially and potentially free and pure, shall man keep him in eternal bondage and sin? Freedom is constitutional in man, and when this freedom is curtailed by social and civil laws and institutions, it is done not to kill but to perfect this very freedom itself. This is the only rational end and justification of those necessary limitations that society imposes upon human freedom everywhere, and where this justification is absent, human nature revolts against these limitations, whether social, religious, or political, creating conflicts, struggles, revolutions, through which humanity realises its divinely appointed destiny everywhere. The desire for autonomy is constitutional in man and not a mere functional disturbance such as the tyrant and the aggressor has always proclaimed it to be. Is it sinful to cherish that which is a necessary element in the very constitution of man's mind and soul? Has not history preserved, as the most sacred relics of the race, the achievements of this natural and God-inspired impulse from its very birth? Has not art beautified it in a thousand lovely forms, in poetry, in painting, in music, and in sculpture? Has not religion, wherever and whenever it has not been able to free itself from the selfish control of priests and princes, sacrificed this noble instinct, as the very breath of God? Shall we alone deem it a sin and be branded, for cherishing this divine desire, as criminals?

“Tyrants have tried but have they ever succeeded in repressing this natural love of freedom in man? Repressed it has grown in strength; crushed under the heel of the tyrant, it has assumed a myriad forms and in successive incarnations gaining strength and inspiration from repeated failures and endless suffering, it has risen finally, to overthrow its oppressor for good: this is the teaching of History, this is the message of Humanity.

“But like the scriptural adder, tyrannies have eyes

but they see not, have ears but they hear not, and the universal teaching of history, and the eternal message of humanity, are both lost on them. And the car of progress has, through human folly and perversity, to wade through blood and ruin still on earth."

This is the rationale for 'Indian autonomy,' according to the new school.

The government of India by Great Britain is a huge and costly failure. It has no justification whatsoever. No nation has a right to make a slave of another nation. Britain boasts of taking a leading part in the abolition of slavery in the world; but this party would say that she has been responsible for the establishment of a slavery in a different form, on a large scale in the modern world. It is not the enslavement now of one man by another man; it is the enslavement of one nation by another nation. Three hundred millions of human beings are deprived of their elementary rights and liberties in the name of an imperial civilisation. The Indian nation when it lost its liberty, lost its self-respect: and the loss of liberty and the loss of self-respect mean the loss of everything. The pettinesses and jealousies which seem to be so rampant to-day in India are nothing inherent in the Indian people, but the direct result of their deprivation of political life and liberty. Autocracy in India in the past is said to be responsible for the servile nature of the Indians; but the autocracy of Britain has done more to kill the public spirit in Indian people than the autocracy of the Hindu and Mahommedan rulers of the past. These autocracies lacked compactness and organisation of the modern type; they, therefore, always left considerable scope for freedom and initiative among the people. Hence the Marathas and the Sikhs could easily organise sub-national risings against the autocracy even of Aurangzeb. But to-day any one who attempts to play the rôle of Shivaji will be locked up in jail or hanged

in no time. Secondly, the oriental autocracies of the past merely touched the surface of the people's life; local life in villages and in outlying districts was completely unaffected by the vicissitudes of political life in Delhi. The present despotism has a far-reaching influence on the life of the people. It regulates currency, prices, trade, and the whole economic life of the people. Its cultural influence, for good or evil, is even more far-reaching and subtle. "The disrupting influence of Western education and the contact with Western life and thought have loosened the old religious and social bonds on the one hand, while the British system of administration, taking away all power and prestige from the old and natural leaders of society, without vesting the general masses of the people with any civic rights and privileges which might more than compensate for the decay of the old order, has entirely killed even what feeble and primitive civic life there was in the country before; and these have combined to make us more selfish and sordid than we had ever been in the past."

Britain's gifts to India are all doubtful gifts; they destroy more than they construct. Britain boasts of giving peace to the country, but is this the peace of life or peace of death? Is it not like the Roman method which created solitude and called it peace? What is this peace worth if it has simultaneously taken away all capacity of the people even to protect themselves? Does not this peace facilitate the work of peaceful exploitation?

England claims to develop the natural resources of the country: but for whom? All the profits go to the English capitalist. The Indians come only as coolies—as mere labourers.

The plain fact of the situation which stares every one in the face, who honestly wants to understand it, is that Great Britain's interests are radically different from and

opposed to the interests of India. The whole Moderate politics is an impossible attempt to trace a harmony of interests which does not, and which cannot, exist. The interests of India are no more identical with the interests of Britain than the interests of the mouse are identical with the interests of the cat. India should not accept in a spirit of resignation and helplessness the supreme surrender that is implied in the acceptance of the Imperialist's point of view. It would be an act of political, economic, and cultural suicide. How can India be the same as Great Britain ? How can India accept the rôle of a subordinate department of His Majesty's Government ? If *a priori* reasoning does not convince the Moderate of the impossibility of identifying the interests of India with the interests of Great Britain, surely a hundred and fifty years of rule of the British in India is a sufficient demonstration of the utter futility of such hopes and aspirations. India is a valuable asset to the Empire because it offers such a nice field for the investment of British capital. But if Indian capital takes the place of British capital, what scope is there left for the English capitalist's ambitions ? India is a valuable asset to the Empire, because she supplies raw materials to and buys the finished products of, the British industrialist. But here again if native enterprise and capital build up Indian industries, what happens to the ambitions of the industrial England ? India is a valuable asset to the Empire, because she offers the best training-ground for the intellect of England and the character of England : but if Indians take the place of Englishmen in higher services, what hopes are there then for the British talent ? The loss of one country is the gain of the other. India's expansion can only take place at the expense of England's, because the field which everywhere is reserved for the nationals, is here occupied by the foreigner. That is why the foreign rule can never be anything but an unmixed curse to the people. That is why the new party demands Swaraj,

demands independence, demands separation from Britain.

If the nation, therefore, wants to attain to the full height of which it is capable and shape its evolution and its lines of development according to its own genius, and its own best interest, it has got to work up to the ideal of complete political freedom.

The Swaraj movement is not only a political or economic movement. It is political, social, economic: but it is really a wider cultural, essentially spiritual movement. It is the assertion of India's best and highest self in all the affairs of India's life. It takes its stand upon the fundamental truth enshrined in India's highest philosophic thought viz. that every man has within himself, as his own soul, as the very root and realisation of being, the spirit of God. Thus B. C. Pal preaches the message of Swaraj:

“Freedom is man's birth-right. It is inherent in the very making of man. Man is made not out of the image, not in the image, but out of the substance of the Maker, and as God is eternally free, so are you, prince or peasant, Brahman or Pariah, man or woman, Hindu or Mahómmedan, Buddhist or Christian, rich or poor, ignorant or learned, free and eternal.

“You realise it not, because you are enveloped in ignorance. You realise it not, because freedom has not yet organised itself yet in your social life. You realise it not, because this spirit of freedom has not yet been able to organise itself in your economic life. You realise it not, because this idea of freedom has not yet actualised itself in your political life.

“In the citizenship of a free State you regulate yourself, you control yourself, you rule yourself, you restrain yourself and freedom is not want of restraint but self-restraint; freedom is not want of determination but self-determination, and it only consists, as free citizens of a free

State, in the administration of your own affairs, in your submitting yourself to the laws that you helped to make, and in submitting yourself to the regulations that you helped to impose upon yourselves and upon the community at large.

“ Hence I say that it is essentially a spiritual movement. We believe that the spirit of our race will fulfil and realise itself in and through this movement and shall realise the divinely appointed destiny of our nation.”

#### *14. ARE WE FIT FOR SWARAJ ?*

The Moderates maintained that we must deserve before we desire: and that self-government in the case of India is a very arduous task requiring a period of arduous preparation. The Swaraj is, therefore, to be necessarily obtained by stages: at each stage we have to convince our masters of our ability to run successfully the tasks allotted to us: and with their permission, we go on to a higher stage. The whole period of British rule is a period of political apprenticeship of the Indian nation.

Tilak maintained that the Indian nation has ceased to be a tender child: and now that it has grown up, it demands that the management of its affairs should be transferred to it. The trustees accept the principle that the moment the people acquire real maturity, they should govern their own affairs. But they begin to think that the head of the child has turned or that the child has not yet acquired the necessary fitness. Now will anyone say when the child will acquire that fitness and how the child will acquire that fitness? How can the Indian people demonstrate their fitness till they are actually entrusted with the task?

That Indians are not fit, that they will take a considerable period before they will be fit, if at all ever they will be, that as long as this period of immaturity continues in