

of vegetation, a love for its swarthy populations, unshod and unclad, a love for the dirt-clothed village urchins, unshod and unclad; a love for its languages, its literatures, its philosophies, its religions, a love for the culture and civilisation—this is the characteristic of this new patriotism.”

17. *NATION-BUILDING. A. CONSTITUTIONAL
AGITATION.*

The ideal dictates to some extent the precise methods to be followed in achieving the ideal. The Liberals strove hard to bring about a better government of the Western type under the British leadership and with the British co-operation. Their main weapon in this fight is known as constitutional agitation. The process that the Moderates actually developed under this dignified name is called in plain language the process of begging. The policy of so-called constitutional agitation is nothing but a policy of mendicancy. The Moderates pray and petition, beg and cry: they sometimes fret and fume: but they cannot go beyond that. This type of agitation has been indeed an instrument of political training and has helped the diffusion of national sentiment among us. But it has not achieved any concrete results: and the few reactions of the Government to it have been a measure here and a measure there meant to lighten the work of the administration and to strengthen the foundations of the British supremacy in India.

The Moderates believed too much in the British heart, the British good sense, the British conscience, the British liberal traditions, the British pledges. There are strong tactical advantages in this policy. You can go on clamouring without giving any handle to the Government to stop you or punish you. Your safety, your career are not jeopardised. You can indulge in the luxury of patriotism without

any material sacrifices. You can even advance your interests under the cloak of patriotism. Your ceaseless clamour, your rhetorical demonstrations and appeals may either induce the Government to bribe you into silence or may spread your reputation among the people and strengthen your professional interests. This was the essential nature of a large part of the Congress Liberal politics: it was a clever fight by a few distinguished lawyers and some others to out-manoeuvre both the Government and the people into giving them a few solid material advantages. The Indian people were deceived for some time and it suited the Government to play this tactics for some time: and the Congress patriotism flourished.

The nationalist has unmasked this old type of patriot and put back the Rao Bahadurs into their proper places. The nationalist has exposed the shallowness, the trickery of this traffic, in the name of the country, carried on shamelessly by distinguished nonentities. Tilak set the example of the new type of patriotism; he showed that the path to country's service is not the primrose path of dalliance.

The Moderates always congratulate themselves and the country and create hopes when a Liberal Member becomes the Viceroy or the Secretary of State, or the Liberal Party comes into power. Lord Morley's appointment created a flutter in the country. Meetings were held and resolutions were passed congratulating the country. Passages were read from Morley's books. Tilak said that you may as well read passages from the Gita. The Liberal views announced in books are for the British people. They are the academic expression of a philosopher's creed. But a philosopher in office is an anachronism: he either ceases to be a philosopher or ceases to be an officer. Lord Morley, the Secretary of State, is different from Lord Morley "the reverent disciple of Burke, the friend and biographer of Gladstone." The Secretary of State is a part of a system; he is the mouthpiece

largely of Anglo-Indian bureaucracy. He is guided entirely by the actual circumstances and not by the philosophic theories which he might have eloquently preached. Every officer is a part of a system and he has either to accept the system or to go. Any reliance, therefore, on any personality in politics in a system of the type we have, is entirely misplaced.

Nor is it advisable for any Indian who wants to face facts to place any trust in any British party. All parties have adopted a common front towards India and agreed that India should be outside party politics. If the Imperialists close their ranks when India is concerned, is it not up to the Nationalists to close their ranks, when Great Britain is concerned? Granting that here and there a Member of Parliament or a prominent politician tries to bring the Indian point of view before the Parliament or the British public, rest assured that in many cases it is a party advantage that he is trying to score. Disinterested attitude in politics is very rare: and where it is evident, it is not likely to be effective at all. All credit to the "Little Englanders" and some great Liberals who now and then put up a heroic, disinterested defence of India: but they are, and always bound to be, a very, very negligible minority.

The British Government is a sort of democracy. If the country's only salvation is to come from Great Britain, there will have to be a magical transformation of public opinion in Great Britain towards India. Is such a miracle possible? How much time are we to waste, how much money are we to spend in this absolutely foolish enterprise in bringing conviction to those whose minds are already closed against us by their self-interest? Dadabhai spent twenty-five years of his life in trying to convince the English people of the injustice that is done to India to-day. At the age of 82 he comes back and tells us that he is utterly disappointed. Then Gokhale may wait for eighty years more and then

tell us that he is disappointed. How long is this farce of agitation to go on? Thus Tilak argued. "So it comes to this that the whole British electorate must be converted. So you are going to convert all persons who have a right to vote in England, so as to get the majority on your side, and when this is done and when by that majority the Liberal party is returned to Parliament, bent upon doing good to India and it appoints a Secretary of State as good as Morley, then you hope to get something by the old methods. The whole electorate of Great Britain must be converted by lectures. You cannot touch the pocket or interest, and that man must be a fool indeed who would sacrifice his own interest on hearing a philosophic lecture. One of my friends delivered a lecture in England on the grievances of India. A man from the audience came and asked him how many of them there were. The lecturer replied, "Thirty crores." The inquirer replied, "Then you do not deserve anything." That is the attitude with which an Englishman looks at the question. You now depend on the Labour Party. Labourers have their own grievances, but they won't treat you any better. On the contrary, they will treat you worse, because British labourers obtain their livelihood by sending us their goods. This is the real position."

Constitutional agitation, therefore, in the form of propaganda or appeals to the official or non-official British men was foredoomed to failure. But it was not only futile; it was positively mischievous. It cultivated a lack of manliness and self-respect among the people who were taught to look for their salvation to the people of another country. It further tended to degenerate in actual practice into an agitation for honours, titles, positions, and spoils of office. This was the use made of the cry of Indianization both by the Indian Liberals and the British Government. These positions in the Govern-

ment hands were so many traps for the Indian patriot and so many lures for the self-seeking politicians. These men then passed from the Congress ranks and became distinguished tools in the hands of the bureaucracy. Moderate politics was not only ineffective : it was grossly selfish. It brought about a degradation of public life. " They (i. e. the Moderates) do not feel the utter degradation and misery of their present position in the constitution of their State. Their sense of the disabilities and the disadvantages of British despotism is personal and self-regarding. They complain because they are not appointed to high offices in the administration, and the appointment of a Bengali as a Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, or of a Madrasi as Advocate-General in Madras, sends up a chorus of congratulations from the whole body of the Indian Press, who have not yet arisen to a perception of the elementary truth that such isolated instances of official advancement do not, and can never compensate for the serious intellectual and moral wrong which the Government of one people by another and an alien people always inflicts. The leader who today leads a most violent attack on the Government is, therefore, found, the moment that Government receives him with offers of honour and preferment, to support and defend it most enthusiastically. All this is due to the absence of *Mumukshatva*-this deep and burning sense of bondage-and the unquenchable longing for salvation, which is the distinguishing feature of the new Party."

Constitutional agitation has not much scope in an autocratic government. The Government of India is an absolute government. Lord Morley cannot even imagine the Government of India to be any other than " a personal and absolute government." Now an absolute government is one which is not guided or influenced by the wishes and opinions of the people. Lord Minto says that it would be a mischievous thing for the British Government in

India, if the idea got abroad that the Government of India had no convictions of their own and that they initiated reforms, under the pressure of public opinion here. What does it mean in plain language? That the Government of India should never allow itself to be influenced by the public opinion in India, that it would seriously weaken its prestige and alter its character if it looked that it yielded to the clamour of popular agitation. How then can we talk of a constitutional agitation in India and its efficacy in bringing about changes in the policy of the Government?

The Moderates forget that there is no democracy in India and that there is no constitutional government either. In one sense every Government is constitutional because it has a certain fixed nature regulating the relation of the parts to parts and of the parts to whole. But in political science constitutional governments are contrasted with personal and absolute governments. There are constitutional ways through which the people can effectively enforce their will upon the Government in a constitutional government. Here in India the people have no part or lot in the shaping of the constitution. The constitution is a mere arbitrary creation of the British Parliament and imposed upon the people. It is not created by the people: it cannot be modified by the people. The people have merely to obey; they have no voice at all in it. How can this Government of India be called a constitutional government?

Constitutional agitation is a great and powerful weapon in the hands of the people in democratically organised countries. There the people themselves create their Parliaments and their Executives; they are the political sovereign. Hence the Parliamentary governments are always very sensitive to strong gusts of public opinion and the people have no justification to have recourse to force, because they have constitutional channels of self-

expression. Agitation in England can demand changes: and can constitutionally *enforce* these demands if necessary. But in India the Moderates use the language, try to adopt the methods of Great Britain, without perceiving the essential difference between the two cases. Here in India constitutional agitation only means agitation which is regulated by law and which is within the limit of the law. But who makes that law? That is the essential question. Under the circumstances, constitutional agitation only means an agitation which is consistent with the safety of the agitator, which will not conjure up the dreaded section of 124 A of the Indian Penal Code.

Policy may dictate to the nationalist a temporary compliance with the laws of existing government. The theoretical position however is different. The Moderates accept the present Government as the Government constituted by law: and consider it vital that the laws—whatever they are—enacted by the Government are valid: and have to be obeyed in the higher interests of not only the Government, but also of the existing social order. This virtually means that they accept the right divine of the British Government to go wrong. The nationalist accepts these laws as long as these laws respect the primary rights of citizenship. Here the nationalist comes out with his theory of the natural rights of men. “There are certain rights which Governments do not create: but rights which create Government themselves. They are natural rights, they are primary rights, rights that inhere in every individual human being, rights the charter of which is received from no man but from Him, Who stands on high, Who endowed every man with his life, with his limbs, Who endowed every man with his human instincts, Who endowed every man with his intellect and every spiritual and ethical endowment. The charter of these rights comes not from any crowned head, but it comes from the

King of Kings, from the throne of God Himself. And so long as the British Government in India will respect those natural, those primary, those uncreated rights of persons and property of individual Indian citizens, so long we shall respect these laws, and our agitation shall be conducted along such lines. In this sense we may claim to be as constitutional as are those who refuse to accept the constitutional character of our programme and propaganda."

18. NATION-BUILDING : B. A PROBLEM IN PSYCHOLOGY.

The real Indian problem is neither a problem in politics, nor in economics, nor in administration: it is a problem in psychology.

The foreign government in India appears a miracle, an inexplicable phenomenon to the English people. What are the real roots from which it has sprung? What are the real roots from which it derives perpetual life? India is a vast country with a population of about three hundred millions. These three hundred millions are governed by less than three lakhs of foreigners. To conquer such a vast population and to maintain constant control over such a vast population, mere force won't suffice. It is the Indian who virtually conquered India; it is the Indian who actually rules India.

Why have the Indians consented to play this rôle? It is illusion: *maya*. The Indian people have been led to believe they are weak; that they are divided; that they cannot maintain peace and order, that they cannot withstand the foreign invader; that they will pounce upon each other if the British withdraw. It is the Indian police who keep the peace; but they do not know their own power. It is the Indian Sheristedars who conduct the