

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

revenue administration; but they do not know their own power. This myth of incapacity, of helplessness has been dinned into their ears so often that the politicians as well as the people have come to believe it as absolute truth.

The New Movement changes all this. It sets itself to remove this illusion. It proclaims the message of strength to the people. It places the ideal of Swaraj before the people in order to remove this killing despair among the people. It sets up a new gospel of self-reliance and self-sacrifice. It asks the nation to turn its face away from the Government to itself, for salvation always comes both to individuals and nations not from without, but from within.

The Moderates merely repeat what they have been taught by the English rulers of India that the road to Swaraj is weary, that there are almost inseparable difficulties in the way and that these difficulties will increase hundred-fold by playing a game of recklessness. They sometimes forget that these difficulties are the creation of the present state of affairs. Our growing physical weakness, our lack of administrative experience, our military helplessness, our internal divisions—are not these the outcome of a foreign rule? The Extremist does not want to minimise these difficulties: but takes the only way to modify or remove them.

Our troubles are with our own mind, with our own wills; and our sense of despair has gone to such an extent that the biggest party in politics in the country from 1885 to 1905 seriously believed that without the indispensable co-operation of the British Government we could not proceed one inch forward. Under the influence of this belief we are asked to lick the hand that bites us.

The period of British rule in India is not a period of education of the Indian people in the ideals of freedom

and the methods of acquiring them, especially upto 1905. The rude shock of the Partition disillusioned many of us and opened the eyes of those who were asleep so far. Time has gone when the nation can be pleased with a rattle or tickled with a straw or frightened by a bugbear.

The task of the new movement is to create a new mood among the people. In this new atmosphere, people must cultivate an absolute mental aloofness from the present foreign government. The service of the Government should be now looked upon as a degraded sort of thing. "The position of the Government servant should be made as degrading as that of the Brahmin who receives alms from the Shudras in the old Brahmanical social economy. Every Government servant must be regarded as a Bratya, one who has lost the purity of his social life. It is the nation's good will which must go far to secure respectability and not the good will of the Government. All the old valuations must change : and a spirit of virile nationalism must make the task of subservience to Government in any shape or form, a very difficult thing. Public opinion is always a very powerful force especially in a society like the one in India : and the moment it is mobilized the old Government prestige and fear are bound to disappear."

The new movement proposed to create a powerful national organization on the basis of this new-born sentiment. The people must be taught to govern themselves, to organise their own affairs, as independently of the officials as possible. The task of building up a nation is a herculean task; and those who are engaged in it have no leisure for "those flirtations with the Government which have so long usurped the name of national politics."

Thus the new movement sometimes called the Passive Resistance Movement had a two-fold task. The

first task was a psychological one; here the leaders proceeded to remove those illusions which were really at the root of our foreign conquest about the omnipotence and altruism of our rulers. "Untrained in the crooked ways of civilised diplomacy, they had believed what their rulers had said, either of themselves, or of their subjects, as gospel truth. They had been told that the people of India were unfitted to manage their own affairs, and they believed it to be true. They had been told that the people were weak and the Government was strong. They had been told that India stood on a lower plane of humanity and England's mission was to civilise 'the semi-barbarous native.' The Nationalist school took it upon themselves to expose the hollowness of all these pretensions. They commenced to make what are called counter-passes in hypnotism, and at once awoke the people to a sense of their own strength, and an appreciation of their own culture."

Secondly, the leaders placed before the people the new ideal of the Mother—their own country, once so great and now fallen on evil days and evil tongues—demanding every particle of their energy and devotion. The real patriotism could grow only after the myth of the beneficence and irresistible character of the Western rule was cleared away. The poison of these denationalising beliefs once removed, the patient's normal powers of recovery will assert themselves. The nationalists however proceeded to organise civic and economic institutions of their own through which the newly generated spirit of self-reliance and self-sacrifice may express itself. What are these institutions? "Our own village organisations, side by side with,—but working neither in opposition to nor in association with—the officially controlled village unions, our own Local and District organisations, similarly working in sub-divisions and districts, our own organs of provincial life and activities, and finally our own National Congress or Assembly, stand-

ing at the heart of these all, regulating and directing their activities, consistently with the large and eternal interests of the nation.”

19. *REFORM ON NATIONAL LINES.*

The new nationalism emphatically stood for the assertion of the Indian ideals in everything. The old nationalism stood for mechanical, blind imitation of the Western forms. Now imitation never leads to true greatness; and imitation always tends to be a mere external thing. It is easy perhaps to transplant the forms of Western life: but it is the spirit which matters: and the East is East and the West is West; and one should not be twisted and tortured into the other's likeness. This is the new attitude.

It is the peculiar thought-structure and the peculiar social structure which reveal a people's individuality. It is this individuality, this peculiar genius of the people, its characteristic national mind, which makes the literature, the religion, the social institutions of one people so different from those of other peoples. To stifle this spirit is to kill the very life of the people. To ignore it in our schemes of reconstruction is to foredoom them to failure. The whole Liberal school ignored this most vital fact in the whole social situation - viz. the soul of the nation and all that it stands for. This is why the whole school has not been able to touch the inner springs of the nation's life, and consequently has simply failed to move it. The new movement derives its strength from this fact that it addresses its whole programme to the actual, living soul of India, and not to its mere surface-intelligence. “The true meaning of ‘reform on national lines’ means the recognition of, and due obedience to, the supreme genius of the nation in devising means for its advancement. It does not mean the