

hesitating, doubting, calculating, casting up moral results to satisfy ourselves that our gains have been commensurable to our sacrifices. Such indeed has not been the royal road to political enfranchisement. The triumphs of liberty have not thus been won. Japan is an object lesson which thrusts itself upon the view. Read her history : note her wonderful self-sacrifice, her marvellous power of adaptation, her patience, her fortitude, her indomitable energy and persistency, and let the most ancient of Eastern nations derive inspiration and guidance from the youngest, which has solved the riddle of Asiatic life, and has harmonised the conservatism of the East with the progressive forces of the West."

6. *THE SPIRIT OF SELF-RELIANCE.*

There had been growing within the Congress slowly but surely a tradition, somewhat different from the usual tradition of the Liberals to look to Britain as a friend, and even saviour. This tradition was trying to divert the Indian mind from this policy of dependence upon the Empire to a new policy of self-help and self-reliance. This is the very essence of new nationalism. The report of the third Congress says: "Words are not enough. You must be up and doing." Dadabhai Naoroji said in the ninth Congress: " We must show that we believe in the justice of the cause by our earnestness and self-sacrifice: otherwise we can never succeed with the British people by mere declamations." Mr. Alfred Webb, as the President of the tenth Congress said: "Let it be your individual care to carry back from these Congresses into everyday life and everyday occupations, true elevation of mind, belief in your future, and your power to mould your future. This future depends more upon yourselves than upon any political or financial changes." Another speaker said: " You will achieve the real good, if you win the people for yourselves as others have

done. No man can give you political salvation. You must win it."

Bipin Chandra Pal expresses the new creed very early in a pamphlet called 'The Basis of Political Reform', in the following passages which can become the basis of a genuine constructive nationalism in India. "It is easy to give new political rights or confer valued political privileges upon a people; but it is not so easy, I fear, it is not at all possible, to endow them all of a sudden, by an edict or an ukase, with capacities for discharging satisfactorily the duties of new citizenship. These capacities must grow with the progress of ideas and the growth of culture in a nation, and with consequent development of its capacities for higher forms of life and thought, politics will necessarily grow, and when they rise and grow in this natural fashion, it no longer lies in the power of any man to check their growth or oppose their progress." and further, "It (the democratic idea) is as yet a mere exotic plant reared up in the hot-houses of our schools and colleges, in our association rooms and meeting halls, and it has now to be transplanted into our domestic and social circles; and when that has been done, when it has been naturalised in our homes, in our drawing rooms and our holy temples, when it has dug its roots into our religious systems, our social institutions and our domestic habits, then and only then, will it be a natural and a healthy growth in our politics: and then and only then, the possibilities of a political revolution upon a democratic basis can be realised in this country." Such was B. C. Pal in those days. Here he advocates a wise and cautious policy of an all-round democratic construction first in social life and then in politics, a process to be slowly brought about, for precipitation and hot-house culture can never lead to beneficial results.

But it is not so easy to develop democracy in this fashion. The principle of self-help thus passed into its

third phase. The first phase was that of the Congress politicians, who, while they primarily looked to the Government for the initiation of all national policies, secondarily asked the people to look to themselves for their salvation. But they did not much approach the people. The second phase was that represented by Pal's utterance: here we are asked to go in for a period of intense preparation, leaving the Government alone. Then comes the third phase, when this new policy tries first to capture the Congress and then the people and develops a strong anti-British agitation.

The agitation against the Partition brought about a veritable transformation in the country. The Partition very much reminds us of the greased cartridges of the Indian Mutiny days. It may or may not have justification; but it did set the nation ablaze. The extremist politicians were waiting for a suitable moment to launch their campaign; the Partition exactly gave them this opportunity. A wave of true national feeling swept first over Bengal and then all over India. The Indian Extremist saw his chance and pushed himself to the front.

Tilak now re-enters politics as one of the all-India leaders. The national sentiment which had spread like wild fire over the country gave him the necessary driving power to place his views before the whole country. Mass movements require mass leaders: and the Congress politicians, with a few exceptions, had so far specialised in the leadership of academic audiences. Tilak had been always working with the people, addressing his appeal to them in a language which they could understand, and working upon their mind in ways suitable to it. The Partition broke violently those barriers within which the Indian Liberal mind conveniently confined itself: and once the barriers were burst, the great flood came, requiring a different type of men, men who can "storm wind and ride the whirlwind." Sentiment is a very powerful factor in all great movements of the human

mind : and it is to a certain extent, an incalculable factor. But once it is roused, it transcends all limits and sweeps men off their feet in a mysterious way. In 1905, India experienced one of those great emotional storms which dumb-found and paralyse the acutest intellects and gives special opportunities to truly democratic leaders, who find themselves at home in those troubled times.

Tilak, as the exponent of new nationalism in the country, first tried to convert the Indian National Congress into a living and active organization, capable of leading and inspiring the masses. He concentrated, therefore, on the four-fold programme of Swaraj, Swadeshi, National Education, and Boycott. These cries had emerged in the anti-Partition agitation in Bengal and Tilak did a very astute thing in recommending them for adoption by the Congress. Thus at one stroke, he captured the imagination of the Bengalees and placed himself at the head of the rising tide of the Bengalee patriotism. His early efforts and sufferings in the Maharashtra had made his name dear to the imagination of the young idealist all over the country: and now he came forward and asked the Congress to make the struggle in Bengal a national struggle by an acceptance of the programme, which Bengal was evolving to meet its immediate problem.

On this issue, then, he invited the elderly leaders of the Congress to either join or fight. In 1905, Sir Pherozeshah was absent at the Benares meeting: and Gokhale accepted enthusiastically the Swadeshi and even the Boycott resolution to some extent. But the independent Boycott resolution was not passed. In 1905, Tilak went to Calcutta, to celebrate the Shivaji festival. B. C. Pal made the proposal, soon after, that Tilak should be invited to preside over the Congress. The Moderate Leaders were nervous and they cabled to Dadabhai Naoroji to return to India and preside over the Congress. Tilak however persisted in his agitation to revise

the programme of the Congress. On the 11th December, 1906, Tilak wrote in the *Kesari*: "We are sometimes told not to be disheartened. If the Moderates think that we are easily disappointed and lack grim determination, they are entirely mistaken. We have lost faith, not in the ultimate result, but in the dilatory activities of the Congress. To us, the holding of the Congress for three days in the year, the tepid work of the British Congress Committee and the occasional sending of a deputation to England-seems quite an insufficient work. Not that we have no faith in 'Constitutional Agitation.' We do not want to overthrow the English Government. Political rights will have to be fought for. The Moderates think that these can be won by persuasion. We think that they can only be got by strong pressure. Will the Congress exert itself to apply this pressure? That is the point, and if such a pressure is to be applied, the Congress must leave this holiday character, and develop into an organisation working continuously and energetically."

The Congress of 1906 met under the Presidentship of Dadabhai Naoroji, who himself laid down Swaraj as the goal of the Congress. The "Englishman" remarked that the President, being called upon to quench the flames of hatred towards the British Rule in India, had only used Kerosene for the purpose. The Congress also adopted the resolutions about Swadeshi, National Education, and Boycott. This was the second triumph of the New Party.

The Moderates were alarmed at this triumph of the Extremists: and the differences between the two parties were becoming daily more acute. The Surat Congress broke down as no settlement could be arrived at: and it further saw the secession of the new and more virile elements from the Congress for some years. The goal of the Congress was defined as follows:

“The Indian National Congress has for its ultimate goal the attainment by India of self-government similar to that enjoyed by other members of the British Empire. It seeks to advance towards this goal by strictly constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration.”

The Extremists felt this was a deliberate attempt to convert the Congress into a *party* organisation of the Moderates. The Bengal Extremists would not accept the ideal of colonial Self-Government: they stood up for independence. Evidently one or the other party had to go.

The Surat Congress represented a fateful moment in the history of the national struggle. The Government wanted to rally the moderates, and adopted a strong policy with regard to the extremist elements in the country. A common political front was broken: the Moderates continued to hold the show year after year: but they were steadily losing influence in the country. The Extremists could be easily isolated, when once they had not the support of the Congress behind them.

In the meantime the new anarchist party appeared and began its work of destruction; the Government adopted the vigorous policy of repression, and one after another, these leaders of the Extremist party disappeared from the scene. Tilak was prosecuted and sentenced in 1908, to six years transportation. His last words before going to the jail made a deep impression upon the public mind. “All I wish to say is that in spite of the verdict of the jury, I maintain that I am innocent. There are higher Powers that rule the destinies of things: and it may be the will of Providence, that the cause which I represent may prosper more by my sufferings than by my remaining free.”

7. PRACTICE OF THE NEW PROGRAMME.

The Partition of Bengal convinced the politicians that mere public meetings and protests would not do. The overwhelming pressure of verbal agitation left the Government cold. Action was necessary, not mere words; action which may adequately give expression to the tense state of excitement of the public mind, and which may rouse the Government to a more vivid sense of the reality of the situation. The whole character of political life changed with the change of the character of nationalism behind it. The old political formulæ and methods—the methods of petition and protest—proved bankrupt. The people had an object lesson before them of the utter ineffectiveness of the political agitation on the old prescribed lines of the Liberal Party. The old leaders were simply dragged into new situations by the force of circumstances, but they felt themselves very uncomfortable in the new environment. Their policy was “Safety first”: but if you place safety in the forefront of your programme, you generally achieve nothing especially when new and unprecedented situations make new and unprecedented calls. But the popular unrest instead of proving a stimulus to the Moderate politician proved a drag: the Moderate leader found himself more and more one with the authorities and more and more estranged from the popular feelings. He was accustomed to see the vision of a unified nation in the Congress-hall or small meeting-halls of big cities. He could not face the vision of this new nation,—excited, moving, demanding action. Here was a first-class opportunity for great leaders to shape and mould in their own way into lasting forms this new life, which made itself felt in the nation. But the Congress leaders were not made of the heroic mould: and they allowed the leadership of the country to pass into the hands of the Extremists.