

four kingdoms of considerable extent and power..... And the tendency towards the gradual absorption of these domains, and also of the republics, into the neighbouring kingdoms, was already in full force. The evidence at present available is not sufficient to give us an exact idea either of the extent of the country or of the number of population, under the one or the other form of government; nor has any attempt so far been made to trace the history of political institutions in India before the rise of Buddhism. We can do no more, then, than state the fact—most interesting from the comparative point of view—that the earliest Buddhist records reveal the survival, side by side with more or less powerful monarchies, of republics of either complete or modified independence. It is significant that this important factor in the social condition of India in the sixth and seventh centuries B. C. has remained hitherto unnoticed by scholars either in Europe or in India. They have relied for their information about the Indian peoples exclusively on the Brahman books and these, partly because of the natural antipathy felt by the priests towards the free republics, partly because of the later date of most of the extant priestly literature and especially of the law books, ignore the real facts. They convey the impression that the only recognised, and in fact universally prevalent, form of Government was that of kings under the guidance and tutelage of priests. But the Buddhist records, amply confirmed in these respects by the somewhat later Jain ones, leave no doubt on the point."

Says he in *Buddhist India* :—"The administrative and judicial business of the Sakya clan was carried on in public assembly, at which young and old were alike present in their common Mote Hall (Santhagara) at Kapilavastu. It was at such a parliament that King Pasenadis' proposition was discussed. When Ambattha goes to Kapilavastu on business, he goes to the Mote Hall where the Sakyas were there in session. And it is to the Mote Hall of the Mallas that Ananda goes to announce the death of the Buddha, they being then in session there to consider that very matter. A single chief, how and for what period chosen we do not know, was elected as office holder, presiding over the sessions, and if no sessions were sitting, over the State. He bore the title of Raja which must have meant something like the Roman Consul or the Greek Archon."—Page 19.

"The local affairs of each village, were carried on in open assembly of the householders, held in the groves which, then as now,

formed so distinctive a feature of each village in the long and level alluvial plain".—Page 20.

"This jungle (Mahavana) was infested from time to time by robbers, sometimes runaway slaves. But we hear of no crime, and there was not probably very much in the villages themselves—each of them a tiny self-governed republic."—Page 21.

"There are several other names of tribes of which it is not yet known whether they were clans or under monarchical government. We have only one instance of any tribe, once under a monarchy, reverting to the independant state."—Page 23.

"There were revolutions leading to the declaration of independence by a tribe and the establishment of a republic. It is very interesting to notice that while tradition makes Videha a kingdom in earlier times, it describes in the Buddha's time as a republic."—Page 26.

"Alexander found a succession of small kingdoms and republics whose mutual jealousies more than counterbalanced the striking bravery of their forces and enabled him to attack and defeat them one by one."—Page 268.

Dr. Hoernle says that Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, was born in an oligarchic republic. He says in the *Proceeding of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* No. II February, 1898. p. 40 "Vaisali is the modern Besali, about 20 miles north of Patna. Anciently it consisted of three distinct portions, called Vaisali, Kundagama and Vasrigama, and forming in the main, the quarters inhabited by the Brahman, Kshatriya and Baniya castes respectively..... While it existed, it had a curious political constitution; it was an oligarchic republic; its government was vested in a senate, composed of the heads of the resident Kshatriya clans, presided over by an officer who had the title of King and was assisted by a Viceroy and a Commander-in-chief."

The extracts from various authors given above show that republics existed in India at least as early as the days of Buddha and Mahavira (6th century B. C.) and as late as the reign of Samudragupta (4th century B. C.) and that they were situated in the extensive tract of country stretch-



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ing from the Punjab to Bihar and from Nepal to the southern borders of the Central Provinces. So the republican form of government in ancient India had a duration of at least 1000 years. We do not know of any other country, ancient or modern, where democracy has prevailed for a longer period. The Roman republic lasted for 500 years. The Athenian republic lasted for little more than 300 years. These countries which in ancient times were dotted over with small republics, are certainly not as extensive as the parts of India which in olden days could boast of many republics.

DIFFERENCE IN CONCEPTION OF DEMOCRACY.

Democracy in ancient times was not, however, like modern democracy. But in no country in the ancient world was there democracy in the modern sense. Democracy in modern times is a very different thing from what it was in its best days in Greece and Italy. Of representative government in the modern sense there is practically no trace in Athenian history, though certain of the Magistrates had a quasi-representative character. Direct democracy was impossible except in small states and the qualification for citizenship was rigorous. Formerly the state consisted merely of a body of burgesses limited in number but now it consists millions of men inhabiting extensive countries. Now slavery, serfdom and other restrictions are abolished. Freedom of conscience, freedom in the choice of one's residence and profession, have been more or less fully realised. There is progress towards the abolition of all privileged classes, and towards equality before the law. The distinctive features of the modern democracy are:— (1) the widest personal freedom, by which each man has the liberty and responsibility of shaping his own career; (2) equality before the law, and (3) political power in the form

of universal suffrage exercised through the representative system. These distinctive features seem to have existed neither in ancient India nor in ancient Europe.

CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHS.

But the spirit of democracy may also exist in a more or less pronounced form even under a monarchical form of government. In Europe all monarchies were originally elective. Some Indian monarchies in the Vedic and post-Vedic periods were also elective in the same way. But neither in ancient Europe nor in ancient India, kings were effectively restrained in the exercise of their power by the voice of the people or of any representative assembly.

Those monarchs who ruled for life, were the supreme judges settling all disputes and punishing wrong-doers even with death. All other officials were appointed by them. They imposed taxes, distributed lands and erected buildings. In war they were the absolute leaders and they were also the religious heads of the communities. In some respects the Vedic assemblies appear to have had more power than their European counter-parts; for they legislated to some extent and performed judicial work too. Constitutional monarchy in the modern sense is a growth of comparatively recent times, and did not exist either in ancient Europe or in ancient India. But as democracy in the modern sense did not exist in any country in ancient times, the comparison should be, not with the powers of democracy in modern republics and constitutional monarchies, but with ancient republics and monarchies. Take, for instance, England. There was the Witanagemot to restrict the powers of the English sovereign but the rebellions before the Magna Charta, the declaration of commonwealth and the Bill of Rights occurred because the kings never cared for the national assembly.

lies. So also in ancient India, there were assemblies, but the Kings might not have always respected their wishes. But the tendencies in the direction of democratic government did make progress in social integration, however feeble might have been the real power displayed. Crude and imperfect as such governments may be, they are better than the wisest of autocracies. Lester F. Ward, in his "Outlines of sociology," says: "Stupidity joined with benevolence is better than brilliancy joined with rapacity, and not only is autocracy always rapacious, but democracy is always benevolent."

THEOCRACY.

It is worthy of note that in India the state itself never became a theocracy. Firstly the ruler was never regarded as the head of religion; secondly, the primary object of the state was not spiritual salvation; 3rdly, law, mingled as it was with religion and morality, was the chief source of the authority of the state; and fourthly the political status of individuals was independent of their religious beliefs and convictions.

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS.

"The great drawback of the state in ancient India was that the rights of man as man were not fully recognised. Individuals had rights and duties not as component parts of the body politic but as members of estates or classes in society."

EARLY COUNCILS

There were two kinds of assembly, the Samiti and Sabha. The popular assembly was a regular institution in the early years of the Buddhistic age. The rule of the majority was not unknown, and it was probable that the decisions of the majority prevailed. The council of minis-

sters (*mantri parishat*) was the chief administrative authority in the kingdom. It possessed immense powers, and enjoyed a great deal of independence. In exceptional cases it had even the power of electing the king. "In point of members," says Megasthenes, "it is a small class, but it is distinguished by superior wisdom and justice." According to the *Nitivakyamrita*, "unanimity of opinion being difficult to obtain, the number of ministers should be uneven." "Though such ministers controlled the destinies of large kingdoms and extensive empires, they, as a rule, led very simple rules, and were renowned for their honesty, integrity and nobility of character." "The Parishats of olden days may be called legislative assemblies. Although their main business was to interpret—not to enact—laws, yet in performing their duty they, not un-often, changed the laws so as to bring them into greater harmony with the altered circumstances of changed times. The rules of conduct were not inflexible in ancient times, and the Parishats, while maintaining the infallibility of the Vedas and the Smritis considerably modified the spirit of the laws. The text-book writers in compiling the old laws of the country, greatly helped the process of change, and in later times the commentaries also contributed to the same result."

JUSTICE

• The administration of justice bore several points of resemblance to the system now prevalent in civilised countries. The king, together with the chief justice (*Pradvivaka*) and three or four other judges (*Dharmikah*) formed the highest court of justice. It was, however, the chief justice, who in reality presided over the king's court even when the king was present, and had two sorts of jurisdiction, original and appellate. Next in importance to the king's court were the district courts, and below them were the village courts

composed of the headman and the elders of the village. There was a regular mode of appeal from the decision of inferior courts to the superior courts. Trials were always held in public. The Sukraniti says "Neither the king nor the members of the judicial assembly should ever try cases in private."

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

In all Smritis, Vyawaharadhyaya (Chapter dealing with the administration of justice) has a section, Sambit Vyatikrama (non-performance of agreement), which is one of the 18 Vivadapadas (causes of legal action). The Sambit (agreement) is of two kinds :—

- (1) Rajakrita (laid down by the king) (2) Samuhakrita (laid down by the different public bodies).

The body of learned men created by the king is called Rajakrita Samudaya (body created by the king) and their prescribed course of duty is Rajakrita Sambit.

The body of learned men elected by the people is called Samuha or Samudaya and their prescribed course of duty is Samuhakrit Sambit.

RAJAKRIT SAMBIT.

(LOCAL BOARDS.)

Vrihaspati, as quoted in the *Virāmitrodaya*, says : "Although the royal edict which created the body (Rajakrita Samudaya) simply enjoined its members to practise their moral and religious duties (Svadharmā palayam) they had nevertheless to do, at times, things of a secular and political nature. Their main duties were—(1) assisting towns-people in the discharge of all religious duties (daily, occasional and optional); (2) officiating in ceremonies; (3) giving authoritative decisions on doubtful points of

religion; (4) protecting grazing grounds and water courses; (5) looking after temples and other places of worship.

SAMUHAKRIT SAMBIT.

(MUNICIPALITIES.)

Vrihaspati and Yajnavalkya, as quoted in *Viramitrodaya*, say: "Villages, townships, guilds of merchants and mechanics, communities of Brahmans and heretics, and other bodies, should, when expecting common danger enter into an agreement among themselves for the protection of their common interests and the proper performance of their duties. The duties under their written agreements (*Yavaitalukhiyam patu dharmya sa samayakriya*) were (1) The repair of public halls, prapas (wells, reservoirs), temples, tanks and gardens, the performance of the purificatory rites for the poor and the destitute, and arrangements for the cremation of dead paupers, distribution of gifts among the people desirous of performing religious acts and supporting people in times of famine and distress. The next step, after the execution of the agreement was to appoint executive officers (*Karyachintakas*) for the discharge of the duties specified in the agreement."

"The number of these officers," says Vrihaspati, "varied from two to five" (quoted in *Viramitrodaya* and *Vivadaratnakara*). Having regard to the area of an ordinary Indian town or village, the number cannot be said to have been inadequate for the management of its affairs. In the case of big towns, the number of executive officers or commissioners, as we might call them, appointed by the people, added to the number appointed by the king certainly sufficed for their requirements. These commissioners were responsible only to their electors, who could punish them in case of misconduct with fine, dismissal,

and even banishment from the area over which they held sway. In such cases, they had simply to notify their decision to the king who accepted it as a matter of course.

Katyayana says:—

“That is to say, as is said by Vriṣṇu, he who (among the Mukhyas or headmen) is guilty of a serious criminal offence, who habitually creates disunion (among his colleagues) and who destroys public property—all of them should be removed, and the removed notified to the king.”

Vrihaspati says:—

“Headmen (commissioners) residing in towns and forts and managing the affairs of *Pugos* (mercantile and other guilds) *Srenies* (bodies of men following the same trade or profession) and *Ganas* (communities of Brahmans or of other people distinct from the Srenies) should punish wrong-doers by administering rebuke or censure, as well as with social ostracism and banishment. And the favour or disfavour, thus meted out by them (to the people), when in accordance with the precepts of religion and morality, should be accepted by the king; for general approval had already been accorded to whatever these might do (in the ordinary course of their duties).

Vivada Ratnakara quotes a passage from Vriṣṇu which says that in cases of difference between the Mukhyas and the Samuhas, the king should interfere and compel each party to perform its respective duties. But the Viramitrodaya takes the passage as referring to the punishment in case of wrong-doing, of Mukhyas (commissioners) by the Samuhas (public bodies).

Local self-government was successful then on account of its entire freedom from the control and interference of

the king, except on very rare occasions and the public bodies enjoyed larger powers than similar bodies under British Rule.

VILLAGE COMMUNITIES.

There was self-government even in villages. The Archaeological Superintendent for 1904-1905 (p. 131-145) quotes the following rules for election for one of the village assemblies in the village of Uttaramallur Chatur-vedi. mangalam in the Chola country said to have been promulgated in A. D. 918-919 and 920-921.

- (1) (Lines 1-2) We in accordance with the royal command made a settlement as follows according to the terms of the royal letter for choosing one every year from this year forward (members for) the "annual committee" "Garden Committee" and "Tank committee." Their shall be 30 wards.
- (2) (Lines 2-3) In these wards, those that live i.e., each ward shall assemble and shall choose for 'pot tickets' (kuanolai) (any one possessing the following qualifications) :—
 - (a) He must own more than a quarter (Veli) of a tax-paying land.
 - (b) He must live in a house built in his own site.
 - (c) His age must be above 35 and below 70,
 - (d) He must know the Mantrabrahmana i.e., he must know it by teaching (others).
- (3) Even if one owns $\frac{1}{2}$ veli of land (he shall have) his name written on the pot ticket to be put into the (pot), in case he has learnt one Veda and one of the four Bhashyas by explaining (to others).
- (4) Among those (possessing the foregoing qualifications),
 - (i) Only such as are well conversant with business and are virtuous shall be taken.
 - (ii) One who possesses honest earnings, whose mind is pure, and who has not been on (any of) the com-

munities for the last 3 years shall also be chosen.
(Lines 4-6) One who has been on any of the committees but has not submitted his accounts and all his relations specified below shall not have (their names) written on the pot-tickets and put into the pot.

1. The sons of the younger and elder sisters of his mother.
2. The sons of his paternal aunt and maternal uncle.
3. The Uterine brother of his mother.
4. The uterine brother of his father
5. His uterine brother.
6. His father-in-law.
7. The uterine brother of his wife.
8. The husband of his uterine sister.
9. The sons of his uterine sister.
10. The son-in-law who has married his daughter.
11. His father.
12. His son.

(5) (Lines 6-9) (A) "One against whom incest (Agamyagaman) or the first four of the 5 great sins are recorded:—

- (B) "All his relations above specified shall not have (their names) written on the pot tickets and put into (the pot).
- (C) "One who has been out-cast for association (with low people) shall not, until he performs the expiatory ceremonies, have his name chosen for the pot-ticket.
- (D) "One who is fool-hardy.....shall not have (his name) written on the pot-ticket to be put into (the pot.)
- (E) "One who has stolen the property of others shall not have (his name) written on the pot-ticket to be put into (the pot).
- (F) "One who has taken forbidden dishes of any kind and who has become pure by performing the ghes expiation shall not to the end of his life have his name written on the pot-ticket to be put into (the pot) for the committees.

- (G) "One who has committed sins and has become pure by performing expiatory ceremonies ;
- (H) "One who, having been a village pest, has become pure by performing expiatory ceremonies.
- (I) "One who is guilty of incest and has become pure by performing expiatory ceremonies ; all those specified shall not, to the end of their lives, have (their names) written on the pot ticket to be put into (the pot) for any of the committees.
- (6) (Lines 9-11) Excluding these thus specified, names shall be written for pot-tickets in the 30 wards, each of the wards in the 12 streets (of Uttaramallur) shall prepare a separate covering ticket for (each of the) 30 wards handled separately. (These tickets?) shall be put into a pot. When the pot-tickets have to be drawn, a full meeting of the great assembly including the young and old (members), shall be convened. All the temple priests (Nambimai), who happen to be in the village on the day, shall without any exception whatever, be caused to be seated in the inner hall, (where) the great assembly (meet). In the midst of temple, priests, one of them who happens to be the eldest, shall stand up and lift that pot, looking upwards so as to be seen by all people. One ward (i.e. the packet representing it) shall be taken out by any young boy standing close, who does not know what is inside, and shall be transferred to another (empty) pot and shaken. From this pot one ticket shall be drawn (by the young boy) and made over to the arbitrator (Madhyastha). While taking charge of the ticket thus given (to him) the arbitrator shall receive it on the palm of his hand with the five fingers open. He shall read out (the name on) the ticket thus received. The ticket read by him shall (also) be read out by all the priests present in the hall. The names thus read out shall be put down (and accepted). Similarly one man shall be chosen for (each of) the 30 wards.

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(7) (Lines 11-13) Of the 30 men thus chosen, those who had (previously) been on the "garden committee" and on the "tank committee," those who are advanced in leaning, and those who are advanced in age shall be chosen for the annual committee; of the rest, twelve shall be taken for the 'garden committee'; and the remaining six shall form the "tank committee." These two last committees shall be chosen by the Karai. The great men of these 3 committees thus (chosen) for them shall hold office for full 360 days and then retire. When one who is on the committees is found guilty of (any) offence, he shall be removed (at once). For appointing the committees after these have retired, the members of the "committee for the supervision of justice" in the 12 streets (of Uttaramallur) shall convene an assembly (kuri) with the help of the arbitrator. The committees shall be appointed by drawing pot tickets.....according to this order of settlement."

(8) (Lines 13-16) For the "Panchavara committee" and the "Gold committee" names shall be written for pot tickets in the 30 wards, thirty packets (with) covering tickets shall be deposited (in a pot) and 30 pot tickets shall be drawn (as previously described). From these 30 tickets 12 men shall be selected. Six out of 12 (thus) chosen shall form the "gold committee" and the remaining six the "panchavara committee". When drawing pot tickets for these two committees next year the wards which have been already represented (during the year in question) on these committees shall be excluded and the selection made from the remaining wards by drawing the Kari. One who has ridden on an ass and one who has committed forgery shall not have (his name) written on the pot ticket to be put (into the pot).

"Any Arbitrator who possesses honest earnest earnings shall write the accounts (of the village). No accountant shall be appointed to that office again before he submits his accounts (for the period during

which he was in office) to the great men of the big committee and (is declared) to have been honest. The accounts which one has been writing, he shall submit himself, and no other accountant shall be chosen to close his accounts.

- (9) (Line 16) "Thus from this year onwards, as long as the Moon and Sun endure, committees shall always be appointed by "pot-tickets" alone. To this effect was the royal letter received and shown (to us), graciously issued by the Lord of Gods, the emperor, one who is fond of learned men, the wrestler with elephants, the crest jewel of heroes, whose acts (gifts) resemble those of the celestial tree, the glorious Parakesarivarman."
- (10) (Lines 16-17) At the royal command Karanjai Kondaya Karmavittabbattam alias Somasiperuman of Srivanganagar in Purangaramabhai Nadu (a district of the Chola country) sat with (us) and thus caused (this settlement) to be made."
- (11) (Lines 17-18) We the (members of the) assembly of Uttaramallur chaturvedimangalam, made (this) settlement for the prosperity of our village in order that wicked men may perish and the rest may prosper.

At the order of the great men sitting in the assembly, I the arbitrator Kadavipottan-Sivakkuri-Rajamalla-Mangalapriyan thus wrote the settlement. "It is interesting to observe that ladies were eligible for election, and a lady was a member of a committee of justice (Report for 1910, section 35, page 98). Other village assemblies appear to have consisted of cultivators and merchants. The archaeological superintendent surmises that the same rules applied to them except knowledge of the Vedas (Report 1912-1913 p. 98).

SOCIAL LIFE IN CITY STATES

As in the political and civic life so in the social life the tendency towards democracy manifested itself. The natural social type of the small community is such as we see in Athens, where not only Cleon the tanner exercised as strong a political influence as the high born and wealthy

Nicias and the highest offices and civic functions were open to men of all classes, but in social functions there was a free association and equality. We see a similar democratic equality, though of a different type in the earlier records of Indian civilisation; the rigid hierarchy of castes with the pretensions and arrogance of the caste-spirit were a later development. In the simpler life of old, difference or even superiority of function did not carry with it a sense of personal or class superiority; and at the beginning the most sacred, religious and social function that of the Rishi and sacrificer, seems to have been open to men of all classes and occupations. Later on caste and absolute kingship grew in force *pari passu* like the church and the monarchical power in mediaeval Europe under the compulsion of the new circumstances created by the growth of large, social and political aggregates. The theory some Historians hold that the governments of ancient monarchies in India were pure autocracies tempered by the influence of the Brahman priesthood is no longer tenable.

THEORY OF STATE

The commonly accepted notion is that the Hindus considered state as divine and the monarch *de facto* as the absolute repository of such Divine right. There can be nothing more which is farther from truth. Even in the days of the epics in Aryan India when the spirit of speculation and philosophy was barely perceptible, we find that the origin of the state and of the authority of the king was a matter on which a good deal of thought had been bestowed by writers. In the Mahabharata for instance, in the Shanti parva, Rajadharma section we have in the beginning this very question asked by Yudhistira of Bhishma:—

“Whence is this word Rajan (King) derived and whence the power of the King to rule over others, mortal

as he is, having like other men two hands and two eyes only and with no better intelligence?"

Bhishma replied :—" In the Krita Age, there was no king and all people were free and observed Dharma of their own free accord. After a time however, coming under the influence of anger, greed and desire they began to transgress Dharma and do all sorts of sinful acts. By the spread of sinfulness the gods suffered and they prayed Brahma to remedy the evil. Brahma thereon composed a vast treatise on Dandaniti or the rules of protecting the people by means of punishment and taught it to Shankara, who gave it to Indra, who again gave it to Brihaspati, who condensed the treatise into 3,000 chapters. This work is known as Brihaspatiniti. Shukra again condensed it into 1000 chapters. Prajapathi gave the shastra to Ananga, who ruled the earth in accordance with it. His son Atibala followed him, but his son Vena transgressed the rules, oppressed the earth and gave free scope to his love and hate. The Rishis therefore killed him and from his right thigh they created a son called Prithu the son of Vena. The Brahmans and the gods said to him :—" Rule the earth according to this law, without love or hate and even-handed towards all beings. Promise also that you will not punish the Brahmins and that you will prevent the intermixture of castes. Prithu promised to do so and ruled the earth righteously. The Brahmins and the gods accordingly gave him their best things. He removed stones from the surface of the earth and made it give forth the seventeen kinds of grass and other plants which are required by men, Yakshas, and others. He was called a Rajan (King) because he pleased the people. Vishnu himself told him that no body would transgress his orders and by his tapa, Vishnu himself entered into the body of the King. It is therefore that the world bows to a king as to a god.

A king is born with the knowledge of Dandaniti, and the spirit of Vishnu."

This attempt to give a mythical significance to a rational speculation is no doubt characteristic of Indian thinkers. From this it is clear that the source of sovereign power lay ultimately in the will of the people. It can be shown that, that is the settled belief of Indians by a similar passage from the Ramayana where the authority of public opinion and the duty of the sovereign to consult it are laid down in equally clear terms. Addressing the assembled citizens whom he had convened to his council chamber, King Dasaratha asked their consent to the crowning of Rama in the following terms :—

" For a very long time I have borne this huge garb of State and its attendant cares of guiding aright the fate of the millions under me upon the narrow path of Dharma and I must be allowed a respite. If the saintly Brahmins here, my friends and my people give their unqualified assent to my proposal, I mean to place my son in charge of the kingdom and enjoy a short period of quiet. Rama my first born, whom I have fixed upon to take my place as heir-apparent has the valour of Indra and his skill, and before him fall like ripened headed corn the foemen's cities and their pride. He takes after me in all godly graces and excellences, he is the foremost champion of Right; he is the prince of men for power and might, radiant beyond comparison, even as the full orb'd moon in his glorious mansion of the constellation Pushya, I have set my heart upon crowning him as heir-apparent on the auspicious day when the moon is in conjunction with Pushya. Of boundless glory, Rama, the elder brother of Lakshmana is worthy lord of this, my kingdom and of you, my faithful subjects. The three worlds will rejoice in

peace and prosperity under the shadow of his mighty arm. Grant me to make him your king. Grant me to make over to him this weighty crown and its attendant responsibilities, it will be the dawn of a happy era for the earth, and my heart will grow young with joy indescribable. I pray, you will give your well-thought consent to it only if it seems to you that I have formed this plan after mature deliberation, only if the act would be crowned with happy success. But should it seem to you otherwise, pray, advise me the wiser course. It may be that this seems right in my eyes; but I am sure that greater good will come of it if I take counsel with you who are moved soully by considerations of the common weal."

POLITICAL CONCEPTIONS

The conception of the king as the servant of the state was one of the basic principles of political thought in ancient India." The Sukraniti says "Brahma created the king to be the servant of his subjects, and he is remunerated by a share of the produce. He assumes the character of king only for protecting his subjects." Again "if the king is an enemy of virtue, morality and power, and is unrighteous in conduct, the people should expell him as a destroyer of the state." The idea of an autocratic ruler was not very congenial to the Hindu mind. The king in India was never regarded as being above law. At no time was the royal power, in theory at least quite absolute. The Mahabharata derives the word Rajan from 'Ranj' to please. Among the kingly duties, as enumerated in the great epic are (1) to please the people (2) to protect them and (3) always to seek their welfare.

That the power of the king was thus not absolute but was guided and controlled by the will of the people was thus a proposition frequently stated but another pro-

position which occurs quite as often in Indian literature is that the authority of the king is divine, that he is an embodiment of the power of Vishnu, the protector and that his commands must be obeyed. That the will of the people coalesced with the will of god is this not a maxim which the French Revolution handed to us in the phrase "Vox populus vox die." (Jana Vakyam Kartavyam). The passage from the Mahabharata which is cited above will show how the will of the people obtained the sanction of God and vested the power of God in the person of the sovereign for the good of the people. The progress from the popular origin of sovereign authority to the absolutist and divine pretensions of kings and monarchs was apparently the same in India and western countries and apologists for the absolutism of the king went on a similar track for justifying autocratic authority. The deligation of kingly authority from Vishnu or from god had constantly to be reinforced by a deligation of the Kingly authority by the people themselves to the sovereign in perpetuity. The social contract theories which flourished in the west up till recent times have had their counterpart in India. In the Mahabharata again in Shantiparva it is narrated. "It is stated that formerly mankind suffered on account of their being no king (ie) as the 18th century philosophers will say a state of nature. They therefore by common consent made the following rule. "He who reviles or strikes another or seduces the wife or seizes the property of another should be expelled." But the rule could not be enforced and the people being harassed went to Prajapati and asked for a ruler, whom they would all respect if he would protect them. Brahma directed Manu to rule the people, but Manu declined saying that he was afraid of committing sin, as to rule others, especially men who are sinful was an extremely difficult task. But the

people said to Manu "Do not be afraid. Sin will fall on those who commit it. We shall pay you one-fifteenth part of our cattle and our gold and one tenth of our corn with one fair girl at every marriage season; the principal men will attend on you with arms. Rule thus then strong and happy and we shall give you a fourth part of the religious merit we earn." 'Manu accepted the offer and started with them in refulgence and strength. He destroyed all enemies and compelled men to follow Dharma. A people therefore should always elect a king for their good.' The idea of a covenant between Manu and men, the one promising to enforce Dharma and the other promising to pay taxes in consideration of protection and justice, is indeed a noble one, but as a matter of fact it has rarely guided the acts of despotic rulers whether in India or outside.

Let us see how similar ideas developed in the West. When the traditions of the Roman Republic which maintained the legislative supremacy belonged to the people meeting in their *comitia* was forgotten by centuries of disuse and the famous jurists of Justinian days formulated in their Digest, their theory as to the source of Emperor's sovereignty. They began by recognising the Emperor as the person who actually possessed legislative power, but they deduced his rights from a delegation by the people of their rights and perhaps as Professor Bryce points out a delegation not in perpetuity to the imperial office but to each individual Emperor in succession. A similar state of things seemed to have existed, in India too, for in some works prior to the Epic period In the Atharva Veda, it is recited that each ruler should be crowned with the assent of the people, and on the occasion of the coronation undertook to rule justly.

Beesle in his "Buddhistic records of the Western World" (Vol 1 pp. 210-212) writes about the election of the Emperor Harsha :

"The people having lost their ruler, the country became desolate. Then the great minister Po-ni (Bhandi), whose power and reputation were high and of much weight, addressing the assembled ministers said: 'The destiny of the nation is to be fixed today. The old King's son is dead. The brother of the prince, however, is humane and affectionate and his disposition, heaven conferred, is dutiful and obedient. Because he is strongly attached to his family, the people will trust in him. I propose that he assume the royal authority; let each one give his opinion on this matter, whatever he thinks.' They were all agreed on this point, and acknowledged his conspicuous qualities. On this, the chief ministers and magistrates all exhibited him to take authority- 'Let the royal princes attend! The accumulated merit and the conspicuous virtue of the former king were so illustrious as to cause his kingdom to be most happily governed..... The opinion of the people, as shown in their songs, proves the real submission to your eminent qualities. Reign then with glory over the land; conquer the enemies of your family; wash out the insult laid on your kingdom, and the deeds of your illustrious father. Great will be your merit in such a case. We pray you reject not our prayer." The prince replied: "The Government of a country is a responsible office, and ever attended with difficulties. The duties of prince require previous consideration. As for myself, I am indeed of small eminence, but as my father and brother are no more, to reject the heritage of the crown—that can bring no benefit to the people. I must attend to the opinion of the world, and forget my own insufficiency."

When Sakuntala went to Dushyanta with her son to his capital the king did not accept her, being evidently afraid of the opinion of his subjects. A voice from Heaven declared, in the hearing of all his court that she was his wife and the son his. Then Dushyanta prayed for the consent of his people whether he could accept them as such. They all agreed. (Mahabharata Sambhava Parva cha. 74).

King Yayati nominated his fifth and youngest son Puru as his heir ignoring the claims of the elder four. When this became

known to his people they remonstrated with him. He had to satisfy them as to the righteousness of the step he had taken. The eldest son Yadu, son of Devayani. The second son Turbasu. The third son Drahyu, son of Sarmistha. Fourth son Anu. Fifth son Puru. The people said, "O King! act according to the precepts of religion." Yayati said, "Hear all of you why my kingdom should not be given to my eldest son." Puru is a great friend of mine and he did what was agreeable to me and Sukra himself granted me this boon. The son who would obey me would become the king and the lord of the Earth. Therefore I entreat you let Puru be installed on the throne." The People said "O King! it is true that the son who is accomplished and who seeks the good of his parents deserves all prosperity though he is the youngest." Therefore Puru who has done good to you deserves to have the kingdom." Vaishampayana said: "Having been thus addressed by the contented people, Yayati installed his son Puru on the throne. (Mahabharata Sambhava Parva Ch. 85) Similar wishes of the people were expressed when Yudhisthira was installed on the throne at Indraprastha as Yuvaraj. (Jatugriha Parva Ch. 143.)

When again Yudhisthira and his four brothers went to Varanavata as the result of the machinations of the wicked Kauravas they expressed their dissent. Then Yudhisthira addressed: "You are our friends, walking round us and making us happy with your blessings, return to your homes. When the time comes for anything to be done by you then accomplish all that is agreeable and beneficial to us." They then returned to the city.

But both in ancient Rome and ancient India the non-exercise of the will of the people and the actual practice of absolute government on the part of the Emperors, introduced a change in the conception of what was popular will. As the Emperor Julian said, "What difference does it make whether the people declare its will by voting or by its practice, acts and customs, seeing that the laws themselves bind us only because they have been approved by the people." To the institutes of Rome or the Scriptures and

Neetisastras of India were thus added the customs of the people? and customary law has since been accepted as 'possessing' an authority above written law until actual legislation by which the sovereign varies it. Thus, while to thinkers and cultivated people, a limitation of sovereignty by the ultimate will of the people was a political concept of accepted authority, but to the people inhabiting distant parts of extensive empires, to whom the visible authority of the ruler's officers was the outward symbol of protection and peace and to whom the might of the Emperor was the only available test of his right, the suggestion of a Divine power encircling the irresistible power of the conqueror or ruler who founded Empires and extended territories was a most natural one. The feeling, therefore, that the power actually supreme in a state has received divine sanction by being permitted to prevail, that it has thereby become rightful and that being rightful, it claims full obedience, came to be inculcated in political writings which soon profoundly swayed the minds of men in Europe. It was by a similar process that text writers in ancient India gradually threw into the background the theory of origin of sovereign authority in the will of the people and by treating the actual sovereign as the repository of divine authority, stripped such power of all limitations and conditions.

But in the later evolution of theories of sovereignty and of doctrines of Divine Right, Indian conceptions made a most significant reservation which theories in the West did not do. During the times of mediaeval theologians and of the political philosophers the idea that sovereignty or Magistas as the highest power in the state, which is subject to no laws, but is itself the maker and master of them, had become the accepted assumption of apologists,

for autocrats as well as panegyrists of popular sovereignty, all of whom evolved their own theories of the original social contract between the sovereign and the people. In India, however, no king, however divine, was above the law and this law was laid down in codes whose authority to this day might have remained unquestioned in the domain of politics by Hindu kings as they have remained unquestioned in the domain of the social and religious life of the community. Of course the codes were many and the commentaries thereon innumerable. The pundits were also men of the world and knew how to discard obsolete customs or precepts in the codes and how to justify new ones by the letter of the Divine law. Yet the theory has remained unquestioned that the codes whose powers are claimed to lie in the Vedas which constitute the revealed knowledge of the Hindus, are as abiding on monarchs as upon subjects, ie., that no Hindu king is above the law. Western Europe has only in recent years discarded the absolute theories of sovereignty which Austin petrified in England and began to give more authority to the value of written constitutions and fundamental laws of the State than the speculations of rationalist philosophers permitted in the earlier years. It is to the credit of the speculative mind of the Hindus that it long ago perceived the necessity of recognising the existence of limitations to the absolute authority of the State, over and beyond what is called the normal right to resist gross mis-government.

The democratic tendency received a set-back when the Empire idea flourished, be it in ancient times or in modern times. It must be remembered that a greater social or political unity is not necessarily a boon in itself. It is worth pursuing only if it provides a means and a framework for a better, richer, more happy and puissant individual and collective life. But hitherto the experience of

manhood is otherwise. It would seem rather that collective life is more at ease with itself, more genial, varied, fruitful when it concentrated itself in small spaces and simpler organisms. Modern Europe owes two-thirds of its civilisation to 3 such supreme moments of human history: Firstly the religious life of the congress of tribes called Israel; secondly the many-sided life of the small Greek city states; and thirdly the similar, though more restricted, artistic and intellectual life of mediaeval Italy. Nor was any age in Asia so rich in energy, so well worth living in, so productive of the best and most enduring fruits as that heroic period of India when she was divided into small kingdoms. Her most wonderful activities, her most vigorous and enduring work belonged to that period; the second best came afterwards in larger, but still comparatively small, nations and kingdoms like those of the Pallavas, Pandyas, Cholas and Cheras. In comparison she received little from the greater empires that rose and fell within her borders, the Moghul, the Gupta or the Mourya—little indeed except political and administrative organisation and a certain amount of lasting work not always of the best quality. Nevertheless in this regime of the small city state there was always a defect which compelled a tendency towards larger organisations on account of their defencelessness against the attack of larger organisations and of an insufficient capacity for widespread material well-being. So these city states gave place to the larger organisation of empires and nation states.

EMPIRES

In a nation we have a richer life than in an empire. Collective life diffusing itself into vast spaces seems to lose intensity and productiveness. Europe has lived in England, France, German states, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands,

Modern civilisation evolved itself in the nation state but not in the huge mass of the Holy Roman Empire or the moribund Russian Empire. The unproductiveness, isolation, lethargy and stagnancy in Asia was due to the presence of large empires which existed till very recent times. But a Nation state combines all the advantages of a city state as well as an Empire state. It lacks the disadvantages of the small weak city state and of the colossal empire state.

AN ILLUSTRATION.

The Roman Empire is often selected by English statesmen as the model for the development of the British Indian Empire. The advantages of an empire are admirable organisation, peace, widespread security, order and material well-being. The disadvantage is that the individual, the city, the province, sacrifice their independent life and become mechanical parts of a huge machine. Life loses its vitality, richness, variety, freedom and incentive for noble actions. The Empire organisation is great and admirable but the individual dwindles and is overpowered and overshadowed. Eventually by the smallness and feebleness of the individual, the huge organism inevitably and slowly loses even its great conservative vitality and dies of an increasing deterioration. Thus the empire state hinders growth of life in human society.

What then are the causes that led to the decline of the Roman Empire?

The Roman effected his sway by military conquest. Whenever he conquered he introduced a good, efficient, and benevolent government, made acceptable to the conquered peoples. But he blotted out wherever he conquered the sense of a separate nationality. He admitted the Latins as well as every other conquered people to the highest military and civil offices in the state and even to

the imperial purple. Within a century after Augustus, first a Gaul and then a Spaniard became Caesars. He proceeded rapidly to deprive all the vitality in the people and he abolished even apparently all the grades of civic privilege and extended indiscriminately the full Roman citizenship to all Roman subjects whether they be Asian, European or African. The result was that the whole Empire became one, not only politically but also psychologically. On account of the Roman good government the subject peoples became firmly attached to the Roman Empire. The Roman had another advantage over the Britisher and that is the geographical unity of the Empire. So far the Roman succeeded. Where he failed it was due to the inherent vice of his methods. He crushed out, however peacefully, the living cultures or the incipient individuality of the nations he ruled. He deprived the nations themselves of vitality, and therefore though he removed all positive causes of disruption and secured a passive force of opposition to all disruptive changes, his empire lived only at the centre and when the centre tended to become exhausted there was no real and abundant vitality throughout the body from which it could reinforce itself. Ultimately, Rome could not even depend for a supply of vigorous individuals from the peoples whose life she had pressed out under the weight of her superimposed civilisation. She had to draw on the frontier barbarians. Rome was conquered by those barbarians but not by the old peoples, under her sway. When the Roman grasp loosened the world which it had so firmly constructed, there had been for a long time a huge decorous death-dance in the countries occupied by Rome which were incapable of new organisation or self-regeneration. Vitality could only be restored through the inrush of the vigorous barbarian from the forests of Germany, the steppes beyond the Da-

nube and the deserts of Arabia. Dissolution had to precede a movement of sounder construction. It is needless to say a more or less similar policy is followed by the British in India. As the vitality in the people living in the plains is diminishing the Britisher is compelled to reinforce his armies from the barbarian hordes in the North-West Frontier. The Wazir, the Mahsud, the Afridi, the Ghurukha and the Sikh are sterner fighters than the people already conquered and emasculated to whom even defensive weapons are denied except under a license granted by the whim of the District Magistrate. The Indians are for over a century mere quill-drivers. A nation of warriors is converted into a human aggregate of clerks. The helplessness of the people in Malabar and the Punjab when the rowdy element broke out in those parts is within the living memory of every one of the present generation. The same story is repeated to a more or less extent in almost all the empires that flourished and decayed on this planet.

If the old City states had endured and modified themselves so as to form larger nations without losing their own life, many problems might have been solved with greater simplicity. But now those very problems have to be settled by an intricate and difficult method under peril of innumerable dangers and extensive convulsions.

DEFECTS IN CITY STATES.

The life in the City state had vital defects which it could not cure. In the case of the Greek City states two great defects were found. The first defect is that all the people could not participate in the full civic and cultural life of the community. That participation was denied to the *slave* and hardly granted at all in the narrow life conceded to the *woman*. In India the institution of slavery was absent and the woman had at first a freer and more digni-

fied position than in Greece and Rome; but the slave was soon replaced by the proletariat, the Shudra, and the increasing tendency to deny the highest benefits of the common life and culture to the Shudra and the woman, brought down the Indian society to the level of its Western congeners. It is possible that these two great problems of economic serfdom and the subjection of woman might have been attacked and solved in the early City state or regional state if it had lived longer. It is now to be attacked and solved in the modern Nation State. The other defect in those City states was their inability to solve the question of inter-relations between community and community. War remained their normal relation. All attempts at free federation failed and military conquest was left as the sole means of unification. The attachment to the small aggregate in which each man could maintain his individuality had generated a sort of mental insularity which could not accomodate itself to the new and wider ideas which political thought and philosophy moved by the necessity of larger needs and tendencies had brought into the field of life. Therefore the old City states had to dissolve and disappear in India into the huge bureaucratic empires of the Gupta and the Maurya to which the Pathan, the Mogul and the Englishman succeeded. This is enhanced by the conquest of Alexander who brought the Western model of an Empire state into India. In the West the City states were absorbed by the vast military and commercial expansions achieved by Alexander, by the Carthaginian Oligarchy and by the Roman Empire.

ASIA AND EUROPE

Both Asia and Europe are equally guilty in propagating the Empire idea rivalling each other from very early times. The Greek and the Roman had struggled

for mastery over oriental peoples. In the 5th century the Huns from Central Asia carried fire and sword into the heart of Europe and settled themselves in Hungary. Later on the Arabs conquered Spain and poured across the Pyrenees to be smitten by Charles the Hammer and retained for a very long time a large portion of Spain. Then followed the 2nd Tartar Invasion when the Mongols attacked Vienna but were repulsed by the Hungarians. Finally the Ottoman Turks from the plains of Turkestan rivalling the military success of the Arabs captured the whole of the Byzantine Empire. Now we have the colonial empires of the British, the French and the Dutch in Asia the results of the maritime supremacy of these European nations.

Thus the City states had failed and the Empire states followed suit. Naturally man turns to a golden mean; between the two—the Nation-State which is the common type of State that is developing to-day in Europe as well as in Asia. At the present stage of human development the nation is the really living collective unit of humanity. Empires exist but they are as yet only political and not real units. They have no life from within and owe their continuance to a force imposed on their constituent elements or else to a political convenience felt or acquiesced in by the constituents and favoured by the world outside.

CAUSES FOR NATION—STATE

The hardships endured by foreign domination in an Empire-state created and enhanced the process of nation-making. History affords us many illustrations. But in some cases the phenomenon of foreign domination is momentary and imperfect, in others long enduring and complete, in others often repeated in various forms. In some cases the foreign element is rejected, its use being

once over. In others it is absorbed ; in some others it is accepted with more or less assimilation for a longer or briefer period as a ruling caste. The principle is the same, but works variously in various countries according to the needs of the particular country. There is none of the modern nations in Europe which has not had to pass through a phase more or less prolonged, more or less complete, of foreign domination in order to realise its nationality. In Russia and England it was the domination of a foreign conquering race which rapidly became a ruling caste and was in the end assimilated and absorbed. In Spain it was the succession of the Roman, the Goth and the Moor ; in Italy it was the overlordship of the Austrian. In the Balkans it was the long suzerainty of the Turk ; in Germany it was the transient yoke of Napoleon.

STAGES OF NATION—STATE

The Nation-state in Europe passed through 3 stages. The first stage was a loose political union as in the days of the feudal system. The 2nd stage is a movement of unification and of increasing uniformity by the creation of a metropolitan centre, by the growth of absolute sovereignty, and by the creation of church authority. But feudalism, monarchy and church authority were substituted by a new movement directed towards the diffusion of the national life through a strong, well-organised political, legal, social and cultural freedom and equality.

The 3rd stage enjoyed the advantages of unity and sufficient uniformity and also the individual liberty characteristic of the city-state.

By these gradations of national progress a federated nation, based securely upon a fundamental and well-realised psychological unity, was effected.

INDIA—A NATION-STATE

English historians and politicians say that India is a vast continent, sheltering warring and contiguous races professing conflicting religions, speaking different languages and possessing no common bond of unity or fellowship. The error in their reasoning is apparent. In spite of all that is said against us we are a Nation. As a result of the rise of Nation-States, the word 'nation' is many times used where State is meant. The Nation is an ethical concept, or better, a cultural concept, and consists of a portion of mankind united by other than mere political ties whereas the state is a political concept consisting of a portion of humanity united in one body politic. A state is sometimes composed of a number of Nations, parts of them as the British Commonwealth of to-day or the Russian Empire of old. The Russian Empire has been a congeries of nations—Ukraine, White Russia, Lithuania, Poland, Serbia (all Slavic), all Finland (Finnish), Turkestan (Asian). But all these formed a single state. A Nation is sometimes split into a number of states. The chief difference between Nation and State is that a Nation may exist without territory and government. Nation is a psychological unity whereas a state is a political unity. Nation is an organism. State is a mechanism. Belgium under German domination had neither territory nor government but they were a nation. Poland, though torn by Germany, Austria and Russia, is a nation though it ceased to exist as an independent State. Empires are perishable political units but the nation persists, travails and suffers but refuses to be annihilated. The Greeks Roumanians, Bulgarians and Albanians ceased to be independent states so long as they were under the Ottoman yoke but they preserved their nationalities all throughout. Similarly the Italians under Austria, though ceased to exist as a separate state, preserved their nationality. India is a

land of many states but of one nationality. The whole country from the Himalayas to cape Comorin is bound by one cultural tie. The culture which expresses itself in art, philosophy and literature is the same in every part of the country. The people held in great veneration the numerous rivers that water the different parts of the country and they associate the great mountains with the sacred memories of the past. The seats of learning at the ancient Taxila, Benares, Amroati, and Nalanda had attracted men from all parts of the country and made them feel as members of the same national organism. The Muhammadan also contributed his share to the culture of India. Their influence can be traced in arts such as painting, sculpture, architecture and in literature. They encourage the ideas of political unity. The dynasty that had been founded by Baber ruled for a very long time keeping a great portion of India as one state. The Nation-state came into existence after many failures and false successes. The psychological motive of patriotism, a sign of the growth of a conscious national ego, arose in this frame of Nation-State as the expression of its soul and the guarantee of its durability. For the Nation idea arises from circumstances to which the peoples of the earth were mere victims. It is evolved in a peculiar environment of geographical and historical necessity but does not grow from anything inherent in our vital nature. If the circumstances which created it are removed it may collapse. Our immediate motives and psychological needs grow out of our vital necessities and instincts. The family idea and the tribal idea grow out of our primary vital needs in our being and our instinct of gregariousness. They readily become our psychological needs and immediate motives. The necessities of a Nation-State are (1) the physical unity of a common country to live in and defend, (2) a common economic life dependent on that geographi-

cal oneness and (3) the sentiment of the motherland which grows up around the physical and economical fact creating and protecting political unity. In all Nation-States there is a geographical unity with either a community of interests, political and economical, or a community of religion and philosophy or a community of literature and culture or a community of traditions and history. The Nation-State has, like the individual, 3 bodies. For the *Sthula Sarira*, the physical body, the geographical unity. For the *Sukshma Sarira*, the astral body, a common life and vital interest in the constituents of the body. For the *Karma sarira* the mental body, a conscious sentiment of unity and a centre of governing organ through which the common ego can realise itself and act.

GEOGRAPHICAL UNITY.

For the existence of a Nation-State the idea of a geographical unity is an absolute necessity. Prof. Radhakumuda Mukherji has written a book "The Fundamental unity of India" in which he has clearly stated that amidst various seeming and superficial differences India is essentially one in her traditions, in the out-look of her peoples and their general capabilities. Behind all the diversity of races and creeds there has been in India all through the ages a unity both in political conception and social structure which has steadily governed the history and fortunes of this great country. If a constitution signifies according to its modern definition, a set of laws or principles which concern the political structure of an organised society, it seems to me that India as a whole, subject no doubt to minor qualifications, has been conceived of as an organised society from the earliest days. Among the earliest Hindu Rulers and princes as well as with the great Mahomedan and Mogul Emperors of mediæval times the conception of the whole of

India as a geographical unit was a widely prevalent one and was far from being a mere aspiration on their part as the aspiration of some European world conquerors towards a world-empire. India was a geographical unit even amidst a variety of physical conditions. That in itself is a pre-disposing cause at all times to its conception as a political unit. But from the earliest times the political unity of India has been sought to be attained by the able rulers Hindu or Mahomedan, by the establishment of a sway, unitary as well as federal on their part, over the whole country. This conception of political unity pervaded not merely in the minds of kings and rulers, but also in the minds of the people of this country in all its parts and it is proved by the persistence of the same fundamental social conceptions, institutions and culture which are found as common among the people in the extreme south of the peninsula as they are among those in the extreme north. Sir Herbert Rishy has rightly observed: "Beneath the manifold diversity of physical and social type, language, custom and religion, which strikes the observer in India, there can still be discerned, as Mr. Yousuf Ali has pointed out, a certain underlying uniformity." One aspect of this unity has been thus explained by Monier Williams in his book "Hinduism." "India though it has, as we have seen, more than 500 spoken dialects, has only one sacred language, only one sacred literature, accepted and revered by all adherents of Hinduism alike, however diverse in race, dialect, rank and creed. That language is Sanskrit, and that literature is Sanskrit literature—the only repository of the 'Veda' or 'knowledge' in its widest sense—the only vehicle of Hindu Theology, Philosophy, Law and Mythology, the only mirror in which all the creeds opinions, customs and usages of the Hindus are faithfully reflected; and (if we may be allowed a fourth metaphor) the only quarry whence the requisite material may be obtained

for improving the vernaculars or for expressing important religious and scientific ideas of life from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin." The census commissioner, Mr. E. A. Gait, I.C.S., has also recorded the same conclusion: "The people of India as a whole can be distinguished from those of Europe by certain broad characteristics. While, according to Mr Vincent A. Smith speaking from his long and first-hand experience of India, the civilisation of India has many features which differentiate it from that of all other religions of the world, they are common to the whole country or rather continent, in a degree sufficient to justify its treatment as a unit in the history of human social and intellectual development."

A COMMON LIFE.

The common social conceptions and political institutions of the country evince that a common life animated the country as a whole. In the various text books on polity of the early Hindu period and at a time when it might be said the idea of common political unity was likely to have declined and the multiplication of petty principalities was the general order of things in the days of the Nitisaras of Sukra and Kamandaka, of the Arthashastra of Kautilya, we find that these text writers did not draw a mere theoretical picture of the Samarat, the Chakravarti, the king of kings, who brought the various kingdoms of the Indian peninsula under one umbrella—as it was metaphorically described—but recorded only what was known to them to have existed as a fact both by knowledge and tradition of the Empires which Bharata and Yudhis-thira in ancient days, Chandragupta and Asoka in later days established throughout the Indian peninsula. A dispassionate study of the historical literature of the ancient period in India should go far to dispel the notion that

India was a mere aggregate of peoples and races living in confused mass of kingdoms and governments. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, the Premier of England, has put the whole question in a nut-shell in his introduction to the Fundamental Unity of India. "Perhaps it might be contended that though, during the Hindu period of Indian History there were certain social and political features common to all parts of India which were essentially in Hindu character, still such characteristics must have disappeared or ceased to have much effect on the political evolution of the country after it was overrun by succeeding generations of invaders from the north-west, by Mahomedans and Moguls, and was brought under the sway of a European power from overseas. The essential political conceptions of the Hindu period survived during the days of the Muhammadan conquest and empire. The Muhammadan conquest added other conceptions and out of them both have grown administrative principles and policies which amidst the clash of arms and changes of dynasties in the various parts of India, still underlie the existing schemes of administration and government in the country."

THE CLEFT UNDER TURKISH RULE.

During Turkish rule the aim of the administrators was not the welfare of the subjects but power and wealth. Sir Alfred Lyall gives us an idea what the Turkish conquest of India actually accomplished, what it uprooted and what it maintained. "The kings of the earlier Mahomedan dynasties in northern India pierced the country from end to end by rapid, rushing invasions, plundering and ravishing, breaking the idol and the beautifully sculptured temples—Buddhist and Brahman—but so long as the object of these incursion, was mere booty or fanatical slaughter, the ancient principalities merely bided their time and asserted,

themselves once again after the invader had withdrawn to his fastnesses beyond the frontier"—or to his capital at Delhi after he became established in the country. Such administrative machinery as was established in consequence of the conquests of Mahomedan rulers in India prior to the Mogul period was of a semi-military type and its nature has been described as that of government by military camps by Colonel Malleon in his biographies of Baber and Akbar.

COMMON MENTALITY.

When the Mughal hold on the country became more consolidated and Akbar became not a foreign potentate established in India, but a national sovereign, the fortunes of whose dynasty became identified with the progress of the country, the principles of government established in the country did not differ in essentials from that which imperial dominion in India should have been based on in the ancient Hindu period. With religious bigotry put into the shade, with Hindu and Muhammadan kings and Hindu and Muhammadan satraps owning the sway of the Mogul emperor in all parts of the peninsula the political unity of the country and the placing of it under one sway was as distinguishing a feature of the Mahomedan period as it was of the Hindu period.

POLITICAL UNITY.

• But while the tie which typified such political unity of the whole country was loose and only periodically in action in ancient India, the tie which the Mahomedan conquerors of India sought to establish was closer; and it was the effort to tighten this tie into a big centralised imperial administration, based on force and religious bigotry on the part of Aurangzeb, that broke the sovereignty of the Mogul emperors after about two centuries of strong government, over the greater part of the Indian continent. A cou-

federacy of Hindu princes of an earlier period who owned from time to time an imperial suzerain as often as a strong ruler appeared on the scene, an allegiance to a Chakravarti or Emperor, was not such a steady phenomenon as it became in the days of the Mogul Empire. Indeed, at the time the Mogul emperors consolidated their conquests all over the country, it might be said that the bulk of the territories had passed under their direct sway and only the outlying portions were under princes who acknowledged their imperial authority. But by the time the whole authority of the Delhi Emperors became concentrated and measures of centralised administration had been set on foot, the inherent difficulties of direct government over such a vast territory made themselves felt and it was not long before the subadars or satraps of the out-lying provinces asserted independent powers under the nominal headship of the Delhi Emperor.

CHAOS.

To the troubles of the turbulent Satraps was added the assertion of independent sovereignty by the Maharatta chiefs and the Mussalman principalities of the Deccan and when the attempt to secure dominant authority in India by the Maharatta confederacy failed on the field of Paniput in 1761 chaos reigned supreme, and each petty little kingdom rose and fell as each adventurer started and perished. They warred incessantly with each other and the security of the country nearly in every part thereof, was precarious indeed until the East India Company—at first with a view to secure its commerce, later with a view to secure some slice of dominion for itself in the general *Melée*—found itself in the position of being able to attain paramount authority over the whole country.

MAN vs. STATE

Man's growth is decided by his relationship with the community as well as with humanity. He has to subordinate himself in some respects to the communal authority and at the same time assert his rights in the community. Thus arises the conflict between the individual and the community represented by the State. In some places the State is all in all and the individual is nothing as in ancient Sparta and modern Germany. In others the supremacy of the State is maintained while at the same time the power, dignity and freedom of the individual are preserved as in ancient Athens and modern France. In some others the State gives up its interference in favour of the individual and asserts that it exists for his growth for assuring his freedom and dignity as in mediaeval England and modern United States of America.

Now-a-days the State idea is the dominating factor in the thought and action of the world. It has an external and internal function to perform. It protects the individual from external aggression of other peoples, and internally it preserves law and order and improves the moral condition of the people. Theoretically it is the collective wisdom and force of the community made available and organised for the general good. Practically it requires that the individual shall surrender some of his interests for the welfare of the State. It asserts that the hope for the good and progress of humanity is in the efficiency and organisation of the State. It orders that the intellect, capacity, thought, emotion, and life of the individual be used in the interest of all.

The state is a powerful, military, political and economic being and is least hampered by internal scruples or external checks but intellectually very slightly deve-

loped. Its undeveloped intellect often blunts the ethical conscience by state philosophies. The state now feels the necessity of its existence by organising the general economic well-being of the community and even of all individuals.

FUNCTIONS OF STATE.

The function of the state is to provide all possible facilities for co-operative action, to remove obstacles, to prevent all really harmful waste and friction, to administer justice, to secure for every individual a just and equal chance of self-development and satisfaction to the extent of his powers and in the direction of his nature. But any unnecessary interference beyond this to the freedom of the individual is harmful. These powers and duties of the state have led to the growth of socialism in almost every country of the world.

SOCIALISM.

Socialism is the organisation of the State to secure the equal welfare of all its individuals. Socialism wants to secure this by avoiding competition and encouraging co-operation among the individuals. The co-operative form of human society existed formerly in the form of a commune or village community but the restoration of the commune as the unit would imply practically the return to the old city State and as its existence is no longer possible under the altered present day circumstances the socialistic idea can only be realised through the well-organised Nation-State. To afford equal opportunities and to develop an equal capacity by a free, universal and compulsory education and training by means of the organised State is the fundamental idea of modern Socialism. With the growth of socialistic ideas the tendency to organise the State to secure the efficiency, morality and well-being of every individual is developing in all countries and people are willing to surrender

their individual liberty for the realisation of this ideal. So the Nation-State is developing to be a politically free, self-governing body aiming at perfect social and economic organisation composed of individuals who are willing to surrender their liberties. The great European war has greatly enhanced the socialistic ideas among nations of the world.

DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRACY IN THE NATION-STATE

Even in early times among the Aryans in India there was the King with his council, the civil, the military, the priesthood, and the assembly of freemen who could be used in war as soldiers. The priest exercised very little power in the State and the Council always sided with the king, supporting him in his political and military actions. The assembly of freemen was practically the check over his absolutism. After he managed to make this assembly also to act in accordance with his wishes he used to get rid of or subordinate to himself all the other powers of the social life. This caused naturally an aversion in the minds of the people towards the king. In such circumstances, the king was compelled to act according to the will of his people and give up his idiosyncracies lest the sovereignty of the people should be asserted.

When the king begins to legislate for the people he exceeds his powers ; he has undertaken functions which he cannot healthily and effectively fulfil. Administration is simply the regulation of the outward life of the people. The king is merely the regulator. But legislation, social development, culture, religion, even the determination of the economic life of the people are outside his proper sphere. They constitute the expression of the life, the thought,

and the soul of the society. If the king is an enlightened man in touch with the spirit of the age he may help to influence but he cannot determine. Only society itself can determine the development of its Dharma by a self-conscious regulation through the organised national reason. Thus a governing body comes into existence to embody the reason and will of the whole society. When this body in the course of its development assumes the regulating power also by overthrowing the king it becomes an Aristocracy. It may be one of birth, wealth or intellect. If this aristocracy grows selfish caring only for the interests of its class and begins to interfere with economic forms, religion, education and culture of the masses using all these for the best advantage of its class the sovereignty of the people (i.e.) Democracy comes into existence. All this might well be seen to fall within the province of the king and be discharged by him with as much efficiency as by a democratic government. But it is not so in reality as history bears witness. The king is an inefficient legislator and unmixed aristocracies are not much better. For the laws and institutions of a society or the frame-work it builds for its life and its Dharma. When it begins to determine these for itself however limitedly it may be by a self-conscious action of its reason and will it has taken the first step towards the movement which must inevitably end in an attempt to regulate its whole social and cultural life self-consciously. No individual thinker can determine by his arbitrary reason the evolution of the self-conscious Nation-State. Much less can an executive individual or a succession of executive individuals determine it, in fact, by his or their arbitrary power. It is evident he cannot determine the whole social life of the nation. It is much too large for him. No Society would have the heavy hand of an autocrat on its whole social living. He cannot determine

the economic life. He can only watch and hold it. He cannot determine the religious life. Nor can he determine the cultural life. No can he determine the ethical life. Akbar's attempt to create a new Dharma for the Indian nation by his enlightened reason proved futile. Asoka's edicts remain graven on pillar and rock but the development of Indian religion and culture took its own line in other and far more complex directions determined by the soul of the great people. For an individual or for a class to put forth such preposterous claims is one of the most amazing of human follies. What a king or aristocracy can not do democracy may with a better chance of success and a greater security attempt and bring nearer to fruition—the conscious and organised unity, the regularised efficiency on uniform and intelligent principles, the rational order and perfection of a developed society by self-government. This is the attempt of modern life and this attempt is the whole rationale of modern progress. In most of modern European states the middle classes often called bourgeois rule in the state representing themselves as Democrats. Such democracies are gradually tending towards proletariat democracy because the intellectuals are dissatisfied that they could not realise their ideals on accounts of obstinate commercialism of the capitalists and because the dull routine of parliament arena does not afford any scope for the play of their imagination in managing the practical affairs of state. The labourites also are dissatisfied, because the classes are using the parliamentary institutions for exploiting the masses. The union between the intellectuals and the labourites to get rid of the exclusive privileges of the capitalists and to afford equal opportunities to all is giving a strong impetus to the growth of Socialism in a well-organised democratic State. So Nation-state, Democracy and Socialism have

become the inescapable growth in the process of evolution even in the political conceptions of the people of India.

What then are the organs of the huge being the Nation-State? The classification of provinces in a state must be according either to language, religion or race. But all religions and races are found in every part of India. Then the classification must be according to languages which prevail in particular localities. The seeking for a common language for all Indians is a dominant idea in the minds of all Nationalists. The view of the people is that Hindi in either sanskrit or Urdu script may be adopted as the common language of the whole of India. But any attempt to unify all languages either by discouraging or destroying any or some of them is detrimental to the interest of national life and progress. The legend of the Tower of Babel speaks of diversity of tongues as a curse laid on the race, but the experience of humanity proved it otherwise. The purposeless exaggeration of anything is always an evil. No doubt the existence of many tongues which do not really encourage a real diversity of spirit and culture is rather a hindrance than a help to growth of nationalism. No doubt diversity of language creates a barrier to knowledge and sympathy. Very often misunderstandings though not actual hatred may be created among peoples who speak different languages. A common language may help the continuity of growing thought, formed temperament and ripening spirit. It is an intellectual bond tending to unite and strengthening unity. It is the generator of racial or national self-consciousness and the recorder of its growth, and progress. Each language is the sign and power of the soul of the people which naturally speaks it. Each language therefore develops its own peculiar spirit, thought, temperament, way of dealing with life and knowledge and experience and also assimilates the thoughts of other

nations into its own. It is the instrument for the expression of its culture. A nation, race or people which loses its language cannot live its whole life or its real life, nor one which has no language of its own can contribute anything special to the culture of the world. The Celtic race in Ireland with its profound spirituality, quick intelligence and delicate imagination which did so much in the beginning for European culture and religion remained stagnant since the overshadowing of the Gaelic speech by the English language. The British colonies or the United States of America, which have no language of their own have not got any central intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual life of their own which they can specially contribute to humanity. The very large introduction of English language in schools, colleges and law courts in India in preference to the vernaculars prevalent in various provinces has stunted the intellectual progress of India. A common national language like Hindi or Hindustani may be used to foster and preserve the spirit of a common nationality but the vernaculars should never be suppressed. Language is the sign of the cultural life of a people, its soul in thought and mind standing behind and enriching its soul in action.

Diversity of language is worth keeping to preserve the variegated culture. The suppression of any language in any race leads to sterilisation of the mind and stagnation of the same. The vigour of life and freedom of the nation can only be assured by protecting the provincial freedom as well as the individual freedom. Is it possible to have a common nationality without a common language? Look at Switzerland which has German, Italian, Roman or Latin and French, or the United States of America, the great democracy of Russia or of the Austrian which have different languages spoken within their dominions.

Locky writes in "England in 18th century" Vol. IV p. 18: "Twenty-one years before New York, or as it was then called New Amsterdam, fell into the hands of the English, it was computed that no less than 18 different languages were spoken in or near the town and it continued under English rule to be one of the chief centres of foreign immigration." Even at the present day during the presidential election campaigns different parties publish pamphlets in 12 or 13 different languages. These are nation-states even though there is a variety of languages within their geographical confines. When it is not advisable to dispense with the variety of languages the only course left open is to classify the state into provinces according to linguistic areas.

DECENTRALISATION.

To cure the malady of an excessive metropolitan absorption of the best national energies and facilitate their free circulation through many centres, a sort of decentralisation is effected by granting provincial autonomy. Each province is a reflection of the State in all its various departments and must be free to exercise its organic functions except in matters which concern the state as a whole. In the state as well as in the province there are three departments, the Legislative, the Executive and the Judicial. All these are independent of each other and their efficiency is determined according to the extent each of the individuals take part in them either collectively or through their representatives. The freedom of the individual is secured only when the judicial is separated from the executive and placed beyond its control. To settle the disputes between the state represented by its executive and the individual the judiciary must be independent of the executive so that there may not be any failure of justice. The supreme court of justice must be beyond the control of the executive

What then are the elements that make up the Nation-State? The first element is political unity about which much has been already said above. The second element is uniformity of administration which preserves law and order. The distinction between unity and uniformity is to be borne in mind.

Unity is an idea which is not at all arbitrary or unreal, for unity is the very basis of life. Unity which is at the basis secretly is realised consciously by the evolving spirit in Nature, by the time it reaches the top.

But uniformity is not the law of life. It requires that every individual shall be unique by some principle or ordered detail of variation, even while he is one with the rest of his community. Over-centralisation, which is the condition of a working uniformity, is not a healthy mode of life. Life exists by diversity.

Life is only one in its existence and totality, and in its play it is necessarily multiform. Absolute uniformity would mean the cessation of life. The vigour of life is observed by the diversities which it creates.

While diversity is essential for power and fruitfulness of life, unity but not necessarily uniformity is necessary for its order, arrangement and stability. If man could realise a perfect spiritual unity, no sort of uniformity would be necessary. The utmost play of diversity would be possible only on the basis of spiritual unity. If an individual could realise unity of principle, diversity in its application might be possible without any fear of disorder or strife.

As he is not able to realise unity of principle and at the same time apply it diversely he wants uniformity instead of real unity. While the life-power in man demands diver-

sity his reason favours uniformity, because it gives him an illusion of unity in place of real oneness, at which it is very difficult to arrive ; because it makes easy for him the otherwise difficult business of law and order and again because the tendency of the human mind is to make every considerable diversity an excuse for strife and separation and therefore uniformity seems to him the one secure and easy way to unification. Moreover by securing uniformity in any one direction or department of life man is able to economise his energies for development in other directions.

For instance if he standardises his economical existence and escapes from its problems he can attend more energetically to his intellectual and cultural growth.

If he standardises his whole social existence and rejects further problems he can attend more energetically to his spiritual development.

But the complex unity of existence asserts itself. Finally the intellectual and cultural growth suffers by poverty of the economic life and the spiritual life weakens in its richness on account of standardised social life.

Owing to the defect in the human mind uniformity has to a certain extent to be admitted and sought after, yet the real scheme in Nature is a true unity supporting a rich diversity.

A real spiritual and psychological unity can allow a free diversity and dispense with all but the minimum of uniformity which is sufficient to embody the community of nature and of essential principle. Until we can arrive at that perfection the method of uniformity is to be applied to such an extent as not to discourage life in the very sources of its power, richness and self-expression.

The third element of Nation-State is a centralised authority of which I need not describe much, for the India of to-day is suffering from over-centralisation. The British Indian Empire affords a type for the study of the centralisation of authority.

The fourth element is a strong defensive force, national militia, police and navy. The fifth element is well-equipped finance.

EXTREMISTS.

As bureaucratic pressure grew stronger in India there arose a certain class of extremists who hold that there is no possibility of India remaining a part of the Empire. Their reasons may be briefly stated thus: (1) *Geographically* there is no necessity for union, for the long distance of 6000 miles creates a positive mental separation. (2) *Economically* they are poles asunder. Britain wants free trade and India requires protection. If England engages herself in war with other nations on account of her having possessions everywhere on the globe, India also will be unnecessarily dragged and thus the national debt will grow, besides India losing her best sons on the field of battle. The large economic drain of Indian money to pay British officers staggers some of the Indian politicians. (3) *Psychologically* England and India have different cultures, religions, philosophies, history and traditions and the two peoples are entirely different in their habits of mind, temperament, and character. (4) *Politically* the Indians are dwarfed and stunted in their growth because they have no chances of controlling their own purse and managing their own house. The defence of India is mainly in the hands of the foreigner and in course of time the nation may grow so helpless that it will have to depend on the foreigner, for all time to come. (5) *constitutionally*—If a common parliament were

to be created for England and India, Indians, being numerically strong, may be able to control the whole parliament and thereby be able to control the whole of England to which position the Englishman will never consent. There can never be a common constitution in England for Britain as well as India, which can safeguard the best interests of Indians. These ideas are only prevalent among a particular class known as independents. But the Indian nation as a whole, as expressed in the ideal of the National Congress is willing to be within the Empire, if England offers her hand of fellowship and treats her as a sister nation. The development of steam power and the rapid use of electricity as a commercial commodity have overcome the difficulties that arise on account of the great distance between the two countries. Time and space are nothing now on account of the great advancement that has been made in the realm of science. The apparent economical and psychological differences can be easily adjusted if there is real willingness between the two countries for union. Politically too, they can easily adjust, if one does not think of exploiting the other. Constitutionally they can be two separate units with friendly relations between them. Therefore congress is indefinite on that point and leaves the future to shape itself according to circumstances.

CAUSES FOR THE GROWTH OF NATIONALISM

The great events that are taking place in quick succession in the world external to India have enhanced the growth of Nationalism in India. By the close of the year 1904 an oriental country like Japan could completely defeat the huge and massive Russian Empire extending across the north of Asia and Europe together. That shattered the delusion then prevailing that the orientals were inferior in every way to Europeans. The revolution in China trans-

forming the empire into a republic fostered the growth of a desire for representative institutions in the East. The formation of Nation-States in Europe after the close of the last war gave a new impetus to the smouldering national spirit in India. England which declared herself as the champion of independence of smaller nations, cut a sorry figure in the League of Nations when she was questioned about the treatment of Indians in British India as well as in her colonies. England which holds that "taxation without representation is robbery," that "law, made without the consent of the governed, is tyranny," had to pocket her conscience when the people of India in a body asked her to give them their financial and legislative control. Be it whether England had introduced certain Acts voluntarily or whether they occurred in the usual course of things. British rule has helped the growth of Democracy in India to some extent.

The cinders of Democracy that were covered by the ashes of Brahmanical superiority and extortion of the zamindar and the nawab grew with a blaze of Nationalism after the advent of the British into India. The centralised and paramount government introduced into the country enabled the British to relieve the underfed and oppressed tenant from the clutches of the voluptuous and avaricious zamindar. The passing of the Estates Land Act in Madras, the Tenancy Act in Bengal and similar Acts in other provinces enabled the tenant to breathe more freely by relaxing the tight grip of the landlord on the throat of the famished Indian tenant. The free grant of governmental lands to the depressed classes alleviated the sufferings of the starving millions though to an infinitesimally small extent. British rule in India brought the East and West together and evoked the dormant democratic spirit in India. Social service, relief work, hospitals, and education of the masses also

enhance the democratic tendency in the nation and propagate the religion of humanity.

The dominance of the Brahman caste maintained by religious sanction and partly by spiritual interests and considerations had always stood in India in the way of development of Democracy. That caste dominated thought and society and determined the principles of national life but did not actually rule and administer.

But under British rule that caste has not only lost the best part of its exclusive hold on the national life but has secularised itself. On the loss of that influence political and secular considerations have been able to come into the forefront. It has made possible the organised unity of the nation as distinct from a spiritual and cultural oneness. Thus the political self-consciousness has been awakened. Even before the advent of the British, the Rajputs created national self-consciousness which was not of a predominantly spiritual character and the Sikhs also achieved an organised political unity in certain provinces. But in India as a whole there was a sub-conscious tendency to secularise. The Maharattas secularised themselves, the whole people indiscriminately, Brahmin and Shudra becoming for a time a sub-nation of soldiers, statesmen and politicians. The British entertained in most of their offices a good many Brahmins who found it easy to master the English language and interpret the English law to the masses and represent the requirements of the masses to British officials. These Brahmins held positions in state, earned money and became secularised. The old priestly order was thinned year after year by the secularisation of its members.

The introduction of a universal criminal law by which priest and peasant, rich and poor, Christian and Muhammadan, high and low, men of all castes, creeds,

rac~~es~~ and colou~~rs~~ (though Anglo-Indians are given some privileges) are punished similarly for similar crimes is a great advance towards democracy. Much greater would have been the progress if a universal Civil Code also had been legislated for all Indians. The introduction of parliamentary methods in some branches of administration in India is a great move towards democracy for parliamentary institutions are half-way house between real democracy and benevolent despotism.

EFFECTS

Thus democracy is the onward march of humanity to the temple of God and the out-come of the law of continual progress without which there would be neither life, nor movement, nor religion, nor God. Some of our countrymen are horrified at the idea of democracy. They mistake it for anarchy. They exclaim 'Is it the anarchy of France in 1793, China in 1911, and Russia in 1917?' They forget that the changes in those countries were revolutionary whereas in India it will be evolutionary. France and Russia transformed immediately and without easy intermediate stages the whole basis not only of government, but of society and that under the pressure of a disastrous war. Both these countries fell under the despotism of an extreme party which represented the ideas of the Revolution in their most uncompromising and violent form and which, though hateful and bloody in the beginning, but after a gradual settlement in the state placed their countries on a basis of democracy. The terrors which appeared in the beginning gradually passed away; peace and plenty now reign supreme. In China the ideas of democracy had not permeated the masses but it was a revolution effected by military leaders who hated the Manchu dynasty and finding themselves at loggerheads and being unable to establish a definite and settled government

because each one of these military leaders is trying to become an emperor and set up his dynasty. Thus there arose the civil war which made life and liberty insecure. To condemn democracy on account of this is to condemn justice because several litigants are impoverished and ruined by seeking it in law courts. The circumstances in France, Russia or China are different from those of India and the Indian people are more level-headed than the people of France, China or Russia. "Democracy," says Mazzini, "is the progress of all through all under the leadership of the best and the wisest." He adds "The suffrage, political securities, progress of industry, arrangement of social organisation all these things, I repeat, are not Democracy; they are not the cause for which we are engaged; they are its means, its partial applications or consequences. The problem whose solution we seek is an educational problem; it is the eternal problem of human nature." There are two doctrines which agitated the minds of democrats. One is based on the individual right of man and the other on the duty of man to the community. Mazzini approves the latter and condemns the former which has its greatest support in England in the school of Bentham and Spencer. He says "There is but one sole virtue in the world—the eternal sacrifice of self." "The Benthamite school have taken the incident for the object. They have seized one of the results of a principle, and have said 'That is the principle itself.' Mahatma Gandhi also advocates the doctrine of Duty and Sacrifice instead of the other doctrine of Right and Enjoyment. The fall of Rome is due to the fact that there were a large number of Utilitarians who accepted the doctrine of Right and Enjoyment.

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMICS.

What is it that has made the Indian to think of Democracy as the panacea of all evils? What is it that makes India a prey to ever-recurring famines? What is it that is the cause of plague, pestilence and cholera? What is it that is at the bottom of premature and excessive mortality in India? The one answer to all these questions is the miserable economic situation in India. The administration in India presents an epitome of the management of a commercial firm on a very large scale by a board of directors, whose one aim is to obtain the largest amount of profits with the smallest amount of capital invested in it. The change of hands *i. e.*, from the control of the directors to that of the sovereign of England, has in no way changed the angle of vision of the servants of that sovereign. India of the 20th century is the same milch-cow of England of the 18th and 19th centuries. It may be the happy wish of a sovereign to proclaim "In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward;" but on the contrary there is neither prosperity nor contentment. What do you generally see everyday in India? You behold the famished, and the hunger-stricken Indian cooly unable to balance his trunk on his legs, nor his head upon his shoulders, with shrunk muscles, with an undeveloped brain and with a cloud of superstition hanging over his mental horizon. What more? You behold the British gaol with its legions of prisoners whose sole occupation and means of livelihood is the committing of crimes. You behold the busy lawyer reaping a harvest of litigation manured by the ignorance and party strife among his countrymen. You behold the stu-

dent with his satchel on his back containing English poems and English history and often with spectacles on nose, thinner in body than the pencil he holds. What more? You behold the shop-keeper who sells European, American and Japanese articles. You behold locomotives carrying passengers to and fro, managed by a Board of British capitalists whose profits go to England. You behold the starving Jutkawallah goading his jaded horse for half-penny. This is the urban life in India. Except the cities of Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi, all other cities in India are but overgrown towns with a larger population than is usual. What do you see in the villages? You behold a number of fields intercepted with bunds wherein mostly the untouchables toil from morn till eve. From December to April you find the villagers engaged in selling the corn and paying the cists and at other times running to court to spend in litigation the little balance left after paying the cist. After they stepped into court you find them going to the sowcar and executing pronotes for monies required to continue the litigation started, hoping to win their case somehow by exhausting all the appellate courts and if necessary and possible the Privy Council also. This is the ryotwari village life.

In Zamindari villages you behold the big land-lord with his zenana of wives and concubines, male and female servants all engaged in unceasing mirth leading an epicurean life, executing bonds, mortgaging their properties to the rich sowcars who are always ready to lend them. Expressing very briefly, the formula of human life in India is to study to get a living, or till the land, to find out some means to keep the lingering breath in the human body, to vegetate and then to die. Thus a fifth of the human race is left unimproved. The first question that touches the young Indian Democrat is what all this is due to. He

wakes up, opens his eyes and sees the great mystery of his degradation. He thinks that he has in a way found out the causes. He says all this is due to the great drain of Indian money collected from the people as taxes and sent out of the country. He begins to study the question further and finds that the British administration in India is very costly. Why should European experts be employed in India on high salaries when indigenous talent is available? Cannot Indians be trained to fill the various places? Why should the costly offices be increased year after year? These are some of the questions which make him uneasy. He sees the hand of oppression gripping him wherever he moves. He goes to the shop and finds everything foreign. He asks, "why should India be the market for all foreign articles?" He feels the want of encouragement of indigenous industries. A countervailing tax is imposed on cloth produced in the Indian cotton mills to balance the customs duty levied on foreign-imported piece-goods. Excise is levied on Indian salt to counter-balance the customs duty on foreign salt. He learns that England is a manufacturing country but not a producing country and so all raw materials must be sent from India to England on English steamers to be sent back as finished products. He finds out that his people have to pay the cost of freight to and fro and also the cost of labour to the English manufacturer. England has practically no interest in the development of indigenous industries, for she loses her market in India. He learns that India of old used to send valuable products of her looms to distant lands as Egypt, Babylonia and Rome, and drew in from other lands vast returns in gold and that she alone worked up her own raw materials. He finds that all those industries have decayed. Instead of adopting Protection in India, England adopts Free Trade as in England. She has made India a vast

field for producing raw materials for British manufacturers and finds a huge market in India for her goods after they are finished and shipped. Even as an agricultural country India has but little advanced. No great projects of irrigation have of late been undertaken as the state has no surplus income to utilise even for education or sanitation. He finds that his people or their representatives have no effective control over the budget, though a formal debate is allowed. He finds that his people are merely informed of the wishes of the government and that they are not consulted as to the incidence and allotment of taxes. He learns that those English maxims "no taxation without representation," "law without the consent of the people is tyranny," "taxation without the approval of the people is robbery" are applicable only to British people. Over and above all these he is surprised to find a big establishment in every important town intended for supplying labourers—the emigration depot for indentured labourers. Formerly men were *sold* as slaves, but now they are *hired* as slaves. The former were slaves in body and the latter are slaves for wages. The young cooly finding life too hard in India and hoping that he will find a heaven of rest sells himself for a time and allows himself to be shipped to some unknown destination. Excluding a few who are exceptionally gifted with ancestral wealth, the great problem looming large before the mind of the young Indian is "how can I earn my bread tomorrow? Shall I become a lawyer, teacher, doctor or government servant?" These are the great aspirations, the cherished ideals of many a young man. It is such men alone that can command high prices in the bridegroom-market. Except the few toiling ryots the labourers and the manufacturers, all others are more consuming than producing agents. °

BRITISH POLICY.

England has committed a suicidal policy in allowing Japan, the United States of America, Germany, Switzerland and France to, pour in their goods into India, while the 313 millions in India are getting on with a single meal a day on an average. The various industries in those countries nourished by state aid and fostered by the development of technological skill and encouraged by scientific invention, have been able to crush out all the indigenous industries in this country while the authorities in India do not make any attempt to ward off the impending danger. It is not even the selfishness of England but her imprudence that has brought to the surface the volcanic forces disrupting and threatening Indian humanity of today. If it was her mere selfishness she would have introduced Imperial Preference and shut off all foreign goods from off the shores of India by heavy import duties or by dumping her surplus output. By pursuing a blind policy, *laissez faire*, she has created an economic situation in India unparalleled in the history of any country. The external menace to Indian peace is the fear of an invasion from the North-West Frontier and the internal trouble is the miserable poverty of the suffering and starving millions of India. The one is the Achilles' heel in the geographical situation and the other is the Damocles' sword hanging over the head of the Indian demos. Geographical discovery, business enterprise, political peace and scientific invention have enabled foreign countries to carry raw material from all parts of the world and send it back as finished article to the consumer. Foreign capital flowed into the country to purchase raw material and the Indian manufacturers were ousted of their employment and the labourers from villages gathered into cities either to be employed as factory labourers or to be exported as indentured coolies. Labour

is being concentrated in cities and towns to be exploited and the economics of exploitation is being worked out. The villages are deprived of their labourers and so agriculture made no progress. The price of corn goes up and rents rise with it. Labour fails everywhere to obtain remunerative employment. Population is increasing and supplies are diminishing. The war and bad harvests combined to produce a severe industrial crisis and depression. The masses are irritated and they are uncontrollable. The bitterness in the hearts of the people is made all the more acute because the bureaucracy has grown all-powerful in Asia and has to send Indian labourers to military campaigns while the condition of the labourer is as miserable as it can be. The grip of autocracy is felt by every one and the whole society is sitting on the top of a volcano which may burst at any moment. University men are agitating for the Indianisation of the state service or for at least the employment of a greater number of Indians in the State service though not in some branches of administration as army, navy etc. To appease the hunger of these people the Government has thrown out some high offices to them. Some Indians are admitted into the executive councils and some others are made ministers. But the real cause of discontent is not that a few Indians are not given high appointments but that heavy taxation is oppressing the poor and the result is that the condition of labourers is miserable. The new offices created added to the cost of administration which is already unbearable by a poor country like India. To meet this expenditure the poor man's salt is taxed. To an Indian whose average income is an anna per day the increase of a pie in his expenditure for salt per day deprives him of so many necessities of human life. The ability of the poor to pay this tax is to be judged from the standpoint of the labourer but not

from the capacity of the financial member whose salary is in thousands of Rupees. Even though the salt tax is increased a millionfold it is not necessary for him to lessen even a particle of bread from his table, but the rise of a pie may affect the poor labourer very much. If the poor peasant is overburdened with tax after tax, however small it may be, there will come a day when his back may be broken by the last straw.

LAND TAX.

Under Indian rulers, the land tax was levied on produce, but not on acreage, hence it varied with good and bad harvests and with the fertility of the soil. Under Hindu Rulers it was $\frac{1}{12}$ to $\frac{1}{6}$ of the gross produce, under Akbar it was $\frac{1}{3}$ and under the Mahrattas it was $\frac{1}{4}$. The periodical increase in the assessment under the British may lead even to more than 50%. Lord Salisbury said, "We cannot afford to limit all land payments to 50% on the gross produce." The peasantry in many cases can no longer live by their land, but after the harvest they go into the towns to earn by wages enough to pay the land tax. The Census Report of 1911 gives 227 millions out of 313 millions as living by agriculture. In Bombay, says the report, there is a large local supply of labourers. Into Calcutta and its vicinity 1.4 millions migrate annually for industrial employment, the great majority seeking only temporary work for the cold weather; some stay longer, returning home with their savings, their families remaining in the villages. In ordinary years the cultivators live on advances from money-lenders for 4 months in the year. Sir Charles Elliott says, "I do not hesitate to say that half the agricultural population never know from year's end to year's end what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied. No wonder that any attempt to

increase taxation would result in financial failure." [Digby P. 509].

CHANGE IN THE ANGLE OF VISION.

The poorer classes have now found out that it is impossible for them to have any share of political authority in this sort of administration. Once the Brahminical aristocracy was paramount in the land. The same was allowed to remain for a very long time even under the British rule. During the regime of Lord Morley, who was Secretary of State for India a new policy of rallying the Moderates had been inaugurated. Thenceforward a new intellectual aristocracy, one of wealth and loyal service combined, noted for its loyal parentage and traditions, is being created in India. All the loaves and fishes of office are being distributed among them and the poor man who, by dint of his ability, aspired to rise high, has practically no chance of rising up in society. He cannot afford to educate himself nor his children at the high and prohibitive cost of education, and if at all he succeeds by begging or borrowing, the next great obstacle is to get the proper recommendation. Thus the broad catholicity which once characterised the British policy in distributing emoluments among the children of the soil according to their capacity is no longer followed and the result is the upheaval of a new spirit to rectify this evil. A strong mass movement has been started to destroy this top-heavy system and wish for a commonwealth of free labourers when the peasants and labourers may find solace and comfort in the administration of their country. They began to conceive of a new economic state of society; they discovered the need of political action. The field of their activities is widened. They are aware that the grievances under which they are labouring belonged to the system

itself and a complete alteration is to be effected, if at all society is to be saved from a volcanic eruption that is threatening every day. A new social idealism is making its way into the minds of uncared-for labourers and the discontented educated classes. They feel reinvigorated by the doctrine of sacrifice so clearly expounded by Mahatma Gandhi and they are refreshed with a moral enthusiasm. As the change in the policy of government grew more marked there rose a strong desire in the people to organise themselves to claim their birth-right of freedom and redistribute their activities. The ultimate end to which their activities are directed is Swaraj and the effect of Swaraj will be the organisation of the state, wherein every Indian may have an equal opportunity of developing his capacity and of being remunerated justly and fairly to the extent he has developed. Formerly people only cared for state service, for which they educated their children with great difficulty and as the remuneration in the state became quite insufficient as the number of vacant posts is limited, their minds are diverted from this slave-mentality to one of freedom and socialism where all men may have equal opportunities of development and employment in some state industry or activity. The heavy taxation and cost of government diverted the minds of the labourers from the present system and created in them an idealism of a government wherein people will be taxed only to such an extent as to maintain the state without engaging in aggressive wars for extension of dominion and wherein they can reduce the salaries of the high-paid officials in the state. The combination of discontented intellectuals and the half-fed labourers is a crying for the evolution of a state of free labourers. The mere conflicts of classes which begin and end with controversies for state service were transformed and transfigured by the ethical idealism of Socialism which

is simple in its outlines. It pays no heed to the complexities and conservatisms of the social organisation. It stirs up the souls of men and enables them to undergo any suffering for the sake of their ideals. The people are not satisfied with the treatment meted out to them and start on a new political adventure. All this happens not because they are avaricious or ambitious or envious or wicked or selfish, but because they feel they are wronged. It is the ideal of socialism which supplies the impulse for effecting social changes. The relationship between the people led by the discontented educated classes and the state officials is growing bitter day by day. No doubt wages have risen a little but the cost of life has grown to an enormous extent that the needs of life cannot be met with at the present day with the raised wages at least to half the extent as was done formerly with low wages. The Congress propaganda is directed to enlighten and embolden the people to be free. It has introduced the *charka* in many a poor home and insisted on the people to wear Khaddar hand-spun and hand-woven cloth and discarded foreign cloth so that money may not be sent to foreign lands to enrich the purses of foreign capitalists who trade in machine-made cloth. All classes in the country are reduced to the same level as seen by the apparel they wear and simplicity of life is strictly insisted on. The old notions that the rich are born to rule the poor have been thoroughly transformed. It is clear that discontent exists in the great proletariat consisting of the toilers in the fields, the labourers in the industries, the clerks in offices, railway servants, steamer-men and petty traders. An extensive economic distress gave rise to serious agrarian troubles in the United Provinces.

CAUSES

The Taluqdars of Oudh reserved for them all the monopolies in the land and looked down with contempt