

THE DEEPER MEANING OF THE
STRUGGLE.

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THE DEEPER MEANING OF THE STRUGGLE.

THE shadow of a coming conflict overhangs the Indian sky. It cannot be much longer postponed, certainly not indefinitely avoided, and the manner, and in some measure the result, will depend largely upon the wisdom and foresight of the opposing parties. Signs are not wanting that the struggle will be a very bitter one. Every day in India the gulf between Englishmen and Indians widens. In England herself there has been of late a hardening, a reaction from her old ideals of freedom and liberty. It was a strange and significant thing to hear in Parliament, not many weeks ago, a great Englishman defend the application in India of the lawless methods he had before denounced in Ireland. The deportation of Lāla Lajpat Rai without trial or charge preferred has stirred India from north to south; where were once a few moderates are now many extremists. Recent decisions of the High Court of Calcutta have justified our suspicions regarding the administration of justice as between Hindu and Muhammedan. We are gradually but surely being convinced that England is not sincere.

The difficulties which have been pointed out in connection with the idea of self-government for India undoubtedly exist. But assuredly the growth of national feeling amongst us will so far unite us, as to make the administration

of our own affairs a possibility. The future cannot be postponed for ever. "Svarāj," or self-government, is the ideal of young India, and it depends upon the wisdom and sympathy of the English rulers of India to say whether the growth of this idea of nationality throughout the country shall be attended with violent disturbance, or whether it shall be allowed to proceed peacefully towards the inevitable goal. Episodes, such as Muhammedan-Hindu riots, the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller, and the deportation of Indian agitators, are but the flashes that announce the conflict, they are not the struggle itself, nor do they explain its significance. What then is the deeper meaning of the struggle?

It is part of a wider one, the conflict between the ideals of Imperialism and the ideals of Nationalism. Between these two ideals the world has now to choose ; and with the choice of England in particular, we are now concerned. Upon that choice depends the salvation of much that is absolutely essential to the future greatness of civilisation and the richness of the world's culture. For Imperialism involves the subordination of many nationalities to one ; a subordination not merely political, but also economic and mental. Nationalism is inseparable from the idea of Internationalism, recognising the rights and worth of other nations to be even as one's own. For England we cannot speak ; but for ourselves, the ideal is that of nationalism and internationalism. We

feel that loyalty for us consists in loyalty to the idea of an Indian nation, politically, economically, and mentally free ; that is, we believe in India for the Indians ; but if we do so, it is not merely because we want our own India for ourselves, but because we believe that every nation has its own part to play in the long tale of human progress, and that nations which are not free to develop their own individuality and own character, are also unable to make the contribution to the sum of human culture which the world has a right to expect of them.

It is not yet an ingrained and ineradicable hatred of England that inspires our efforts. There is not yet in us the bitterness that is in Ireland. If England would help and trust us (as we have too much reason to fear that she will not) there might yet be time for us to love and reverence her name, both now and in the days to come when we and she are truly free to love and reverence each other ; free alike from the domination of others, and from dominating others. For it seems to us that the master is not truly freer than the slave, that England herself is not free so long as the burden of a great dominion hangs about her shoulders.* So

**“I cannot help ‘thinking with Herbert Spencer,’” said Lafcadio Hearn, “that we are going to lose our liberties for the very same reasons that impel us to attack the liberties of weaker peoples.” The transition is not difficult, from punishment without trial in India, to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in England.*

long as England's ideal is set upon an achievement of dominion over others, she can be neither free nor truly great.

Nor do we lack confidence that there have been and even now are in England true lovers of her real self who share this view. Sir Edward Burne-Jones was English; but the name of Empire did not blind him, and when it was said that England would be ruined if she lost India, he answered that England was not ruined when she lost America nor when she lost France. He held that it would not be in the least for the good of the world to have another great Anglo-Saxon Empire in South Africa. "Let's have no more dominant races—we don't want them—they only turn men into insolent brutes." There are men like Sir Henry Cotton, Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, and Mr. Redmond, by whom it has been recognised that Nationalism must be the guiding principle of the future, if the true interests of their own or any other people are to be considered. These have helped the cause, and help us still, but they are not enough, and because they are not, a struggle is inevitable. Yet let us not while in the midst of it, forget its deeper meaning, as there is some danger that we may; we owe it to ourselves to make the issue clear.

The world resembles some vast, as yet unordered garden, having divers soils and aspects, some watered, some arid, some plain, some mountain; the different parts of it should properly be tended by different gardeners, having experience of the diverse qualities of soil and aspect; but certain ones

have seized upon the plots of others, and attempted to replace the plants natural to those plots, with others more acceptable or profitable to themselves. We have not to consider only the displaced gardeners, who naturally do not admire and are not grateful for the changes introduced into their plots ; but to ask whether these proceedings are beneficial to the owner of the garden, for whom the gardeners work. Who is this owner but the Folk of the World of the future, which is ever becoming the present ? Shall they be glad or sorry if uniformity has replaced diversity, if but one type of vegetation is to be found within their garden, flourishing perhaps in one part, but sickly in another ; what of the flowers that might have flourished in that other part had they not been swept away ?

As I have already admitted, all of the difficulties that beset the path of Indian Nationality are real. The one thing strange to us is the delight with which Englishmen insist upon them, as though the possibility of an Indian Nation, conscious of its past, and led by hope of days to come, were in itself an evil thing. Why is there not rejoicing at a nation's birth, or rather adolescence ? for to all men the gift is given, and to all is brought the fame. " How many things shalt thou quicken, how many shalt thou slay ! How many things shalt thou waken, how many gather to sleep ! How many things shalt thou scatter, how many gather and keep ! O me, how thy love shall cherish, how thine hate shall wither and burn !

How the hope shall be sped from thy right hand,
nor the fear to thy left return ! O thy deeds that
men shall sing of ! . . . O Victory yet to be ! ”

The world has progressed from the idea of individual slavery to that of individual freedom ; it has become an instinct to believe that men are equal at least to this degree, that every man must be regarded as an end in himself ; but progress is only now being made from the idea of national slavery (Empire) to that of national freedom (Inter-Nationalism). We have to learn that nations no less than men are ends in themselves ; we have yet to fully realise that a nation can no more ultimately justify the ownership of other nations, than a man can justify the ownership of other men.

Let us not forget that in setting this ideal of Nationalism before us, we are not merely striving for a right, but accepting a duty that is binding on us, that of self-realisation to the utmost for the sake of others. India's ancient contribution to the civilisation of the world does not and can never justify her children in believing that her work is done. There is work yet for her to do, which if not done by her, will remain for ever undone. We may not shirk our part in the reorganisation of life, which is needed to make life tolerable under changed conditions. It is for us to show that industrial production can be organised on Socialistic lines without converting the whole world into groups of state-owned factories. It is for us to show that great and lovely cities can be built again, and things of beauty made in them, without the

pollution of the air by smoke or the poisoning of the river by chemicals ; for us to show that man can be the master, not the slave of the mechanism he himself has created.

It is for us to proclaim that wisdom is greater than knowledge ; for us to make clear anew that art is something more than manual dexterity, or the mere imitation of natural forms. *Belmont* It is for us to investigate the psychical and supersensual faculties anew in the light of the discoveries of physical science and to show that science and faith may be reconciled on a higher plane than any reached as yet. It is for us to intellectualise and spiritualise the religious conceptions of the West, and to show that the true meaning of religious tolerance is not the refraining from persecution, but the real belief that different religions need not be mutually exclusive, the conviction that they are all equally roads, suited to the varying capacities of those that tread them, and leading to one end.

This and much more is our allotted task. Other peoples have found other work to do, some of which we may well share, and some leave to those still best fitted to perform it ; but let us not turn from our own task to attempt the seemingly more brilliant or more useful work of others. "*Better is one's own duty, though insignificant, than even the well-executed duty of another.*" Let us not be tempted by all the kingdoms of the earth ; granted there is much that we have not, which others have, and which we may acquire from them ; *what is the price to be?* What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole

world and lose his own soul ? Think of our duty from another point of view ; is not the ancient virtue of hospitality binding on us ? Yet now the shame of hospitality refused is ours ; how many have come to India, reverencing her past, ready to learn of her still, and have been sent empty away ! The student of social economy finds a highly organised society in the process of disintegration without any of the serious and constructive effort required for its re-organisation under changed conditions ; the student of architecture finds a tradition living still, but scorned by a people devoted to the imitation of their rulers, building copies of English palaces and French villas in the very presence of men who still know how to build, and under the shadow of buildings as noble as any that the world has seen. The student of fine art is shown inferior imitations of the latest European 'styles,' where he should find some new and living revelation ; the decorative artist sees the traditional craftsmen of India thrown out of employment by the mechanical vulgarities of Birmingham and Manchester without the least effort made to preserve for future generations the accumulated skill and cunning of centuries of the manufacture of materials and wares which have commanded the admiration of the world. The musician of other lands hears little but the gramophone or the harmonium in India ; the man of religion finds the crudest materialism replacing a deep-rooted faith ; the lover of freedom beholds a people who can be imprisoned or deported for indefinite periods without

trial, and too divided amongst themselves to offer adequate resistance to this lawlessness; in a word, every man seeking to widen his own outlook, sees but his own face distorted in an Indian mirror.

It is from this inhospitableness, this cowardice, that the call of the Motherland must waken us. We are conscious that the best in us is sleeping still; but when the sleeper wakes, who knoweth what shall come of it? One thing at least we are certain of, that the awakening must be no waking in a prison cell, but that of a free man, "full of good hopes, of steady purpose, perfect strength."* It is for this that we are stirred, for this that we shall suffer; and this is the deeper meaning of the struggle.

MĀTĀ BHĀRATA.

THERE was once a tall, fair woman,—not indeed young, no one could have thought that—but serene to the uttermost and possessed of great patience and grace. In years past she had been famed for wisdom, and the wise men of the world had sat at her feet and carried away her teachings to the ends of the earth. But now she was older, and a little weary, and the light in her eyes served only as a star for the few who still beheld reality behind appearance. She was, moreover, wealthy, and many had sought her hand, and of these, one whom she loved least had possessed her body for

* *Taittiriyaopanishad.*

many years ; and now there came another and stranger wooer with promises of freedom and peace, and protection for her children ; and she believed in him, and laid her hand in his.

For a time it was well, her new lord was contented with the wealth of her treasure houses and gave her the peace of neglect. But ere long he took more interest in his cold bride and her children, and said to himself, "This woman has strange ways unlike my own and those of my people, and her thoughts are not my thoughts ; but she shall be trained and educated, that she may know what I know, and that the world may say that I have moulded her mind into the paths of progress." For he knew not of her ancient wisdom, and she seemed to him slow of mind, and lacking in that practical ability on which he prided himself.

And while these thoughts were passing in his mind, some of her children were roused against him, by reason of his robbing them of power and interfering with the rights and laws that regulated their relations to each other ; for they feared that their ancient heritage would pass away for ever. But still the mother dreamed of peace and rest and would not hear the children's cry, but helped to subdue their waywardness ; and ere long all was quiet again. But the wayward children loved not their new father and could not understand their mother. And their new father turned to other ways, and sent the children to schools where they were taught his language and his thoughts, and how great his people were, and self-sacrificing ;

and from what unrest and wretchedness he had saved their mother, and with no thought of gain or profit ; and they were taught, too, to forget their ancient glory and from the height of the new polish to despise their ancient manners.

But now another thing happened ; the mother bore a child to the foreign lord, and he was pleased thereat, and deemed that she (for it was a girl) should be a woman after his own heart, even as the daughters of his own people, and she should be fair and wealthy, and a bride for a son of his people. But when this child was born, the mother was roused from her dream, and lived only for the girl, and she grew up to remind the mother of her own youth, and favoured the foreign lord little ; yet she had somewhat of his energy and turn for practical affairs. The mother talked long and deeply with her, and the foreign lord did not take it aught amiss, for he deemed that all must go even as he, such a great man, would have it go. And he got teachers, and she was taught the wisdom and manners of his people. But in secret the mother taught her the ancient wisdom, and her heart was turned away from her father and his people and his teaching. And the mother was content ; and now she was white-haired and weak with age, and a time came when she passed hence, for her work was done. And the foreign lord himself grew a little weary, for there were troubles in his own land, and some had said that he was a tyrant in a foreign land ; and thereby his heart was pained, for had not he spent his life for others,

and surely the labourer was worthy of his hire? But the girl grew strong, and would brook little of her father's tyranny, and she was a mother to the children of the children who came before her, and she was called the Mother by all; and perhaps she and her mother were after all the same. One day there arose murmurings amongst the children as of old, and they said that they needed no foreign lord to take their revenues and school their minds. Still they were subdued with a high hand and some were cast in prison, or worse, for the father was a patriarch of the old type and deemed it amiss that he had not the power of life and death over all his subject people. But now they would not brook his tyranny—for he himself had taught them that the king-days were over, and made them dream of freedom, though he was sorry now he had done it.

All these trials were upon him, and he grew old and weary; and the young mother (she would be mother of all she said, but wedded unto none) helped all the children and taught them to love and help each other and to call her mother; and she left the foreign lord and went to live in a place apart, where the children came to her for counsel. And when the foreign lord would have stopped it, she was not there, but elsewhere; and it seemed that she was neither here nor there, but everywhere.

* * * * *

And this tale is yet unfinished; but the ending is not far away, and may be foreseen.

INDIA: A NATION.

I HAVE above alluded to the welcome accorded by most Englishmen to whatever goes to show that India has never been and can never be a united people. This attitude is perhaps more to be regretted from the English point of view than from the Indian, as it prevents those who hold it from understanding the progress of events, and so from contributing to their due development. We ourselves are aware of the fundamental unity which unites us; and apprehend that as soon as that unity is realised (it does not require to be created), it will become a matter of comparative indifference to us whether or no its existence is admitted elsewhere. I have, nevertheless, thought it worth while to gather together a few notes on the expression to which that unity has hitherto attained, in order to give more concrete form to what might be regarded as a vague sentiment. ✓

What are the things which make possible national self-consciousness, which constitute nationality? Certainly a unity of some sort is essential. There are certain kinds of unity however which are not essential, and others which are insufficient. Racial unity, for example, does not make the negroes of North America into a nation. Racial unity is not even an essential; the English nation is perhaps more composed of diverse racial elements than any other, but has none the less a national consciousness. To take another example, many of the most Irish of the Irish are of English

origin ; Keating and Emmet for instance were of Norman descent ; but neither they nor their work were on that account less a part or an expression of Irish national feeling and self-consciousness. Neither is a common and distinctive language an essential ; Switzerland is divided between three languages, and Ireland between two.

Two essentials of nationality there are,—a geographical unity, and a common historic evolution or culture. These two India possesses super abundantly, beside many lesser unities which strengthen the historic tradition.

The fact of geographical unity is apparent on the map, and is never, I think, disputed. The recognition of social unity is at least as evident to the student of Indian culture. The idea has been grasped more than once by individual rulers,—Akbar, and Aśoka. It was recognized before the Mahābhārata was written ; when Yudhishtira performed the Rājasūya sacrifice on the occasion of his inauguration as sovereign, a great assembly (*sabhā*—simply the *gam-sabhāva*, or village council on a larger scale) was held, and to this assembly came Bhīshma, Dhṛitarāshṭra and his hundred sons, Subala (king of Gandhāra), etc. . . . and others from the extreme south and north (Draviḍa, Ceylon and Kaśmīr). In legends, too, we meet with references to councils or moots of the gods, held in the Himālayas, whither they repaired to further common ends. No one can say that any such idea as that of a Federated states of India is altogether foreign to the Indian mind or even new to it.

But more than all this, there is evidence enough that the founders of Indian culture and civilization and religion (whether you call them *rishis* or men) had this unity in view ; and the manner in which this idea pervades the whole of Indian culture is the explanation of the possibility of its rapid realisation now. Is it for nothing that India's sacred shrines are many and far apart ; that one who would visit more than one or two of these must pass over thousands of miles of Indian soil ? Benāres is the sacred city of Buddhist and Hindu alike ; Samanala in Ceylon is a holy place for Buddhist, Hindu and Muhammedan. Is there no meaning in the sacred reverence for the Himālayas which every Indian feels ? is the *geis* altogether meaningless which forbids the orthodox Hindu to leave the motherland and cross the seas ? is the passionate adoration of the Indian people for the Ganges* thrown away ? How much is involved in such phrases as 'The Seven Great Rivers' (of India) ! The Hindu in the north repeats the mantram :

Om gaṅgē cha yamunē chaiva godāvari sarasvati
Narmadē sindhu kāvēri jalē'smin sannidhim kuru.†

* My own father, for example, was cremated in Ceylon; another member of the family had to convey the ashes to the Ganges, and perform due ceremonies there ; thus is every Indian bound by religious ties to the holy soil of India. The 'holy land' of India is not a far-off Palestine, but the Indian land itself.

† "Hail! O ye Ganges, Jamna, Godavari, Sarasvati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri, come and approach these waters."

when performing ceremonial ablutions ; the Buddhist in Ceylon uses the same prayer on a similar occasion. Or take the epics, the foundation of Indian education and culture ; or a poem like the *Mēgha Dūta*, the best known and most read work of Kālidāsa, whose work is to India what Shakespeare's is to England ; are not these expressive of love for and knowledge of the motherland ?

☞ The whole of Indian culture is so pervaded with this idea of India as **THE LAND**, that it has never been necessary to insist upon it overmuch, for no one could have supposed it otherwise. "Every province within the vast boundaries fulfils some necessary part in the completion of a nationality. No one place repeats the specialised functions of another." Take for example Ceylon (whose people are now the most denationalised of any in India) ; can we think of India as complete without Ceylon ? Ceylon is unique as the home of Pali literature and Southern Buddhism, and in its possession of a continuous chronicle invaluable as a check upon some of the more uncertain data of Indian chronology. Sinhalese art, Sinhalese religion, and the structure of Sinhalese society, bring most vividly before us certain aspects of early Hindu culture, which it would be hard to find so perfectly reflected in any other part of modern India. The noblest of Indian epics, the love-story of Rāma and Sītā, unites Ceylon and India in the mind of every Indian, nor is this more so in the south than in the north. In later times the histories of northern India and Ceylon were linked by Vijaya's emigra-

tion, then by Aśoka's missions (contemporaneous with the wave of Hindu influence which passed beyond the Himalayas to impress its ideals on the Mongolian east); and later still a Sinhalese princess became a Rājput bride, to earn the perpetual love of her adopted people by her fiery death, the death which every Rājput woman would have preferred above dishonour; to this day her name is remembered by the peoples of northern India, as that of one who was the flower and crown of beauty and heroism. And just in such wise are all the different parts of India bound together by a common historical tradition and ties of spiritual kinship; none can be spared, nor can any live independent of the others. ✓

The diverse peoples of India are like the parts of some magic puzzle, seemingly impossible to fit together, but falling easily into place when once the key is known; and the key is that realization of the fact that the parts do fit together, which we call national self-consciousness. I am often reminded of the Cairene girl's lute, in the tale of Miriam and Ali Nur al-Din. It was kept in a "green satin bag with slings of gold." She took the bag, "and opening it, shook it, whereupon there fell thereout two-and-thirty pieces of wood, which she fitted one into other, male into female, and female into male till they became a polished lute of Indian workmanship. Then she uncovered her wrists and laying the lute in her lap, bent over it with the bending of mother over babe, and swept the strings with her finger-tips; whereupon it

moaned and resounded and after its olden home yearned ; and it remembered the waters that gave it drink and the earth whence it sprang and wherein it grew and it minded the carpenters who cut it and the polishers who polished it and the merchants who made it their merchandise and the ships that shipped it ; and it cried and called aloud and moaned and groaned ; and it was as if she asked it of all these things and it answered her with the tongue of the case." Just such an instrument is India, composed of many parts seemingly irreconcilable, but in reality each one cunningly designed towards a common end ; so too, when these parts are set together and attuned, will India tell of the earth from which she sprang, the waters that gave her drink, and the Shapers that have shaped her being ; nor will she be then the idle singer of an empty day, but the giver of hope to all, when hope will most avail, and most be needed.

It may be suggested that I have spoken so far only of Hindus and Hindu culture ; and if so it is because Hindus form the main part of the population of India, and Hindu culture the main part of Indian culture : but the quotation just made from Arabian literature leads on to the consideration of the great part which Muhammedans, and Persian-Arabian culture have played in the historic evolution of India as we know it to-day. It would hardly be possible to think of an India in which no great Mughal had ruled, no Taj been built, or to which Persian art and literature were wholly foreign. Few great Indian rulers have displayed the genius

for statesmanship which Akbar had, a greater religious toleration than he. On the very morrow of conquest he was able to dispose of what is now called the Hindu-Muhammedan difficulty very much more successfully than it is now met in Bengal; for he knew that there could be no real diversity of interest between Hindu and Muhammedan, and treated them with an impartiality which we suspect to be greater than that experienced in Bengal to-day. It was not his interest to divide and rule. Like most Eastern rulers (who can never be foreigners in the same way that a western ruler must be) he identified himself with his kingdom, and had no interests that clashed with its interests. This has been always a characteristic of an invader's or usurper's rule in India, that the ruler has not attempted to remain in his own distant country and rule the conquered country from afar, farming it like an absentee landlord, but has identified himself with it. The beneficent rule of Elāla, a Tamil usurper in Ceylon two centuries before Christ, was so notorious that deep respect was paid to the site of his tomb more than 2000 years later; and to mention a more modern case, the Tamil (Hindu) ruler Kīrti Śrī (18th century) and his two brothers so identified themselves with the Sinhalese (Buddhist) people as to have deserved the chronicler's remark that they were 'one with the religion and the people.' To show that such a situation is still possible, it will suffice to cite the State of Gwalior, where the Hindu king's half-brother is a Muhammedan, Hindus and Muhammedans are so much

at one as to be not unwilling to eat together, and the king observes and respects Hindu and Muhammedan feasts and ceremonies equally. The very existence of the Sikhs, again, is an evidence of the Indian capacity for discovering a solution for the difficulties which the enemies of Indian unity would fain declare insoluble.

Even suppose the differences that separate the Indian communities to be twice as great as they are said to be, they are nothing compared with the difference between Indian and European. Western rule is inevitably alien rule, in a far deeper sense than the rule of Hindus by Muhammedans or the reverse could be. And what does alien rule mean? "The government of a people by itself," says John Stuart Mill, "has a meaning and a reality, but such a thing as the government of one people by another does not, and cannot exist. One people may keep another as a warren or preserve for its own use, a place to make money in, a human farm to be worked for the profit of its own inhabitants." No cant of the white man's burden alters the stern logic of these facts; to us it appears that the domination of East by West is a menace to the evolution of the noblest ideal of humanity; the 'white man's burden' translated into the language of Asiatic thought becomes 'the white peril'; and this not because we despise the achievements of Western civilisation, or fail to appreciate the merits of Englishmen as such, but because we think that a whole world of Englishmen would be a poor place, quite as poor as a world of Indians or Chinamen.

But let us not wander from the point; which is that we possess a real unity and national self-consciousness, and feel it our duty to realise this consciousness in concrete form, as much for the advantage of others as of ourselves; and this without any feeling of bitterness or exclusiveness towards other races, though perhaps for a time such feelings may be inevitable. And to show what spirit moves us I append a statement of belief in the unity of the Indian people, compiled as a credo by Shiv Naryen; and the beautiful national song, called 'Bande Mātaram' ('Hail! Motherland') which expresses the aims and the power of the awakened Indian nation, as the Marseillaise embodied the ideal of awakened France, or as those of Ireland are expressed in the songs of Ethna Carberry.

CREDO.

"I believe in India, one and indivisible.

I believe in India, beloved mother of each and all
of her many million children.

I believe in India's divine mission.

I believe in the saints of her birth and the heroes of
her breeding.

I believe in India the invincible, whom the world's
loftiest and holiest mountains defend.

I believe in the invigorating power of the ocean, on
whose lap lies my mother secure.

I believe in India, the beautiful;—Nature's own
paradise of loveliest flowers and streams.

I believe in the sanctity of her every particle.

I believe in India's departed sons, whose ashes are mingled in the air, earth, and water, that give me my food, and form my very blood.

I am bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh.

I believe in the abiding relationship of Indians of all times and all communities.

I believe in the brotherhood of all who belong to India's soil, be they of whatsoever caste or creed.

I believe in the living Indian nation, dearer to her children than aught else of earthly kinship.

I believe in its golden past and glorious future.

I believe in the righteousness, valour and patriotism of Indian manhood.

I believe in the tenderness, chastity and selflessness of Indian womanhood.

I believe in India for the Indian people to live for and to die for.

I believe in one land, one nation, one ideal, and one cause.

The service of my countrymen is the breath of my life,—the be-all and end-all of my existence.

So help me Bhāra ! ”

BANDE MĀTARAM.*

“ My Mother-land, I sing,
Her splendid streams, her glorious trees,
The zephyr from the far-off Vindhyan heights,
Her fields of waving corn,

** Written by Bankim Chandra Chatterji : the translation is by an Englishman, a member of the Bengal Civil Service.*

The rapt'rous radiance of her moonlit nights,
The trees in flower that flame afar,
The smiling days that sweetly vocal are,
The happy blessed Mother-land ;
Her will by seventy million throats extolled,
Her power twice seventy million arms uphold.
Her strength let no man scorn.
Thou art my head, thou art my heart,
My life and soul art thou,
My soul, my worship, and my art ;
Before thy feet I bow.
As Durga, scourge of all thy foes,
As Lachmi, bowered in the flower
That in the water grows ;
As Bani, wisdom, power,
The source of all our might,
Our every temple doth thy form enfold,
Unequalled, tender, happy, pure.
Of splendid streams, of glorious trees,
My Mother-land I sing,
The stainless charms that e'er endure ;
And verdant banks and wholesome breeze,
That with her praises ring."

These words are not the hysterical utterances of a people uncertain of their unity or doubtful of their future. They express the Indian recognition of the Motherland, their quiet but profound assurance of her greatness and beauty, and their consciousness of the high calling which is hers. They voice the hope of the INDIAN NATION, which shall not be disappointed.

THE END.

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