

## **Svadesh and Svaraj** by **B.P. Wadia**

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[Page 1] IN this ancient Indian land so much talk is now-a-days, heard regarding *Svadesh* — "our own Motherland", and *Svarāj* — the "self-government" thereof, that in the din and clamour of varied voices of party-strife for supremacy and leadership the true interests of the cause get drowned. Patriotism, love of country and high political aspirations are things of great value and import, even from the occult standpoint. In the building of character, individual or national, as well as in personal or racial evolution, these qualities occupy a very important position. Therefore they cannot be praised too highly. The more the Indians tend towards patriotic and national aspirations the better for them and for the Motherland. The more the rising generation is reared on these virtues the better for it and the future of the country.

But there are times and periods in the history of every land, when lack of proportionate and right perspective, over-enthusiasm and youthful rashness, produce revolutions instead of healthy and sound reformation. Revolutions do not have their beginnings in [Page 2] evil motives or wrong aspirations; they begin rightly but end wrongly, because of ways and means. They may be terrible and ghastly, as in the case of the famous French Revolution, or otherwise, as in the case of America, but whenever they are impelled by the ignorant voice of the mob, drowning the wisdom of the few who can guide and lead, the invariable result has been sorrow and suffering.

Mrs. Besant has rightly called this a "changing world". In every department of human activity transformations are taking place. At such a time, more than at any other, revolutions are likely to occur. Those who are familiar with problems of national psychology understand how the great force, working from within without, might so spring forth on the agitated mind of the populace that undesirable effects might be produced. The French Revolution is a prominent case in point. It is very necessary, therefore, that Theosophists, who occupy somewhat a unique position in leading the thought of the world, should bear this in mind and work carefully. To this end we must thoroughly grasp broad principles rather than innumerable details; and not only understand but also explain them, as far as we possibly can, to the world at large.

In India the national mind is in a turmoil. It is the mind of a person waking from a very long sleep. Rip van Winkle-like, it is looking around and wondering, is agitated and hasty to act, though knowing [Page 3] neither what to do nor how to proceed. The nation has awakened because of political troubles and disturbances, and naturally the mind, working along the line of least resistance, has begun to seek expression in talk of patriotism, the Motherland, and Self-government. Elsewhere, in other climes, nations have been affected differently, and therefore the signs of waking manifested are also different.

Now, at such times a rational and philosophical basis for the problem before the public eye should be given, as such a course would very much help in preserving the necessary equilibrium. The class

disciplined by education, though less in quantity, guides the undisciplined and ignorant mob by virtue of its sterling quality. Even a shadowy and faint permeation of philosophical conceptions in the thought atmosphere goes a great way towards checking the rashness of the populace. A force generated at a higher level controls and guides the activities of the lower level, unless the force coming into existence on the lower should outweigh it.

Let us therefore study this talk of *svadesh* and *svarāj*, so universal at present in this ancient land, in a calm and philosophic way. In the scheme of evolution, evil and hatred do not occupy the same place that good and love do. The former do exist, but only as stepping stones, only as resistance absolutely necessary, for the overcoming of inertia. Without friction progress is not possible; without the darkness of night [Page 4] we should not enjoy the brightness of day; without the existence of hatred we should not value and appreciate love. A very natural conclusion therefore may be drawn that friction, darkness and hatred exist because progress is to be made, brightness is to be experienced, and love is to be felt. The former are secondary not preliminary in character; they are there because of their positive counterparts.

That brings us to the truth of "as above, so below". Ideas in abstract regions produce idols in concrete worlds. Tables are seen and used on this earth because tabularity exists in its heavenly region. It is a philosophical necessity to posit an archetypal world. Has it not occurred to you that every single manifestation on this plane, of any permanent value, is a reflection of its archetype on a subtler plane? Suicides and murders on the physical plane are symbols of those on higher ones with which "lost souls" are related; maternal love typifies the compassionate love of the Great Ones for the child humanity; conjugal love represents the union of the lower and higher selves; day and night signify *manvantara* and *pralaya*; birth and death indicate manifestation and disintegration of atoms and systems; earthly man stands for Heavenly Man private societies and secret fraternities betoken the sacred and little-known Brotherhood, as ceremonial entrance into the former copy the Great Initiations in the latter, the frauds and charlatans of Occultism point [Page 5] silently to the existence of the White Magician; and so in all departments and provinces of Nature in an endless range of succession, till we feel overpowered by and bewildered at the plumbless depth and unscalable height and marvellous expansion on every side.

That is a general principle and may be applied everywhere and in all things. The ancients in their wisdom did so. *The Purānas* and the *Book of the Dead* and even the four Gospels of *The New Testament* show this quite plainly and well. From the much misunderstood story of Shri Krishna and the Gopis down to the Wise Men's vision of the Star in the East "over where the young child was", this is clearly seen.

The Lord Buddha was teaching, in a sense, the same lesson, when His father questioned Him why He returned to His Kingdom clad in the yellow garments of a beggar, and He replied: "My father, it is the custom of my race". He referred to His having reached Buddhahood, which made Him a member of the Deathless Race.

" Not of a mortal line", the Master said,  
 " I spake, but of descent invisible,  
 The Buddhas who have been and who shall be,  
 Of these am I, and what they did I do."

His yellow robe and His begging bowl indicated the existence of their marvellous archetypes.

And it is a sign of wisdom always to look for the underlying principles, the archetypes of concrete objects and abstract subjects, for thereby we understand better and consequently act without blundering. [Page 6]

Now, what can be the archetypes, as it were, of *svadesh* and *svarāj*? What can be the Ideas — using that word in the sense in which Plato used it — that have produced, among other things, the embodiments of *svadesh* and *svarāj*? From an archetype issue forth many types, just as from a centre many radii come out; hence triangularity is one, but triangles are many; tabularity is one, but tables are many. What are the heavenly and abstract and metaphysical prototypes of the physical-plane conceptions of the Motherland (or Fatherland, or Native-land) and self-government?

It seems to the writer that the attraction and love for the Motherland lies in the attraction and love of the individual self for the Universal Self; or to particularise, the inherent, albeit often unconscious, tendency and attraction of the Personality towards the Ego, of the Ego towards the Monad, of the Monad towards the Logos, and so on at higher and higher levels. Thus longing for home when travelling in foreign lands, longing for the rest and refreshment of one's own room in crowded reception halls, are instances in other spheres of the manifestations of the same Idea or archetype. The Personality and the Ego, the Ego and the Monad, the Monad and Logos, are ever separate, though they are in close embrace all the time, and the longing of the first for the second throughout the period of ignorance, till Knowledge is gained, and Wisdom acquired and Liberation reached, continues to be present. This longing, this yearning, exists [Page 7] every human heart, though men know it not, and it expresses itself in the search for happiness, in the seeking for bliss by all, even the young, the weak and the ignorant, in body or soul.

Similarly the conception of Self-government seems to have its archetype in the inherent and innate desire or will of the Ego to govern the Personality and manage its affairs, or that of the Monad to look after the Ego, or that of the Logos to attend to the Monad; or, to put it in general abstract terms, in the desire or will, of the Universal Self to protect and help its sparks, the individual selves enmeshed in matter. Even the rash and domineering manner in which ignorant husbands try to rule their wives or *vice versa*, etc., are manifestations of the same archetype.

We must understand the lessons these archetypes have to impart. If we do so, then we are not likely to go astray and commit mistakes. If people understood the workings of these archetypes, from our midst would disappear hatred and abuse of other nations and individuals. Quarrels would cease and evil would die. If we understood that the true *svadesh* was in heaven whence we come as travellers in foreign lands, of India, China, Persia, Europe, America, Africa, travellers to gather knowledge and gain experience and learn wisdom, travellers, who in turn, have to visit various lands and many nations and adapt ourselves to the ways, habits and customs of the people we visit, if we want to profit by our [Page 8] stay amongst them — if we understood that, then we would not hate or speak evil of our brother-travellers in Africa or Europe, if we at the time happen to be travelling in Asia or America. We ourselves have been in those lands, and if we have not been there, we shall have to be there some time. It is folly, therefore, to hate and quarrel, and moreover it is meaningless. Be true *svadeshīs*: love your home which is in heaven, and you will cease, to hate and begin to appreciate your heavenly brethren, now wearing a different dress suitable to the climate of the land in which they are sojourning.

And Self-government — it is governing the lower by the higher; not governing lands and people without, but becoming masters in the vast and rich kingdom that lies within. The higher is pure, good, noble and lofty; and with gentle kindness, with compassionate reasoning, with true sympathy, with wide experience, it rules the lower. Learn that, and you will cease to talk of governing others while you do not possess compassion and experience. He who has conquered himself is master of the worlds.

And when that conquest takes place and the true *svarāj* is enjoyed, then also shall we taste the joys of our true Motherland, the real *svadesh*, that heavenly region which is our true home.