

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY
of
B. R. AMBEDKAR

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D. R. Jotava, M. A., Ph. D.



B. R. Ambedkar

M. A., Ph. D., D. Sc., Bar-at-Law

“The Father of Indian Constitution”

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OF
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By

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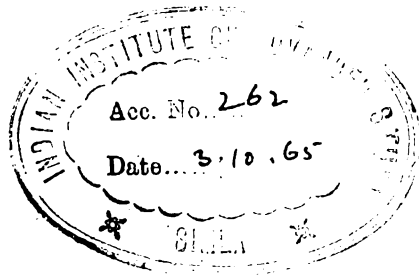
**The Social Philosophy of Ambedkar
Some Varieties of Humanism**

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PREFACE

Political Science is the study of principles which underlie the political institutions. It is not only a normative but also a positive science. It describes the structure and functions of government. On its ethical side, it discovers laws to regulate the conduct of individuals with a view to doing public good. It, being a positive science, embraces all those social facts which are connected with the growth of the State, its organisation and its functions : the State as it has been and the State as it is. Its main concern is with nothing less than "the moral phenomena of human behaviour in society."¹

But political philosophy is the study of human ideals which underlie the political relations and institutions. It gives the political institutions the human base of togetherness for social development. It suggests means to co-ordinate human ends of different social groups within a State. It observes the actual in the context of the ideal, the momentary in the light of the eternal, the particular in the frame-work of the universal. This makes the subject highly speculative, and it lacks the definiteness of meaning which is certainly found in Political Science. Yet political philosophy and political science are closely related to each other, for idealism is as much a part of human life as realism. Today's idealism is tomorrow's realism.

To arouse interest in the political philosophy of a man, it is necessary to reanimate his thought and action, and his fading ideas in such a way as to make them real, vivid and vital to modern minds and to posterity. This method has guided me in accomplishing my dream of arriving at a synthetic interpretation of B. R. Ambedkar's economic, social, moral and religious thoughts in the form of a political philosophy.

Ambedkar hails from a very poor family of an exploited, suppressed and tyrannized Mahar community of Maharashtra. As a student, he won many scholarships and studied Economics, Sociology, History, Political Science, Law, Ethics and Religion,

1. Wayper, C. L. : Political Thought, p. vii.

in Germany, Britain and America. He started his career as a Professor in Political Economy and became the Principal of Law College, Bombay. Then, he changed over to legal practice which brought him in mass contact. He struggled hard for the freedom of India and the people as well. He was not only a champion but also a creator of human rights. He was the first Law Minister and the father of the Indian Constitution. Many books came out of his productive pen. He revitalized people's faith in India's cultural heritage by spreading the Buddha's message of peace and human happiness, love and social brotherhood.

Though not a philosopher in the conventional sense, Dr. Ambedkar nevertheless carved his social and political ideas and ideals out of the clash between idealism and realism, empiricism and rationalism, naturalism and humanism, individualism and socialism, nationalism and internationalism, thinking mostly as a philosopher, and distinguishing himself as a scholar-politician. Political philosophy, to him, cannot be entirely based on the plane of speculative and ethical ideas, but it has to be essentially connected with the real issues of human problems. Social environment and political philosophy supplement each other. In Ambedkar's approach, there is a combination of thought and action, which helped him in formulating his ideas and ideals. His political philosophy, in a sense, is an expression of vital human affairs and is a sincere attempt to bridge the gulf between practice and theory, materialism and spiritualism.

Ambedkar was a man of profuse reading and of wide thinking and broad human outlook. He was a lawyer, a professor, an educationist, a parliamentarian, a social reformer and a leveller. With a sober and scholarly attitude to politics, he formed his intellectual ideas, practical convictions and means for achieving human ends, mostly in an individual way of life. The social environment in which he lived had deeply touched his feelings. It influenced him very much and instilled in him a strong passion for revolt against injustice, inhumanity, exploitation, tyranny and oppression. Gautam Buddha, the Enlightened One, spiritualized him in a broad sense. In fact, the Buddha had a powerful effect on his mind; and Ambedkar, as a true disciple, strove for individuality with a keen sense of

sociability. This has always been the driving force behind his ideas. Individuality is the keynote of his thoughts.

Here the social and political ideas of Ambedkar are primarily gathered from his basic writings. Most of his thoughts and actions, are valid today and so would remain for tomorrow. There was thoughtful revision in his approach from time to time because of changing circumstances, practical considerations and human needs. He disliked inane political ideals and he made corrections in his ideas and ideals pragmatically with a critical mind. He always welcomed criticism, if it was really just and constructive, and moulded himself accordingly. The concepts of democracy, socialism and nationalism, are ever changing. He did not hold himself fast to any meaning in the name of consistency. To him, more important than consistency was responsibility. His main concern in life has been to guide the people in accordance with moral principles as the human needs dictate them.

In this present book, it has been my sincere aim to present the political philosophy of Dr. Ambedkar, as objectively as possible, in his own words, culled from his writings and other material available to me. The readers of this volume would find that the book has been profusely documented. It is because he has covered almost all ideas of political science and philosophy. Many people have forgotten that he was a great humanist whereas his humanist ideas present sincere solutions for human problems, conflicts and controversies. His humanist philosophy can revitalize thoughts and actions of man and society. There is a profound thoughtfulness in his approach and, if deeply pondered over, it may be interpreted as a great philosophy of Humanism of this century. Perhaps mine is the first humble and simple attempt in this direction. I hope people would definitely find an interesting reading in this book and suggest points for further improvement.

I am deeply grateful to my good friends Mr. S.L. Doshi, M.A., Ph. D.; Mr. Y. Sharma, M.A.; Mr. C. L. Gangan, M.A.; Mr. B. S. Bhatnagar, M. A.; Mr. N. K. Mehta, M. A.; Mr. S. Kumar, M.A.; Mr. B. S. Vikal, M.A.; & Mr. Owen M. Lynch (Columbia University), who helped me and gave some valuable suggestions during the preparation of this volume.

I also acknowledge gratefully my debt to all the authors and publishers from whose books and publications, I have drawn thoughts and inspirations. I am particularly very grateful to Mr. Dhananjay Keer, for without his interesting book "Dr. Ambedkar : Life And Mission", I would have not been in position to write the Political Philosophy of Ambedkar. Dr. B. G. Tiwari, M. A., Ph. D.; D. Litt., my revered teacher, has always been a beacon light in my academic life.

I hardly need anything to say that no one but the author is responsible for the views expressed in this work.

Nagla Nai,
Hathras (Aligarh)
U. P., India.
JANUARY, 1965

D. R. Jatava

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ambedkar, B. R.,	Ranade, Gandhi and Jinnah,	RG.
Ambedkar, B. R.,	Pakistan Or	
	The Partition of India,	PP.
Ambedkar, B. R.,	What Congress and Gandhi	
	Have Done to the Untouchables,	WC.
Ambedkar, B. R.,	States and Minorities, What	
	are Their Rights and How	
	to Secure Them in the Free	
	Constitution of India,	SM.
Ambedkar, B. R.,	The Buddha and His Dhamma,	BD.
Ambedkar, B. R.,	Annihilation of Caste,	AC.
Keer, Dhananjay.,	Dr. Ambedkar : Life and	
	Mission,	LM.

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INTRODUCTION

Some may still recall the days, when a section of Indian nationalists dubbed Jinnah and Ambedkar as stooges, whom the British imperialists were exploiting to create dissensions in nationalist ranks in furtherance of their policy of "Divide and Rule". The subsequent creation of Pakistan under the leadership of Mr. Jinnah and the fashioning of the Indian Constitution under the guidance of Dr. Ambedkar exposed the superficiality of this charge. Ambedkar championed the cause of full-blooded nationalism. He fought for human rights of liberty, equality and justice in a serious and moral way. During his life time Ambedkar developed a sort of social and political philosophy on the lines of humanism.

There are, however, many, who still regard Ambedkar mainly as a man of action—say, a man immersed in the practical problems of day-to-day politics and social reform—rather than a man of thought with a philosophy of his own. The present book is designed to dispel this impression. One can trace a number of stages in the development of Ambedkar's thought. It was only towards the end that it began to assume the form of a philosophical system ; yet, even till the end, its evolutionary movement did not stop ; hence, as a system of philosophical thinking, it was not completely consistent, just because it was not rigid, inert or dead. His mode of thinking was dynamic and humanistic, which led him to make changes in his personal and social philosophies. Responsibility rather than consistency is the keynote of Ambedkar's practical wisdom and theoretical attitude. His philosophy of life is nothing but a standard to measure things in their cognitive and evaluative aspects.

Thinking begins with comparison : Ambedkar's thinking, it seems, arose out of his acute dis-satisfaction with the anomalous treatment, meted out to his community, by the Hindus of the so-called higher castes. The service classes—the Sudras and the Untouchables, were denied human treatment and social rights. The doors of education were closed to them. For them, there were poverty and ignorance, hatred and contempt.

These social facts engendered in Ambedkar a burning dissatisfaction against the existing order of things. He stood for their liberty and equality, human rights and privileges, but with patience, peace and persuasion, and not with any violence.

Further and advanced studies in the West imparted a liberal, democratic and humanist and, later on, a radical bias to his outlook on the problems of the day, as they affected the servile classes. He felt that in matters of educational, social and economic reform, no less than in those, connected with the political struggle against the British rulers, the leaders of the land, particularly in the pre-Gandhian era, were concerned more with the aristocratic upper classes, later on, with those of the middle class than with those of the downtrodden sections of Indian Society. It was, to Ambedkar, disappointing and incapable of bringing any radical and rational change in human relations.

Gandhiji professed to have brought about a change in outlook and social behaviour patterns ; but, in Ambedkar's view, even that change did not go far enough, while, in some aspects, it even fostered revivalist and reactionary tendencies. Gandhian leadership was incapable of bringing about radical changes in the existing order of things—particularly, in the social structure of the Caste Hindus. Consequently, Ambedkar began to consider all the problems, which were then agitating the minds of Indian leaders and publicists, from the special point of view of their implications to the well-being of the servile classes. This noble point of view cast a new light on those problems ; and the ideal principles, which cast this beacon light were those of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Ambedkar, as he said, derived these ringing and immortal words from the teachings of Gautam, the Enlightened One, and not from the French Revolution.

History, it has been observe, is the training school for statesmanship. A deep and careful study of history had convinced Dr. Ambedkar that change—rapid and thorough—in every sphere of life and thought, was imperatively needed in his motherland. But concerning the method of bringing this change, he had his own ideas. As a radical, he had no faith

in the panacea of "Petitions and Protests", prescribed by the Indian Moderates ; yet as a constitutionalist, he was against law-breaking even if it professed to be peaceful ; much more vigorous was his opposition to the violent violation of legal and constitutional processes, advocated by some revolutionary schools. He was, therefore, a champion of a revolution to be brought about, by the dynamics of public opinion, through a change in the laws of the land.

At the bottom of Ambedkar's policies and programmes, in various spheres, were, it seems, the fundamental thoughts of Locke, Jefferson, Dewey and the Western Liberal thinkers,— empiricism in epistemology, realism in ontology and humanism in ethics ; added to these was a warm-hearted allegiance to modern science. It was through the windows of a scientific and secularistic ethics that Dr. Ambedkar looked at the teachings of the Buddha. For him, Buddhism became another name for a scientific and ethical humanism. Religion, in his interpretation of Buddhism, essentially became a social ethics for establishing right relations between man and man : he made it shed its other-worldliness and intuitionism and caused it to embrace secularism and empiricism, naturalism and humanism. How far the religion of the "Tathagat" was capable of this metamorphosis is another question.

Ambedkar would like to see the establishment of the Religion of Humanity in the human society. That religion made the centre of worship and devotion not God (or anything Supernatural) but the achievements of Humanism by man's righteous conduct. The priests, for such a noble religion, should be honest social reformers, who know the laws of society. Ambedkar believed that he had discovered the laws of a just social order and he would like those laws to be made the articles of new faith. His new social concept inspired the people to check the vested interests of individuals. The object of worship was neither God nor Buddha but man himself. Man without society cannot be conceived. Such was the development of humanistic philosophy in Ambedkar's thought and action.

Dr. Ambedkar did not consider himself to be a philosopher in the accepted sense of the term. He was above all a true social reformer. He had no sympathy with a philosophy,

which did not study the actual human problems. To him, only that knowledge was good which had a practical utility. In his view, most of the social reform that was being done in Indian Society was useless, if not harmful. His claim was that he had found the laws and principles of human relationship and by following them social behaviour patterns could be managed, honestly and scientifically.

To propagate his own point of view vis-a-vis the burning problems of his times, Ambedkar, from time to time, issued statements of varying lengths—from small leaflets and tracts to heavy tomes. These statements may be regarded as his critiques on the ideologies of his day, which are interesting, intellectual and instructive, to all those who yearn for self-respect and human dignity.

There may be two ways of handling the above critiques : (i) with the help of a prefatory note, prefixed to every text, the editor may introduce the reader to the original author's own thought (on various matters) ; and, if necessary, to the extract from the text he may suffix some further explanatory notes ; or (ii) the editor may himself analyse the critiques and then synthesize (and systematize) his conclusions in his own words. The first of the above methods may appeal to the scholarly mind, while the second one may help the general reader.

We have steered clear of the above extremes and followed the golden mean. We have laid most of Dr. Ambedkar's numerous writings under contribution to make this treatise a well-documented one. Yet we have interpreted that remarkable leader's thought in our own philosophical way.

One may or may not agree with our conclusions. But a careful perusal of this interpretative book will probably convince the dispassionate reader that we have a substantial contribution to political thought, incorporating, as it does, fresh material on the political and social philosophy of Ambedkar. Some have forgotten it and some have ignored, but we have explored thoroughly what was in Ambedkar's sweet heart and brilliant mind.

Let us now proceed to analyse it systematically under a variety of topics in the following Chapters.



CHAPTER 1

Man and Philosophy

MAN AND PHILOSOPHY

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Influence of Philosophy.

The mind of Ambedkar is more practical than theoretical. He does not live merely in the world of ideas, but lives, too, perpetually in the world of actions. He always tries to be a link between these two worlds—a world of thought and a world of action. His philosophical thought grows and develops through intellectual craving and an eternal search for knowledge, while, action follows his incredible industry and unflinching aim for individual development and social emancipation. Ambedkar, by his precept and practice, strives for a balance between thought and action and he endeavoured to maintain it earnestly. His life has been a life of purpose and principle. "Thought-provoking and provocative, this life is highly instructive to everyone who yearns for human dignity and equality in human relations in society."¹ The human life, to Ambedkar, is full of meaning. In his own actions, the realities of life and the ideals of thought, the exigencies of practical living and the thirst of spiritual aspirations are harmoniously fused.

A life of stiff struggle which aims at raising the standard of humanity is after the heart of Dr. Ambedkar. His life, with all his sense of sacrifice, learning and scholarship is sincerely devoted to liberating the suppressed people, which is 'A glorious fight for ushering in India a social and economic democracy.' His political philosophy grows out of his unbending struggle for the freedom of the servile humanity. His moral stamina cannot tolerate the unjust environment—social, economic, political and religious—which has been arresting the movement of social progress and holding humanity in fetters, for centuries past. Ambedkar, during his lifetime, with a strong faith in revolt against orthodoxy and traditionalism, developed a sort of political philosophy, which gives us some definite trend of thought and action in the political history of our nation. To welcome all noble thoughts from all directions has been a tradition in the philosophy of this great land.

Ambedkar studied Moral Philosophy at Columbia University under the able and inspiring guidance of Prof. John Dewey,

1. LM., p. ix.

the pragmatic humanist. He was highly impressed by the humanistic outlook and liberal attitude of his teacher. Ambedkar holds that man should not conserve the whole of his social heritage, but select what is helpful and transmit to future generations only that much and no more. He says : "Prof. John Dewey, who was my teacher and to whom I owe so much, has said : 'Every society gets encumbered with what is trivial, with dead wood from the past, and with what is positively perverse... As a society becomes more enlightened, it realizes that it is responsible not to conserve and transmit the whole of its existing achievements, but only such as make for a better future society.'¹

Ambedkar's thought is influenced by the pragmatic philosophy of his teacher. With a deep sense of love and reverence towards him, he learnt much and, thus, cultivated an attitude of pragmatic practicability and dynamic approach. He ridicules the idea of worshipping the past as the only source of supplying ideals to the present. He accepts Prof. Dewey's words : "A knowledge of the past and its heritage is of great significance when it enters into the present, but not otherwise. And the mistake of making the records and remains of the past the main material of education is that it tends to make the past a rival of the present and the present a more or less futile imitation of the past."² To Ambedkar, the principle, which makes little of the present act of living and growing, naturally looks upon the present as empty and the future as remote. It is, therefore, inimical to progress and a hindrance to a strong and a steady current of life.

Prof. Dewey's philosophical influence leads Ambedkar to a kind of dynamism and humanism. Ambedkar's principle of dynamism recognizes that "there is nothing fixed, nothing eternal, nothing Sanatan ; that everything is changing, that change is the law of life for individuals as well as for society."³ So in a changing society, to him, there must be a constant revolution of old values and the people must realize that "If there must be standards to measure the acts of men there must

1. AC., p. 78.

2. Quoted by Ambedkar-AC., p. 79.

3. AC., p. 79.

also be a readiness to revise those standards.”¹ This dynamism is closely related with his humanistic spirit, which he imbibed from his revered teacher Prof. Dewey. Ambedkar’s humanism, too, stands for radical change for the material and spiritual good of man and society. For, without finely changes, human values like liberty and equality cannot be entertained by all men and women. It was this which was largely responsible for shaping and determining his entire thought into a dynamic and humanistic philosophy of life.

Philosophical Approach.

Ambedkar’s philosophical approach is a kind of indifference to epistemology, however, with serious consideration for metaphysical problems. He is as positivistic as Spencer and Comte and his main concern is always for morals: man, society and State. Definitely, he would not agree with the “moderns” who have become so accustomed to windy verbiage in philosophy that when philosophy is presented without the verbiage, they can with difficulty recognize it. “One must pay a penalty for having a prejudice against obscurity.”² Ambedkar is not, even the least, an obscurant and, thus, avoids obscurantism in his thought and action.

He does not take any interest in the affairs of other-worldliness. But he attaches great importance to the illumination of human purposes and the co-ordination and elevation of human life. Though circumstances were unfavourable and adverse, nevertheless his confidence and firm determination left nothing undone to prepare himself to answer this deep-seated human need. This dynamic attitude stands for a change in the fundamental notions of life right from the flag pole to the foundation. He says : “It means a complete change in the values of life. It means a complete change in outlook and in attitude towards men and things. It means...new life. But a new life cannot enter a body that is dead. New life can enter only in a new body. The old must die before a new body can come into existence and a new life can enter into it. To put it simply, the

1. AC., pp. 79-80.

2. Durant, Will., *The Story of Philosophy*, p. xiii.

old must cease to be operative before the new can begin to enliven and to pulsate.”¹

Things, including even morality and religion, according to Ambedkar, must be measured by their standards of survival value. There are many ways, many ideas, in the world. He does not attach more importance to differences, natural and necessary, but to the best elements in human life, which have survived for the betterment of human society. He argues : “..... whether it is sufficient to take the placed view of the anthropologist that there is nothing to be said about the beliefs, habits, morals and outlooks on life, which obtain among the different peoples of the world except that they often differ ; or whether it is not necessary to make an attempt to find out what kind of morality, beliefs, habits and outlook have worked best and have enabled those who possessed them to flourish, to go strong, to people the earth and to have dominion over it.”²

Naturally and inevitable enough, Ambedkar’s philosophical approach becomes critical and evaluative and not dogmatic. He does not like, even the least, to be untroubled with doubts and stands for clear understanding, practical vision and wisdom. He wants every society to have a workable scheme of human life. A society should have practical morality and social religion. The main task before him comes to determine the real position of men into society or societies and to clarify their ideas and measure their conduct in relation to the social and political strifes of the day. “Every man”, he holds, “should have a philosophy of life, for everyone must have a standard by which to measure his conduct. And philosophy is nothing but a standard by which to measure.”³ A philosophical attitude, so developed and practised, may at last lead him to the solution of human misery. Only when people have faith and follow some system, consciously or unconsciously, that they can develop their conduct for the happiness of others. Men, to Ambedkar, should have certain principles of human living according to which they should channelise their thoughts and actions in such a way that all may feel real happiness. Unprincipled life is

1. AC., p. 76.

2. AC., p. 77.

3. LM., p. 455.

indisciplined—a life without purpose and profit to human society.

Attitude Towards God.

Since Ambedkar treats human society as the brotherhood of man, he has a deep faith in man and his powers. Man, to him, is something more than God, though frankly speaking, he does not believe in God, in any supernatural being who can help man and remove his miseries. Man himself is a responsible being. Upon him, there lies a great responsibility to mitigate his own woes, slavery and poverty. He says: "You must abolish your slavery yourself. Do not depend for its abolition upon God or Superman. Your salvation lies in political powers and not in making pilgrimages and observance of fasts. Devotion to scriptures would not free you from your bondage, want and poverty. Your forefathers have been doing it for generations, but there has been no respite nor even a slight difference in your miserable life in any way. Like your forefathers, you wear rags. Like them, you subsist on thrown-out crumbs; like them, you perish in utter slums and hovels; and like them, you fall easy victims to diseases with a death-rate that rages among poultry. Your religious fasts, austerities and penances have not saved you from starvation."¹

This strong faith in human dignity, prestige and power leads Ambedkar to discard the belief in fatalism or pre-determinism, held by the people, because it is responsible for social stagnation. He asks the poor and downtrodden masses: "The sooner you remove the foolish belief that your miseries were pre-ordained, the better. The thought that your poverty is an inevitability and is inborn and inseparable is entirely erroneous."² "What you have lost", he goes on to say, "Others have gained. Your humiliations are a matter of pride with others. You are made to suffer wants, privations and humiliations not because it was pre-ordained by the sins committed in your previous birth, but because of the overpowering tyranny and treachery of those who are above you. You have no lands because others have usurped

1. LM., p. 234. [This is an earlier trend of the development of his thought. His later thought was dominated by religious reform.]

2. LM., p. 219.

them ; you have no posts because others have monopolised them. Do not believe in fate. Believe in your strength.”¹ He opposes the spiritualistic fads and superstitions of the people, which have emasculated and devitalised them for many years past. It is for the good of man himself that Ambedkar wishes him to be courageous to reject irrational beliefs in fatalism and pre-determinism.

Ambedkar, being a great jurist, rejects belief in the existence of God on rational and empirical grounds. “Nobody has seen God. People only speak of God. God is unknown and unseen. Nobody can prove that God has created the world. The world has evolved and is not created. What advantage can there be in believing in God? It is unprofitable...It only ends in creating superstition.”² According to him, the belief in God gives rise to belief in the efficacy of worship and prayer and the efficacy of worship and prayer gives rise to the office of the priest and the priest is the evil genius who creates all superstitions and thereby destroys the growth of right view.”³

The belief in God, to Ambedkar, is unprofitable both from individual and social point of view, for such a belief makes man inactive, dormant, fatalist, and indifferent to the woes of mankind. He remarks : “The appearance of Tulsi (a Hindu family plant) leaves around your neck will not relieve you from the clutches of the money-lenders. Because you sing songs of Rama, you will not get a concession in rent from the landlords. You will not get salaries at the end of the month because you make pilgrimages every year to Pandharpur. Because the major part of the society is absorbed in these worthless mysteries of life, superstitions and mysticism, the intelligent and self-centred people get ample scope and opportunities to carry out their anti-social designs.”⁴ In this way, Ambedkar enlightens the people to understand their own affairs themselves. Only self-awakening can give them strength enough to fight against evils in society.

Though Ambedkar asks the people not to depend upon God and His mercy, yet he does not teach them to adopt wrong

1. LM., p. 233.

2. BD., p. 251.

3. BD., pp., 254-255.

4. LM., p. 218.

means to end their miseries of life. "Give up eating carrion. People ask me then what they should eat. In reply, I ask you to remember the example of a virtuous woman. She will never accept the life of a prostitute for betterment though she falls on evil days. She suffers for self-respect. Learn to live in this world with respect. You should always cherish some ambition to do some thing in this world. They alone rise who strive. Some of you nurse the wrong notion that you will not rise in this world. But remember that the age of helplessness is ended. A new epoch has set in."¹ He instils strong optimistic values in the minds of people and discards the orthodox religious attitude which regards man as a helpless log.

Ambedkar also discards the false belief that at the appearance of a national calamity, God is supposed to come down in human form and save man from ruins and perils. He says : "In other countries, during a national calamity and crisis, people take united action against the national calamity, ward off the danger, and attain peace and prosperity. But our religion has drummed into our ears that a man does nothing....The result is that instead of taking a united action against their enemies, they await the arrival of an incarnation to do this job for them."² This traditional belief in incarnation exonerates man out and out from social responsibility which is the seat anchor in Ambedkar's philosophy of life. Evidently, he does not believe in Avatarvada (the theory of incarnation) that whenever there is trouble, God comes and removes it. Moreover, to him, "The Avatar theory does not require that God should be pure in his making. All that the Brahmanic theory of Avatar says is that God saves his followers by taking different forms although God may be very impure and immoral in his conduct."³ How such a God who himself is irresponsible, impure and immoral, can be helpful to human society in removing national calamity ?

Following the teachings of Gautam, the Enlightened One, Ambedkar accepts that the centre of religion should not be between "man and God", but between "man and man". The purpose of religion, therefore, to him, should be to teach man

1. LM., p. 233.

2. LM., p. 234.

3. BD., p. 78.

how he should be have towards other men so that all may be happy. Even the discussion about the existence of God leads men to social conflicts. It also creates individual passivity in man. Though God is said to be merciful, just and good, yet He is a helpless Being who fails to do justice to the poor masses. So the entire question of God, to Ambedkar, is unprofitable for man and society.

Did God create something out of nothing or did he create something out of something? Ambedkar does not find any satisfactory answer to this question. He argues : It is impossible to believe that something could have been created out of nothing. "If the so-called God has created something out of something, then that something out of which something new was created has been in existence before he created anything. God cannot, therefore, be called the Creator of that something which has existed before him. If something has been created by somebody out of something before God created anything, then God cannot be said to be the Creator or the first Cause."¹ Such is his attitude towards God. To Ambedkar, the belief in God or Supernatural Being is a belief in falsehood. The only concern of his philosophy of life then remains man : his status and well-being. With an unbounded sympathy for man, he looks upon him as the centre of his thought and action. He does all that is fruitful to human being in order to make this world—a world of happiness, and not of tears and troubles.

Opposition to Supernaturalism.

Ambedkar does not seek any supernatural help for the well-being of the people. He is quite aware that people are indulged in worthless mysteries and superstitions of no value. He asks them not to waste their time and human energy in such fruitless actions, for they contaminate human purity and restrict its freedom. On the one hand, Ambedkar opposes supernaturalism, and on the other, he believes in natural laws and, thus, comes very near to the naturalistic view of life. To him, human life is closely related with nature.

The Doctor knows that whenever any phenomenon occurs, it has a sufficient cause. "Sometimes cause and the effect are so proximate and so close that it is not difficult to account for

1. BD., p. 255.

the occurrence of the event. But often-times the effect is so far away from the cause for the effect is not accountable. Apparently, there appears to be no cause for it.”¹ Here some people may ask: “How has this event occurred ?” Those who believe in some supernatural being say : “It has occurred because of God or some other Supernatural Power.” But to Ambedkar, it is unbelievable. He holds that every event has a cause, though “The cause is the result of some human action or natural law”. “If Time, Nature, Necessity, etc., be the sole cause of the occurrence of an event, then who are we ? Is man merely a puppet in the hands of Time, Nature, Chance, Gods, Fate, Necessity ? What is the use of man’s existence if he is not free ? What is the use of man’s intelligence if he continues to believe in supernatural causes ?”²

Ambedkar believes in the free nature of man, though not unrelated to natural laws. He holds that “Every event must be the result of man’s action or of an act of Nature. There cannot be any event which is supernatural in its origin. It may be that man is not able to discover the real cause of the occurrence of an event. But if he has intelligence, he is bound one day to discover it.”³ Here Ambedkar turns to natural science and is surely as objective as a scientist. This objectivity of his method and attitude essentially leads him to the path of truth as he sees it.

Agreeing with Buddha’s repudiation of supernaturalism, Ambedkar has three objects in his mind, *i. e.*, (i) to lead man to the path of rationalism ; (ii) to free man to go in search of truth ; and (iii) to remove the most potent source of superstition, the result of which is to kill the spirit of inquiry. Ambedkar, by following the path of rationalism, escapes from supernaturalism and its defects and comes to naturalism. His naturalistic attitude regards man as a part of Nature, though to him, man has a free nature and a free will to act. He does not want man to depend upon any supernatural factor, because it leads man to a loss of self-reliance, courage and confidence. Man forgets his creative ability and also the social responsibility that he is expected to exhibit with the help of his own intelligence and power. Widely, variously and astonishingly read as he is, his opposition to

1. BD., p. 249.

2. BD., p. 249.

3. BD., p. 250.

supernaturalism is born out of a rational approach towards life. Anything that has not been proved on the anvil of science and reason, is what he will not touch even with a pair of tongs.

Faith in Human Action.

Well-versed in the lore of both of the East and West, Ambedkar has inherited the millennial profundity of the former but has readily taken to the speed, strength and change of the latter as well. Men are the masters of their fate and they are also the captains of their souls. Dr. Ambedkar has undying faith in the essential goodness of man and the vast potentiality that is in him. He knows from history that injustice is not removed till the sufferer himself does away with it by his own exertions and exhibitions. As long as the conscience of a slave does not burn with hatred for his slavery, there is no hope for salvation. "Tell the slave he is a slave and he will revolt." Ambedkar echoed this powerful slogan in the social and political life of Indian Nation.¹

Ambedkar is a man of action as well as of thought. He always believes in self-help. He does not aspire for any extramundane help for the mitigation of human suffering. "We will attain self-elevation only if we learn self-help, regain our self-respect, and gain self-knowledge."² This he tells to the mighty millions of India, who deem themselves as helpless and hopeless. "You had better die and relieve this world if you cannot rise to a new life and if you cannot rejuvenate yourselves. As a matter of fact it is your birthright to get food, shelter and clothing in this land in equal proportion with every individual high or low. If you believe in living a respectable life, you believe in self-help which is the best help."³

Coming to the metaphysical aspect of man, Ambedkar does not believe in the permanent soul residing inside human body. To him, the soul is merely an speculation. "Nobody has seen the soul or conversed with the soul. The soul is unknown and unseen. The thing that exists is not the soul but the mind. Mind is different from the soul."⁴ The belief in soul is unprofitable,

1. LM., p. 60.

2. LM., p. 70.

3. LM., pp. 60-61.

4. BD. p. 259.

because it ends in creating superstition. To him, the discussion of the existence of the soul is as unfruitful as the discussion of the existence of God.

In Ambedkar's view, the belief in soul is far more dangerous than the belief in God. "For not only does it create a priesthood but it gives the priesthood complete control over man from birth to death." The art of priesthood beguiles the man. It leads man to perilous social consequences and makes him a victim of false superstitions in life. Trailing in the footsteps of the Buddha, Ambedkar condemns the practice of priesthood. This priesthood is said to be for the salvation of the soul, whereas, to Ambedkar, there is no soul. He believes only in human consciousness. The chief thing in man's life is consciousness and all the functions of a sentient being are performed by the sentient being through and as a result of consciousness.¹ In his scheme of life, thus, there is no soul, no God, to govern the life of man.

Ambedkar, by denying the existence of the soul and God, rules out the possibility of the past Karmas done in previous lives as the regulator of human existence. There is an extended doctrine of past Karmas, which he opposes root and branch. This doctrine holds that if a man is born in a poor family, it is because of his past bad Karma. If a man is born in a rich family it is because of his past good Karma. If a man is born with a congenital defect it is because of his past bad Karma. But Ambedkar says : "This is a very pernicious doctrine. For in this interpretation of Karma there is no room left for human effort. Everything is determined for him by his past Karma."² If men are to be shaped and determined by the dark forces of their previous lives, they are no better than clever mechanical puppets in the hands of a black power that engenders a crepuscular state of mind, which induces them to sit down satisfied and take things as they are.

In a society where such mentality exists, man becomes helpless and hopeless. He becomes a pawn on the chess-board of certain inexorable powers. Most of the people easily escape social responsibility which they ought to undertake for the removal of

1. BD., pp. 261-264.

2. BD., p. 339.

human hardship. This theory Ambedkar attributes to Hinduism. "The basis of the Hindu doctrine of past Karma as the regulator of future life is an iniquitous doctrine. What could have been the purpose of inventing such a doctrine ? The only purpose one can think of is to enable the state or the society to escape responsibility for the conditions of the poor and the lowly."¹

To Ambedkar, there is nothing which can be attributed to the past actions of human life. He is not, even in the least, interested in enjoying the life of heaven for the present suffering. He believes in the present life and cares little for what happens after death. However, it does not mean that Ambedkar rejects the charm and beauty of life. He adheres to the principle of understanding rather than the rejection of life. "The lack of understanding", he says, "Is the root of all evil."² He stands for the improvement of life and not for the destruction of it. The present injustice and unhappiness, misery and brutality of man to man, are the results of man's actions towards man. To him, the law of past actions as formulated in the Hindu way of life, saps completely the spirit of revolt.

The very basis of this doctrine of past actions is the belief in transmigration. In transmigration, the soul goes on from life to life. This soul is said to be distinct from the body. Each act which man does, produces an impress upon his soul. When a man dies and when his soul escapes, the soul is full of such impressions. It is these impressions which determine his birth and status in his future life. The belief in such a theory makes an individual shirker as he is helpless to undo the cause (i. e., past impressions) of his present suffering. Society, too, seeks an escape by shifting responsibility to different individuals. In this sense, Ambedkar holds that this theory is responsible for social misery. This notion of past action helps the intelligent but cruel people to escape their duty in social relations.³

These displeasing thoughts in human society lead Ambedkar to positivism and to humanism. He seeks, like Comte,⁴ to find in positivism "a basis for a social reconstruction", which

1. BD., p. 344.

2. BD., p. 398.

3. BD., pp. 337-338.

4. Bahm, A. J. : *Philosophy—An Introduction*, p. 104.

can elevate human life to a better standard and establish a religion of humanity. And certainly, he would agree with Comte when the latter's positivism rejects "as metaphysical that knowledge of things outside experience of which we are unsure, uncertain, and not positive."¹ In fact, positivism, by recognizing the success of science, has a deep faith that it can bring good rather than bad results to human society.

Man And Mission.

In the scheme of things of Dr. Ambedkar, man is a little higher than the angels in Hinduism, Islam and Christianity and consequently is the chief subjects of his study. All his thoughts and actions are guided by man's spirit—good and strong. He has a strong faith in his mission. He says : "Man is mortal. Everyone is to die some day or other. But one must resolve to lay down one's life in enriching the noble ideals of self-respect and in bettering human life."² To him, it may be easier to lose faith in Super-Human Being, but very difficult and more dangerous to lose faith in man and his mission. By denying the status of man—his honour and self-respect, there would remain nothing and everything would be reduced to a futility and nullity. So to him, the proper study of mankind is man, and man alone is the measure of all things.

With an unfailing sympathy for man, Dr. Ambedkar looks towards him with great regard and respect. He wants every man to live a dignified life. To him, "It is disgraceful to live at the cost of one's self-respect. Self-respect is a most vital factor in life. Without it, man is a mere cipher. To live worthily with self-respect one has to overcome difficulties. It is out of hard and ceaseless struggle alone that one derives strength, confidence and recognition."³ Without a hard struggle in life, no man can rise, nor can he be of any use to the building of a new society and nation.

To Ambedkar, an honourable life is always a dignified life. He does not see any novelty in mere survivalness, if devoid of a high standard of culture. "There is no honour in mere survival. What matters is the plane of survival. One can

1. Ibid., pp. 105-106.

2. LM., p. 127.

3. LM., p. 127.

survive by unconditional surrender. One can survive by beating a cowardly retreat and one can survive by fighting"¹ According to him, "There are different modes of survival. But all are not equally honourable. For an individual as well as for a society, there is a gulf between merely living and living worthily. To fight in a battle and to live in glory is one mode. To beat a retreat, to surrender and to live the life of a captive is also a mode of survival."² It is useless for a man to take comfort in the fact that he and his society have survived. "What he must consider", Ambedkar emphasizes, "Is what is the quality of his survival. If he does that, I am sure he will cease to take pride in the mere fact of survival."³ What Ambedkar wants is not the mere survival but a life of respect, of justice and equality.

Human life, to Ambedkar, is not static and dogmatic. It is, always, self-renewing—growing and developing. He says : ".....a human being is always changing, always growing. He is not the same at two different moments of life."⁴ Even more, "Man is what his mind makes him".⁵ He agrees with Modern Science which has shown—in his own words—"that lumping together of individuals into a few sharply marked-off classes is a superficial view of man noteworthy of serious consideration. Consequently, the utilization of the qualities of individuals is incompatible with their stratification by classes, since the qualities of individuals are so variable."⁶

Ambedkar does not accept Plato's concept of man. He says that Plato's "idea of lumping of individuals into few sharply marked-off classes is a very superficial view of man and his powers. Plato had no perception of the uniqueness of every individual, of his incommensurability with other, of each individual forming a class of his own. He had no recognition of the infinite diversity of active tendencies and combination of tendencies of which an individual is capable. To him, there were types of faculties or powers (i. e., the appetitive, the passionate, and the rational, and three corresponding classes are the industrial, the military and the governing) in the individual constitution. All this is demonstrably wrong."⁷ To Ambedkar,

1. WC., p. 297.

3. AC., p. 55.

5. BD., p. 359.

7. AC., pp. 43-44.

2. AC. p. 55.

4. BD., p. 240.

6. AC., p. 44.

it is not possible to pigeon men into holes, according as they belong to one or the other ; because man is unique and his uniqueness cannot be measured by artificial assortment. The classification of men into different classes has not been proved profitable to human society.

What attracts Ambedkar most in man is his uniqueness, his ability, courage and reflective thought in the times of calamity and crisis, though man's life is not generally so. "Man's life", he observes, "is generally habitual and unreflective. Reflective thought, in the sense of active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form or knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it tends, is quite rare and arises only in a situation which presents a dilemma—a crisis."¹ Obviously, Ambedkar holds that man's life is a continual change, an interesting adventure, a mission of tide and fortune. Once when he was in London, wrote to one of his well-wishers that man should wait for things quoting Shakespeare thus :

"There is a tide in the affairs of man,

Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."²

To Ambedkar, nothing is more disgraceful for a full man to live a life devoid of honour, self-respect, great cause and love for man, society and his country. Ambedkar has an immense faith in man and with such a faith in the strength of man, he wants man to be devoted to the service of humanity. He says: "Life can be ennobled and immortalised by sacrificing it for lasting good such as the cause of truth, a vow, honour or country. For the protection of human rights several great men have immolated themselves at the altar of duty. Better to die in the prime of youth for a great cause than to live like an oak and do nothing."³ He disregards dragging on life somehow or to live like a crow for thousand years. It is not a worthy way to live in this world.

Ambedkar finds in man something that offers society prosperity or elevation in this world. Man should treat society as a human family and human beings as an end. An individual is a

1. AC., p. 68.

2. LM., p. 27.

3. LM., pp. 91-92.

free citizen of any social order and should be left free to carve out his own future destiny. Ambedkar regards and attaches more importance to a life of devotion. It is the only life worth living. Man, to him, should not be without a mission. Man, without a mission is like a rudderless boat and if he has a mission, he must follow it with unswerving singleness of purpose and unflagging sincerity. The mission of man's life is to fight tyranny, injustice and false traditions, and to undo all privileges and release the harassed people from bondage. His cause gained more recognition than he wished because of his ceaseless struggle for a just cause.

The Concept of Great Man.

Who is a Great Man ? Military Heroes—Alexander, Attila, Caesar, Tamberlane, etc., are great men. They are not merely men but miracles who make epochs and vast transitions, appal and dazzle their contemporary fellows by their victories. But to Ambedkar, "their permanent effect on the history of mankind is very small." Such great men do not leave a "permanent mark on the character of the society in which they live." He says : "The details of their career and their moral may be interesting, but they do not affect society and form no leaven to transform or temper the whole."¹ To him, military heroes are great no doubt, but of no permanent character in the history of human beings. Some people regard the great man as a Divine Being. To them, 'a Great Man is launched into the world, as a great natural or supernatural force, as a scourge and scavenger born to cleanse society and lead it on to the right path who is engaged in a vast operation, partly positive, mainly negative, but all relating to social regeneration.'² As regards the purpose of such a great man, Ambedkar has no dispute, but he does not agree with that a great man is divinely sent to set things aright in society, because this again would make man wholly dependent on supernatural being. Ambedkar does not believe in any Divine Dispensation for the emancipation of mankind and the welfare of society.

To some thinkers "sincerity" is the sign of greatness ; and to others, only "intellect" is enough to make a man great. But to Ambedkar, this is not true. Only a combination of both

1. R.G., p. 9.

2. R.G., p. 12;

sincerity and intellect, can help man in becoming great. He says : "A man is Great because he finds a way to save society in its hour of crisis. But what can help him to find the way ? He can do so only with the help of intellect. Intellect is the light. Nothing else can be of any avail.....that without the combination of sincerity and intellect no man can be great."¹ This, too, is not enough to constitute the personality of Great Man. Ambedkar wants something more to be done by a Great Man to the society in which he has to live.

According to Ambedkar, sincerity and intellect are enough to mark out an individual as being eminent as compared to his fellows. But these are not only the marks to raise man to the dignity of a Great Man. To Ambedkar, "eminence" and "greatness" are two different things and, therefore, a great man must have something more than what merely an eminent individual has. "A Great Man", he emphasizes, "must be motivated by the dynamics of a social purpose and must act as the scourge and the scavenger of society. These are the elements which distinguish an eminent individual from a Great Man and constitute his title-deeds to respect and reverence."²

It is evident that to Ambedkar, no claim for being a Great Man can rest on the foundation of sincerity and intellect either singly or in combination. A man cannot be called a Great Man if he has these two qualities and no more. A man's title to being a Great Man must rest upon the "social purposes" he ought to serve. A truly great man is a servant of great norms and ideals which he yearns to realise for the good of human society. A great man should be a great social reformer and his whole life should be nothing but a relentless campaign for social reform. It is, to Ambedkar, on man's role as a social reformer that his title to being a Great Man rests and such a man is sure to have immense courage, vision and virtue. It is through this uncanny sense of unfailing vision and transparent sincerity that he seeks to enthuse the faltering feeble footsteps of a blundering humanity and put it on the right path.

What Ambedkar likes in great man is his courage and confidence. A great man faces a challenge from traditional

1. RG., p. 13.

2. RG., p. 14.

societies, though he himself is a challenge to them. He says : "Most people do not realize that society can practise tyranny and oppression against an individual in a far greater degree than a Government can. The means and scope that are open to society for oppression are more extensive than those that are open to Government, also they are far more effective."¹ If a man rebels against a Government, he may incur sentence of a few months or a few years imprisonment. But if a man challenges society, he may be excommunicated. And the magnanimity and severity of excommunication is far greater than to pass days in Government goal. So to Ambedkar, a Social Reformer is more courageous than a Political Patriot.

According to him, "when the Social Reformer challenges society there is nobody to hail him a martyr. There is nobody even to befriend him. He is loathed and shunned. But when the political patriot challenges Government he has whole society to support him. He is praised, admired and elevated as the saviour. Who shows more courage—The Social Reformer who fights alone or the Political Patriot who fights under the cover of vast mass of supporters?"² To Ambedkar, a Great Man as a Social Reformer shows "a high degree of courage". Great man lives in times when there is need of a great challenge to the social and religious customs, which have become gross and immoral. The Great Man questions their divinity and declares them to be an "intolerable blasphemy". In fact, man's courage and his challenge to die-hards, creates in him the germs of greatness. Man becomes great by his own deeds. Man, in this sense, is not born great. Greatness is just and respectable, only when it is achieved by hard labour and doing good to other human beings in a society.

A View of Society.

To Ambedkar, society is not an organism as some people hold. It is an organisation based on some human attitudes. This organisation has certain essentials which go to make up a real view of society. He says : "Men do not become a society by living in physical proximity anymore than a man ceases to be a member of his society by living so many miles away

1. RG., p. 21.

2. RG., p. 22.

from other men.”¹ Again to him, “.....similarity in habits and customs, beliefs and thoughts, is not enough to constitute men into society. Things may be passed physically from one to another like bricks. In the same way, habits and customs, beliefs and thoughts of one group may be taken over by another group and there may thus appear a similarity between the two.”²

According to Ambedkar, culture spreads by diffusion and that is why one finds similarity between various tribes in the matter of their habits and customs, beliefs and thoughts, although they do not live in “proximity”. Similarity in certain things, ideas and thoughts, therefore, is not enough to constitute a society. What Ambedkar wants is not merely a sense of similarity but also an ardent faith in the common unity of purpose among the different members of a society. Without such a purposive living, men may not be forming a society based on unity. “Society is the process of associating in such ways that experiences, ideas, emotions, values are transmitted and made common.”³

Again, according to Ambedkar, “Men constitute a society because they have things which they possess in common. To have similar things is totally different from possessing things in common. And the only way by which men can come to possess things in common with one another is by being in communication with one another. This is merely another way of saying that Society continues to exist by communication, indeed in communication.”⁴ In fact, communication brings “a certain likemindedness in the people and a certain recognition that their good is a common one.” It helps man in possessing and preserving the values of democracy and humanity. “Communication, sharing, joint participation are the only actual ways of universalizing the moral law and end.....The increasing acknowledgment that goods exist and endure only through being communicated.”⁵

But to make it concrete, it is not enough, if some men act in a way which agrees with the acts of others. To Ambedkar,

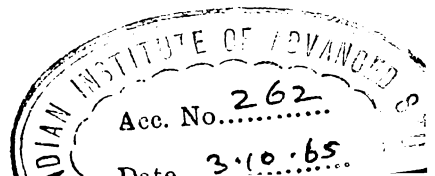
1. AC., p. 26.

2. AC., pp 26-27.

3. Dewey, John : *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, p. 161.

4. AC., p. 27.

5. *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, p. 160.



“Parallel activity, even if similar, is not sufficient to bind men into a society.”¹ He cites the living example of Hindu festivals. The different castes observe the similar festivals, yet these parallel performances of similar festivals among the different castes and groups, have not been able to bind them into one “integral whole”. The different castes do not possess things in common—a sense of spiritual unity and brotherhood, the soul of a society.

For making up a real society, to Ambedkar, what is necessary is for a man “to share and participate in a common activity so that the same emotions are aroused in him that animate the others”. He holds that “Making the individual a sharer or partner in the associated activity so that he feels its success as his success, its failure as his failure is the real thing that binds men and makes a society of them.”² “Society means association ; coming together in joint intercourse and action for the better realization of any form of experience which is augmented and confirmed by being shared.”³

The above essence of human society is utterly lacking in the caste system of Hindu Society. “The caste system”, Ambedkar observes, “prevents common activity and by preventing common activity it has prevented the Hindus from becoming a society with a unified life and a consciousness of its own being.”⁴ The real basis of a society lies in a “unified feeling” and “common activity”. On this also depends its strength. He says : “The strength of a society depends upon the presence of points of contact, possibilities of inter-action between different groups which exist in it. These are what Carlyle calls “organic filaments”, i. e., the elastic threads which help to bring the disintegrating elements together and to re-unite them.”⁵

Ambedkar’s view of society involves what TH. Green says : “a sense of possessing common interests, a desire for common objects on the part of the people.”⁶ In such an organisation, human beings are more or less clearly conscious of themselves

1. AC., p. 27.

2. AC., p. 27.

3. *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, p. 160.

4. AC., pp. 27-28.

5. AC., p. 52.

6. *Principles of Political Obligation*, p. 84.

as persons pursuing some common good. They are also conscious of each other that they form a unified society to live together. Therefore, Ambedkar conceives a society based upon a "clear consciousness of things" to be pursued that are in some degree, for the benefit of all individuals. Society may be called a "spiritual whole" possessing within itself "lesser wholes" for the elevation of the whole with its essential parts. In other words, in any social organisation, no part, even smaller one, should be ignored. And ignorance or negligence of any part is the root of impairment of harmony and unity.

How Social Atability.

Ambedkar does not question or abrogate the existence of small social units or groups. What he wants is that there should be "common standards and models of life" among them. He discards unnecessary and unnatural and menacing disparity which obstructs social progress, and also results in the unnecessary balkanization of the society. He says : ".....so long as one community looks upon the other as a menace there will be no social progress and the spirit of conservation will continue to dominate the thoughts and actions of both."¹ In such a living social stability may not be acquired. To Ambedkar, it is not impossible if the different social units realize its significance. They have to bear in mind that it is the social stability on which depends political parity and military power.

According to Ambedkar, social stability depends upon the best social adjustment among the different social units. The canons of social adjustment, he holds, are "fluidity" and "equity". So to him, unless there is fluidity and equity among the classes there cannot be social progress and, therefore, no social stability. It is natural that everybody wants social stability, and some adjustment must be made in the relationship between individuals and classes in order to bring about stability among them. But two things nobody wants. He says : "One thing nobody wants is a static relationship, something that is unalterable, something that is fixed for all times. Stability is wanted but not at the cost of change when change is imperative. Second thing nobody wants is mere adjustment. Adjustment is wanted but not at the sacrifice of social justice."²

1. PP., pp. 237-238.

2. AC., Appendix II, p. 21.

To Ambedkar, social stability depends upon the attitude of men who constitute society. If they desire, they can achieve it. But they have to be courageous to change false traditions and beliefs. They have to adjust themselves with the changing circumstances in society and life. It requires essentially a sense of justice to change whenever there is wrong. Ambedkar observes that such change in the caste system does not occur. The achievement of social stability means not to have the caste system in Indian Society. So long as there is a caste system, the idea of social solidarity and unity is remote.

Here Ambedkar does not agree with the Arya Samaj (a Hindu social reform movement launched by Swami Dayanand) and its ideology which has obstructed social stability and has created a sense of social stagnation. Its adherents have helped in making Indian Society a "stationary society". The Arya Samajists' ideology preaches that the Vedas are eternal, without beginning, without end, and infallible; and the social institutions of the Hindus being based on the Vedas are also eternal, without beginning, without end, infallible, and, therefore, require no change. Ambedkar says that this is the worst thing that can happen to the progressive attitude of society¹. He stands for change, when essential, re-examination, when indispensable, reforms, when required and revolution, when the people need it.

A Harbinger of New Society.

Ambedkar does not attribute the cause of present misery to past karmas of man, but he holds that man in circumstances is wholly responsible for present poverty and suffering. The present suffering is due to man's own activities done in this life. The social environment is as much responsible for human sorrow as man himself. Ambedkar holds that "the fate of the individual is governed by his environment and the circumstances he is obliged to live under, and if an individual is suffering from want and misery it is because his environment is not propitious."² This is but natural because, as he observes : "A common environment is bound to produce common reactions, and reacting constantly in the same way to the same environment is bound to produce a common type."³

1. Ambedkar, B. R. : Who Were the Shudras ? p. 8.

2. WC., pp. 134-135.

3. PP., p. 16.

It is true that the status of a man may be governed not so much by parental heredity as by his social environment. The social organisation may be held responsible for the state of society and the status of man. What man has made of man is obvious from man's own hostility and enmity towards man. Iniquity, exploitation, tyranny, coercion, hatred, greed and lust, all are a negation of an ideal social relationship.

Apart from these wrong attitudes, there are also some imperfections in human society. Ambedkar is willing to bear these imperfections, but is vehemently opposed to wrong ideals. "I realize that the world is very imperfect and any one who wants to live in it must bear with its imperfections. But while I am prepared to bear with the imperfections and shortcomings of the society in which I may be destined to labour, I feel I should not consent to live in a society which cherishes wrong ideals or a society which having right ideals will not consent to bring its social life in conformity with those ideals."¹ In this way, Ambedkar condemns a society based on dual standards, which make a false basis of social organisation. It leads to hypocrisy and wrong traditions.

Though a society may have right ideals, yet it may also cherish wrong ones. This spoils the picture of an ideal society. To Ambedkar, an ideal society is a different one. "If you ask me", he says, "my ideal would be a society based on Liberty, Equality and Fraternity". So according to him, "An ideal society should be mobile, should be full of channels for conveying a change taking place in one part to other parts. In an ideal society there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. There should be varied and free points of contact with other modes of association. In other words, there must be social endosmosis."² Ambedkar's view of society, thus, includes equality, freedom, love, democracy, brotherhood and communication. It excludes all fissiparous tendencies, all views and things which create social dissensions and lead to ill-will and ill-treatment. In the ideal society of Dr. Ambedkar, which may come to pass some day, the part exists for the whole and the whole exists for the parts. He derives his belief in new society from his belief in the spiritual brotherhood of mankind.

1. AC, Appendix II, pp. 25-26. 2. AC., Appendix, II, p. 38.

From another point of view, the soul of Ambedkar's ideal society is "social conscience", without which no ideal society can exist on this earth. He says: "Social conscience—to use the language of Coleridge—that calm incorruptible legislator of the soul, without whom all other powers would 'meet in mere oppugnancy—is the only safeguard of all rights fundamental or non-fundamental'.¹ Right ideals, in fact, are protected not so much by law as by the social and moral conscience of society. If social conscience is such that it is willing to practise the right ideals which law chooses to enact, the ideals will be safe and secure ; but if the ideals or rights are opposed by the society, no law, no parliament, no judiciary can protect them in the real sense. To Ambedkar, this social conscience is a rebel against wrong deeds of any power on earth. It always strives for social justice, peace and progress, and stands as the greatest weapon of upholding the principles of liberty and equality in human relations.

Ambedkar believes that social conscience cannot accept wrong relationship. It cannot associate itself with wrongly idealized society. "No society with a social conscience has ever accepted ...iniquity on the ground that whatever is once settled is settled for all times. Such a view is opposed to all morality....On the contrary, whatever progress in improving the terms of associated life between individuals and classes has been made in the course of history, is due entirely to the recognition of the ethical doctrine that what is wrongly settled is never settled and must be re-settled."² Social conscience with its corresponding ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity, constitutes the real basis of an ideal living in Ambedkar's political thought.

Ambedkar's ideal living strives for human harmony. This harmony does not regard man in abstraction, but in actual relations. It is because Ambedkar is not an escapist. To escape from social responsibility is cowardice, immoral and anti-social. Escapism, in fact, is no sign of courage, fellowship and dynamic attitude. He finds meaning in social relations based on a true human conscience. His view of an ideal society is not something entirely abstract and unrelated to human life and action. It is

1. RG., p. 35.

2. Ambedkar, B. R. : *Who Were the Shudras ?* p. 15.

essentially related to vital activity of human urge. It is basically a progressive democratic view and avoids an aristocratic living which applies especially to the rulers, and elevates them over others as a superior class. It may, therefore, be said that the learned Doctor has been an ardent and faithful harbinger of a new society in which there is love for all and malice towards none.

New Society and Women.

Ambedkar, the father of the modern Indian Consitution, created human rights equally for both men and women. In today's social order, all have equal rights. There is no discrimination on the ground of race, religion and birth. He wants that women now should not lag behind in the activities of social reform. Ambedkar is a great believer in women's progress and organisation. He knows that what women can do to improve society, if they are convinced and get themselves united for common purposes. In the eradication of social evils, they can render great services. Ambedkar measures the progress of a community and a society by the degree of progress which women achieve.¹

He was happy that women, in India, have achieved a sense of human dignity and have made progress in all spheres of their life. With a deep faith in their emancipation, Ambedkar advised them :

- (i) "Learn to be clean.
- (ii) Keep away from vices.
- (iii) Give education to your children.
- (iv) Remove from them all inferiority complex.
- (v) Instil ambition into them.
- (vi) Inclucate in their minds that they are destined to be great.
- (vii) Do not be in a hurry to marry."²

Ambedkar holds that marriage is a liability. Parents should not impose it upon their children unless they are financially able to meet the liabilities arising from marriage. In modern Indian society, there are many social evils created by the early marriage system in Hindu and Islamic societies. Those who will

1. LM., p. 350.

2. LM., p. 350.

marry will have to keep in mind that to have too many children is a social crime. He says : "The parental duty lies in giving each child a better start than its parents had. Above all, let every girl who marries, stand by her husband, claim to be her husband's friend and equal, and refuse to be his slave. I am sure if you follow this advice, you will bring honour and glory to yourselves."¹

Ambedkar wants to make not only men but also women bold and fearless, courageous and intelligent, so that they can manage many of their affairs themselves in their homes and in their communities. He says : "Never regard yourself as Untouchables. Live a clean life. Dress yourself like the touchable ladies, never mind if your dress is full of patches, but see that it is clean. None can restrict your freedom in the choice of your garments and in the use of the metal for your ornaments."² All these personal and human rights were denied to the women of Untouchable communities in Hindu Society. As we see, there are still certain places, where the Untouchable women cannot freely move, eat and dress themselves. Ambedkar's was a just cause to rouse the conscience of these ladies against inhuman restrictions imposed upon them.

He stresses the need of "the cultivation of the mind and the spirit of self-help among the men and women. He wants them to realize that they owe a great responsibility for educating their children in right way. But at the same time, he advised them : "Do not feed in any case your spouse and sons if they are drunkards. Send your children to schools." To him, education is the most important factor for moulding the life of all men, women and children. He observes, "Education is as necessary for females as it is for males. If you know how to read and write, there would be much progress. As you are, so your children will be. Mould their lives in virtuous way, for sons should be such as would make a mark in this world."³

Thus, Ambedkar, who was the symbol and hope of a suppressed people—the degraded section of humanity, smashed the walls of bondage, tyranny and exploitation, and freed all men

1. LM., p. 350.

2. LM., pp. 104-105.

3. LM., p. 105.

and women and brought them on the par of social and political equality. He wanted all men and women to follow fearlessly what contribute to the good of the society and nation, and to shun what hamper their growth, prosperity and consolidation. Unless they do so, there can be no human progress, and, therefore, no human good and happiness. Women share the equal responsibility in human progress and advancement of humanity and the decay and destruction of mankind.

Attitude towards Religion.

Religion, to Ambedkar, means the life-breath for man and society. It is the essence of human wisdom. It is a driving force for human activity. He says : "Man cannot live by bread alone. He has a mind which needs food for thought. Religion instils hope in Man and derives him to activity."¹ Ambedkar has no truck with the people who prefer "bread to culture of the mind". He does not regard religion as worthless. He stands as an ardent advocate for the need of religion in human relations. "Some people think that religion is not essential to society. I do not hold this view. I consider the foundation of religion to be essential to life and practices of society."² Even in individual life, religion, according to him, plays an appreciable role. "Religion is an influence or force suffused through the life of each individual moulding his character, determining his actions and reactions, his likes and dislikes."³ These likes and dislikes, actions and reactions, are not institutions which can be dealt with, if a particular religion cherishes wrong practices, by controlling or counteracting them.

According to Ambedkar, religion is a part of one's "social inheritance" and the life of the individual and society—their dignity and pride, are bound up with it. It is very difficult to abandon it. But as he says : "I want religion.....I do not want hypocrisy in the name of religion."⁴ He is vehemently opposed to an organized and wrongly institutionalized religion because it stands for outer meaning—the vested interests. Sometimes, this provoked him to question the very existence of religion. "Can

1. LM., p. 499.

2. LM., p. 258.

3. Ambedkar, B. R. : *Mr. Gandhi & the Emancipation of the Untouchables*, p. 55;

4. LM., p. 304.

you respect or believe in a religion which recommends actions that bring happiness to oneself by causing sorrow to others, or happiness to others by causing sorrow to oneself or sorrow to both oneself and others? Is not that a better religion which promotes the happiness of others simultaneously with the happiness of oneself and tolerates no oppression?"¹

Not only rankst hypocrisy is the enemy of religion, but slavery is also an antithesis of a religious society. Ambedkar observes: "The religion which discriminates between two followers is partial and the religion which treats crores of its adherents worse than dogs and criminals and inflicts upon them insufferable disabilities is no religion at all. Religion is not the appellation for such an unjust order. Religion and slavery are incompatible."² If one man's religion is the same as that of others, then his rights should be equal to them. No doubt, there may be differences—tyranny and coercion, among the members of different religions, but to Ambedkar, injustice and slavery, at least for the sake of principle, among the members of the same religion are repugnant. It is against the very basis of that religion. Religion is to enlighten the people, while slavery is to keep them in darkness. These two things cannot and should not exist together, even slavery in any form should not continue in human society.

To Ambedkar, religion is for the service of man and not man—as a means—to religion. "The religion that does not teach its followers to show humanity in dealing with its co-religionists is nothing but a display of force. The religion that asks its adherents to suffer the touch of animals but not the touch of human beings is not religion but a mockery. That religion which precludes some classes from education, forbids them to accumulate wealth and to bear arms, is not religion but a mockery. The religion that compels the ignorant to be ignorant and the poor to be poor, is not religion but a visitation."³ Ambedkar, in the name of religion, does not want any type of hypocrisy, injustice and exploitation of man by man.

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1. BD., pp. 308-309.
 2. LM., p. 92.
 3. LM., pp. 273-274.

If men are true to their religion, they ought to follow it both in thought and in action without making man as a means. He says: "I tell you, religion is for man and not man for religion."¹

It is fruitless to derive satisfaction merely from the theoretical view of a religion. Religion is a collective thing inseparable from society i. e., from practical way of human life. Religion should be tested and judged by its social products and existing standards. To Ambedkar, "Religion must be judged by social standards based on social ethics. No other standard would have any meaning if religion is held to be a necessary good for the well-being of the people."² He links religion with the social well-being of the people. He does not see religion in an abstract totality unrelated to the needs of man and indifferent to the vital reforms of society.

But Ambedkar does not reduce religion to merely a means to organic needs of man. He gives it a higher and respectable place with reference to economic elements in human life. He says: ".....economic motive is not the only motive by which man is actuated.....economic power is the only kind of power no student of human society can accept.. ...religion is the source of power is illustrated by the history of India where the priest holds a sway over the common man often greater than the magistrate."³ To him, religion, social status and property are all sources of power and authority. The only difference is that one is predominant at one stage, the other is predominant at another.

It is very difficult, to Ambedkar, to believe in a religion which is nothing but "a multitude of commands and prohibitions". He wants to have a religion in the sense of "spiritual principles", truly "universal", applicable to all times, to all countries and to all races. It must be essentially the governing part of a man's life, if he claims to be a follower of it.⁴ From this point of view, Ambedkar criticizes Hindu religion. Hinduism is "a mass of sacrificial, societal, political and sanitary rules and regulation, all mixed up". He calls it a "Law" or

1. LM., p. 273.

2. AC., Appendix II, p. 25.

3. AC., p. 15.

4. AC., p. 72.

"Legalized class-ethics". Such a religion tends to deprive life of freedom and spontaneity and reduce it to more or less an anxious and servile conformity to externally imposed rules. In it, there is no loyalty to ideals. There is conformity only to commands. The unhealthy feature of such religion is that its laws continue to be the same yesterday, today and for ever. "That being the case", he questions, "how can humanity endure this code of eternal laws, without being cramped and without being crippled."¹ The hard and fast rules of a theistic spiritual life are not dear to Ambedkar, because they leave no room to vital activity and urge of human existence. There should be the freedom of conscience, always and everywhere.

It is evident that Ambedkar, does not believe in a religion of Rules and Laws, but only in a religion of principles.¹

According to him, "Rules are practical ; they are habitual ways of doing things according to prescription. But principles are intellectual ; they are useful methods of judging things. Rules seek to tell an agent just what course of action to pursue. Principles do not prescribe a specific course of action. Rules, like cooking recipes, do tell just what to do and how to do it. A principle, such as that of justice, supplies a main head by reference to which he is to consider the bearings of his desires and purposes, it guides him in his thinking by suggesting to him the important consideration which he should bear in mind."² This difference between rules and principles makes the acts done in pursuit of them different in quality and in content, which leads to different types of social and political behaviour patterns.

To Ambedkar, therefore, doing good by virtue of a rule and doing good in the light of a principle are two different things. "The principle may be wrong but the act is conscious and responsible. The rule may be right but the act is mechanical. A religious act may not be a correct act but at least it must be a responsible act. To allow this responsibility, religion must mainly be a matter of principles only. It cannot be a matter

1. AC., p. 73.

2. AC., p. 71.

of rules. The moment it degenerates into rules it ceases to be Religion, as it kills responsibility which is the essence of a truly religious act.¹ In his view, a religion of principles alone can claim to being a true spiritual religion. It is really common spiritual fellowship that can also help people in maintaining the social and economic equality and democracy.

In the light of these considerations, it may now be seen more clearly what is the general nature of religion that is properly to be ascribed to a human society. Ambedkar looks towards a religion as a source of social and spiritual unity. This can only be maintained by spiritual beings—i. e., persons, in human society. So religion, to Ambedkar, has a very prominent place in human relations in Society.

Essentials of Religion.

There are, according to Ambedkar, four characteristics of a true religion :—

(i) "That society must have either the sanction of law or the sanction of morality to hold it together. Without either, society is sure to go to pieces". As experience tells us, law in all societies plays a very small part. It is generally intended to keep the minority within the range of social order and discipline. But the majority is left and has to be left to sustain its social life by the sanction of moral principles—the postulates of morality. "Religion in the sense of morality must, therefore, remain the governing principle in every society."²

(ii) "Religion as defined in the first proposition must be in accord with Science. Religion is bound to lose respect and, therefore, become the subject of ridicule and thereby not merely lose its force as a governing principle of life but might in course of time disintegrate and lapse, if it is not in accord with Science." In other words, "religion, if it is to function, must be in accord with reason which is merely another name for Science."³

(iii) "It is not enough for religion to consist of moral code, but its code must recognize the fundamental tenets of liberty,

1. AC., p. 71.

2. Ambedkar, B. R., *Buddha & the Future of His Religion*, (an article) para, 17.

3. *Ibid.*, para, 18.

equality fraternity. Unless a religion recognizes these three fundamental principles of social life, religion will be doomed.”¹ It is true because religion is not merely an individual affair. It has a social significance, which demands in all its sanity and serenity, a sense of equality and brotherhood. Inequality in society, on the basis of a religion is perilous and pestilential.

(iv) “Religion must not sanctify or ennoble poverty. Renunciation of riches by those who have it may be blessed state. But poverty can never be. To declare poverty to be a blessed state is to pervert religion to perpetuate vice and crime, to consent to make earth a living hell.”² Here Ambedkar does not agree with Gandhian attitude to poverty. The Gandhian view is the “glorification of poverty”, since God, to Gandhiji, is especially thought to be the Lord of the poor and that the poor are His chosen people. Gandhiji, in his work for the poor, gives them a religious term known as “Daridranarayan”—“The Poor that is God, or God that resides in the Poor.”³ Ambedkar cannot appreciate religious justification of poverty, because he takes it as an evil and stands to remove it in any form, found in human society.

Dr. Ambedkar combines in himself the illumination of the East and also the alacrity of the West. Besides his religious ideas, he has a strong faith in science, its objectivity and utility. A religion, to him, should be more scientific than mere a mass of superstitions and dogmatic beliefs. He does not favour a critical credulousness and a reliance on the supernatural in religion. Mysticism, too, is not attractive to him—and even metaphysical thinking is of little value to his social aspirations, because mysticism recoils the upward struggle of humanity. Ambedkar’s religious attitude opposes superstition, idolatry, dogmatism, hypocrisy, sectarianism, fanaticism, individualism, mysticism and conventionalism, poverty and ignorance, in religion. What he stands for is that religion should be a social gospel. It should make clear and coherent the meaning and the course of social events for human happiness here on this earth.

1. Ibid., para, 19.

2. Ibid., para, 20.

3. Das, M. N., *The Political Philosophy of Jawahar Lal Nehru*, pp. 145-46,

Ambedkar stands for a religion which is democratic out and out. The foundation of his religion is his faith in the capacities of human nature, faith in human intelligence and equality. Religion, to him, should be a social gospel for realising democracy and unity as the truly human way of life. The keynote of his concept of religion as a way of life is the necessity for the participation of every human being in the formation of the values that regulate the social living for common purposes. That is necessary from the standpoint of both the general social well-being and the satisfactory development of men as individuals.

Dhamma As Religion.

The basis of Ambedkar's concept of religion is not theocentric. It is purely anthropocentric. It is secular and not extramundane. The generally accepted view of religion as some sort of belief in supernatural being is not acceptable to him. A religion that disintegrates the human society is not a true religion. Religion, as he conceives, is a rational one, a moral one, and a spiritual one. If men are rational, ethical and spiritual, their religious and humanistic outlook on life will be sound and lasting towards human happiness and social well-being.

Ambedkar regards Dhamma as religion. Dhamma differs fundamentally from what is called Religion. He observes : "Religion, it is said, is personal and one must keep it to oneself. One must not let it play its part in public life. Contrary to this, Dhamma is social. It is fundamentally and essentially so."¹ His view of religion is social and secular and morality is the keynote of it. He says : "In Dhamma there is no place for prayers, pilgrimages, rituals, ceremonies or sacrifices. Morality is the essence of Dhamma. Without it, there is no Dhamma."²

What is Dhamma ? "Dhamma", Ambedkar tells us, "is righteousness, which means right relations between man and man in all spheres of life."³ Right relations have to be established on the basis of social principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. One man, if he is alone does not need Dhamma. "But when there are two men living in relation to each other they must find a place for Dhamma whether they like it or not.]

1. BHD., p. 316.

2. BHD., p. 323.

3. BHD., p. 316.

Neither can escape it. In other words, society cannot do without Dhamma" —, *i. e.*, right relations.¹

Ambedkar's view of religion is the cultivation of human mind for establishing right relations on the basis of moral principles. Morality is the soul of what Ambedkar regards Dhamma as religion. "Morality", he says, "arises from the direct necessity for man to love man. It does not require the sanction of God. It is not to please God that man has to be moral. It is for his own good that man has to love man."² Dhamma as religion, thus, rejects belief in God, belief in soul, worship of God, curing of the erring soul, propitiating God by prayers, ceremonies, sacrifices, etc.

The essentials of religion—morality, reason, liberty, equality, fraternity, etc., that Ambedkar wants in a true religion, are present in Buddha's religion. Some European theologians refuse to recognize Buddha's Dhamma as Religion. But as Ambedkar says : "There need be no regrets over this. The loss is theirs. It does not harm to the Buddha's Dhamma. Rather, it shows what is wanting in Religion."³ In short, Ambedkar regards Buddha's Dhamma as true religion the purpose of which is to reconstruct the world by establishing right relations among human beings. A well-ordered society, based on religious consciousness of things to be pursued that are for the benefit of all, is the central theme of Ambedkar's concept of religion.

A Talk on Hinduism.

Some people charge Ambedkar with "distrust of Hinduism." It is not distrust, but indeed dissatisfaction which he has for Hinduism. And it is inevitable that a passion for a better and healthier order in social relations leads an intellectual like Ambedkar to dissatisfaction towards the existing order of things, if they are harmful to social unity. Fundamentally, Ambedkar is not against the very existence of Hinduism and Hindu leaders but he is dead pitched against its wrong ideals and the tenacity of Hindu leaders to them. "If I am disgusted with Hindus and Hinduism, it is because I am convinced that they cherish wrong ideals and live a wrong social life. My

1. BHD., p. 316.

2. BHD., p. 323.

3. BHD., p. 316.

quarrel with Hindus and Hinduism is not over the imperfection of their social conduct. It is much more fundamental. It is over their ideals."¹ This is not distrust but is an attitude of dissatisfaction. Such discontent is desirable not only for him, but also in his view for all those who aspire for social betterment and brotherhood.

The reason of this dissatisfaction lies in the fact that Hinduism gives no support to social unity, the vital need of the day. "Hinduism and social union", Ambedkar says, "are incompatible. By its very genius Hinduism believes in social separation which is another name for social disunity and even creates social separation. If the Hindus wish to be one they will have to discard Hinduism (i. e., the theory of *chaturvarnya*). They cannot be one without violating Hinduism. Hinduism—the traditional social structure—is the greatest obstacle to Hindu unity. Hinduism cannot create that longing to belong which is the basis of social unity. On the contrary, Hinduism creates an eagerness to separate."² It has to amend its social behaviour patterns in order to bring about social unity on which depends socialistic feeling, national integration, democratic ideal and spiritual fellowship. Ambedkar's is a revolt against all that is evil and an obstacle to social unity and human progress. And in fact, practically he revolted against something against which everybody should revolt.

Ambedkar accepts that Hinduism was once a "missionary religion". But once a missionary religion, Hinduism perforce ceased to be a missionary religion after the time when the Hindu Society developed its system of castes. For, caste is incompatible with conversion. Caste dragged Hinduism into "a religion of inequality". To him, if the Hindu religion is to be a religion of all people, it must become a religion of social equality, then it must recognize all as nationals and not aliens—as regards some of them. If the Hindu religion is to be the religion of social equality, then an amendment of its code to provide temple entry is not enough. What is required is to purge it of the doctrine of Varna System. This is the root cause of all inequality and is also the parent of the caste system and

1. AC., Appendix II, p. 26.

2. WC., p. 187.

untouchability, which are merely other forms of inequality.¹ Inequality and social brotherhood are opposed to each other.

It is wrong to think that Ambedkar is for the destruction of Hinduism. His main concern is to reform and reconstruct it. And it has happened from time to time. He says : Whether you do that or you do not, you must give a new doctrinal basis to your Religion—a basis that will be in consonance with Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, in short, with Democracy. I am no authority on the subject. But I am told that for such religious principles as will be in consonance with Liberty, Equality and Fraternity it may not be necessary for you to borrow from foreign sources and that you could draw for such principles on the Upanishadas.”²

In criticizing Hinduism, Ambedkar's sublime purpose is to refrom Hindu social relations, to make Hindu Society a place for all with equality and dignity. “The Hindu Society should be re-organized on two main principles—equality and absence of casteism.”³ Unless the existing foundation of Hindu Society is removed and a better one is laid in its place, it cannot hope to survive. “In my opinion, only when the Hindu Society becomes a casteless society that it can hope to have strength enough to defend itself. Without such internal strength, Swaraj for Hindus may turn out to be only a step towards slavery.”⁴ Obviously, such a faithful talk to Hinduism is not out of any distrust but out of hope as well as dissatisfaction with it. “That the Hindu Society must be re-organized on a religious basis which would recognize the principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.”⁵ Even to-day, if Hindus do not take Ambedkar's advice seriously, their bright future is doomed.

Ambedkar's talk to Hinduism is mostly coloured by his practical wisdom for social betterment and spiritual oneness. Referring to Sankara Vedanta, he says : if the Brahman pervades all, a Brahman and an Untouchable are equal. But the people do not apply the doctrine to social organisation and keep the discussion on a vedantic level. Had they applied it on a social level and preached social equality, their vedantic gospel would

1. LM., p. 229.

3. LM., p. 100.

5. AC., Appendix II, p. 11.

2. AC., p. 76.

4. AC., p. 81.

have been profound and worth consideration, apart from its erroneous belief that the world is an illusion.¹ In this way, Ambedkar wishes man not only to have inner perfection but also external adjustment. The combination of both can help man and his society to make themselves whole, harmonious and illumined one. It may, therefore, be concluded that Ambedkar's talk to Hinduism is not futile—unrelated to its vital purpose and profit to Modern Indian Society. His talk is always for the benefit of all. As a defiant Hindu, as he was in earlier days of his life, Ambedkar was against the vedantic idealism, because it represented the dead weight of "medieval mental dogmatism and scholasticism." The vedantic idealism was nothing but a Brahmanical counterpoise to the liberating role of the Buddhist movement. Here Ambedkar and M. N. Roy are very near to each other and both recognized the revolutionary implications of Buddhism. To them, Buddhism was a revolt against "parasitic luxury" and it prepared the foundations of "a prosperous and glorious civilization." But the revival of militant Hinduism and unkind Brahmanism by certain reactionary forces became the occasion for conservative traditionalism, darkness and decay.

Progressive and Genius.

Ambedkar, in all spheres of human life, was progressive. He stood for all scientific and artistic activities which enhanced the cause of human progress and happiness.² As a progressive humanist, he did many things to the welfare of the most degraded section of humanity in India. He was not only a progressive and social humanist, but also a genius—a man of intellect, sweetness and light. Genius is a man who is the spokesman of ignored humanity and overlooked reality. Ambedkar, in his own way, realized the both upto the end of his heroic career. There is a large part of ignored and neglected humanity of which he became the untiring spokesman throughout his active and thoughtful life.

The work that the geniuses accomplish differ according to time, circumstance and expediency. It also differs according to the training and temperament of the genius. There are two

1. LM., p. 506.

2. LM., p. 495.

types of genius—the peace time genius and the genius who lives in the periods of rebellion and revolution.¹

Ambedkar, as we have seen, belongs to the second type of genius. He lived in the times of great transition, in the moments of great war and violence, in the thoughts of great decisions and tasks, in the midst of great struggles and upheavals. In all these, he acquired new aspirations and visions for upholding the human rights for the degraded section of humanity like the Untouchables. He says : “So far as I am concerned, I am willing to consider everything, though I am not willing to allow the human rights of Depressed Classes to be curtailed in any way.”²

There is no doubt that Ambedkar stood and spoke for the cause of the suppressed humanity, but he did it in his own way, which annoyed certain persons, for whom he did not care. “It is my solemn vow to die in the service and cause of those downtrodden people among whom I was born, I was brought up and I am living. I would not budge an inch from my righteous cause, or care for the violent and disparaging criticism by my detractors.”³

From another point of view, the genius is “a connecting link among people and societies divided by the powerful barriers of custom and convention.”⁴ Ambedkar, as a genius, did not care for the customs and conventions which did not profit man. His was a justified protest against the Hindu social order which dehumanized the dignity and sanctity of man. He demanded freedom and equality for all men and women, which he expressed chiefly in the movements for social and political reforms. In this, he visualized the vision of a superior social order based on the principles of human rights to education, property and protection.

Ambedkar, as a spokesman of overlooked reality, revived the perennial philosophy of Gautam, the Enlightened One, for the emancipation of ignored humanity. He regarded Buddha's religion as true reality which people had ignored and neglected for a long period and failed to see that in right earnest. He

1. Devaraja, N. K. : *The Philosophy of Culture*, 1963, p. 127.

2. *LM.*, p. 206.

3. *LM.*, p. 202.

4. *The Philosophy of Culture*, p. 129.

studied Buddhism and found that it was the only religion which was in consonance with reason and science. For this, he wrote a book : *The Buddha And His Dhamma*" which he regarded his *Magnum Opus*.

The reality, which Ambedkar found in Buddha's religion, was not merely an idea to him. He did not merely possess it, but he also sought to be one with that reality. That reality consists in the recognition of human suffering and the removal of it. Ambedkar, even in the days of his student life, realized that Buddha was right in explaining the secret of human life. He, since then, devoted his entire life in removing the human ills in the way the Buddha taught to his followers. Thus, Ambedkar, as a genius, was so constituted that he constantly sought to visualize more satisfactory arrangement of human life and experience, and because he effectively discerned the elements of good and honest life, he devoted himself in spreading the gospel of Buddha.

A genius is not merely a learned man, but he is also essentially an intellectual. There is a vast difference between a learned and an intellectual. A learned person is a man who is always confined to the interest of his own class even at the cost of other classes. He does not transgress the limits of his class. Whereas an intellectual is an enlightened person who is devotedly interested in the welfare of all.¹ The aim of an intellectual's life is the emancipation of ignored humanity.

Ambedkar, as a genius, was not merely a learned man, but also an intellectual, who sacrificed his life for the dignity and uplift of the poorest of the poor of the world. As a spokesman of ignored humanity, he created human rights to all and brought all men on the par of social equality. His aim was not communal and limited to personal benefit, but it was essentially social and human related to all who suffered from tyranny and exploitation.

A Social Humanist.

Ambedkar's thought—social, political and moral—leaves no doubt that he is a humanist, more accurately a social humanist. As a humanist, his main concern in life has been

1. Ambedkar, B.R., : *The Untouchables*, Preface, ii.

human progress, human happiness, human goodness, human relationship, human call and human approach. However, his path, as a humanist, has never been smooth. It was blocked from many directions and sides and by the shadows of darkness. The sentiments of the people whom he wanted to reform and harmonize were deeply rooted in orthodoxy and traditionalism, superstition and falsehood. He, consciously or unconsciously, directed his humanism against orthodoxies and wrong traditions of man and society, which aimed to dehumanize, to subordinate the very existence of human beings.¹

From this way of thinking what his social humanism is, derives this own way of life. His philosophical thought attaches great importance to man—for raising mankind to a higher material and spiritual level. In his humanism, there are some spiritual values. The first of these is "love". It is used in the sense of Karuna in Buddhism. It is a selfless concern for the genuine well-being of all others, without reference to special claims or merits. Such love knows no distinctions of race, caste or creed. It seeks all possible good for its object. It involves deep feeling, yet is genuinely practical. It is utterly impartial, yet deeply personal and basically social. The basis of this spiritual value Ambedkar has derived from the teachings of Gautam, the Benevolent One. It has roots in co-operation, the mutualities of family, friendship, and community love, but it outreaches all of these. Its fully developed occurrence is rare and beautiful.

The other type of spiritual value, to Ambedkar, is "reverence" in the sense of Maitri in Buddhism. It does not mean either personal worship or doctrinal beliefs or institutional practices. Rather it means grace and love to all sentient beings. Its full achievement is rare, but those in whom it becomes a vital experience place it beyond all values save love itself. Like love, it tends to spread its influence over all

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1. Ambedkar's utterances and thoughts may be characterized as the trend of thought termed as "Social Humanism". For the interpretation and characterization of Ambedkar's thought as a distinct type of Social Humanism and the discovery of relevant facts, see : *The Social Humanism of B. R. Ambedkar*, by Dr. D. R. Jatava, (Ph. D. Thesis).

associated experiences, but it is, in no sense, in competition with love, for each of these two tends to enrich the other and, at the best, they tend to coalesce.

Ambedkar's social humanism does not believe in the absoluteness of values. It believes in social relativism. So all values have in it intrinsic worth differing only in levels; extent and duration. The spiritual values—love and reverence contain more intrinsic than extrinsic worth, whereas organic values like food and sex have more extrinsic than intrinsic worth. To him, therefore, absolute ideals are no ideals. They cannot serve human purposes.

With a deep faith in such ideals and values, Ambedkar evolves his concept of social humanism, which is the essence of his philosophy of life. His humanistic philosophy is practical and pragmatic, social and moral, definite and dynamic, individualistic and socialistic. These are the real foundations to his political philosophy. His political thought recognizes man—man only in social relations. He says: "More than political or religious, man is a social animal. He may not have, need not have, religion; he may not have, need not have, politics. He must have society; he cannot do without society."¹ He always conceives man in social relationship and not in any abstract totality.

In his thought and action, Ambedkar, thus, attempts at a harmony between the two poles of his philosophical attitude, *i. e.*, between man and society. The mind of Ambedkar, always and everywhere, aspires for having an ardent passion to find out some kind of harmony and unity in human life, in social relations. All educational programmes, social and political organisations, should have at their back a strong desire for harmony and unity, although they may not be achieved in their entirety in the course of human efforts. It is, in fact, always better to fail in things great and glorious rather than succeed in things low and trivial. What Ambedkar aims at, therefore, is something that would outlast even success.



1. PP., p. 119.

CHAPTER 2

Nation and Nationalism

NATION AND NATIONALISM

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The Force of Nationalism.

Nationalism in general is an ideology based on devotion to or love of one's country either by birth or by choice. In particular, these are as many nationalisms as there are nations. The real basis of nationalism is cultural, something spiritual. Nationalism is man made, and therefore, nationalism is closely related with man's life, pride and activity. Nationalism is a force in the history of mankind. It cannot be overlooked now and at any time, by the emerging forces—social and political—in the different parts of the world.

The spirit of nationalism in the West was that of violent type and resulted in bitterness, enmity and extermination of those who could not resist the force of this movement. Persons, like Sydney Brooks, Norman Angell, found nationalism as a threat to peace and humanism. To Robertson, nationalism was an "irrational instinct", if not a "positive hallucination", and the sooner humanity got rid of it the better for all. These critics of nationalism, no doubt, were frightened by the horrible results which led them to think in such terms; but they, led by their extremism, forgot that the spirit behind it was human. It may, however, be admitted that the leaders of the nationalistic movements did not use humane methods in bringing people on the dais of nationalism. Generally, people, in India, did so. They used peaceful means to unite among themselves and win the freedom of national home under the leadership of Tilak, Gandhi, Patel, Nehru and Ambedkar along with a host of others.

To Ambedkar, in whatever way the matter is viewed and howsoever ardently one may wish for the elimination of nationalism, nationalism is a fact in human society. He says: "...nationalism is a fact which can neither be eluded nor denied. Whether one calls it an irrational instinct or positive hallucination, the fact remains that it is a potent force which has a dynamic power to disrupt empires. Whether nationalism is the cause or the threat to nationalism is the cause, is a difference of

emphasis only.”¹ The real thing is the recognition of nationalism as strong enough to produce war in spite of the people’s resistance. It has devastatingly enough proved itself to be no outward creed, but a “vital force to be reckoned with.” Obviously enough, Dr. Ambedkar regards nationalism as a real force in human life. It has now become an affair of life and death to most of the people in the world.

The spirit of nationalism has been disruptive. It has destroyed many nations, though at the same time, it has also created other ones. It thus both destroys and preserves. To Ambedkar, nationalism has taught much to humanity. “That nationalism is a disruptive force is not the only lesson to be learnt from the history...experience embodies much else of equal if not of greater significance.”² According to him, the Turks were bound to the Arabs with the ties of religion. The religious tie of Islam is the strongest known to humanity. No social confederacy can claim to rival the Islamic brotherhood at the point of solidarity. But Arab nationalism broke the bonds of Islam and fought against his fellow Muslim, the Turk, for its independence. It won, but Turkey was completely dismantled.³

Another example Ambedkar gives is that of Czechoslovakia. Though the Czechs and the Slovaks were one people. Yet within a few years, the Slovaks claimed to be a separate nation. Their nationalism compelled the Czechs to recognize the fact that they were a distinct people. For this purpose, there was a struggle, hard and bitter. They did not care what means they would employ. Their nationalism was so single-minded and so intense that when they failed, they did not hesitate to call the aid of the Germans. A deeper study of the disruption of Turkey and Czechoslovakia shows that neither local autonomy nor the bond of religion is sufficient to withstand the force of nationalism, once it is set in motion.⁴ In fact, nationalism sometimes is so blind that it causes enmity and anger even among those who have lived together for centuries past. Muslim nationalism was so irrationally intense that it disrupted the long and aged unity of Indian people. It was the most unhappy event in the history of this great nation.

1. PP., p. 207.
3. PP., p. 208.

2. PP., pp. 207-208.
4. PP., p. 209.

The Basic Approach Misunderstood.

It is true that Ambedkar recognizes the efficacy of nationalism as one of the most dynamic forces of the modern history. Not only during the freedom movement, did the spirit of nationalism in him continue to be a motivating force, but it remained so even after the freedom was achieved. Anyhow, the starting point of Ambedkar's nationalism was startling, which was entirely misunderstood and was looked upon as anti-national¹, although his attitude was always purely national. National unity was the fundamental aim of his political thought.

The spirit of Ambedkar's nationalism started with the humanistic cause of the poorest of poor in the world. He wanted equality and civil rights for those persons who were deprived of them for centuries past. Many people were denied the basic human rights. The older conception of social life was based on mere duties, but today, the demand for rights is persistent in almost all the countries of the world and particularly in those countries where people have been slaves and serfs under the tyranny or their so-called Masters.

When the Round Table Conferences were being held for the freedom of India, Ambedkar emerged as the champion of the downtrodden people. He said that the depressed classes formed a group by themselves, which was distinct and separate from the Mohammedans, and although they were included among the Hindus, yet they, in no sense, formed an integral part of that community. Not only were they regarded as a separate entity, but they were also assigned a status which was invidiously distinct from the status occupied by any other human community in India. The status granted to these poor lowly was "midway between that of the serf and the slave". The serf and the slave were permitted to have physical contact, from which the depressed classes were debarred. According to Ambedkar, this enforced servility and bar to human intercourse was due to untouchability which involved, not merely the possibility of discrimination in public life, but actually worked out as a positive denial of all equality of opportunity and as a denial of the most elementary of civic rights on which all human

1. Cf. *Ambedkar Refuted*, (a small paper), by C. Rajagopalachari.

existence depends.¹ Such was the realistic start of national feeling in Ambedkar which was, in no sense, less than a full-blooded nationalism and love for his land and its people.

In the Round Table Conferences, Ambedkar explained the social existence of millions of people and told as how they continued to be the most degraded of persons in their own motherland. His nationalism was not merely an empty state of mind, but it was based on a full-blooded humanistic faith in the greatness of his country and the dignity of its denizens. When Ambedkar championed the cause of the depressed classes, it did not mean that he was against the freedom for India and favour of the British regime. He held the British rule responsible for the negligence of the welfare of millions of people. In fact, the British rule preserved the wrong traditions of India's past, which almost mutilated the human beauty and charm, the understanding and confidence of a vast majority of men and women.

Nationalism in Ambedkar began in protest both against external domination and internal oppression. Regarding internal oppression, Indian Society, according to him, was a gradation of castes forming an ascending scale of reverence and descending scale of contempt. It was a system which gave no scope for "the growth of that sentiment of equality and fraternity so essential for a democratic form of government."² Ambedkar emphasized the point that the "political mechanism" must take account of these poor classes of Untouchables. In the building of New India, certain hard facts had to be examined because of the narrow particularism of caste behaviour patterns. He wanted some constitutional safeguards to protect the unprotected, to give heart to the heartless, to provide relief to the weary and succour to the suppressed, and nothing more. This spirit of human service was not for any personal gain. It was essentially for the good of the poor people.

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1. Round Table Conference, (First Session : from 12-11-1930 to 19-11-1931), Proceedings, pp. 123-129.
 2. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, (Selected Speeches), Compiled by Bhagwan Das, p. 9.

As regards the foreign domination, the British attitude in India, according to him, suffered from two very serious limitations. There was an "internal limitation" which arose from the character motives and interests of those who were in power. This prevented them from appreciating the living forces operating in Indian society, made them indifferent and inimical to its aspirations and apathetic to its education. The external limitation was the moral fear that it had of external resistance. The British rule realized the necessity of removing the social evils which were eating into the vitals of Indian Society and which had blighted the lives of the downtrodden people for so many years. It also realized that the landlords were squeezing the masses dry, and the capitalists were not providing labourers with the suitable wages and decent conditions of work. Yet the British Government did not dare touch any of these evils. For it was afraid that its intervention in the then existing code of social and economic life, would give rise to resistance.¹

✓ Ambedkar's attitude was humanistic as well as nationalistic. His approach was twofold. He wanted not only freedom from foreign domination, but also internal freedom for the people whom it was denied. It was not anti-national. It was, in fact, infused with a real spirit of freedom and nationalism. He says : "We must have a Government in which men in power knowing where obedience will end and resistance will begin, will not be afraid to amend the social and economic code of life which the dictates of justice and expediency so urgently call for. This Role the British Government will never be able to play. It is only a government which is of the people, for the people and by the people that will make this possible."²

Nationalism, to Ambedkar, does not mean communalism. It means the spirit of oneness in the people. The poor masses, in his view, should be (in a broad sense) the source of inspiration to a nationalist. To overlook the grovelling conditions and inhuman behaviour patterns in a society is definitely the very negation of nationalism. There is no doubt that Ambedkar was vehemently opposed to the wrong social structure of India's past, but to say he was against the nation is wholly wrong.

1. Ibid., pp. 8-9.

2. Ibid., p. 8.

He says : "I know my position has not been understood properly in the country. It has often been misunderstood.....I say that whenever there has been a conflict between my personal interests and the interests of the country as a whole, I have always placed the claims of the country above my personal claims. I have never pursued the path of private gain.....so far as the demands of the country are concerned, I have never lagged behind."¹

Though foreign rule had been a potential force in this country, yet Ambedkar's spirit of nationalism took a definite shape through the struggle against the British rule. The struggle against foreign domination and love for the community in which he was born, brought in his mind the real implications of nationalism. It is a different matter that he had certain fundamental differences with the caste Hindus, but as he declared : "I confess I have quarrel with the Caste Hindus over some points, but I take vow before you that I shall lay down my life in defence of our land."² National urge came to Ambedkar through his pride and dignity both for the country and its people. He had a desire to win freedom and an intense feeling against foreign domination. At the same time, he had an intense feeling to win an actual freedom for the lowly and the poor that they might live a life of their own charm and choice with respect and dignity. To call such a sublime attitude as an anti-national, is to misunderstand the meaning of humanism and nationalism to which Ambedkar sincerely adhered.

Up Against British Neutralism.

The spread of education among the servile classes brought forth from them a group of intellectuals such as Dr. Ambedkar, who became the spokesman of their sufferings and disabilities and the passionate fighter for their elementary human rights.³ In fact, he became a strong advocate for winning the equal social rights for the downtrodden communities.⁴ Persons like

1. LM., p. 327.

2. LM., p. 339.

3. Desai, A. R. : Social Background of Indian Nationalism, p. 244.

4. Ibid., pp. 245-246,

Ambedkar and Gandhi were not reticent over the British attitude of indifference towards social equality and civil liberties. The British attitude roused the social conscience of Ambedkar against its very domination. The spirit of Nationalism became in him strong enough to oppose the foreign regime. He aimed at a struggle against foreign rule, as well as at freedom for men and democratic institutions.

For Ambedkar, along with other Indian nationalists, "...the British government did not energetically and enthusiastically work for the restoration of the rights of the depressed classes and that it did not exercise its power to strike at the undemocratic denial of elementary human rights to the Untouchables".¹ He said : "When we compare our present position with the one which it was our lot to bear in Indian Society of the pre-British days we find that, instead of marching on, we are only marking time. Before the British, we were in the loathsome condition due to our untouchability. Has the British Government done anything to remove it? Before the British, we could not enter the temple, can we enter now? Before the British Government, we were denied entry into the Police Force. Does the British Government admit us in the Force? Before the British, we were not allowed to serve in the Military. Is that career now open to us?"² In fact, there were no positive answers to these pertinent questions.

To Ambedkar, unless the Indian people secured political power and unless that power were concentrated in the hands of the socially suppressed section of the Indian Society, it would not be possible to completely wipe out all social, legal and cultural disabilities, under which that section suffered.³ He says : "This is, therefore, the inevitable conclusion which the depressed classes have come to, namely, that the bureaucratic Government of India, with the best of motives, will remain powerless to effect any change so far as our particular grievances are concerned. We feel that nobody can remove our grievances as well as we can, and we cannot remove them unless we get political power in our own hands. No share of this political

1. Social Background of Indian Nationalism, p. 246.

2. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, pp. 6-7.

3. Social Background of Indian Nationalism, p. 247.

power can evidently come to us so long as the British Government remains as it is. It is only in a Swaraj Constitution that we stand any chance of getting the political power into our own hands, without which we cannot bring salvation to our people.”¹ He was, thus, against the British imperialism and asked for self-government—the government of the people, for the people and by the people. The spirit of nationalism was not confined only to the opposition of the British rule, but the real implications of nationalism were to be found in the welfare of the people.

The British attitude was nothing more than a policy of “neutralism”. It was found “in social and religious matters which objectively tended to perpetuate reactionary and oppressive social customs and institutions.” The British Government evaded its “state duty to stamp out social inequalities and injustice.”² That is why, Ambedkar said : “We must have a Government in which the men in power will give their undivided allegiance to the best interest of the country.”³ Under Ambedkar, an attempt was made to awaken the social and national consciousness among the poor masses. He made them conscious of the fact that the British neutralism had proved fatal to the social emancipation of the people. They must fight for a government of their own, in which they could fulfil their aims and reach their destiny.

Freedom of the People.

Western writers on Political Science do not make a distinction between freedom of a country and freedom of the people living therein. It is not true when they hold that the “freedom of a country is the same as the freedom of the people in the country and once the freedom of the country is secured the freedom of the people is also thereby assured”.⁴ In some countries, though they are free, some people still live a life of serfdom and villainage. Take the case of Negroes. They are treated as second class citizens in a free country like the United States of America. The resistance to Civil Rights Bill in

1. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 8.

2. Social Background of Indian Nationalism, p. 247.

3. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 12.

4. WC., p. 203.

America is a living example of discrimination and inhumanity against Negroes. They cannot be said to be free in a free country.

If one cannot make any distinction between the freedom of a country and the freedom of the people thereof, according to Ambedkar, it is to mislead oneself. "For words such as society, nation and country", he says, "are just amorphous if not ambiguous terms. There is no gainsaying that 'nation', though one word, means many classes". He likes to use the word nation in that sense which points out to the area of society rather than that of the State. ✓ To him, "Philosophically, it may be possible to consider a nation as a unit but sociologically it cannot but be regarded as consisting of many classes and the freedom of the nation, if it is to be a reality, must vouchsafe the freedom of the different classes comprised in it, particularly of those who are treated as the servile classes."¹

It is evident that in Ambedkar's view, a nation consists of at least two things. First, a nation includes the whole society, in all the varied range of life, *i. e.*, groups and classes; these different social classes also have an attachment to the tradition and achievement. Secondly, a country comprises of an area of soil, which is the physical feature of the land these social classes occupy. Thus a nation is made of two factors—society and the land it resides on.

When Ambedkar talks of the freedom of a country, he means that its land, the physical area, is not controlled by any external authority. Its own inhabitants are the real owners. It is fixed, unchangeable "unless some necessity arises". Only the taking over of this physical area from the foreign power under which it was held, does not actually mean the freedom of the people. For in such a physically lacerated area, there may be some classes which are treated as sub-human, less than men and worse than beasts. These people cannot be said to be free. In India, the servile classes, though living in an independent country, are nevertheless regarded as degraded people particularly in villages. Only when these people are quite free from want and fear, oppression and exploitation, can the freedom of

1. WC., p. 204.

the people may be said to be real. To these classes, no doubt, there is freedom of the country, but not of themselves. These classes live on the mercy and kindness of the landlords and of other village officials. This is why, Ambedkar makes a clear distinction between the freedom of the country and of the people of that country, which the Western writers on political science overlook.

To Ambedkar, the freedom of a country is one thing and the freedom of the people living in that country is another. It is because of this distinction that he emphasized on the freedom of both. Freedom of a country, without the freedom of its people, is not true freedom. His main stress was on the freedom of the people, though he was not opposed to India's freedom. This caused a misunderstanding in the minds of those who could not make such a distinction between these two things. Even today, the ruling social classes can only justify the freedom of people by extending the hands of love and friendship to all servile classes. Unless the people do so, they cannot realize the aims of a free and true nation. Without the freedom of people, nationalism becomes a means of internal slavery, forced labour and organised tyranny for the poor and servile classes.

Unity of the Country.

The supreme concern of Ambedkar's heroic life, during the freedom struggle, was to achieve the unity of his country as a great nation. "I have not the slightest doubt about the future evolution of the social, political and economic structure of this country. I know today, we are divided politically, socially and economically. We are in warring camps, and I am probably one of the leaders of a Warring Camp. With all this I am convinced that given time and circumstances, nothing in the world will prevent this country from becoming one and with all our castes and creeds, I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that we shall in some form be united people."¹ To him, the unity of the country was not simply theoretical and intellectual. It was practical and secular. Irrespective of communal inhibitions, he desired unity among the people of all sections in the land of the Buddha.

1. Speech delivered in the Constituent Assembly, New Delhi, on 17-12-1946.

Ambedkar had an immense faith in the bright future and evolution of his country. The idea of a united and an independent India gripped his mind firmly. It was not a mere shouting slogan, but a natural outcome of what he had read about India's fundamental unity of the past, though, undoubtedly, the social organisation of India on the basis of four big castes put "an end to the simplicity, freedom and equality that had characterized the unity of the people in the Vedic Age."¹ Even during the talks of achieving freedom for India, his ultimate goal was how to unite the people. He says : "So far as the ultimate goal is concerned, none of us have any apprehension or doubt. Our difficulty was not about the ultimate thing but how to unite the heterogenous mass that we are today to take a decision in common and march in a co-operative way on that road, which is bound to lead us to unity."²

With a deep faith in India's people, Ambedkar discouraged all heterogeneity, doubts and differences and appealed to them for social and national unity. "I should have thought, therefore, that in order to make a start and in order to induce every part and every section in this country to co-operate, it would be an act of the greatest statesmanship for the majority part even to make a concession to the prejudices of the people who are not prepared to march together, and it is for that, I propose to make this appeal. Let us leave aside slogans which frighten people. Let us even make concessions to the prejudices of our opponents. Bring them in, so that they may willingly join this march on that road which must necessarily lead us to unity."³

It is not enough to hold the people together. Ambedkar wants something more in the name of unity, i. e., spiritual unity of the people. "If unity is to be of an abiding character", he says, "it must be founded on a sense of kinship, in the feeling of being kindred. In short, it must be spiritual".⁴ To him, ".....what is wanted is not merely political unity but a true union of heart and soul, in other words, social unity.

1. Husain, S. A. : *Indian Culture*, p. 6.

2. *Thus Spoke Ambedkar*, pp. 97-98.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

4. *PP.*, p. 48.

Political unity is worth nothing, if it is not the expression of real union. It is as precarious as the unity between persons, who without being friends become allies of each other.....Personally, I do not think that a permanent union can be made to depend upon the satisfaction of mere material interests.”¹ It is clear that the unity of the country, not only political and social, but also spiritual, was the supreme concern of Ambedkar’s freedom-movement. Unity, thus, appeared, to him, as something much nobler a task than mere conflict with the alien government. The real factor was to establish all-round harmony amidst the people.

National Feeling Defined.

The predominant characteristic of “national feeling”, according to Ambedkar, is “a feeling of consciousness of kind”. It is, in a sense belonging together and leaving aside the rest. He says : “It is a feeling of a corporate sentiment of oneness which makes those who are charged with it feel that they are kith and kin. This national feeling is a double-edged feeling. It is at once a feeling of fellowship for one’s own kith and kin and an anti-fellowship feeling for those who are not one’s own kith and kin.”²

National feeling, thus explained, is essentially “a double-edged feeling”. To Ambedkar, it is “a feeling of consciousness of kind which is on the one hand binds together those who have it, so strongly that it overrides all differences arising out of economic conflicts or social gradations and, on the other hand, severs them from those who are not of their kind. It is a feeling not to belong to any other group. This is the essence of what is called a nationality and national feeling.”³

However, it does not mean that Ambedkar moved into a narrow circle of nationalism. Nationalism, in a sense, is an obstacle to international understanding and fellowship. Though to him, national feeling is both a fellowship and an anti-fellowship element, there is no room for race-hatred, caste-feeling, and social prejudices in his concept of nationalism. If nationalism is harmful to humanity, it will ultimately prove

1. PP., pp. 180-181.

2. PP., p. 13.

3. PP., p. 13.

itself nothing but a sort of coercion. He would not like to associate with such a nationalism, for the solution of any human problem can never be attained on racial discrimination and narrow ground of nationalism.

Here Ambedkar would definitely agree with Swami Vivekanand who preached : "I am thoroughly convinced that no individual or nation can live by holding itself apart from the community of others, and wherever such an attempt has been made under false ideas of greatness, policy or holiness—the result has always been disastrous to the secluding one. The fact of our isolation from all the other nations of the world is the cause of our degeneration and its only remedy is getting back into the current of the rest of the world. Motion is the sign of life."¹ To Ambedkar, national feeling is not merely negative. It is essentially positive, if the people long to live together. Whenever Ambedkar witnessed the horrors of rabid nationalism, he felt desire to bring the people of India together by broadening their outlook of Indian nationalism in the light of international affairs. In fact, without doing so, it would be difficult for India to live a life of international friendship, love and brotherhood.

Nationality and Nationalism.

It is possible for nations to exist, and even for centuries, in unreflective silence, while there continues to live a spiritual essence of a national life of which many of its members are not aware. So, to Ambedkar, it must be admitted that "there do exist cases, where people are aware of their nationality, but this awareness does not produce in them that passion which is called nationalism.....there may be nations conscious of themselves without being charged with nationalism."²

There is a difference between nationality and nationalism. They are two different psychological states of human mind. Ambedkar says that nationality means "consciousness of kind, awareness of the existence of that kinship". However, it does not mean that they are poles apart and altogether unrelated to each other. They have an intimate relationship. It is true that there cannot be nationalism without the feeling of nationality

1. Quoted in *The Discovery of India*, by Jawahar Lal Nehru, p. 340.
2. *PP.*, p. 20.

being in existence. But it is not necessary that there cannot be nationality without having nationalism. He says : "The feeling of nationality may be present and yet the feeling of nationalism may be quite absent. That is to say, nationality does not, in all cases, produce nationalism."¹

To Ambedkar, nationality can flare up into nationalism, only when two conditions are present. (i) There must arise the will to live as a nation. Nationalism is a dynamic expression of that desire. (ii) There must be a territory which nationalism could occupy and make it a State, as well as a cultural home of the nation. Without such a territory, nationalism would be a soul, as it were, wandering in search of a body in which to begin life over again and dies out finding none.² A strong will to live as a nation and to make a state or cultural home with a definite territory constitutes the essence of nationalism in Ambedkar's political thought.

"Nationalism", Ambedkar says, "is not a matter of political nexus or cash nexus, for the simple reason that union cannot be the result of calculation of mere externals. Where two communities live a life which is exclusive and self-inclosed for five years, they will not be one, because, they are made to come together on one day in five years for the purposes of voting in an election."³ To him, such political meeting cannot by itself produce nationalism in the hearts of different people. Political unity needs some permanent basis to exist, perpetually. It should be suckled and supported by social fellowship. What he, therefore, wants is social unity among the varied modes of human life. "Without social union", he predicts, "political unity is difficult to be achieved. If achieved, it would be as precarious as a summer sapling, liable to be uprooted by the gust of a hostile wind".⁴

To Ambedkar, who has a deep faith in Indian nationalism, mere political unity cannot yield much. Social unity is also essential to bind the people together, because with mere political unity, India may be a State. "But to be a State", he says, "is not to be a nation and a State, which is not a nation, has small prospects of survival in the struggle for existence.

1. PP., p. 21.
3. PP., p. 259.

2. PP., p. 21.
4. PP., p. 185.

This is especially true where nationalism—the most dynamic force of modern times—is seeking everywhere to free itself by the destruction and disruption of all mixed states.”¹ The danger, therefore, to a mixed and composite lies not so much in “external aggression” as in the “internal state resurgence” of nationalities which are fragmented, entrapped, suppressed and held against their will. The only way to hold the different communities together which have some distinct features, is social brotherhood—a sense of oneness, without which all other unions can easily be broken up into pieces.

In Ambedkar’s political thought, it clearly appears, true nationalism must satisfy two conditions. Nationalism, in relation to a nation, should be based fundamentally on a strong feeling of social unity. Without it, nationalism cannot long exist. And nationalism, in relation to internationalism, should be founded on human brotherhood. Otherwise, it may create conflicts and cause wars among the different countries of the world. In other words, nationalism should not be a tyranny and menace to any other community and country.

Against Gangsterism in Politics.

Dr. Ambedkar is vehemently opposed to the gangster’s method in politics. To him, gangsterism means vandalism and vendettas—a deliberate and planned sabotage. By it, social and political riots are caused on a large scale. During the struggle of the freedom movement, this method of gangsterism became a settled part of some of communities.² It was their simple strategy in politics, which caused havoc and took many human lives, which otherwise would have enjoyed some years more in this world. It is all due to the lack of political understanding on the part of different communities. To win some rights, though not very essential, these communities lose self-control and try to conquer others by the methods of coercion, threat and destruction. Wilful destruction and disruption become the soul of their movement. This is why, Ambedkar condemned gangsterism when there was talk of freedom for our country.

The spread of gangsterism in the body politic creates a mentality which is sure to bring forth a life and death struggle

1. PP., p. 185,

2. Cf. PP., p. 260.

leading to disunity, disruption and destruction, among the people themselves. Gangsters destroy cohesion, weaken the love and faith of the people and prevent the use, if not retardation of their moral and human resources. People except the saboteurs themselves became anaemic and live in a sickly state, ineffective, like a living corpse, dead though not buried. Therefore, this method, to Ambedkar, is inhuman uncalled for in any sane society of human beings.

Moreover, people develop a spirit of retaliation and no longer feel any compunction in killing their opponents. The worst state of affairs exists when the opponents, too, create in themselves a feeling of retaliation and revenge. Ambedkar says : "This spirit of retaliation bids fair to produce the ugly spectacle of gangsterism against gangsterism."¹ This is, therefore, an undesirable trend in a healthy and happy political life. Even today, the people believe in such a cruel method, which has recently taken many innocent lives of children, men and women. They should understand that gangsterism cannot solve any human problem. It rather creates many other problems. It must be eradicated from all civilized societies, if the people are to live in peace, love and harmony.

The Policy of Appeasement Harmful.

Ambedkar was always and categorically opposed to the policy of appeasement. He usually favoured a settlement provided there were sufficient grounds. "Appeasement", according to him, "means buying off the aggressor by conniving at his acts of murder, rape, arson and loot against innocent persons who happen for the moment to be the victims of his displeasure."² This type of policy gives the man, to whom the appeasement is accorded, the freedom to realise both his dues and undues as and when he likes. Such a man is never satisfied, and as the human nature is, he demands more and more whenever he gets time and opportunity. If not appeased he may use the method of gangsterism, according to Ambedkar.

What Ambedkar wants is settlement. He says : ".....settlement means laying down the bounds which neither party to it can transgress. Appeasement sets no limits to the demands and aspirations of the aggressor. Settlement does."³ This

1. PP., p. 260.

2. PP., p. 261.

3. PP., p. 261.

policy is also known as the policy of concessions. Referring to the freedom movement, Ambedkar observes : ".....the Congress has failed to realize.....that the policy of concession has increased Muslim aggressiveness, and what is worse, Muslims interpret these concessions as a sign of defeatism on the part of the Hindus and the absence of the will to resist. This policy of appeasement will involve the Hindus in the same fearful situation in which the Allies found themselves as a result of the policy of appeasement which they adopted towards Hitler."¹ To Ambedkar, this policy creates political malaise, no less acute than the malaise of social stagnation. Appeasement creates troubles from time to time. The only remedy, therefore, is a settlement. It gives peace and tranquillity to the people living in insecurity due to a growing political appetite, i. e., appeasement.

When Ambedkar talks of settlement, his main emphasis is on the inevitable which must be attended to. "I am one of those who believe that what is inevitable must be faced. There is no use in burying one's head in the sand and refusing to take notice of what is happening round about because the sound of it hurts one's sentiments."² People should seek the solution of the problem before it creates unnecessary troubles and aggravates the existing conditions. Appeasement, slackness and procrastination in the face of inevitables are such things that cannot give permanent peace to political life. Ambedkar is one of those who believe that one must, if one can, be ready with a solution long before the hour of decision arrives. It is wise to build a bridge if one knows that one will be forced to cross the river.

No doubt, Ambedkar believes in a sincere settlement and appeals to attend to the inevitable, he does not submit at any cost to the wrong. Submission to the wrong, in any sphere of life, spoils the moral stamina of human existence. Settlement is a rational approach to political activities. It gives to both parties what is their due. Ambedkar, thus, likes to say that people, in political life, if they are really to live a life of dignity, strength and stability, should never submit to the evil-doers and to their wrong deeds. Settlement is the settlement of a just

1. PP., p. 261.

2. PP., p. 383.

cause. It does not mean to yield to the strong and to his threats. Otherwise, there would be no political peace and social democracy.

According to Ambedkar, gangsterism requires submission to the wrong, whereas appeasement is not generally so. Nonetheless, both appeasement and gangsterism prevent the growth and development of honest democratic institutions and humanistic attitudes. They create a society in which life is not worthwhile. It is the rule of Nature that men cannot survive in the midst of constant troubles, conflicts and wars. This is why, Ambedkar condemns such things in his scheme of human life.

Nation and Community.

Ambedkar makes a clear distinction between a nation and a community, though some political philosophers do not feel the necessity for making any distinctions within the category of the governed. They think it is a matter of no importance whether those who are included in the category of the governed from a community or a nation. The force of circumstances, however, compelled the political philosophers in India to make a distinction between them. It is not a mere distinction without a difference, but a distinction which is substantial and consequently the difference is fundamental.¹

This distinction between a community and a nation is fundamental. It will be clear from the difference in the rights which political philosophers are prepared to permit to a community and those they are prepared to allow to a nation, against the Government established by law. To a community, they are prepared to allow only the right of insurrection. But to a nation, they are willing to concede the right of disruption.² According to Ambedkar, a right of insurrection is restricted only to insisting on a change in the mode and manner of government; the right of disruption is greater than the right of insurrection and extend to the secession of a group of the members of a State with a secession of the portion of the State's territory in its occupation. To him, this difference comes to this: "a community has a right to safeguard, a nation has right to demand separation". What must be the basis of this difference?³

1. PP., p. 320.

2. PP. pp. 320-321.

3. PP., pp. 321-322.

Prof. Sidgwick justifies a community's right to insurrection. To him, an insurrection may sometimes induce redress of grievances, even when the insurgents are clearly weaker in physical force ; since it may bring home to the majority the intensity of the sense of injury aroused by their actions. For similar reasons again a potential conflict may be anticipated by a compromise. In short, the fear of provoking disorder may be a salutary check on the persons constitutionally invested with supreme power under a democratic as well as under other forms of government. A moral right of insurrection then must be held to exist in the most popularly governed community.¹ As regards the right to disruption, some of those who hold that government to be legitimate must rest on the consent of the governed, appear not to shrink from drawing this inference. They appear to qualify the right of the majority of members of a State to rule by allowing the claim of a minority that suffers from the exercise of this right to secede and form a new State's territory. There are cases in which the true interests of the whole may be promoted by disruption.²

But to Ambedkar, the political thinkers including Prof. Sidgwick, have not given reason why the right of one is limited to insurrection and why that of the other extends to disruption. Reasons are both interesting and instructive. "To my mind, the reason for this difference pertains to questions of ultimate destiny. A State either consists of a series of communities or it consists of a series of nations. In a State, which is composed of a series of communities, one community may be arrayed against another community and the two may be opposed to each other. But in the matter of their ultimate destiny they feel they are one. But in a State, which is composed of a series of nations, when one nation rises against the other, the conflict is one as to differences of ultimate destiny."³

This is the distinction between community and a nation at a first glance. It is this distinction which explains the difference in their political rights. There is nothing new or original in this explanation. It is merely another way of stating why the

1. *Elements of Politics*, pp. 646-647.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 648-649.

3. *PP.*, p. 322.

community has one kind of right and the nation another of quite a different kind. Ambedkar says: "A community has a right of insurrection because it is satisfied with it. All that it wants is a change in the mode and form of government. Its quarrel is not over any difference of ultimate destiny. A nation has to be accorded the right of disruption because it will not be satisfied with mere change in the form of government. Its quarrel is over the question of ultimate destiny. If it will not be satisfied unless the unnatural bond that binds them is dissolved, then prudence and even ethics demands that the bond shall be dissolved and they shall be freed each to pursue its own destiny."¹

This is what actually Ambedkar has to say on the distinction between a community and a nation: ".....that a community, however, different from and, however, opposed to other communities, major or minor, is one with the rest in the matter of the ultimate destiny of all. A nation, on the other hand, is not only different from other components of the State but it believes in and cherishes a different destiny totally antagonistic to the destiny entertained by other component elements in the State."² In other words, a nation is a group of people, generally, but not essentially, inhabiting a single country, and bound together by common laws, customs and traditions, unlike of other communities.

This difference appears, to Ambedkar, so deep that, speaking for himself, he does not hesitate to adopt it as a test to distinguish a community from a nation. He defines these terms with precision and clarity thus: "A people who, notwithstanding their differences accept a common destiny for themselves as well as for their opponents, are a community. A people who are not only different from the rest but who refuse to accept for themselves the same destiny which others do, are a nation."³ From the point of view of harmony in the body politic, the difference is one of the most vital characters. This difference is the difference of ultimate destiny. In fact, the dynamic character of this difference is undeniable, because if it persists, it cannot but have the effect of rendering the State in fragments. So far as

1. PP., p. 322.

3. PP., p. 331,

2. PP., p. 331.

the safeguard of the people are concerned, there cannot be any difference between a community and a nation, and, therefore, a community is entitled to claim the same rights and safeguards as a nation can.

The Principle of Self-determination.

The principle of self-determination is quite old, if it is considered in the light of man and metaphysics, society and ethics. But politically it has now become current since the revolt against colonialism, and also what is known as imperialism, in Asia and Africa. It has developed two different meanings. During the 19th century, the "self-determination meant the right to establish a form of government in accordance with the wishes of the people." But at present, Ambedkar remarks : "Self-determination has meant the right to obtain national independence from an alien race irrespective of the form of government."¹ It is now playing an important role in the political life of backward and dependent countries. In a sense, self-determination has become the birthright of all freedom-loving people and countries.

According to Ambedkar, the principle of self-determination has certain limitations. First of these is : "self-determination must be by the people." If self-determination is to be decided by mere individuals and political parties, there may be strange opinions and conflicting claims. These parties may lead to destructive feelings and unhappy happenings. So in order to avoid unhappy events, to Ambedkar, "self-determination is a determination by the people and by nobody else."² And in fact, an individual or a political party has no right for self-determination, if not supported by all men of a country. What matters most is the will of the people who are the actual inhabitants of a particular country.

The other limitation is "the degree of imperative character with which the principle of self-determination can be said to be invested". Self-determination is always claimed by a nation, though this doctrine is not a universal principle. It is a matter of opinion upon which honest and impartial minds differ. To Ambedkar, there are two reasons why this must be so—(i) 'nationality is not such a sacrosanct and absolute principle as to

1. PP., p. 369.

2. PP., p. 370.

give it the character of a categorical imperative, overriding every other consideration, and (ii) separation is not quite so essential for the maintenance and preservation of a distinct nationality."¹ Different nationalities may live together. They can form a united nation maintaining and preserving their own cultural and religious heritage.

Another limitation is "the issue of self-determination". "Self-determination for a nationality may take the form of cultural independence or may take the form of territorial independence." Which form it can take, must depend upon the territorial layout of the population. To Ambedkar, "If a nationality lives in easily severable and contiguous areas, other things being equal, a case can be made out for territorial independence. But where owing to inextricable intermingling the nationalities are so mixed up that the areas they occupy are not easily severable, then all that they can be entitled to is cultural independence. Territorial independence in a case like this is an impossibility. They are doomed to live together. The only other alternative they have is to migrate."² Such is the definition—the scope and limitations of self-determination in Ambedkar's political thought. This principle of self-determination is not absolute one. It is much more relative and is to be considered in the light of many factors like language, religion, land and geographical elements.

Linguism and Nationalism.

Ambedkar has a deep faith in India's cultural unity. "Her unity is as ancient as Nature. Within this geographic unit and covering the whole of it there has been a cultural unity from time immemorial. This cultural unity has defied political and racial divisions. At any rate for the last hundred and fifty years all institutions—cultural, political, economic, legal and administrative—have been working on a single, uniform spring of action. In any discussion,.....the fact cannot be lost sight of, namely, that the starting point, if not the governing factor, is the fundamental unity of India."³ So as a tradition, Ambedkar discounts all disruptive tendencies, all superficial distinctions based on different religions and languages, though he admits the disadvantages of such diversity.

1. PP., p. 371.

2. PP., p. 371.

3. PP., p. 344.

Here Ambedkar comes very near to Lala Hardayal who says : "It is indeed sad to reflect that the unity of mankind has been marred and mangled by the diversity of languages which has engendered hatred, suspicion, and bloodshed. It is natural that men should be unwilling and unable to fraternize with strangers who cannot hold converse with them. Mutual intelligibility is a necessary condition of co-operation. Language has erected an almost unsurmountable Chinese Wall of Separation between one people and another."¹ But, at the same time, Lalaji says : "As the unification of language proceeds, strife and hatred are diminished, as the political state is generally founded on the basis of a common language."²

Ambedkar recognizes the demerits of a diversity of language in a country, but the different languages, to him, should not hinder the growth and spirit of nationalism. There are cases of Canada, Switzerland and South Africa, which have a diversity of languages. These are bilingual States. Linguism does not harm the national spirit in these countries. "One State, one language" he observes, "is a universal feature of almost every State". He cites the examples of France, Italy, England and the United States of America. In all these States, "One language is the rule". The same may be held for India. With a full-blooded faith in Indian nationalism, he says : "One language can unite people. Two languages are sure to divide people. This is an inexorable law. Culture is conserved by language. Since Indians wish to unite and develop a common culture it is the bounden duty of all Indians to own up Hindi as their language."³ In this way, Ambedkar stresses on the need of a common language as conceived by many others. This will not only strengthen the hands of unity and the spirit of nationalism, but also it will be an important for "racial and cultural conflicts".

Ambedkar wants something more from the people of this great country for their own good, unity and welfare. He says : "Any Indian who does not accept this proposal as part and parcel of a linguistic State has no right to be an Indian. He may be

1. *Hints for Self-Culture*, pp. 231-232.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 232.

3. Ambedkar, B. R. : *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, p. 12.

a hundred per cent Maharashtrian, a hundred per cent Tamil or a hundred per cent Gujarati, but he cannot be an Indian in the real sense of the word except in a geographical sense.¹ Through one common language, Ambedkar wishes to have two things—a sense of unity and oneness and a strong feeling of nationalism. So long as there are many languages in all States, there may be war among them. The sense of human unity in a national society is almost absent without a common language. People speaking different languages can understand only their own kith and kin. They may not be able to promote thoughts and actions for the development and happiness of all men, irrespective of race, caste and religion. If people wish to become united and one, they have to adopt one common language. Though Ambedkar belonged to non-Hindi speaking area, and his mother-tongue was Marathi, yet he was very confident of one language being accepted by all countrymen, which would make an easiest way to democracy and removal of racial and cultural tensions in our own land.

Nationalism and Communalism.

Ambedkar, always, throughout and everywhere, regards communalism as the most dangerous persistent and pestilential exhibition of a narrow type of faith. It opposes full-blooded nationalism, hampers the happiness of other social groups and mars social unity. What communalism is may be difficult to define, but the essential feature of it, according to him, is a sense of “groupism” based on narrow interests, habits and sheer slogans. It creates anti-social activities. The anti-social spirit is found whenever one group has “interests of its own”. It prevents one group from having mutual cordial relations with another. Its only prevailing purpose is the protection of what one group has got, forcefully or illegally.² In communalism, different communities or religions are involved and so long as one community looks upon the other as menace, there will not be any “social progress and political stability”. The spirit of conservatism and communalism will continue to dominate the thoughts and actions of all communities.³

1. Ibid., p. 12.

2. AC., pp. 28-29.

3. PP., pp. 237-238.

It is quite evident that Ambedkar, as one of the champions of social reform, lays a stress on the need of fighting against separatism, provincialism, linguism, casteism and communalism. All these anti-social and anti-national activities are to be checked and wiped out root and branch from the face of Indian Society. Communalism is the most dangerous disease. It promotes many groups to rob their fellow-brethren and ruin the State. It makes honest public life impossible, because each political group, as it generally happens, endeavours to benefit its own at the expense of society as well as of State. Such a moral failure, in fact, accounts for the very slow progress of public conscience in a country like our own.

According to Ambedkar, casteism is against the spirit of nationalism. It has weakened India, socially and nationally. This caste organisation divides the people into small separate social units in a kind of ascending scale of hatred and a descending scale of contempt. "Caste has killed public spirit. Caste has destroyed the sense of public charity. Caste has made public opinion impossible. Virtue has become caste-ridden and morality has become caste-bound. There is no sympathy to the deserving. There is no appreciation of the meritorious. There is no charity to the needy. Suffreing as such calls for no response. There is charity but it begins with the caste and ends with the caste. There is sympathy but not for men of other caste."¹ This cast feeling is the mother of communalism. "The existence of caste and caste consciousness has served to keep the memory of past feuds between castes green and has prevented solidarity."² To Ambedkar, nationalism means the negation of caste-spirit and caste-spirit is nothing but a deep-rooted communalism. He characterizes castes as dens of selfishness and hypocrisy.

Thus, if the communal spirit and regional patriotism, based on caste considerations, do not disappear, communalism will be the greatest calamity for the unity of Indian nation. Communal feelings are a menace to national integration and hamper the way for liberty, equality and fraternity. These feelings are incompatible with democracy and civil government. And Ambedkar is a strong supporter of democratic institutions for

1. AC., p. 37.

2. AC., p. 29.

the happy future of his nation. He has made his newly independent country conscious of its real mission—the fundamental rule of social duty—to shun all caste and communal thoughts and actions, so that everybody, irrespective of any distinctions, may be happy. The concept of Ambedkar's nationalism, thus, encourages man to love his country and prepare him to hate all those who are the enemies of country or in any way impede the progress of his nation. Nationalism is nothing, if it does not create love for the country and respect for mankind.

Nationalism, to Ambedkar, is a spiritual phenomenon rooted in humanism. It is the expression of the inner unity of a people. A nation is the manifestation of the social and cultural unity of human beings. He is convinced that nationalism is a process of social assimilation and, therefore, nationalism is to receive its perfect harmony in the realization of social brotherhood of men irrespective of caste, colour and creed. So long as there is caste and discrimination, there cannot be a strong and prosperous nation. Nationalism should enable man to transcend the bounds of the caste, the tribe and the locality.

Secularism and Nationalism.

Ambedkar always believes in only one nationalism, i. e., the Indian nationalism. He does not hold any religious view of nationalism such as Hindu nationalism or Muslim nationalism. Some people have associated it with the rule of the majority and its monopoly of power, which the Doctor vehemently opposes. He says : "Unfortunately for the minorities in India, Indian nationalism has developed a new doctrine which may be called the Divine Right of the Majority to rule the minorities according to the wishes of the majority. Any claim for the sharing of power by the minority is called communalism while the monopolizing of the whole power by the majority is called Nationalism."¹ Ambedkar never allows his nationalistic spirit to submit to such a type of irrationalism. Monopoly of the power and prestige by certain religious or political groups in majority is not nationalism. This attitude, if rightly considered, is itself anti-national. It becomes a source of nationalistic fanaticism. It easily leads to the coercion of the minority by the majority.

1. SM., p. 52.

Ambedkar regards religion as an essential part of India's destiny. "Religion refers to our common spiritual struggles and aspirations."¹ To Ambedkar, no religion should disrupt the India's spirit of nationalism and secularism. He accepts the principle of secularism for the future existence of all religions, for all men cannot come under one religious faith. There will always be a diversity of religions in India. However, secularism does not mean that the State shall not take into consideration "the religious sentiments of the people". It means that there should be no imposition of any religion upon the people.² They can accept different religions in accordance with their conscience.

According to Ambedkar, men cannot live by bread alone ; they have a mind which needs proper food for thought; religion instils hope in men and puts them into action. But he does not want irrational nationalism in the name of religion. Religious differences, though natural in Indian Society, should not in any way hamper the development of a strong current of national unity. What he wants is that "religion should be the binding force which deepens the solidarity of human society". Religion is the foundation whereupon depends the social solidarity. It is the social solidarity which can lead the people to human happiness, national unity, military strength and political stability.

In the Indian nation, all religions have equal importance. To Ambedkar, these religions should not be a symbol of inhuman treatment, ignorance and ignominy. They should essentially be a binding force behind the national spirit. Despite their historical antagonism and feuds, all religions should co-exist to create a sense of social service which is the stable foundation of a strong nation. Thus Ambedkar, as the champion of secularism, advocates for religious tolerance and condemns all kinds of hypocrisy and oppression in the name of religion and nationalism. Otherwise, national relations will be a violation of the basic principles of democracy and contrary to the best interests of government and religion. Nationalism and secularism should try to build up a fellowship of believers by

1. Radhakrishnan, S. : *Religion and Society*, p. 13.

2. Pylee, M. V. : *India's Constitution*, p. 111.

bringing them together for emotional integration and social unity. This is what Ambedkar aspired for.

Nationalism and Patriotism.

Patriotism and nationalism are two different, though relative terms. "Nationalism, in its proper sense, is a term which belongs to the area of society rather than that of the State : it is a feeling of attachment to the tradition and achievement of the whole national society, in all the varied range of its life, just as patriotism (if we distinguish it from nationalism) is a feeling of attachment to the very soil and the physical features of the whole 'land of our birth' or patria, in all its sweep and variety."¹

Nationalism and patriotism are such vital ideas that are related to human society. Without having any relation to human needs and social conditions, their true meaning cannot be determined. But in this country, as Ambedkar observes : ".....nationalists and patriots are a peculiar people. A patriot and a nationalist in India is one who sees with open eyes his fellowmen treated as being less than men. But his humanity does not rise in protest. He knows that men and women for no cause are denied their human rights. But it does not prick his civic sense to helpful action. He finds whole classes of people shut out from public employment. But it does not rouse his sense of justice and fair play. Hundreds of evil practices that injure man and society are perceived by him. But they do not sicken him with disgust."²

It is evident that Ambedkar does not want hypocrisy in the name of nationalism and patriotism. These terms are dynamic and do not induce passivity in the adherents of them. Sitting silently with folded hands and seeing things as they are, while claiming to be true nationalists and patriots, without any reaction to injustice, inequality and barbarism, is against the very spirit of justice, patriotism and nationalism. To Ambedkar, patriotism demands action in right direction and reaction

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1. Barker, E. : *Principles of Social and Political Theory*, p. 161.
 2. *Thus Spoke Ambedkar*, p. 19.

against all wrongs. Mere attachment to the land is half-hearted patriotic spirit. He wishes a patriot and a nationalist to have in themselves a full-blooded faith in doing justice and good to the needy, the lowly and the weak.

Ambedkar, the leader of the downtrodden masses, does not strive for power in the name of patriotism. As he observes : "The patriot's one cry is power and more power for him and for his class."¹ He does not belong to such a class of patriots in Indian Society. "I am glad I do not belong to that class of patriots. I belong to that class which takes its stand on democracy and which seeks to destroy monopoly in every shape and form. Our aim is to realize in practice our ideal of one man, one value in all walks of life, political, economic and social."² This, in Ambedkar's political attitude, is the essence of patriotism.

To Ambedkar, patriotism and nationalism mean democracy, liberty and equality. He stands to total negation of disruptive, sectarian, reactionary, obscurantist and opportunist elements in the national life of Indian Society. With a deep faith in Indian nationalism, he advises the people not to support the cruel and corrupt institutions of patriotism and nationalism. They eat into the vitals of human society based on reason, love and logic. To him, liberty, equality and fraternity prescribe the minimum that all men and women should be entitled to claim in the national Society and State. Fraternity, in Ambedkar's view, stands for love and brotherhood. Love is the basis of society around which all the laws and institutions should revolve for ever. His view of patriotism and nationalism implies economic, political, social and cultural equality and liberty and moral values without which the Indian nation, in the long run, will not flourish and prosper. Patriotism and nationalism should understand the needs of the common man and make him free from want and misery and, thus, lead a life of hope and happiness.

Ambedkar's view of patriotism and nationalism, obviously, creates a spirit of social brotherhood and a determination to improve the lot of the people who live in the same country but are not otherwise treated as full men. Patriotism should attach

1. Round Table Conference, (First Session from 12-11-1930 to 19-1-1931) Proceedings, pp. 438-441.
2. Ibid., pp. 438-441.

more importance to bettering the life of the degraded masses, uneducated people and sick citizens. And it is because of the awakening of such a spirit in patriots and nationalists that they demand the ending of imperialism, bureaucracy, social tyranny, forced labour, casteism, communalism, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, ill-treatment and insecurity.

Opposition to Hero-worship.

Ambedkar, by training and temperament, is quite suited to democracy, but he is smothered by the crowd, noisy and undemocratic displays which smack of hero-worship. Sometimes his heart craves for loneliness, a calm and quiet atmosphere. But such a rule of life is not applicable to him. He is destined to have a busy life. He is from that section of society to which peace and rest were denied. It is sheer love—love of social duty—that he has given his life to the inevitability of such a busy and noisy life. He hopes that “sincerity of purpose” and “love of duty” would inspire him with a confidence and fearlessness to perform the task of emancipating the weak and the lowly from a low standard of life.

Ambedkar, in reward to his heart-rendering services to humanity, does not wish that he should be worshipped like a hero. He is totally against the hero-worship in the political life of his country, because it prevents a spirit of inquiry, a sense of creativity and an independent attitude of mind. He says: “These ideas of hero-worship will bring ruin on you if you do not nip them in the bud. By defying an individual, you repose faith for your safety and salvation in one single individual with the result that you get into the habit of dependence and indifferent to your duty. If you fall a victim to these ideas, your fate will be no better than logs of wood in the national stream of life. Your struggle will come to naught.”¹ In fact, the people should strive and struggle independently, though under somebody’s leadership, yet not blindly, for their just cause. In independent minds hope and courage come naturally to help the helpless and to rouse the people from dogmatic slumber.

Ambedkar criticizes Indian journalism for worshipping heroes blindly. “Journalism in India was once a profession.

1. LM., p. 234.

It has now become a trade. It has no more moral function than the manufacture of soap. It does not regard itself as the responsible adviser of the public. To give the news uncoloured by any motive, to present a certain view of public policy which it believes to be for the good of the community to correct and chastise without fear all those no matter how high, who have chosen a wrong or a barren path, is not regarded by journalism in India as its first or foremost duty. To accept a hero and worship him has become its principal duty."¹ Such a trend in Indian journalism still persists. This is not good. It gives undue publicity to those things which need not so much. Ambedkar observes : "Lord Salisbury spoke of the Northcliffe journalism as written by office-boys for office-boys. Indian journalism is all that plus something more. It is written by drum-boys to glorify their heroes. Never has the interest of the country been sacrificed so senselessly for the propagation of hero-worship. Never has hero-worship become so blind as we see it in India to-day."² Indian journalism should now correct itself, if it claims to be true to its sacred duty of presenting facts as they are—with a view to interpreting them for the benefit of all.

Ambedkar refused to mislead people by playing upon, and exploiting the patriotic sentiments of the people. He refused to be a party to methods which were crude, cruel and corrupt. Ambedkar is not a forged bank-note and in respecting him the people have no feeling of kneeling before anything that is false. Even his fellow rationalists questioned him many times. He was glad and accepted their right views on many occasions.

Ambedkar makes a distinction between admiration and hero-worship of man. To him, "Hero-worship in the sense of expressing our unbounded admiration is one thing. To obey the hero is a totally different kind of hero-worship. There is nothing wrong in the former while the latter is no doubt a most pernicious thing".³ The former is only man's respect for anything noble and true and is consistent with respect ; while the latter is the villain's fealty to his lord and is a sign of debasement. He says : "The former does not take away

1. RG., pp. 48-49.

2. RG., p. 49.

3. RG., p. 59.

one's intelligence to think and independence to act. The latter makes one a perfect fool. The former involves no disaster to the State. The latter is the source of positive danger to it."¹

Ambedkar hopes that his countrymen will some day learn that the country is greater than the men, the heroes, and hero-worship and service to India are two different things. The service to the people is greater than the worship of political heroes. The worship of political heroes has killed public conscience, because the heroes think only of their worshippers and neglect the common cause of mankind. No country can maintain democratic tradition and no people can preserve a true representative government, if the generality of the people are imbued with an unrestrained sense of hero-worship. Democracy cannot long survive among these people in whom the loudest voice counts as the voice of wisdom and reason.

Hero-worship is, in fact, against the spirit of democracy. To Ambedkar, the defenders and champions of democratic ideals should not lay their liberties at the feet of even a great man or trust him with powers which enables him to subvert their democratic institutions. He says : "There is nothing wrong in beings grateful to great men who have rendered life-long service to the country ; but there are limits to gratefulness. As has been well said by the Irish patriot Daniel O'Connell, "No man can be grateful at the cost of his honour ; no woman can be grateful at the cost of her chastity ; and no nation can be grateful at the cost of its liberty". This caution is far more necessary in the case of India than in the case of any other country. For, in India Bhakti plays a part in politics unequalled in magnitude than the part it plays apart in politics of any other country in the world. Bhakti may be a road to the salvation of the soul ; but in politics, Bhakti or hero-worship is a sure road to degradation and eventual dictatorship."² In this way, Ambedkar warns the people against the spirit of irrational and blind hero-worship which, today, prevails in the country. If it persists for the next few years, this country would face immense difficulties. It is, therefore, better to abandon the habit of hero-worship not for the sake of the good of the country and its people. The condemnation of hero-worship will lead us to the new values of social life.

1. RG., p. 60.

2. LM., pp. 411-412.

A Rational Attitude to Nationalism.

Ambedkar looks to something unique in the continuity of the cultural tradition of his country. This is the spirit of love to its soil. In modern times, it is known as nationalism. Nationalism, to him, is not a natural desire. It is an acquired habit of love and hate. But the love of one's native soil and loyalty to regional traditions, to not mean violent hostility to one's neighbours. Ambedkar's spirit of nationalism took shape through his revolt, strivings and struggles against both Indian orthodoxy (conservative traditionalism) and British rule, without using any violent method and hostile attitude.

From this point of view, nationalism, to Ambedkar, is not the spirit of the whole revivalism of India's past. No doubt, he looks back to the past with respect and reverence, but he believes in making a distinction between a good or a bad, a right or a wrong, a workable or unworkable scheme of social and national life.¹ With a firm faith in rationalism, he stands for getting rid of a crippled and cramped religious outlook, supernatural beliefs and metaphysical speculation. He wants the people to discard what is not good and true in the past and invites them to study the present. He does not find something vital and enduring in the ideals of those who aspire for the whole revivalism, though he thinks there is a great deal to be followed. In Buddhist traditions, he finds many things useful for the man today. These are—love, kindness and international brotherhood, the essentials of human happiness. Even India's foreign relations, today, are in accordance with the Buddhist traditions.

Ambedkar's attitude towards nationalism, past and present, is rational. He does not like extreme nationalism, which creates a spirit of intolerance. Extreme nationalism easily develops into irrationalism and is hardly conducive to human welfare. Ambedkar knows well that humanity progresses only when there is a spirit of co-operation, i. e., social brotherhood, and not when there is too much of inequality and injustice. Nationalism, to him, should not be prejudiced and inhuman, aggressive and intolerable. Nationalism should not stop on the frontiers of religion and regional patriotism.

1. Cf. AC., pp. 77-78.

Nationalism, in Ambedkar's political thought, demands not only the liberation of every slave country, but also the freedom for all subject and subjugated masses even in free countries. This attitude can lessen human tension, social struggle and mental bitterness in the different parts of the world. The tide of imperialism, domination and slavery can be checked by the tide of nationalism. To Ambedkar, under the present circumstances, nationalism and internationalism have to co-operate in order to mitigate human burden and misery. The only way for the nations of the world to exist and to progress is through co-operation and mutual respect, because the whole world today has become interdependent.

The spirit of freedom and social emancipation developed in Ambedkar a strong sense of nationalism. Behind his war of many years, there was a strong desire to revitalize Indian Society. So nationalism, to him, appeared as something more than mere political freedom. With higher aims, his real mission of life was to see people free and happy, socially, politically and economically, without any coercion, always and everywhere. A true sense of nationalism can endure only when the people as a whole hold fast to constitutional methods for achieving their social and economic objectives. They should abandon the coercive methods of revolution, of civil disobedience and of non-co-operation, because they are now themselves the founders of Indian democracy and the defenders of Indian nationalism.

In building up the Indian nation, Ambedkar aims at higher things of life. Nationalism is not mere a display of political manoeuvre. The real object of nationalism is the people. Without raising the whole level of the common masses, nationalism cannot long survive. It has to build up the real inner strength and outer solidarity among the people. It has to broaden the minds of men in the line of liberal humanitarian nationalism, preserving at the same time, certain ideals and objectives, the material and spiritual growth of man and the unity of all human beings. This is the essence of Ambedkar's concept of nationalism.



CHAPTER 3

People and Democracy

PEOPLE AND DEMOCRACY

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Faith in Democracy.

Ambedkar does not propound any theory of democracy. It is not a matter of much importance, because democracy is not a fulfilment. It is a process. It is a way of life and is subject to changes and chances of time and events. He says : "Everything is vanishing and there is nothing that is permanent in human history."¹ One who practises democracy in actual life need not necessarily be a theoretician. He also contributes something towards the process of democracy. Since the time of Plato and Aristotle, who are regarded as the pioneers of social and political thoughts, many thinkers have come. They endeavoured to give different meanings to democracy. They talked much about the principles of democracy.

But Ambedkar does not merely talk about democracy. He is more a practical man than a theoretician. He is a staunch believer in practical democracy. With an ardent faith in democracy, he declares : ".....It seems to me that there lies on us a very important duty to see that democracy does not vanish from the earth as a governing principle of human relationship. If we believe in it, we must both be true and loyal to it. We must not only be staunch in our faith in democracy, but we must resolve to see that in whatever we do, we do not help the enemies of democracy to uproot the principles liberty, equality and fraternity."²

Ambedkar thinks of democracy from the view of practical life. He extends the hands of love and friendship to all democratic countries of the world. "We must strive along with democratic countries to maintain the basis of democratic civilization."³ He believes in actual working and concerns himself more with the actual problems of democracy. He belongs to

1. WC., p. 194.

2. From an address by Ambedkar delivered at the All-India Depressed Classes Conference, (Third Session), at Nagpur, July, 1942.

3. From the same address.

the realistic school of political scientists. He is not bothered about the principles and theories of political science. He likes to confine himself to the examination of the actual working of the society and State. He likes to study the behaviour of the people as exhibited in their thoughts and actions and tries to learn much from them.

It is true that certain new ideas about democracy have become attractive to the people because of the physical facilities which are easily available to them. Russia talks of people's democracy which Dr. Ambedkar does not accept because of its incompatibility with human love and liberty. There is a bureaucratic regime which prevents "creative self-expression." He would agree with that "What is historically needed in the Soviet Union is the elimination of the bureaucracy.....by the Soviet people and the establishment of socialist democracy. The economic foundation of the Soviet Union society is sound. The defect inheres only in the political superstructure viz., the bureaucratic regime."¹ To him, a bureaucratic society, in the name of people's democracy, is an appalling idea. He has a faith in the virtues of democracy such as freedom of thought and expression without which human life is not worth living. It is this which compels Ambedkar to withdraw himself from attraction of Russian Democracy.

Love for the People.

Ambedkar never claimed, at any time, any exemption, special privilege or treatment on the ground that he was the acknowledged leader of the downtrodden communities. He was given the boundless love and respect by the people he led and guided. It was spontaneous on the part of many, but was also reciprocal on the part of Ambedkar himself. He himself had a great esteem for his land and its people. It was out of compassion that he exhibited a real sense of love in the service of his suppressed and tyrannized brethren. He reminded the people in the memorable words of Tolstoy : "Only those who love can serve."² Without having immense love for people, the service of humanity is not possible. Neither democracy

1. Shah, C. G., *Marxism-Gandhism-Stalinism*, pp. 359-360.

2. Quoted by Ambedkar : *WC.*, p. 139.

and nor nationalism can help them, if the people hate one another.

Ambedkar is vehemently against the scoundrels who make social service their last refuge. He attaches more importance to the service of the needy and the lowly. He emphasizes that such a service to humanity should be regarded as "love's labour". It is very difficult to serve them on the "hire-purchase system" of work, because it cannot produce any lasting good. It is just to suckle them in order to gain some benefit. So what he wants is "a single-minded devotion to one task and one task only".¹ Such a spirit of social service can create bright prospects of democracy in India. Without love and devotion, people cannot hold themselves together for any concerted action for the betterment of human society.

✓ "Ambedkar", says Mr. Keer, "has played the part of destiny in the liberation of suppressed humanity in India. So India must learn to understand his life, character and mission and know him as he is and not as he is distorted by his enemies or deified by his devotees."² In his struggle and striving for the needy and the lowly, Ambedkar depends on the principle of self-help. To him, self-help is the best help. Without self-help nothing can be attained, either for himself or for society. Through self-help man can attain self-elevation and regain his self-respect. Without building one's self, one cannot build others. A man himself should be his own guide and guard. This faith in himself can help man to preserve what is good in human life. Such spirit of vigour and vitality, Ambedkar instilled in the minds of the people. It is true that—

"Staggering legs can never long stride,
Be firm, you will kiss valour and pride."

To Ambedkar, the right guidance is the essence of human progress. He advises the people that they should cherish a noble ideal and follow the right path. And whatever be one's ideal whether of national progress or of self-development, one should patiently exert oneself to reach it. For all great things are achieved by patient industry and by undergoing many

1. WC., p. 139.

2. LM., p. ix.

toils and tribulations. He does not want the people to be satisfied merely with organic pleasures. They should have self-respect and love for the country. He says : "Nothing is more disgraceful for a brave man than to live a life devoid of self-respect and without love for the country."¹

The numerical strength of the downtrodden people is more than any other minority in India. But Ambedkar does not feel any pride in quantity. His chief aim of life is to create the best. Quality of work and knowledge is, in fact, more lasting and lovely to him, for success in life. According to him, it is not enough that a people be unmerically in the majority. They must be always watchful, strong, well-educated and self-respecting to attain and maintain success."² In this way, he becomes one with many, in the communion of those people who form the bulk and beauty of this great land. His love for them was immense. It inspired him to live and to die for the cause of the common people.

As a law-professor, the impression Ambedkar made on his students was lasting and enthralling. Deep and devoted, endowed with a vast knowledge on the subject, he taught his students constitutional law and jurisprudence with love. He was very hopeful about the future role of the student community. He says : "I am very fond of teaching profession. I am also very fond of students. I have dealt with them. I have lectured them in my life. I am very glad to talk to the students. A great lot of the future of this country must necessarily depend on the students of this country. Students are an intelligent part of the community and they can shape the public opinion" in favour of democracy, nationalism and humanism.³

Even such a noble profession as teaching, to Ambedkar, is an obstacle to public service. "I began my career as a professor of Political Economics in the Government Commerce College, Bombay, in 1919, after my return from England. But I soon felt that the Government service was no good for a man who wishes to do public service. A government servant is bound by rules of a discipline. He is hampered at every

1. LM., p. 127.

2. LM., p. 235.

3. An address delivered at D. A. V. College, Jullunder City (Punjab), on 28th October, 1951.

stage in his work of public service.”¹ So having deep faith in public service and love for the people, he left the service and took to legal practice and politics. He thus did legal practice and served the people. These were the alternative currents in his life. His love of the common man led him to social service and to the defence of democracy and liberty. Love is the foundation of all human values. Neither man nor God can do without it.

Practical Aspect of Democracy.

This love and faith in the dignity of the weak, the poor and the lowly, both in their individuality and sociability, developed in Ambedkar an ardent faith in the democratic way of life. During the freedom movement his fundamental aim was to have justice and freedom for the people in the real sense. He aspired for having a government of the people, for the people and by the people. To Him, democracy means no slavery, no caste, no coercion. He wants free-thought, that choice and capacity to live and let live, which according to his conscience, would be the right path to democracy.

To Ambedkar, “Democracy is a mode of associated living. The roots of Democracy are to be searched in social relationship, in terms of the associated life between the people who form the society.”² He is a practical democrat with an ardent faith in democratic machinery as necessary for the management of social relations. In regard to Indian society, he finds poverty, illiteracy and caste distinctions as the positive dangers to democracy. So according to him, educational facilities and economic help should be provided to those, on the one hand, who are illiterates and backward, and on the other, who want to wipe out the roots of caste system in order to safeguard the interests of democracy. Only those who love democracy can maintain it for the good of all.

“If you give education to the lower strata of the Indian Society which is interested in blowing up the caste system”, Ambedkar says, “the caste system will be blown up. At the moment the indiscriminate help given to education by the

1. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 32.

2. LM., p. 487.

Indian Government and American Foundations is going to strengthen the caste system. Giving education to those who want to blow up caste system will improve prospect of Democracy in India and put Democracy in safer hands.”¹ Those who need democracy can show courage good enough to protect it in the country like India. They can even sacrifice themselves in defence of democracy, nationalism and humanism.

Ambedkar's stand is very reasonable when he asks for the education of the masses, because the wide-spread illiteracy and ignorance of these masses is a serious weakness of democracy. Unless the people become able to exercise the franchise in an intelligent manner after understanding the political parties and their programmes in a rational and empirical way, democracy is not safe in India. They may become the victims of empty slogans and false promises. Therefore, to Ambedkar, it is very important to educate the poor masses and develop in them a genuine sense of political consciousness and constitutional temper. Their education means the maintenance of democracy and political order in peace and justice.

According to Ambedkar, democratic society is not merely theoretical. It is also practical. It is related to the actual conditions of the people. It should not benefit only the elite, the people who are already well-to-do and in whose favour there is a traditional class structure of society. “But a democratic society”, he emphasizes, “must assure a life of leisure and culture to each one of its citizens.”² The traditional class structure of society is a positive danger to democracy, because this class structure creates distinctions of rich and poor, high and low, owners and workers, as permanent and sacrosanct parts of social organisation. “Practically speaking in a class structure there is, on the one hand, tyranny, vanity, pride, arrogance, greed, selfishness, and on the other, insecurity, poverty, degradation, loss of liberty, self-reliance, independence, dignity and self-respect.”³ Democratic society cannot be indifferent to such consequences, if it is to live up to its principles of equality and liberty.

The aims of democracy, to Ambedkar, is essentially the practical interest of society as a whole, and not of any class,

1. LM., p. 488.

2. WC., p. 295.

3. WC., p. 296.

group or community. All individuals have to be welcome into the common social living on the ground that they possess common humanity. Men have different capacities, different choices and functions, yet every one of them should find an honourable and equal place in the social organisation. Ambedkar regards democracy, in its practical aspect, as the social organisation of the people in the sense that the people include all members of society. To him, real democracy is opposed to the suppression of minorities. The suppression and exploitation of minorities in any form is the negation of democracy and humanism. If suppression is not stopped, then democracy degenerates into tyranny.¹

In Ambedkar's scheme of political thought, democracy based on associated living will give due weight and influence to all the different elements of society. It will, thus, obviate the undue preponderance of any individual or group. The supreme concern of his life was to make democracy safe for the common man and for the good of this country. This will automatically help the other countries of the world, who aspire for preserving this great human tradition. Democracy is not a gift of Nature. It is a habit of social living and can be acquired by the people themselves for their emancipation and well-being.

Rational Approach to Democracy.

Ambedkar regards democracy as a way of life based on an empirical and rational attitude. Rationalism is a strong faith in reason and its application to physical nature and to human relations. Empiricism is based on the conviction that all knowledge is derived from experience. Ambedkar, as an empiricist rationalist, says that there is nothing fixed, nothing eternal, "that everything is changing, that change is the law of life for individuals as well as for society."² It means that even truth is tentative, changing and subject to constant checking and verification. Truth is a process—a process that is going on, perpetually. Truth is changeable, if new facts are brought to light. So the learned Doctor, as a democrat, does not say : "This is true." He does not claim, anywhere in his writings, that his statements or facts are true, absolutely. He is always

1. Cf. *Thus Spoke Ambedkar*, pp. 41-49.

2. *AC.*, p. 79.

inclined to say that under present conditions, his opinion is probably the best. Like a true democrat, Ambedkar prefers an empirical approach to politics, because no person can claim to be infallible in democracy. The democratic method in politics gives no promise for final truths in human life.¹

Here Ambedkar comes very near to the pragmatic attitude of political thought. The pragmatic view holds that there can be no eternal verities. Everything in the world is relative; the worth of ideas, doctrines principles, and practices depends on how they function in the given situation. If they work well, they may be judged true, good, right, beautiful etc.; if they do not work well, they may be judged false, evil, wrong, ugly, etc. For the pragmatists, therefore, the whole of life, especially social life, is an experiment.² To Ambedkar, too, all social institutions should be regarded as human experiments. They should be evaluated according to their consequences rather than their abstract principles. They should be subject to continuous modification as the human needs arise.

Human Rights and Democracy.

Fascism is a creed which lay a weight of emphasis on nation, state, race and empire including : "distrust of reason", "denial of basic human equality", "behaviour based on lies and violence", "totalitarianism", "racialism", "imperialism" etc.³ And communism, too, puts an emphasis on class, state, violence and other coercive methods. When combined together, both fascism and communism undermine the basic human rights of equality, liberty and democracy, which to Ambedkar, are very dear.

Ambedkar holds that the individual in society is an end in himself and he has certain inalienable rights in social relationship, which must be guaranteed to him by the constitution on certain reasonable conditions and be protected by the state.⁴ The democratic principles of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness are considered to be the essentials of human life in Ambedkar's concept of democracy. He attaches more importance to human

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1. Ambedkar, B. R. : *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, Preface.
 2. Maxey, C. C., *Political Philosophies*, p. 627.
 3. Ebenstein, W., *Today's Isms*, p. 105.
 4. SM., p. 32.

well-being and human rights.¹ His view of democracy, therefore, opposes authoritarianism, dictatorship, fascism and anarchism, which have no sympathy for individual rights of free thought and movement.

It is true that when human rights are widely diffused, the government is democratic and the people take delight in exercising their political rights. The essence of democracy, to Ambedkar, is that as many members of a society as possible should share in the exercise of human rights. It means that there should be equal opportunity for all citizens and harmony among the claims of each person. The majority which controls the government in democracy must defend minority rights, because by denying them, the majority denies the essence of democratic life to them. Only when there is proper adjustment between the rights of man and his institutions, can social good, democracy and humanism be best secured. Thus Ambedkar puts a weight of emphasis on equality and liberty of human rights.

Ambedkar's democratic outlook on life regards society as an organisation the parts of which are essentially related to each other. It is in all the parts related to one another rather than in anyone of them alone that true social relationship is to be found. He says, "Democracy is not merely a form of government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellowmen."² Ambedkar's view of life, thus, wants people to cultivate democracy as a state of mind, a style of social life, which may assure them work and security, proper facilities for education and human rights for all. Democracy cannot be conceived as a sectarian or racial thing. It is but a name for the fact that humanity is developed only when its elements take part in directing things which are common to all. Discrimination in human rights is the very negation of social and political democracy.

Democracy and Voluntarism.

Democracy, to Ambedkar, is certainly what has been explained earlier, but it is also something more. Voluntarism has also a very important place in his concept of democracy.

1. SM., p. 3.

2. SM., p. 38.

Voluntarism means freedom to form associations in various fields of life. The State should not control every aspect of human life. People should be given every chance to form political parties, educational societies, labour unions, employers associations, etc. He says : "No law should be made abridging the freedom of Speech, of the Press, of Association and of Assembly except for consideration of public order and morality."¹

Ambedkar emphasizes on the need of all kinds of freedom so that people may feel and keep themselves in larger liberties. However, it does ^{not} mean unlimited voluntarism. It should be in accordance with constitutional authority. Otherwise, the intelligent people will form such organisation which may lead to exploitation and organized tyranny. So Ambedkar seeks help of a constitutional system for protecting the real spirit of voluntarism, that is, only a constitutional government can help the people. "Without this, that is, without constitutional government, there is no freedom. For the anti-thesis to being free is to be at the mercy of men who can act arbitrarily."² This explains that voluntarism can exist only in democracy of the people and by the people. In communism, fascism, totalitarianism and dictatorship, voluntarism cannot be possible to the extent to which Ambedkar wants.

Voluntarism is the soul of freedom and democracy. Ambedkar, under the present Constitution, of India, attaches great importance to freedom of thought and expression, movement and association, disposal of property and practice of profession. The significance of these freedoms is immense in any democratic society. The very test of a democracy is the extent to which these freedoms are enjoyed by the people in general. These freedoms, when taken together, constitute the most essential ingredients of human happiness and progress.³ And, thus, they show the human basis that Ambedkar gives to the foundation of his political democracy and voluntarism.

Towards Parliamentary Democracy.

The concept of democracy, in Ambedkar's political thought, as it actually is, refers to democracy not simply as a form of

1. SM., p. 11.

2. Lippmann, W. : *The Public Philosophy*, p. 149.

3. Pylee, M. V. : *India's Constitution*, p. 92.

government, but also as a form of social organisation, and, therefore, democracy cannot long sustain itself unless it is suckled and supported by a social setting necessarily favourable to it. Though democracy has many meanings, yet the supreme test of all political institutions and social arrangements is the contribution they make to the all-round growth of every member of society. With this understanding of democracy as a way of life, Ambedkar presupposes social relationships to be founded on the principle of Parliamentary system of Democracy.

Ambedkar has accepted this system of government not because he has imitated the Western outlook on life, but because he finds the parliamentary tradition in India's past. He has a great pride in the cultural tradition of his land. He says : "Parliamentary democracy is unknown to us at present. But India, at one time, had parliamentary institutions. India was far most advanced in ancient times. There are innumerable references in our literature to prove that Parliamentary system of Government was not unknown to us."¹

Parliamentary democracy produces the best results in the long run, because it assigns great significance to virtues like ability and co-operation, mutual respect and self-help, discipline and devotion to work, for the happiness of the millions of people. It gives chances to all and changes itself as the human needs dictate. The system of parliamentary democracy, thus, embodies the principles of change and continuity to which Ambedkar attaches great importance. To him, only the spirit of the people can help parliamentary democracy to function well. People and democracy are closely related to each other.

Before the adoption of the present constitution, there were different opinions regarding the nature and form of constitution that the people were going to have. There were some who preferred the British system and some who like the American form of government. But there were also some people who did not like Parliamentary Government. They wanted the Russian type of Government. Even the socialists were reluctant to have a Parliamentary System. They declared that if they came to power, they would modify it. Ambedkar,

1. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 34 : For details, see : *State and Government in Ancient India*, by A. S. Altekar, pp. 126-131.

despite these opposite voices, was strong enough and he personally appealed to all to maintain the parliamentary tradition of Indian culture, "Personally speaking, I am very greatly attached to the Parliamentary System of Government. We must understand what it means and we must preserve it in the Constitution."¹

What attracts Ambedkar to parliamentary democracy is that it ennoble the people by putting an emphasis on self-help, initiative and individual responsibility. It promotes a better and higher form of national character than any other form of government. It is considered to be the best form of government, because it nurtures the people strong in the moral fibre, integrity, industry, self-reliance and courage. In parliamentary democracy, a man feels that he counts in society and is not merely a plaything. Under no other form of human government, is self-emancipation as easily possible as in parliamentary democracy.

Essentials of Democracy.

Agreeing with Prof. Laski and Walter Bagehot, Ambedkar says: "Parliamentary Government means government by discussion and not by fisticuffs."² In most of the Western Countries, democracy itself took place in violent changes and revolutions. Look at the French politics, where decisions are arrived at more often than not by what is known as "knocking knock out blows." This system of blows to a democrat like Ambedkar, is cruel and inhuman. This spoils human goodness, the beauty of its character and truth of mind. The loss of temper is the negation of parliamentary tradition. He likes the British type of parliamentary tradition where the members hardly ever resort to fisticuffs while taking any decision. The decision is always taken after consent and discussion among the respective members. This system is hardly adequate to those not born in that system. It is an alien institution to the French people. The people of India must learn, understand and make it a success.³

The importance of free discussion and consent is an essential requirement of popular government. "Democracy is unrealizable without freedom of political discussion. A right to vote gives a man no real part in controlling government unless he is

1. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, pp. 33-34.

2. Ibid., p. 34.

3. Ibid., p. 34.

free to form his own opinions about his vote, to hear what others have to say about the issues, and to persuade others to adopt his opinions.”¹ Discussion and consent, according to Ambedkar, are the essential means by which controversial points are settled and resettled. He believes that no human being has absolute truth and the best way to arrive at truth is to discuss things as they are. Men should collect all the available evidence in support of their statements and facts. To him, therefore, the legislative, persuasive and peaceful methods are the best means of social and economic change which can easily help men to form opinions and persuade others adopt their views.²

Democracy is a dynamic attitude towards human life. It attaches a great importance to virtues like tolerance and peaceful methods. Otherwise, it would defeat its own purpose, endurance and creative contribution. Democracy, to Ambedkar, is “a form and a method of government whereby revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of the people are brought about without bloodshed.”³ The fundamental aim of parliamentary democracy is to bring about radical changes in a peaceful or non-violent manner. But he does not undermine the need of revolutionary changes when there is a persistent need and demand for justice and vested resistance to it by those who act against democracy and humanism.

Parliamentary democracy, thus seen, involves non-violent methods of action, peaceful ways of discussion and acceptance of decisions with faith and dignity. In Ambedkar’s scheme of political thought, this is not enough. It requires something more. Parliamentary system of government is much more than government by discussion. There are two other pillars on which the parliamentary system rests. This system needs an opposition and free-fair elections.

Since India achieved political freedom, the people have acclimatised to one single political party. Ambedkar reminds us that the people have nearly forgotten the necessity and importance of a strong opposition for the fair working of parliamentary government. He vehemently opposes those who say

1. Coker., F. W. : *Recent Political Thought*, p. 387.

2. Cf. WC., pp. 134-140.

3. LM., p. 442.

that "opposition is an evil". In a parliamentary democracy, there should be at least two sides. Both should know each other well. "Hence a functional opposition", he says, "is required. Opposition is the key to a free political life. No democracy can do without it."¹

Ambedkar cites the examples of Britain and Canada where the opposition is respected, praised and preserved. In these countries, the leader of an opposition is paid a salary, because the opposition is regarded as an essential thing. People of these two countries believe that the opposition should be as alive as the Government. It is because the Government may suppress the facts about truth. It may have a one-sided propaganda and may give a twisted version of things. The people, therefore, made this provision against any eventuality of such type in these countries. Ambedkar emphasizes that the same should hold good in case of Indian Parliamentary Government. In fact, a strong and sincere opposition is always desirable in the absence of which, the people in power may become despots.

The other pillar on which parliamentary democracy rests is "free and fair elections". "Free and fair elections", Ambedkar says, "are necessary for the transfer of power from one section of the community to the other in a peaceful manner and without any bloodshed."² With a faith in peace and democracy, he wishes the people to have such things now and at any time to come. For, in olden times, if a king died, there was at least one murder in the palace. Bloody revolutions took place in palaces resulting in the brutal killing of relatives before the new rulers captured the political power of that country into their hands. Such has also been the history of India. This is why, Ambedkar, in modern times, appeals to educated and enlightened people to adopt the fair means for a change of government. "Elections must be completely free and fair. People must be left to themselves to choose those whom they want to send to the Legislatures."³

It is a fact that though many elections have taken place in India, yet fairness was often wanting. This is because the

1. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 37.

2. Ibid., p. 38.

3. Ibid., p. 38.

caste structure of Indian society prevails over the political structure of the country. The consequences of the caste system on politics and elections are quite obvious. Castes are so distributed that in any area there are major castes as well as minor castes. The major castes carry the seats of Assemblies and Parliament by sheer communal majority. Voting is always communal, because the minority communities are coerced and tyrannized for casting their votes in favour of a particular candidate.¹ Thus it depends on the people who are the roots of democracy how far parliamentary democracy works and yields fruits to them. Unless they realize that the caste system is harmful to democracy, free and fair elections will not be possible. Even the opposition would not be able to discharge its legitimate duties. It is their bounden duty to eradicate the roots of caste structure for the sake democracy, freedom and honesty.

Defects of Democracy.

Ardent though his faith in democracy is, Ambedkar admits some drawbacks to the democratic tradition. Parliamentary democracy has all the marks of a popular government—a government of the people, by the people and for the people, even then it is a matter of surprise that there has been a revolt against it in many countries. There was a revolt in Italy, in Germany and in Spain, against this good tradition. At present, there is wide discontent and dissatisfaction against this system of government. Even in India, prospects of parliamentary tradition are not very bright. Many people do not favour it. They want radical change. They do not feel pleasure in making experiments with this cultural tradition of their own land.²

To Ambedkar, there are certain drawbacks leading to a failure of a parliamentary democracy in a country. The first of these is that the “movements are very slow” in a parliamentary democracy. This is the main cause that democracy has failed in the countries of dictators. It delays, swift, prompt and indeliberate actions. “In a parliamentary democracy the executive may be held up by the legislature which may

1. Ambedkar, B. R. : *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, p. 34.

2. *Thus Spoke Ambedkar*, pp. 28-29.

refuse to pass the laws which the executive wants and if it is not held up by the legislature it may be held up by the judiciary which may declare the laws as illegal. Parliamentary democracy gives no free hand to dictatorship and that is why it became a discredited institution in countries like Italy, Spain and Germany, which readily welcomed dictatorships.¹ Ambedkar, however, is not happy over such alternative to democracy. He is against dictatorship because of its contrary extremist attitude, i. e., hastiness, which gives no chance to think over human problems, deeply.

There is also a great deal of discontent and dissatisfaction against parliamentary democracy in the countries where people are opposed to dictatorship. It can be said in general terms that "the discontent against parliamentary democracy is due to the realization that it has failed to assure to the masses the right to liberty, property or the pursuit of happiness."² Democracy, almost in all countries, begins with some purposes and promises. It gives assurance for equality of political rights in the form of equal suffrage. It extends the notion of equality of political rights to the equality of social and economic opportunity. It promises that the State cannot be held at bay by corporations of social groups which are anti-social in their attitude. And it also gives many other promises for the welfare of the people. With all such good promises, people feel immense discontent against parliamentary democracy even in countries pledged to democratic faith. It is because democracy, to Ambedkar, has neglected the social and economic emancipation of the needy and the lowly and has failed to check anti-social and corrupt practices. Democracy in India, it seems, is unable to provide the basic necessities of life to millions of people. The success of democracy in India depends upon the satisfaction of these mighty millions.³

There is wrong ideology which has brought a dissatisfaction against parliamentary democracy. This is "the idea of freedom

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1. An address delivered by Ambedkar on the 17th Sept., 1943, to the All-India Trade Union Workers Study Camp at Delhi.
 2. From the same address.
 3. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 29.

of contract". "The idea became sanctified and was upheld in the name of liberty. Parliamentary democracy took no notice of economic inequalities and did not care to examine the result of freedom of contract on the parties to the contract, in spite of the fact that they were unequal in their bargaining power. It did not mind if the freedom of contract gave the strong the opportunity to defraud the weak. The result is that parliamentary democracy in standing out as protagonist of liberty, has continuously added to the economic wrongs of the poor, the downtrodden and the disinherited class."¹ The vested interests in democracy, which have both sources and forces behind them, have no sympathy and love, no give and take of life's hopes and experiences with other people. Consequently, they cherish their own interests without showing any sense of social responsibility. They deliberately neglect the significance of social duty and this negligence creates dissensions among the rank and file.

There is another wrong ideology which has vitiated the institution of parliamentary democracy. This is the failure to realize and feel that "political democracy cannot succeed where there is no social and economic democracy."² Parliamentary democracy easily collapsed in Italy, Germany and Russia, because there was a lesser degree of social and economic democracy. But it did not collapse in the countries like Britain and the United States of America, because there was a greater degree of economic and social democracy. "Social and economic democracy", Ambedkar says, "are the tissue and the fibre of a political democracy. The tougher the tissue and the fibre, the greater the strength of the body politic. Democracy is another name for equality. Parliamentary democracy developed a passion for liberty. It never made even a nodding acquaintance with equality. It failed to realize the significance of equality and did not endeavour to strike a balance between liberty and equality, with the result that liberty swallowed equality and has made democracy a name and a force."³

Apart from these wrong ideologies which, to Ambedkar, have been responsible for the failure of parliamentary democracy,

1. Ibid., p. 30.

2. Ibid., p. 30.

3. Ibid., pp. 30-31.

there is "bad organisation". "All political societies get divided into two classes, the Rulers and the Ruled. This is an evil. If the evil stopped here it would not matter much. But the unfortunate part of it is that the division becomes so stereotyped and stratified that Rulers are always drawn from the ruling class. This happens because generally people do not care to see that they govern themselves. They are content to establish a government and leave it to govern them."¹ This explains why parliamentary democracy cannot become a "government of the people or by the people." It has been in reality a government of hereditary subject class by a hereditary ruling class. It is this vicious organisation of political life which has created discontent and dissatisfaction against democracy. The parliamentary democracy has not yet been able to fulfil the hopes it held out to the common man of ensuring to him liberty and equality, property and pursuit of happiness.

Ambedkar warns the harbingers of democracy that if parliamentary democracy fails in this land, "the result will be rebellion, anarchy and communism."² The people in power have greater responsibility to ponder over the drawbacks of present trends of political life. If they do not, the prospects of democratic tradition in India may be dark and dismal. The masses, so far suffering, oppressed and tyrannized, will start rebellion. Anarchy will prevail. It will, thus, pave the way for communism and totalitarianism. "I want you to take note of these eventful certainties and if you wish that parliamentary democracy prevail in this country, if you are satisfied that we will be assured of our liberty of thought, speech and action, if we should preserve our independence, if we cherish the inherent right of individual liberty, then it is your duty as students, as intelligent community of our country, to strive your utmost to cherish this Parliamentary System of Government in its true spirit and work for it."³

Ambedkar is quite aware that parliamentary democracy is not something which can be created in this land by some magical formula. A parliamentary democracy, to him, can be main-

1. Ibid., p. 31.

2. Ibid., p. 39.

3. An address delivered by Ambedkar at D. A. V. College, Jullunder City, (Punjab), on 28th Oct., 1951.

tained under guarantees of freedom of speech and criticism together with political and economic initiative for the individual. A democracy should be changeable within its own inner structure without violence according to the wish and verdict of the people (i. e., electorate) from time to time. It is only the spirit, the creative urge of human mind in the people, which can make democracy a work of success. If the people are devoted and sincere to it, it can function well. Ambedkar, thus, lays a great faith in this kind of people who aspire and work for the development of such a noble idea. Their hard labour and discipline can save democracy here and elsewhere.

Successful Working of Democracy.

Ambedkar analyses not only the defects of democracy, but gives some positive suggestions—some conditions necessary for the successful working of democracy. The purpose of modern democracy, to him, is “not so much to put a curb on an autocratic king but to bring about the welfare of the people.” This is possible only when democracy works on right lines and improves the *modus vivendi* of the people. There are some conditions on which the success of a parliamentary democracy depends.

First of these is that there should be no “perpetual authority to rule.” Today, it has been provided in the democratic constitution of India that after every five years those who are in authority must go and ask the people whether in their opinion they are well qualified to be entrusted with power and authority to look after their interests, to mould their destiny and to defend them. Ambedkar is not satisfied with such a provision. He wants something more to question the authority of Government. To him, “Democracy requires that not only the Government should be subject to the veto—long term veto of five years—at the hands of the people, but there must be an immediate veto in the Parliament; immediately ready there and then to challenge the Government.”¹ It is because—“Democracy means that nobody has any perpetual authority to rule, but that rule is subject to sanction by the people and can be challenged in the House itself.” It means that there should be no hereditary class to rule. There should be no hereditary

1. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

class to be ruled. There is always a possible tendency among those who are in authority to remain in power. They make it a point of prestige. They do not want to leave their places. This spoils the very basis of democratic tradition and strikes at the root of democratic practice, freedom and opportunity.

An opposition is a condition precedent for successful working of democracy. Opposition means that the Government is always on the anvil. The Government must justify every act that it does to those of the people who do not belong to its party. As has been seen, in Britain not only is the opposition recognized, but the leader of the opposition is also paid a salary by the Government in order to run the opposition. He gets a secretary. He gets a small staff of stenographers and writers. He has a room in the House of Commons where he does his business. Similarly, the leader of the opposition in Canada gets a salary in the same way as the Prime Minister does. This is because in both these countries, "democracy feels that there must be someone to show whether the Government is going wrong. And this must be done incessantly and perpetually and that is why they do not mind spending money on the leader of the opposition."¹

"The dogmatic, totalitarian viewpoint holds that there is only one Truth, and from that position to the one-party state there is a direct line. The democratic viewpoint holds that different men perceive different aspects of truth, mainly in the light of their lives and experiences, and that there will be at least two sides to any major question."² Ambedkar likes the democratic viewpoint, because it also gives respect to opposition party. In communist political organisation, there is no need for an opposition party. Rather it kills an opposition, which, to him, is an act of inhumanity and barbarity. This mentality should no longer have a place in civilized countries.

There should also be "equality in law administration", if parliamentary democracy is to function well. This view of democracy puts emphasis on the basic equality of all human beings. Equality, according to Ambedkar, may be a fiction

1. Ibid, p. 42. "The opposition in the British Parliament is officially called : Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition."

2. Ebenstein, W. : *Today's Isms*, pp. 139-140.

but nonetheless one must accept it as the governing principle of life.¹ All persons should have equal rights. There should be no distinction of caste, colour and creed. All men should be considered to be equal in the eye of law. Every individual has to be given a chance to grow and develop. There should be a guarantee of equality of opportunity, though complete equality in all respects is not possible. If democracy is to survive to its principles, it must fulfil its promises.

Ambedkar does not dilate too much on equality before the law, although there might be few lapses where there is no equality. But what he wants is "the equality of treatment in administration" which is utterly lacking in the democratic life of India. There are many cases where "the party Government is carrying on the administration for the benefit of the members of the party." For the sake of an argument, there is a law "that nobody shall deal in a particular commodity without a licence." Nobody can quarrel with that law because it is universal. There is no discrimination in that particular piece of legislation. But when the time comes for the distribution of a licence, the man who belongs to the party is certainly selected, though many other persons, otherwise qualified, are ignored. This kind of discrimination is also entering the administration. Party persons threaten particular officials, if they do not accede to their demands. In such a political atmosphere, injustice comes in administration. The real function of the Government is to lay down policy but not to interfere in the administration. Interference in administration means the denial of equal opportunity. It should be discontinued, if the democracy means the possession of all and not of the few.²

The observance of "constitutional morality" for the successful working of democracy is another condition. Constitutional morality means some conventions—some moral obligations, that the people must observe. Legally, the people are not bound to do so, but they ought to do so under constitutional conventions. This morality means an "effective co-ordination" between the interests of different peoples. In England, there are such conventions which are called the "conventions of the

1. AC., p. 39.

2. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, pp. 42-43.

constitution and people must be ready to observe the rules of the game." "If you read English history you will find many such illustrations where the party leader have had before them many temptations to do wrong to their opponents in office or in opposition by clutching at an issue which gave them temporary power, but which they refused to fall a prey to, because they know that they would damage the constitution and damage democracy."¹

But here in India, according to him, there are many chances to damage democratic tissues of political life, because while the present constitution contains legal provisions, only the skeleton of what he calls "constitutional morality" is to be found. To save democracy and to strengthen its roots, the people must establish some conventions and follow some principles of constitutional morality. No doubt, Ambedkar thinks so, but this cannot be done without mass education, public honesty and integrity of the people.

Further, there should be "no tyranny of the majority over the minority", if democracy is to function successfully. It is true that there is no country in the world without minority communities, but at the same time, they are represented in different organisations of the Government and their rights are protected. They are given ample facilities for their self-improvement. "The minority must always feel safe that although the majority is carrying on the Government, the minority is not being hurt, or the minority is not being hit below the belt."² However, to Ambedkar, there should not be constant agitation, continuous adjournment motions and violent speeches only for the sake of opposition by the minority communities. Such a spirit in democratic set-up is harmful to democracy. Here in modern Indian tradition, there is a travesty of political honesty where even the party in authority opposes the opposition without giving adequate dealings and chances. The people in authority regard minorities as the natural people to be ruled. If this mentality persists, small minorities can never get a chance to ventilate their grievances. "What happens", he says, "is that these minorities develop a revolutionary spirit something unconstitutional. It is, therefore, necessary that when

1. Ibid., p. 46.

2. Ibid., p. 46.

democracy is working, the majority on which it is based, must not act in a tyrannical manner.”¹

Ambedkar thinks that “democracy does require the functioning of moral order in society,” if the people wish to make it an act of success. But the political thinkers have neglected this aspect of democracy. They think that morality is something which is separate from political life. They argue that people may learn politics and at the same time, they may know nothing about ethics...as though politics can work without bearing in mind some ethical principles.

In a Democracy, mention is often made of free Government and what do we mean by free Government? To Ambedkar, “it means that in vast aspects of social life, people are left free to carry on without interference of law, or if law has to be made, then the law maker expect that society will have enough morality in it to make the law a success.”² In fact, the success of law depends on man and his moral activity. As Prof. Laski says : “It is my activity which gives legality to the law. Law, therefore, has to make its way to acceptance through the channels of the mind.”³ Unless the people observe some moral principles to hold themselves together for common purposes, the State cannot function in any way. Politics without ethics is empty and a constant peril to the prospect of democracy in India.

According to Ambedkar, the majority of the people is left to be governed not so much by law as by morality. Law plays a small part in human society, only when there is dispute and disorder. In this regard, he praises Prof. Laski who referred to this aspect of democracy much in his writings. “The only person who, I think, has referred to this aspect of democracy is Laski. In one of his books he has very categorically stated that the moral order is always taken for granted in democracy. If there is no moral order, democracy will go to pieces as it is going now probably in our own country.”⁴

Lastly, democracy requires Public Conscience. “Public Conscience” Ambedkar says, “means conscience which becomes

1. Ibid., p. 47.

2. Ibid., p. 48.

3. Laski, H. J. : *A Grammar of Politics*, p. 251.

4. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 48.

agitated at every wrong no matter who is the sufferer and it means that everybody whether he suffers that particular wrong or not, is prepared to join him in order to get him relieved.”¹ Recently, it was printed in the news that a large number of young boys and girls, belonging to the white race, are also joining the struggle of the Indians in South Africa. There are many white people who are, physically and mentally, supporting the Negroes in their fighting against social injustice in the United States of America. This is all due to what Ambedkar calls a faith in Public Conscience.

But Ambedkar, with a sense of surprise, finds an utter lack of public conscience in the people of Urban areas, even among the so-called modernists in India. “I do not want to shock you, but sometimes I feel how forgetful we are. We are talking about South Africa. I have been wondering within myself whether we who are talking so much against segregation really know that we, too, have South Africa in every village. There is ; we have only to go and see. There is South Africa every where in the village.”² This is a positive danger to democracy in our own land. There are few people who, sincerely and faithfully, devote their time in agitating against social wrong and political nepotism. Traditionally speaking, the people are so tolerant that their conscience does not rise against injustice meted out against themselves. It is because there is no “public conscience” among the people.

Ambedkar is well aware that there is injustice in every country but the injustice is not equally spread. In India, “the minority which is suffering from injustice gets no help from others for the purpose of getting rid of this injustice. It again develops a revolutionary mentality which puts democracy in danger”.³ And out of sheer ignorance, some people brand this mentality as anti-social and anti-national. They do not know the hard realities of human life. Public conscience is an essential quality for preserving the parliamentary tradition. Public conscience may be presumed to exist when men choose clearly, think rationally and act with disinterest and benevolence. Things like public interest and public conscience are fundamentally needed,

1. Ibid., p. 49.

2. Ibid., p. 49.

3. Ibid., p. 49.

if the people in India wish the parliamentary democracy to continue, to grow and develop for posterity.

What Ambedkar has said, is not a series of dogmas which have been worked out by some arm-chair political scientist, but this is the result what is impressed upon his mind by his own experience and reason. His faith in parliamentary democracy adheres to the principles of continuity and change. The keynote of human society is social progress and human happiness, and the parliamentary tradition is mostly suited to achieve these ends. In spite of many doctrinaire approaches, Ambedkar's view of democracy developed on practical lines, on the basis of which he wanted to discover avenues for its improvement. This concept of democracy, in which men have rights and acknowledge duties, is social and moral in character.

Democracy and Party System.

"Democracy cannot function in the absence of basic civil liberties—particularly those relating to speech and the press—which enable the community to vindicate itself against the State. Further-more, the right to criticize, if it is to be effective, must include the right to organize opposition through political parties. Representative democracy is essentially procedural. It is characterized by free expression, free parties and free elections."¹ To Ambedkar, political parties are indispensable in parliamentary democracy, for democracy without a party system is unconceivable.

According to him, at least two parties are essential in democracy for its fructification. "A Party is necessary to run Government. But two parties are necessary to keep Government from being a despotism. A democratic government can remain democratic only if it is worked by two parties—a Party in Power and a Party in Opposition."² Whether the parties are only two, or more than two, they generally arrange themselves in two sides. There may be many parties, but there can be only two sides. A side which forms the government, and a side which opposes the government. The existence of a party system is the foundation of parliamentary democracy.

1. Brown, B. E. : *New Directions in Comparative Politics*, p. 77.

2. R. G., p. 77.

The negation of the party system in a democracy may lead the people to perilous consequences. For, the party in power may jump over to totalitarianism and dictatorship. Ambedkar says : "Safety lies in having two parties. There must be an opposition to criticize the Government. The Government may otherwise easily become dictatorship."¹ He finds in the practical working of political parties something even more than mere opposition and hooliganism. To him, "Theoretically, political parties are agencies for the expression and execution of public opinion but in practice Parties create, direct influence and often control public opinion. Indeed this is the chief function of a Party."²

Ambedkar does not believe merely in the nominal existence of a party. It should have a practical programme. It should understand the other party's views, which it has for the masses and their well-being. The success of a party is not unconditional. It depends on certain working conditions. According to him, "a Party must do two things : In the first place it must establish contact with the masses. It must go out among the masses with its wares—its principles, policies, ideas and candidates. In the second place it must carry on propaganda among the masses in favour of its wares."³ Mass contact, in today's society, is most a precious thing in the life of a political party. Without it, no society can support any party and the party, however rich, cannot exist.

Though men differ in their opinions, yet they are gregarious by nature. They have to adjust their differences, if they are to live in society. They should combine with persons holding similar views and ideas in order to put forward those views in an organized manner. They should support and propagate the ideas which they jointly favour. Otherwise, their ideas will be silent and dead. This is why, Ambedkar wants a vigorous propaganda of the party programme in society.

A political party or any other human organisation is formed by men and their ideas. Ambedkar says : "Men are mortal. So are ideas. It is wrong to hold that an idea will take roots pro-prio-vigore. An idea needs propagation as much

1. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 58.

2. RG., p. 80.

3. RG., p. 80.

as a plant needs watering. Both will otherwise wither and die."¹ He does not agree with Mazzini that men may be killed, while their ideas cannot be killed. To Ambedkar, ideas may be suppressed. They may be killed, if not followed, suckled and supported by the public opinion. The same thing happens with a party, if it is without mass contact, living ideas and social support. A party must animate the people and enlighten them. It must give the voters some knowledge of the political issues they have to decide. It must inform them of their leaders, and the crimes of their opponents. This can help the people to understand the real problems of political life.²

The utterances of Ambedkar are essentially in line with democratic tradition. But men, in democracy, while having being assured free expression, thinking and organisation, also demand something more. "Men are not interested in principles and policies. But they are interested in accomplishing things. What is necessary for a Party is to bring about concerted action."³ In a parliamentary democracy, to him, things can be accomplished not by individual voice but by concerted action. The necessary thing for concerted action is "the crystallization of individual opinions into public opinion." This crystallization or the building up of public opinion constitutes the main function of a political party on which depends its work and success. A party which fails to forge concerted actions has no right to call itself a party."⁴

Ambedkar does not believe in the mere formation of principles and policies, showy purposes and empty politics, but he stands for actual propaganda, mass contact and concerted action for the emancipation and enlightenment of all citizens. All this, it should be remembered, cannot be accomplished without freedom and courage. To him, "The secret of freedom is courage, and courage is born in combination of individuals into a Party."⁵ He lays a great weight of emphasis on the necessity of the party system in democracy and more accurately, he wishes India to have a

1. RG., p. 83.

2. RG., p. 80.

3. RG., p. 79.

4. RG., p. 80.

5. RG., pp. 76-77.

two-party system instead of multi-party system which gives rise to communal spirit and regional patriotism. In a two-party system, each party would include a great variety of social interests. Political parties, thus, perform necessary service. They are inevitable things like the tides of the ocean. They make the scheme of responsible government workable by bringing a large number of men to acceptance of a common action. The two party system can do it more effectively.

In India, there is ample freedom to form political parties. The parties can organize, agitate, and express their views freely. As long as these freedoms exist, and as long as the ideal of a party system, in which an opposition party or group of parties may assume power continues, the bright prospects of democracy will flourish here. The real test of the party system will come, when the government power shifts from the Congress Party to some other Political Party or Parties.¹ If the shift of power really creates new dimensions for peace and justice, democracy will remain as the governing principle of social and economic life in India.

The Necessity of Political Power.

The essence of democracy consists in its depth and entirety. In it, everyone can share political power, because it gives political liberty. Political liberty means political power to capture the machinery of government. To Ambedkar, the people should share political power in a democate government. Without sharing such power, the fate of a community may not be bright. "Political power is the most precious thing in the life of a community especially if its position is constantly being challenged and the community is required to maintain it by meeting challenge, Political power is the only means by which it can sustain its position."² Democracy has no objection to any community, if it strives for a share in government administration and organisation. Even democracy provides much scope for all communities to come together for concerted action which can benefit them.

1. Weiner, M. : *Party Politics in India*, pp. 287-288.

2. PP., pp. 337-338.

Ambedkar does not want the people to use bad means in order to achieve political power. He condemns false propaganda, mis-representation or the lure of office or gold for a share in the government organisation. There are some attractions or means by which the majority community can have a hold over small communities. But it would be equivalent to disarming the community, to silencing its guns and to making it ineffective and servile. "It may be a way of producing unity. But the way is despicable, for it means suppressing the opposition by a false and unfair method. It cannot produce any unity."¹ Falsehood and unfair means are the very negation of democratic government.

According to Ambedkar, independent organisation is necessary for capturing the political power. The leaders of an organisation should be few but devoted and endowed with courage and knowledge. He says : "If you are to share political power, you must be organized as one solid unit before you could successfully fight for the due rights in the future governments of the country. I must warn you against having too many leaders who believed in paper bodies and paper parties."² Such leaders cannot bring any fundamental change in the political and social life of the people.

In Ambedkar's opinion, the downtrodden communities cannot make any progress without sharing political power. "Political power", he says, "is the key to all social progress."³ "Unless they had the political power in their hands, they would not hope to bring about the desired improvement in the condition of their poverty-stricken people." Not only this but he also visualized the day "when it would be possible to guarantee a minimum wage of Rs. 30/- a month, provide housing for labour and pensions as an insurance against old age to the poor."⁴

The depressed classes stand, today, in great need of political power, if they are really to bring about radical changes in the traditional values of Indian culture. And this is not impossible to them, if they unite themselves with the backward classes. By uniting themselves, they can easily capture the political power and government administration. The days of domina-

1. PP., p. 338.

2. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 51.

3. Ibid., p. 53.

4. Ibid., p. 50.

tion, according to Ambedkar, are over. The day of darkness and forced labour have certainly withered away. The people should rely upon their own strength. They should shake off the notion that they are in any way inferior to any other communities. But, he says : "Our ultimate goal now should be to consolidate our newly won freedom."¹ The capture of political power does not mean to destroy freedom and disrupt national unity. It stands essentially for nation building and happiness of all members of our national society.

Social Democracy.

Ambedkar fought against caste and injustice, because he found that there were no human rights for a large majority of the people. There were only privileges and disabilities—privileges for a few and disabilities for many. He rebelled against such a social organisation. He struggled hard to create human rights, for which the World Organisation, the United Nations is now striving. He wanted to vitalize the conscience of the people and to mobilize the masses in India, for equal human rights. If the people are without legitimate human rights in a country, there cannot be any democracy. His ultimate aim of life was to create a "real social democracy."

According to him, "A Democratic form of Government presupposes a Democratic form of Society. The formal frame work of Democracy is of no value and would indeed be a mis-fit if there was no social democracy. The politicals never realized that Democracy was not only a form of government : it was essentially a form of Society."² The concept of his social democracy includes human treatment and human rights to all, without which there can be no sure and stable political life anywhere. People repeat over and over that man is a social animal, and then confine the significance of this statement to the sphere of ideas. They forget to translate it into political field, which means to isolate social elements from political life. He wants democracy to be harmonized with social aims and political objectives. Politics without sociability is unconvivable.

The 19th centuries meaning of democracy that each individual should have a vote, does not stand up to full test of social and political democracy. It is incomplete and inadequate, and

1, Ibid., p. 53,

2, RG., p. 36.

so people, according to Dr. Ambedkar, should think in terms of a deeper and larger democratic relationship. He holds that it may not be possible for a democracy to be marked by unity, by community purpose, by loyalty to public ends and by mutuality of sympathy. But to him, social democracy unmistakably involves two things. "The first is an attitude of mind, an attitude of respect and equality towards their fellows. The second is a social organisation free from rigid social barriers." Therefore, "Democracy is incompatible and inconsistent with isolation and exclusiveness resulting in the distinction between the privileged and the unprivileged."¹

Unfortunately, some people do not feel the necessity of realizing the truth of social democracy, which is more significant for the survival of a nation. They defend themselves by arguing that to maintain social distance is good for preserving their class superiority. But their superiority is artificial and a deception for those who are not yet awakened. The moment the slumbered people come to know the hard political game and facts of social life, the false notion of social superiority will no longer remain. The sooner they abandon the wrong ideals, the better for social democracy in India. Without social democracy, neither political liberty nor the unity of the nation can be maintained.

Social Structure and Political Democracy.

Political democracy, according to Ambedkar, rests on four premises. These are :—

- (i) "The individual is an end in himself,
- (ii) The individual has certain inalienable rights which must be guaranteed to him by the Constitution,
- (iii) The individual shall not be required to relinquish any of his constitutional rights as a condition precedent to the receipt of a privilege,
- (iv) The State shall not delegate powers to private persons to govern others."²

Obviously, the dignity of the individual, political liberty, social progress and human rights—with necessary constitutional

1. Ibid., p. 36.

2. SM., p. 32.

safeguards—form Ambedkar's basic decent democratic ideals in the political democracy

How far these democratic ideals can be realized in actual practice, depends on what Ambedkar calls the "ground plan." To him, the ground plan means "the social structure of a community to which the political plan is sought to be applied. Unless there is social democracy, as analysed earlier, political democracy cannot make any headway. Political democracy and liberty are nothing if not backed and bucked up by equal social behaviour patterns, because the political structure rests on the social structure. "Indeed, the social structure", he says, "has a profound effect on the political structure. It may modify it in its working. It may nullify it or it may even make a mockery of it."¹ It is, therefore, essential that before passing any judgment on any scheme of political relationship—even making plans for economic reforms, the people must consider the ground plan, i. e., social relations. Democracy should be regarded as both a social ideal and a political method.

Ambedkar aims at a real social and political harmony, nothing less, and something more. Democracy, to him, should be realistic. It should be a state of social co-operation, a state of service and sacrifice based on human experience. "The foundation of democracy," also says Prof. Dewey, "is faith in the capacities of human nature ; faith in human intelligence and in the power of pooled and co-operative experience."² To Ambedkar, too, democracy is nothing if not realistic. It has to consider the actual conditions of human living. There is very little in it that is academic."³ His idea of democracy is, thus, tinged with social realism, human experience and reason, pragmatic and humanistic outlook on life.

Ambedkar, as one of 20th century champions of democracy, is not content merely with refutation of the arguments of the anti-democratic theories. He also tries to make an affirmative case for democracy. In doing so, he stands as a practical democrat and is fully convinced that political and social democracy possesses virtues not to be found under any other

1. Ambedkar, B. R. : *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, p. 34.
2. Maxey, C. C. : *Political Philosophies*, p. 690.
3. Cf. : *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, p. 34.

system. Society can never reach its full development without adopting democracy as a way of life. Democracy helps man in constructive thinking and a creative urge for human well-being.

The Soul of Democracy.

According to Ambedkar, men are unequal by nature in physical and mental endowments, but this should not hamper the way of democracy. Rather all should be treated equally, for without equality of treatment in democracy, law and administration, only those people in whose favour there is birth, wealth and social inheritance, can have opportunities to develop their talents and abilities. Where as democracy needs the best it can get from among all individuals. This is possible only when the people adhere to the Bentham's famous principle : "Every man to count for one ; no man for more than one." The expression of this principle, to Bentham, is limited only to the political right of one vote, one man. Ambedkar wants even more than this political right in the name of the soul of democracy. "The soul of democracy", he says, "is the doctrine of one man, one value." This principle finds intrinsic worth in the individual personality of each man in political and social relations. This stands for the economic well-being of the people, without which democracy, to him, has no value.¹

According to him, democracy has attempted to give effect to the above doctrine only so far as political life is concerned by adopting the rule of one man, one vote. But this should be translated into the doctrine of "one man and one value". Democracy has left the economic structure of society to take the shape given to it by those who are in a position to mould it as they wish. This would not help the needy and the lowly and would not serve the interests of all."²

What Ambedker wants for democracy is that it should become an "economic democracy". To him, it means that the economic needs of the people are to be satisfied. Only in that atmosphere, can they develop to the extent what they are in themselves. No person should die in want of food, clothing and housing, if democracy is to live up to its principle of one man,

1. SM., p. 35.

2. Cf. SM., p. 35.

one value. He does not say that capitalism is economic democracy. There may be economic democracy in other systems, too, if the people are economically well advanced, and they do not feel any strain of poverty. The soul of democracy, according to him, essentially consists in the economic welfare of all men living in a particular society, besides its realization in political relations. Otherwise, democracy would kill its own soul and democracy without soul would be useless, unrelated to human aspirations.

In political life of India today, the principle of one man and one vote may be true, but the principle of one man and one value has not yet been realized, because one man and one value means the all-round material well-being of the people. Even if there is a single individual dying of starvation, this principle is violated. Democracy has not been able to live up to its basic principle as conceived by Ambedkar. It should now justify its own stand as the well-wisher of the common man.

In India, to Ambedkar, the people have not realized that it is equally essential to prescribe the shape and form of the economic structure of society for the benefit of the majority of men. They have not created hopes for economic democracy and emancipation. One vote, after the long five years, has no meaning to the starving man. It has no significance to the man who is always exploited, rebuked and repressed. It has no value to him for whom there is no sympathy, no love and no give and take of life's hopes.¹ Ambedkar's soul of democracy is not speculative, but it is closely related to the real issues of human affairs without which no adequate concept of democracy can be conceived. No democracy in any State, without attending to the actual needs of men, can long stand as a way of life.

The Significance of Law.

Ambedkar recognizes that there is a vast difference between the law of nature and human law. He observes that human laws are not ordained by any God or Divine Being. They are not divine institution. They are simply the results of human activities. He believes that there is a moral order in the universe which is sustained not any supernatural power, but by the

1, Cf. SM., pp. 32-35.

actions—good or bad—of man himself.¹ So in his view, man is behind all the laws in human society.

In most ancient society, there was no security and social stability to such an extent to which it is now found in human society. To Ambedkar, people were aimless and wandered without any definite laws, but they realized as a result of human evolution that they should get themselves united for the peace and order in society. They settled down in different areas and formed tribes. They started their social life with tribal sense of living. Tribalism is the most important characteristic of human society.²

The ancient tribals, when formed certain social units, realized the need of “mutual protection”, because there were nomadic tribes which attacked and plundered the settled tribes. There was insecurity and fear in the minds of all. The individuals surrendered their natural rights and brought into existence rules for the “mutual protection”. And at a later stage, they also formed rules of human conduct. Thus, Ambedkar, as it is implied in his writings, holds that law has its sources in human needs.

Today, there are many kinds of human laws. The most important among them is State law. State gives many laws for the regulation of human affairs. But as Ambedkar rightly observes : State law is incapable of meeting every situation, because the field of human activity is too vast, too shifting and too complicated. Therefore, he insists on the need of moral law. It is only through moral law that the vast affairs of mankind can be managed efficiently. Morality is the essence of human survival. It governs a large part of humanity. It is the most fundamental element in human life and law.³

Ambedkar believes that rapidity as well as rigidity of law is necessary in so far as it is beneficial to all members of society. He admits that law may require amendments and these amendments should be done with the consent of all men. Law is changeable and whenever there is proper time, it should be changed. Laws are made by man for man. Law has not

1. BD., pp. 242-245.

2. Ambedkar, B. R. : *The Untouchables*, pp. 28-31.

3. *Buddha and The Future of His Religion*, (article), 1950.

created man but man has created law for his own happiness.¹ Change in human life must be brought by legislation, because legislation is a body represented by all through elected members. Therefore, legislation is necessary in human life.

But when once law is brought into existence, it should become sovereign and the government must act in accordance with law. It must be the servant of law. Ambedkar emphasizes the point that law must be the same for all and in the interest of all. It must be social and human, *i. e.*, universal in its effect.² He has brought the present Indian Constitution under the preamble of law. The preamble has enunciated the principles on which all law should be based. The aim of the preamble is to persuade the people to accept the command of law and to regulate their individual and social life in consonance with the principles of preamble.³

From the above point of view, Ambedkar's conception of human law is wider than that of many others. It covers the whole moral life of the individual and society. In his conception of law, it is implied that law should be enforced not only by punishment but also by education—by an appeal of the mind of man and the spirit of society. Law should not be cumbersome. It should not suppress human feelings. Law is not always a force compelling the individual to discharge his duties but a spirit impelling him to act. Thus, in Ambedkar's view, impulsion is more important than compulsion.

Ambedkar's conception is, as analysed above, based on the consent of the people, which is quite different from that of a dictator. In the making of laws, the collective intelligence of the people is superior to that of the wisest law-giver. An individual may not see thing in wider perspective. This is why, Manu, according to Ambedkar, made the blackest laws in the history of mankind, which marred and mangled the beauty and dignity of humanity. Ambedkar's ideas of constitutional law is based on the dignity of mankind. It has five fundamental human elements: (i) It is a rule in public interest. (ii) It is not an arbitrary force. (iii) It is secular law

1. AC., pp. 77-80.

2. SM., p. 3.

3. The Preamble to the Indian Constitution has been appreciated by all political thinkers of the East and the West.

applicable to all. (iv) It is not divinely inspired but it is man inspired. (v) It can be changed, whenever there is time and need.

The Influence of Humanism.

Ambedkar's idea of democracy is largely influenced by humanism. The rising of downtrodden people against the traditional social wrongs, which were based on inhumanity and organized barbarism, is the result of humanistic movement. Humanism stands against inhumanity, barbarity, inequality, exploitation and all kinds of injustice and persistently demands that "social wrongs shall not be permanently tolerated". In Ambedkar such a spirit of humanism finds expression in all his activities. His humanism is closely related to the actual human affairs. It is not theocentric. It is rather anthropocentric. It has roots in man and social relations. It, thus, differs from the metaphysical principle of medieval humanism that "only he who himself made existence can know what there is within man."¹ This is the humanism of St. Thomas Aquinas, which is deeply rooted in "affinity with God" and is known as the "humanism of the Incarnation,"² with which Ambedkar cannot agree.

In 19th century, democracy was conceived to be confined only to the nations of liberty and right to happiness. Some people mixed democracy with pure capitalism without caring for the organic needs of all men. Today, some new events have taken place. The idea of physical well-being is essentially related to democracy; otherwise to the suffering and starving millions, democracy would have no purpose. The problems of democracy have become wider. It no longer confines itself to spiritual succor. It includes provisions for the equitable distribution of wealth and the questions of the ownership of means of production, the material well-being and happiness of the people. Social and economic interest is now dominating the idea of democracy, which were, long ago, infused in Ambedkar's political thought.

Ambedkar revolted against something against which everybody must revolt. His revolt was against injustice, tyranny and cruelty, which is essentially a mark of humanistic revolt. Mr. Nehru says : "I imagine that he would be remembered most as

1. *Living School of Philosophy*, Edited by D. D. Runes, p. 259.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 267-268.

a symbol of revolt against all the oppressing features of the Hindu Society...The main thing was he revolted against something against which we all ought to revolt and in fact have revolted in various degrees.”¹ To Ambedkar, it became a life question to understand why there was human misery and how it could be removed. His humanism attaches primary importance to “man and to his faculties, affairs, temporal aspirations and well-being.” Intelligent devotion to human values—shared and shouldered by all—is the essence of his democracy and humanism.

“Philosophers have sought to interpret the world : what matters, however, is to change it”, declared Marx. Ambedkar not only offered an interpretation of the world and of human society, but also influenced many changes in them. His direction fashioned many great formative forces in human society. His influence reached out to millions of people and in fact, his has been a very constructive impact on Indian Society. His was a revolutionary call to the servile classes. He associated his idea of democracy with these people. The improvement in the conditions of these people means to make democracy safe and sure in this great land. If they rise, democracy will flourish. They will strengthen the roots of democracy. To neglect their emancipation is to damage democracy and humanism. The real spirit of democracy and humanism will confirm only when the common man is well protected and provided with basic necessities of human life.

Ambedkar’s concept of democracy and humanism puts an emphasis on self-help, initiative, individual integrity and social responsibility, which can promote a better and higher form of national character than any other policy whatever. It is because democracy creates chances for equality and liberty, while humanism knows of no sharp cleavages and provides an open road to talent. Both democracy and humanism, in his political thought, strengthen love for the country and brotherhood among the different societies, without which no country can survive and no society can establish right relations between man and man. Man, as a humanist, should learn how to behave properly in democratic social order.



1. The Times of India, 6th December, 1956.

CHAPTER 4

Society and Socialism

SOCIETY AND SOCIALISM

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Dislike of Poverty.

Ambedkar, being born in a very poor family and having spent his childhood and adolescent in utter poverty, realized in his early life that there were two problems—"suffering in human society and how to remove this suffering and make mankind happy"—that the people had to face. These were the thoughts in his mind when he began to study and understand human affairs. He fought against tyranny, injustice and false traditions in order to release the suffering people from bondage. Because of his poverty-stricken family, Ambedkar knew well that the results and effects of poverty upon the people were intolerable. There might be many causes of it, but its very existence must be challenged. It must go. Poverty is the greatest enemy of Ambedkar's political ideas and socialistic visions.

Besides his family sufferings, Ambedkar was intensely moved by the inhuman conditions of his suppressed community. These people were groaning under poverty and injustice. Moved by woes of his people, he says : "If I fail to do away with the abominable thralldom and inhuman injustice under which the class, into which I was born, has been groaning, I will put an end to my life with a bullet."¹ For this purpose, he built his personality on patient labour, burning sincerity, supreme courage and selfless sacrifice. And he vigorously struggled against injustice, social slavery, inequality and poverty and for the removal of them from among the poor masses.

Ambedkar is a combination of both love and hate—love for knowledge and hate for ignorance and poverty. Being a practical man, he knows well that before one talks of society and socialism, one should create a mind whose genius is to revolt against poverty and orthodoxy. He should stand as a challenge to unequal social behaviour patterns and do what the human needs dictate. Inspired by such a spirit, man can do a lot for improving the conditions of the poor and illiterate masses. There

1. LM., p. 521.

must be a will for doing good to the people. A person, for such a noble task, must have a passion to die at the altar of social duty.

Ambedkar condemns every thing extols poverty. No human being should ennoble poverty. A man may renounce his riches and it may be a blessed state. But poverty can never be so. Poverty is an evil. It is a vice and a living hell on earth. Ambedkar's idea of socialism is an attack on poverty, because poverty is responsible for diseased bodies and frustrated lives. He does not agree with those men who develop a sort of stoic endurance and resignation towards poverty. Such people can not make any creative contributions. He agrees with Buddha who does not comfort the poor by praising their poverty, nor does he sublimate poverty as a happy state for man to live in.¹ To Ambedkar, poverty and socialism cannot exist together. One has to go.

Though there is so much poverty in Indian society, yet Ambedkar's concept of socialism, as it will be seen, does not stand for equality of identity which is neither desirable nor possible in the practical world. What he stands for is that adequate opportunities are given to all. His socialism recognizes human distinctions based on merit. Its chief aim is to remove the extreme inequalities. It aims at reducing those social and economic conditions of inequality in which some people live without working and some people work without decent living. Therefore, his concept is based on the principles of justice and right. It wants the removal of everything which is evil, but by the peaceful and legislative means.

Towards A Socialist Society.

Work is an indispensable condition for human development. But mere work cannot elevate man to the level of cultural life. He needs leisure for the cultivation of mind and the pursuit of a full human life. "If he is to be a good citizen, he must have some leisure for his general civic obligations and for the development of his own personality, as well as for the exercise of his special function. This involves the recognition that some limitation should be put to the time that is devoted to labour; and this is one of the things that it may be necessary to secure by

1. BD., p. 587.

some form of central control".¹ Ambedkar, too, holds that the State must take some responsibility for running industries. Industries, which are, according to him, "key industries", should be owned and run by the State and even industries which are not key industries but are "basic industries", should also be owned by the State. In doing so, the economic exploitation of the people may be minimized.² It is the step with which Ambedkar conceives the dream of a socialist society.

The primary function of a growing society is, according to him, an effective check on economic exploitation. Whether it is in industry or in agriculture, exploitation is opposed to the very spirit of socialism. But it depends upon the State and the people who govern, how far they are able to protect the poor and the weak. Ambedkar's ideal of socialism can be achieved only when there are people in power who govern honestly and are sincerely devoted to the task of socialism. So the ultimate question is : Who should govern ? It is a genuine and pertinent question. The power of the State should not go to those people who are opposed to socialist ideals—the people who do not want radical changes. If the political and economic power goes to such people, it means simply that India is safe for exploiters—the vested interests which do not wish any socialism, any change in the traditional outlook.³

Who will decide it ? And how will it be decided that the people opposed to socialism and radical change should not hold the government machinery ? It is, to Ambedkar, the people who have to decide and choose the representatives really devoted to the work of social well-being and socialist society. But it needs education and other factors which affect people's decision. Unless they are fully equipped with things to understand the whole basis of democracy and socialism, the idea of socialist society appears remote. Ultimately, all things in democratic society, depend on the wishes of the people. It is up to them whether to choose or not to choose a particular section of representatives.

1. Mackenzie, J. S. : *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, p. 123.

2. SM., pp. 14–15.

3. Cf., *Thus Spoke Ambedkar*, pp. 8–10.

Political and economic power here means the power of the State through which people may enact laws favourable for socialism. They may adopt legislative means to bring about social changes. So the State power is an important factor in man's progress. The main purpose behind the State Control, according to Ambedkar, is to put "an obligation on the State to plan the economic life of the people on lines which would lead to highest point of productivity without closing every avenue to private enterprise, and also provide for the equitable distribution of wealth."¹ Ambedkar seeks State control (or intervention) not only to avoid the waste of capitalism but also to enable it to work on socialist lines. Otherwise, capitalism will stand in the way of socialism and its rapid success in India. The idea of socialism should not be hampered by the vested interests.

Despite his advocacy of State intervention and a more equitable distribution of wealth, Ambedkar remains an opponent of communism. In his sense, he comes very close to Keynes who is also against communism, he though he favours "State intervention."² Ambedkar does not accept the Marxian solution that the right to private property be abolished for the well-being of the poor classes. Nor does he propose to nationalize private property, because it would be an act of violence thereby involving the question of bad means to good ends, though there is no necessity for using power and force. What Ambedkar wants is that the State should, peacefully and legally, remove social, political and economic inequality by providing better opportunities to the submerged classes and, thus, make it possible for every subject to enjoy freedom from want and freedom fear.³

Ambedkar is, at times, very critical of present capitalism which has no sympathy for the needy and the weak. It is his firm belief that capitalism in its unalloyed form cannot sustain itself long, because, in pure capitalism, pauperism, unemployment, hard labour, long hours, dangerous and insanitary conditions and oppressive supervision are the common lot to

1. SM., pp. 30-31.

2. Keynes, J. M. : *Laissez-faire and Communism*, pp. 47-48.

3. SM., p., 3.

the millions of people. That is why, Ambedkar desires drastic changes in the attitude of capitalism. As a reformer of the capitalist system, he is fundamentally an individualist-socialist in his economic and social philosophy. This attitude towards human interest brings him very near to John Stuart Mill who outlines a comprehensive programme of social policy. Mill endeavours to unite the greatest individual liberty of action with a common ownership of the means of production, and he also stands for an equal participation of all in the benefits of combined labour.¹ Mill was a link between individualist and socialist economists and he gave an individualist-socialist programme for the emancipation of the people.² The same is the programme of Ambedkar's scheme of human life.

Interest in Socialism.

Socialism is of many types. However, there is one common thread behind all types of socialism. It is that socialism aims at the control of the means of production by the State, *i. e.*, of essential and basic industries, for the equitable distribution of wealth produced. It gives special attention to the interest of the working classes because of their poverty and ignorance. The idea is that social interest should not always be subordinated to individual interest and that the welfare of all be realized without delay. To Ambedkar, guild socialism, syndicalism, christian socialism, fabian socialism and scientific socialism, are not very convincing. He accepts the theory of State Socialism with necessary modifications in its content and method in the light of Indian cultural tradition.

The doctrine of absolute laissez-faire did not sustain itself unchallenged. Adam Smith based his theory of laissez-faire upon "the identification of public and private interests." But it was rudely shaken by Malthus, Ricardo, Sismondi, Hermann, List, Mill, Rodbertus, Lassale, etc. Most of them argue that the interest of the individual collide with those of the public and in this case State intervention may prove useful. They admit, in varying degrees, and legitimacy of State intervention and agree that the State has a legitimate sphere

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1. Gids & Rist : A History of Economic Doctrines, p. 374.
 2. Ibid., pp. 371-377.

of action in matters economic.¹ Similarly, to Ambedkar, State intervention is essential for economic efficiency when and where the public interest is neglected.

Ambedkar does not curse the capitalists, too much beyond the limit, for the present economic conditions of the people. Capitalism, too, has been of important service to human society. As he believes in the individual liberty, he does not want to annihilate the capitalists. He wishes them to give place to a better and a saner ordering of economic and social affairs. If capitalism is to survive, it has to provide maximum wages and permanent security to the working classes. But he doubts whether capitalism can industrialize the country rapidly. It seems, it cannot. Therefore, Ambedkar proposes State socialism. "State socialism," he says, "is essential for the rapid industrialization of India. Private enterprise cannot do it and if it did it would produce those inequalities of wealth which private capitalism has produced in Europe and which should be a warning to Indians."²

According to him, the plan set out in his theory of State Socialism proposes : "State ownership in agriculture with a collectivized method of cultivation and a modified form of State Socialism in the field of industry."³ It is essential, as he believes, that without the supply of capital by the State neither agriculture nor industry can be made to yield better results for the rapid progress of a country like India, where the people, by nature, training and temperament, are greedy and who do not wish to invest their hidden money for the larger industries. State ownership in specific industries is necessary. It is the duty of the State to help those who want to realize the goal of socialism. Only such people can lead all to the socialist society of India's dream.

In his theory of State Socialism, Ambedkar also proposes the nationalization of insurance companies with a double objective. He says : "Nationalized Insurance gives the individual greater security than the Private Firm does in as much as it pledges the resources of the State as a security for the ultimate payment of his insurance money. It also gives the State the resources

1. Ibid., pp. 413-415.

2. SM., p. 31.

3. SM., p. 31.

necessary for financing its economic planning in the absence of which it would have to resort to borrowing from the money market at a high rate of interest."¹ Ambedkar defends man's right to private possession and property. Not only this, but he also stands for a greater security of the individual's economic interests with the help of State control. In fact, many insurance companies failed in India, and, thus, instead of helping the people, discouraged them. This is why, to him, unless the Government takes some responsibility, people cannot be happy economically, socially and politically. State socialism is a theory, which has a full faith in the wisdom of Government.

State socialism is not merely an economic theory. It has also a social and moral basis, and is built upon a certain ideal of justice and a particular conception of the function of society and of the State. This ideal and this conception it received, not from the economists, but from the socialists especially Rodbertus and Lassale.² These two State socialists laid the stress on the need of the abolition of private property. To Rodbertus, "suppression of private property and of individual production" is essential for the community's welfare. To Lassale, too, "a stricter limitation of the rights of private property" is necessary, which, in the course of time, must result in its "total disappearance."³ Both of them also stand for the annihilation of the capitalist system of social economy, but give full support to the well-being of the underdog.

Though Ambedkar believes in the theory of State socialism, yet he differs from the traditional view at major points. Ambedkar agrees with State socialist who raises "the lower strata of the working classes at the expense of the higher classes", and puts "a check upon the excessive accumulation of wealth among certain strata of society and certain members of the propertied classes". However, he does not agree with State socialists like Rodbertus and Lassale on the questions of capitalist system and private property. He does not want the total disappearance of these two institutions, but stands for an effective check upon their irregularities against the interests of

1. SM., p. 31.

2. Gide & Rist : *A History of Economic Doctrines*, p. 416.

3. Ibid., pp. 429 & 434.

the poor working classes. He accepts their stress on the need of State intervention, but not to the extent to which they do. He, thus, gives way to individual incentive for the economic well-being of the people.

Ambedkar is firmly convinced of the indispensability of the industrialization of India through both key and basic industries. Unless it is done, the objectives of socialism cannot be achieved. Like other State socialists, he does not want the concentration of wealth in a few hands. Even before freedom, Ambedkar thought of some State control and State ownership especially of heavy industries and the larger public utilities. For the same purpose, he put a Memorandum before the Constituent Assembly.¹ It was motivated by a passion that the ship of the State would give to all equally what they need. It was also intended to support those who desired to see a great and socialist India emerge from the crises that were cast upon her, without further bloodshed and travail. He was not only convinced that planned economy was essential for reaping the full fruits of industrialization, but he also believed in its rapid and firm success.

What is attractive in Ambedkar's scheme of life, is an appeal to both the State and the people for doing good to the needy. In his socialism, there exists a moral solidarity which is much more fundamental than any economic tie between the various individuals and classes of this great nation. Such moral solidarity, he wants among the people, through the possession of a common language, common standards and models and a uniform political constitution. The State, to him, is a part of this moral urge. It has, therefore, a duty to look after the material progress of the society. Society and State, when combined with good motives, are sure to create the new dimensions of civilization, peace and justice, for hastening the well-being of the people.

Individualism and Socialism.

Some people think that socialism of any kind stands against individualism, *i. e.*, individual liberty, and favours the conditions for authoritarianism. To Ambedkar, it is not wholly true.

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1. **State and Minorities : What are their Rights and How to secure them in the Constitution of Free India,**

It depends upon the people of a country how far they establish and develop a system of social economy. He does not wish to leave the establishment of State socialism to the will of the Legislature. He wants that the economic structure of society should be prescribed by constitutional law. It has some vital purpose. "The purpose", he says, "is to protect the liberty of the individual from invasion by other individuals which is the object of enacting Fundamental Rights. The connection between individual liberty and the shape and form of the economic structure of society may not be apparent to everyone. Nonetheless the connection between the two is real."¹

According to him, any one who studies the working of the system of social economy based on private enterprise and pursuit of personal gain may easily realize how it undermines, if it does not actually violate the laws of the land, the individual liberty and the fundamental rights of the people, on which rests social and political democracy. Many persons have to relinquish their constitutional rights in order to gain their livelihood. The poor are always subject to the governance of private employers. And many others do not have courage to argue with the master-employer for their legitimate demands, because they may lose their jobs.

It is true that the fundamental rights have no value to unemployed persons. If a person who is unemployed is offered a choice between a job of some sort, with some sort of wages, with no fixed hours of labour and with an interdict on joining a Union and the exercise of his right to freedom of speech, association, religion, etc., can there be any doubt as to what his choice will be. He may face a very critical position here in choosing the one of the alternatives. "The fear of starvation, the fear of losing a house, the fear of losing savings, if any, the fear of having to be a burden on public charity, the fear of having to be burned or buried at public cost are factors too strong to permit a man to stand out for his fundamental rights. The unemployed are, thus, compelled to relinquish their fundamental rights for the sake of securing the privilege to work and to subsist."²

1. SM., pp. 31-32.

2. SM., p. 32.

Even the employed persons become victims of private enterprise. They do not have human treatment from their employers and their liberty is, thus, jeopardized. They always face the threats of retrenchment. In this way, they are coerced. They do not have full liberty of work. But some persons argue that where "the State refrains from intervention in private affairs—economic and social—the residue is liberty". What is necessary is to make the residue as large as possible and State intervention as small as possible. Ambedkar agrees with them that "where the State refrains from intervention what remains is liberty". But to him, this liberty is "liberty to the landlords to increase rents, for capitalists to increase hours of work and reduce rate of wages. This must be so. It cannot be otherwise. For in an economic system employing armies of workers, producing goods on masses at regular intervals someone must make rules so that workers will work and the wheels of industry run on. If the State does not do it, the private employer will. Life, otherwise, will become impossible. In other words, what is called liberty from the control of the State is another name for the dictatorship of the private employer."¹

Evidently, Ambedkar favours the protection of employed as well as unemployed persons. He wants that they should not be coerced and cheated out of their fundamental rights to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. What are the remedies? One of the remedies adopted by Democratic countries is "to limit the power of Government to impose arbitrary restraints in political domain and to invoke the ordinary power of the legislature to restrain the more powerful individual from imposing arbitrary restraints on the less powerful in the economic field."² But Ambedkar does not accept it as quite practicable. "The successful invocation by the less powerful of the authority of the Legislature", he says, "is a doubtful proposition. Having regard to the fact that even under adult suffrage all Legislatures and Governments are controlled by the more powerful, an appeal to the Legislature to intervene is a very precarious safeguard against the invasion of the liberty of the less powerful."³

1. SM., p. 33.

2. SM., p. 33.

3. SM., p. 33.

Ambedkar follows a different method. His method seeks "to limit not only the power of Government to impose arbitrary restraints but also of the more powerful individuals or to be more precise to eliminate the possibility of the more powerful having the power to impose arbitrary restraints on the less powerful by withdrawing from the control he has over the economic life of the people."¹ It seems that of the two remedies against the invasion by the more powerful of the rights and liberties of the less powerful, the one contained in Ambedkar's proposal is more effective. His proposal is essentially a faith for safeguarding the liberty of the individual under the socialist pattern of society.

Individualism and socialism, to Ambedkar, do not appear as inherently contradictory. In his theory of State socialism by the law of the constitution, individual liberties are well protected, even under State intervention. He carefully relates his socialist ideas to the idea of parliamentary democracy, free thought and expression. Socialism, otherwise, would become a coercion—a compulsion, which is opposed to man's very existence. Man has a dynamic personality which needs both individual loneliness and social intercourse. Though there may be conflicts between these two attitudes, yet they can co-exist in a harmonious way for the larger interests of the people. Ambedkar is an individualist by his temperament and training, and at the same time, he is a socialist by his intelligence and intellect. His socialist attitude does not kill the spirit of individual dignity nor does it ignore the social responsibility. He prefers an actual harmony between the two.

Ambedkar's concept of State socialism liberates people from the capitalist's coercion and threats and ensures an equitable distribution of material wealth. It, thus, strives for relieving man of hunger, unemployment, crises of overproduction, fear and other social evils that infringe on his freedom of work, thought and expression. State ownership under Ambedkar's socialism, permits rational organisation of society's political and economic life. His socialism does not restrict man's free choice of living and movement in society. It essentially permits man to make the best of his talents and abilities. The State, to him,

1. SM., p. 33.

is not an evil but as something which is a positive good. He does not believe that the State crushes the individuality of the individuals. His programme of socialism can easily bring justice, leisure, fairplay and honesty into society.

Democracy and Socialism.

So far Ambedkar's theory of State socialism has been considered purely as a means of safeguarding "individual liberty". There is also another aspect of his socialism and that is "to establish State socialism without abrogating Parliamentary Democracy and without leaving its establishment to the will of Parliamentary Democracy". He sincerely associates his idea of socialism with democracy in order to foster and promote the common economic, intellectual and moral interests of the people.

According to him, one essential condition for the success of a planned economy is that it must not be liable to suspension or abandonment. It must be permanent. How can this permanence be secured? It cannot be secured under the form of Government called parliamentary democracy. Under the system of parliamentary democracy the policy of the Legislature and of the Executive is the policy of the majority for the time being. Under the system of parliamentary democracy, the majority in one election may be in favour of State Socialism in Industry and in Agriculture. Whereas the anti-state socialism majority in another election may use its law-making power to undoing the work of the pro-state socialism majority and the pro-state socialism majority may use its law-making power to doing over again what has been undone by their opponents. Men who want the economic structure of society to be modelled on State socialism must realise that they cannot leave the fulfilment of so a fundamental purpose to the exigencies of ordinary law, which simple majorities—whose political fortunes are seldom determined by rational causes—have a right to make and unmake, at times, merely for the sake of an opposition.¹

For these reasons, parliamentary democracy is unsuited for bringing about State socialism. Dictatorship then remains as an alternative. It can give the permanences which State socialism requires as an essential condition for its fructification. Therefore,

1. SM., p. 34.

a dilemma arises. Those who believe in individual freedom would strongly object to dictatorship. They would insist upon parliamentary democracy as a proper form of Government for a free society. It is because they feel that freedom of the individual is possible under parliamentary system and not under dictatorship. These people are not prepared to give up parliamentary democracy as a form of Government. They may be anxious to have State socialism, though they will not be ready to exchange parliamentary democracy for dictatorship. Even though the gain by such an exchange is the achievement of State socialism. The problem, therefore, is to have State socialism without dictatorship, to have State socialism with parliamentary democracy. "The way out", Ambedkar says, "seems to retain Parliamentary Democracy and to prescribe State socialism by the law of the Constitution so that it will be beyond the reach of a Parliamentary majority to suspend, amend or abrogate it. It is only by this that one can achieve the triple object, namely, to establish Socialism, retain Parliamentary Democracy and avoid Dictatorship."¹

Ambedkar's theory of State socialism marks a departure from the existing constitutions of democratic countries. The aim of these constitutions is merely to prescribe the form of the political structure of society leaving the economic structure untouched. The result, according to him, is that the political structure is completely set at naught by the forces which emerge from the economic structure that is at variance with the political structure. He wants that there should be a harmony between economic and political interests of the people through the laws of the land.

It is evident that Ambedkar stands for both democracy and socialism and endeavours to avoid dictatorship. Logically, democracy demands individual property and freedom for individual work and socialism demands social justice for the whole of society. In this sense, he is a strong supporter of Lockean political and economic liberalism. The link between democracy and socialism is the most important element in Ambedkar's thought. Looking at the history of socialism, it can be seen that successful socialist movements have grown up only in nations with strong democratic traditions such as Britain,

1. SM., p. 34.

Scandinavia, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Australia, New-Zealand, and more recently, Israel.¹

In India, the people are following in the footsteps of Ambedkar's idea of democratic socialism. The people, on the one hand, adhere to the principle of democracy, and, on the other, they want socialism. Socialism stands for centralization, whereas democracy for decentralization. There is seemingly contradiction between these two trends of human life. But to Ambedkar, the best elements of the two may be combined together for a better planning. Indian planning is an example of that. Ambedkar wants individual freedom through democracy and social welfare through socialism. Social welfare without individual liberty is a coercion and individual liberty without aiming at social emancipation is fruitless. To him, both are complementary to each other, and, therefore, democracy and socialism can be preserved at the same time, though the movements of progress may be slow. It is good that the people have realized the need of maintaining both, as Ambedkar augured sixteen years ago.² The genius of the people of India is that they cannot live without freedom. They may not care for food, but material well-being is also required today. So both democracy and socialism, when combined together, can fulfil the needs of all men here in this country.

Democratic Collectivism.

Ambedkar, in his theory of State socialism, does not leave agrarian problems untouched. He wants that agriculture should be a State Industry. The State should acquire the subsisting rights in the industries like insurance and agricultural land, held by private individuals whether as owners, tenants or mortgagees and pay them compensation in the form of debenture equal to the value of their right in the land. The State should determine how and when the debenture-holder shall be entitled to claim cash payment. The debenture should be transferable and inheritable property but neither the debenture-holder nor the transferee from the original holder nor his heir shall be entitled to claim the return of the land or interest in any

1. Ebenstein, W. : *Today's Isms*, p. 202.

2. SM., pp. 30-35.

industrial concern acquired by the State or be entitled to deal with it in any way. The debenture-holder should be entitled to interest on his debenture as such as may be defined by law, to be paid by the State in cash or in kind as the State may deem fit.¹

Ambedkar's scheme of agrarian reforms is democratic collectivism. It does not stand for the total abolition of private property in land, but the public ownership of agricultural production in that land. The land will remain of whom it belongs, though not in the manner as it exists today. His scheme of socialism stands only for the co-operative and collective control of the agricultural industry. The original landowner will be entitled either for immediate compensation or long-term interest as the case may be. It would help in removing the evils of landlordism. Today, the possession of agricultural land has become a matter of social status. The people who have no land are regarded as inferior inhabitants in India's villages. This feeling gives rise to unequal social behaviour patterns, and, therefore, to the coercion and exploitation of the underdog. Through Ambedkar's democratic collectivism, village landlordism along with many other social evils, may be uprooted tooth and nail, by peaceful and legislative means.

The idea of democratic collectivism has won over the majority of the people in all industrial and agricultural organisations. It has even exercised very considerable influence upon Indian politics. Ambedkar's democratic collectivism, far from destroying man's right to private property, has rather revived it, not in the antiquated individualistic form of letting each man retain his own property, which is difficult in State socialism and its division of labour, but in the giving to every man a claim upon the equivalent of what he has done and produced. Through his collectivism runs one common thread—to make democratic socialism more real by broadening the application of democratic principles from the political to the non-political areas of human society.

Equality and Socialism.

Here it should be admitted that the people who cannot wage a war against injustice and poverty, cannot be said to be true socialists. Real socialism starts in one's mind, when he rebels

1. SM., p. 15f.

against social tyranny and economic oppression. He develops a strong faith in equality which is, according to Ambedkar, the basis of all socialist doctrines. He is very critical of the Indian socialist programme which is unrelated to the social needs of the people.¹

No idea of political thought is so difficult to define as the idea of equality. There are many misunderstandings of what equality really implies. But definitely, it does not mean the identity of treatment or of the distribution of wealth. Ambedkar himself admits that there cannot be ultimate equality among the people so long as men differ in their needs and capacities.² He would certainly agree with Prof. Laski that equality implies fundamentally a certain levelling process. No man should be so placed in society that he can overreach his neighbour to the extent which constitutes a denial of the latter's citizenship. Man's realisation of his best self must involve as its logical result the realisation by others of their best selves. Equality stands for such an ordering of social forces as will balance a share in the toil of living with a share in its gain also. It means that man's share in that gain must be adequate for the purposes of citizenship.³ Ambedkar's love for equality is also a process of levelling and it includes the absence of special privileges and provisions for adequate opportunities to all.

This Ambedkar leaves to the social management how far it realizes the principle of equality. "It can be urged that if it is good for the social body to get the most out of its members, it can get most out of them only by making them equal as far as possible at the very start of the race." This is the reason why the people cannot escape equality. There is also another reason, according to him, why the people love equality. "A statesman is concerned with vast numbers of people. He has neither the time nor the knowledge to draw fine distinctions and to treat each equitably, *i. e.*, according to need or according to capacity. However desirable or reasonable an equitable treatment of men may be, humanity is not capable of assortment and classification. The statesman, therefore, must follow some rough and ready rule and that rough and rule is to treat all men alike not because they are alike but because classification and assortment

1. LM., p. 450.

2. Cf. AC., p. 39.

3. Laski, H. J. : A Grammar of Politics, p. 152,

is impossible.”¹ Such is the attraction of Ambedkar towards equality as the governing principle of life. His socialist programme cannot do anything without it.

It is true that the fundamental aim of a socialist should be the love for equality. In his steps for social reconstruction, he should strive for the removal of poverty and inequality. Unless one has strong feelings of love and hate, one cannot be a true socialist. So Ambedkar's love for equality and hate for inequality, ignorance and poverty, constitute the basic attitude towards a socialistic spirit. His balance in thought and action helped him in developing his socialist ideal and, in a sense, his political thought seeks harmony with economic well-being of the people through democracy, socialism and humanism.

Practical Socialism.

Ambedkar, as a socialist, stands against all kinds of social discrimination. He advocates for an urgent need of bringing about equality of opportunity to the needy and the weak.² All citizens should have equal access to all institutions, conveniences, amenities maintained by or for the public.³ Discrimination is against the spirit of socialism. It prevents common participation of the people in common activities. Discriminatory behaviour patterns in any society are derogatory to man's dignity. Ambedkar condemns discrimination against citizens by Government offices or by private employers in factories and commercial concerns on the ground of race, creed and social status.⁴ He protects all men from Government coercion and social discrimination, which would hamper the creation of socialist society that he visualized.

According to him, any kind of discrimination is a menace to socialism, because it snatches from the individuals their fundamental rights. And in a country, like India, where it is possible for social discrimination to be practised on a vast scale and in a relentless manner, equality of opportunity and fundamental rights of the individual can have no meaning. This is why, he not only revolts against social discrimination, but also against the social boycott, which is a powerful weapon in the hands of

1. AC., p. 40.

2. Cf. WC., pp. 137-138.

3. SM., p. 9.

4. SM., p. 14.

some traditional higher castes. They use this cruel method to exploit, to tyrannize and to suppress the downtrodden people, when they raise their voice against traditionalism and orthodoxy. Social boycott is always held over the heads of poor depressed classes by the so-called high classes as a sword of Democles. Only these poor people know what a terrible weapon it is in the hands of tyrants.¹ Social discrimination and social boycott are the enemies of Ambedkar's concept of socialism, because his socialism lays a stress on the need of equal behaviour and individual liberty and respect.

"If socialism is a practical programme and is not merely an ideal, distant and far off", Ambedkar says, "the question for a socialist is not whether he believes in equality. The question for him is whether he minds one class ill-treating and suppressing another class as a matter of system, as a matter of principle and thus allow tyranny and oppression to continue to divide one class from another."² A true socialist, to him, would not tolerate ill-treatment and oppression, because these are opposed to socialism. The problem of socialism, in India, is more social than economic. There are traditional beliefs which induce the people to look upon one another as low and high, thereby acquiring social status and prestige, though these people may not be able to achieve these things by their ability alone.

Instead of adhering to the theoretical aspect, the people should attend to the practical programme of socialism. The creed of socialism can be an act of success only where there is harmony among the people. Man is a member of society. So it is the bounden duty of society to remove hindrances from the way of socialism by minimizing occasions for ill-treatment, oppression, conflict and frustration. The true test of socialism, in India, is not how far it helps men to solve their present problems, but how far it breaks down the traditional barriers that separate man from man.³

The interest of socialism lies in creating conditions conducive to freedom, social brotherhood, a better society than ever—an environment most satisfactory to all members of society. Unless there are practical measures regulating human affairs, men cannot be able to establish a socialist society. To Ambedkar,

1. SM., p. 39.

2. AC., pp. 17-18.

3. Cf. AC., pp. 14-19.

the present social system—economically, socially, politically and morally, is not suited to create a socialist spirit among the people. It requires radical changes in all spheres. This is necessary, because socialism also stands for social participation, whereas the present social structure is opposed to social intercourse and human equality. He condemns the move of those socialists who nationalize nothing in practice, but in theory threaten the whole of the system of private property.

Social Reform and Socialism.

Before any socialist revolution takes place, the existing social system largely based on unequal behaviour patterns should be reformed. "I can't see how a socialist State, in India, can function for a second without having to grapple with the problems created by the prejudices which make Indian people observe the distinctions of high and low, clean and unclean." This is because of an inherent attitude of inequality against some social classes by some people. Therefore, to him, "If socialists are not to be content with the mouthing of fine phrases, if the socialists wish to make socialism a definite reality, then they must recognize that the problem of social reform is fundamental and that for them there is no escape from it.....the social order prevalent in India is a matter which a socialist must deal with."¹

Social reform, according to Ambedkar, falls into two different species. One species of social reform is that does not relate to religious notions of people. It is purely secular in character. The second is that which does relate to the religious notions of the people. For establishing socialism, he feels the necessity of social reforms, both secular and non-secular. He opposes a system which prevents the transformation of a society into new techniques of life. To him, the prime necessity, then, is to remove all social evils. Because nothing—either political or economic, can succeed without first removing artificial social distance. "No one can say that to have the problems of social reform put aside is a desirable state of things. Wherever there are social evils, the health of the body politic requires that they shall be removed before they become the symbols of suffering and injustice. For it is the social and economic evils which everywhere are the parent of revolution or decay."²

1. AC., p. 19.

2. PP., p. 237.

Here socialism, imitating the European attitude, is seeking to apply the economic interpretation of history to the facts of India. It propounds that "man is an economic creature, that his activities and aspirations are bound by economic facts, that property is the only source of power". It, therefore, preaches that political and social reforms are but gigantic illusions and that economic reform by equalization of property must have precedence over every other kind of reform.¹ Ambedkar does not agree with such a socialist approach. To him, there are many other sources of power like religion and social status. Unless socialism understands them well, it cannot make creative contribution especially in Indian society.

To Ambedkar, economic reform alone cannot create a socialist society in India. The socialist and any other revolutionary cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social system. He gives historical evidence that all revolutions—economic and political, have always been preceded by social and religious revolutions. The religious reformations started by Luther was the precursor of the politico-economic emancipation of the European people. In England, Puritanism led to the establishment of political liberty. Before the Arabs became a power, they had undergone a religious revolution started by the Prophet Mohammed. The same is true in India. The religious and social revolutions by Buddha, Nanak, Kabir, etc., led to the economic well-being of the people. The Sikhs are now a powerful community because of their religious unity. So the emancipation of the mind and the heart is a necessary preliminary for the political expansion and the economic well-being of the people.²

According to Ambedkar, unless socialism attends to social reforms, it cannot achieve its revolution. If it does achieve a revolution, as a result of good fortune, it will have to grapple with social reform, if it wishes to realize socialist ideal.³ He, thus, believes in adjustment among the social and economic forces of the times, if a true socialist revolution is to be brought about. The real problem before him, as a socialist, is how to harmonize the age-old angularities found among the different

1. AC., p. 14.

2. AC., pp. 13-14.

3. AC., p. 19.

communities of India. His socialist analysis also includes an observation of social evils and ceaseless efforts to eradicate them. Socialism cannot ignore them either now or at any time. It has at least to attend to them here in this country where social conditions are not actually favourable for democracy and socialism because of conservative traditionalism.

A living political and economic philosophy, to Ambedkar, is that which attends to all social, religious and moral affairs of man as a whole. This is why, economic reform alone is not sufficient. Socialism is a dynamic concept—an attitude of life towards all human problems. It has to take note of the eradication of exploitation, the fostering of self-respect, the opportunity of education and employment for all. In spite of his criticism of socialism as conceived by the socialists of India, Ambedkar is essentially a staunch believer in socialism. He is a liberal socialist reformer.

Casteism and Socialism.

Socialism, in a sense, is a problem of social war—a war between the weak and the strong. “Social war has been raging between the strong and the weak for more violently in Europe than it has been in India. Yet the weak in Europe has had in freedom of military service his *physical weapon*, in suffrage his *political weapon* and in education his *moral weapon*. These three weapons for emancipation were never withheld by the strong from the weak in Europe. All these weapons were, however, denied to the masses in India by Chaturvarnya.”¹ There cannot be a more degrading system of social organisation than this one. The Hindu social theory of Chaturvarnya divides men into four classes and it denies the shudras—the bulk of Indian population—the right to education, arms and property. This system prevented the people from rising to either socialism or to capitalism. It is the system which deadened, paralysed and crippled the people from helpful and progressive activity. It is antithesis of socialism, for the sanction behind this system still divides the people, whereas the creed of socialism needs unity among them.

“The caste system”, Ambedkar says, “is a system which is infested with the spirit of isolation and in fact, it makes isolation

1. AC., p. 49.

of one caste from another a matter of virtue.”¹ This spirit of isolationism is the chief hurdle in the way of socialism. Socialism, in this country, is hampered at every step by the traditions and conventions of the caste system and religious orthodoxy. Unless the root of this system, *i. e.*, the Vedic conception of Varnas, is done away with, no socialism can flourish here now and at any time.

To Ambedkar, this system even as an economic organisation is harmful institution, inasmuch as, it involves the subordination of man's natural powers and inclinations to the exigencies (or rigidities) of social rules. It does not result in economic efficiency, the soul of socialism. This system imposes work on man, though he is reluctant.² But in Ambedkar's ideal social organisation men would not be forced to do a particular work. They would be free to choose and to work. This would definitely increase their economic efficiency and strengthen the prospects of democracy and socialism.

For a greater economic efficiency, Ambedkar regards division of labour as an indispensable condition. “Civilized society undoubtedly needs division of labour.”³ Division of labour is simply the spontaneous realization of a particular form of social co-operation. This division of labour effects an easy and natural combination of economic efforts for the creation of material dividend. Division of labour, by establishing the co-operation of all for the satisfaction of the desires of each, becomes a source of progress and of well-being. Today's society needs division of labour and particularly socialist society cannot do anything without it.

But the caste system is not merely a division of labour, but also a division of labourers. This division of labour brought about by the caste organisation is not division based on choice. “Individual sentiment, individual preference has no place in it. It is based on the dogma of predestination.” This belief in predestination determines the profession of each person—no question, whether one is capable of doing that profession or

1. Ambedkar, B.R. : Mr. Gandhi and the Emancipation of the Untouchables, p. 53.

2. AC., p. 21.

3. AC., p. 20.

whether one is keenly interested in that work. "This division of labour", to Ambedkar, "is not spontaneous, it is not based on natural aptitudes. Social and individual efficiency requires us to develop the capacity of an individual to the point of competency to choose and to make his own career. This principle is violated in the caste system in so far as it involves an attempt to appoint tasks to individuals in advance, selected not on the basis of trained original capacities, but on that of the social status of the parents".¹ He calls this division of labour as the "unnatural division of labourers into water-tight compartments." It is an heirarchy in which the divisions of labourers are graded one above the other. In no other country is the division of labour accompanied by this gradation of labourers.

Looked at from industry's point of view, this organisation is pernicious. According to Ambedkar, "Industry is never static. It undergoes rapid and abrupt changes. With such changes an individual must be free to change his occupation. Without such freedom to adjust himself to changing circumstances it would be impossible for him to gain his livelihood."² This social organisation based on Chaturvarnya diverts the minds of the people from greater economic efficiency which is required in the successfull working of socialism. It compels people to do hereditary professions, though they are not prepared to do them. There is a constant desire in them to evade and escape from such occupations. This desire arises solely because of the blighting effect which these occupations produce upon these who follow them because of the slight and stigma cast upon such occupations by the Chaturvarnya.³ This system is the negation of democratic socialism. It must go and leave a place for liberty, equality and brotherhood as Ambedkar wanted them to become the governing principle of Indian social life.

A section of Indian society finds refuge in Vedanta. It says that Vedanta offers a true base for Indian Socialism. How is it possible that the Vedanta which believes in practical human distinction based on the theory of Chaturvarnya can reconcile freedom and social equality—the soul of democratic socialism. The social theory of Vedanta is an anti-thesis of socialism.

1. AC., pp. 20-21.

2. AC., p. 20.

3. AC., pp. 20-21.

Socialism teaches social equality and human brotherhood, whereas the Varna system creates social distance, *i. e.*, social inequality. It is rooted in social disunity—the enemy of socialism. The Vedanta attitude to social life has failed as a binding force. It offers simply a metaphysical unity which is fruitless unless it is sincerely practised in life. This metaphysical unity in Vedanta is not applicable to the practical world—the essential field of socialism. Socialism is a social and economic, political and moral concept. It has never been a metaphysical one. There is an utter contradiction in making Vedanta as a basis of Indian socialism, *i. e.*, between social inequality and metaphysical unity.¹ Therefore, to Ambedkar, Vedanta, with its Varnas as social ideal, is unsuited to the socialist spirit.

Immorality and Inequality.

Ambedkar, when he was a young man, formed an army. It was known as Social Equality Army. Its main function was to remove those practices of man, which were full of inequalities. It was a human organisation and as such, it was a justified protest against the inequal behaviour patterns of all men, institutions and societies. It had no sympathy for a man who practised inequality and exploited the masses. It had no regard for the institution, which created ill-will among the people, and it had no respect for a religion which upheld inequality as the principle of social life. Only the lovers of equality and humanity could join such an army formed by the rebel and revolutionary like Ambedkar.

However, a controversy raged over the activities of the Social Equality Army as conducted by Ambedkar, his friend & followers. Those who were perturbed by its broad and revolutionary ideals bitterly criticized the institution. They charged this army that it had no regard for traditional values and religions. But as Ambedkar said : the aim of this army was to dislodge all those values which conserved and fostered anti-human elements in the name of traditional and cultural heritage. Only the moral and progressive values should be conserved and continued for the emancipation of men, argued the learned Doctor.²

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1. Sampurnanand's "Indian Socialism" considers Vedanta to be the basis of Indian Socialism,
 2. AC., pp. 78-79,

In fact, today's world, as we understand, needs knowledge, courage and kindness. It does not require a regretful hankering after the past, or a fettering of the free intelligence by the words uttered long ago by ignorant men. It needs a fearless and humane outlook to solve the present problems. It is futile to look back all the time towards a past which is dead and harmful to man.

There is also a section of people, which preach that inequality is the rule of Nature. It cannot be obliterated root and branch. It is futile to preach that inequality be abolished. It may be diminished naturally and automatically in the course of time. It can never be abolished. Such people also criticised the activities of the Social Equality Army. To them, this organisation was a waste of its time and money on the useless issue.

Ambedkar does not agree with them. To him, there is no doubt that there is natural inequality and even men are born unequal.¹ He agrees that inequality and many other social evils cannot be abolished totally and all men cannot be made equals in all aspects of human life. But to adopt the principle of equality as the governing point in social and political life is not harmful. It can at least create emotional relations based on equality and liberty. Moreover, if justice and peace is to be maintained the principle of equality is most fundamental and urgent to be adopted by all men and women.²

According to Ambedkar, the man who practises what he preaches is worthy of reverence. But a good principle never suffers because some men holding it do not show the requisite courage and conviction to practise it. The people who preach that inequality and other social evils would never disappear from the face of the earth, Ambedkar asked : why they preach morality to the men and women when immorality had prevailed at all times and in all climes.³ Immorality; in fact, cannot be obliterated root and branch. It may be minimized by preaching the moral principles. Similarly, Ambedkar is right when he asks the people that they should adopt a principle of equality so that most of the inequal behaviour patterns and elements may be removed from human society and at least be minimized.

1. BH., p. 308.

2. AC., pp. 39-40.

3. LM., p. 131.

He expresses his confirmed view that the principle of social equality is the corner-stone of a stable society. To establish society on a sound foundation of morality, justice and peace, it is necessary to apply to all the component parts of the society the principle of equality in all fields, social, economic, political and religious.¹ In short, both immorality and inequality are very harmful to the idea of a Socialist State. It is necessary to understand how to minimize them. If socialism is to be brought about for the welfare and happiness of all, then inequality and immorality should be minimized, if not totally abolished, from the face of the earth, and, therefore, social equality and the like institutions are always a necessity in human society.

Labour and Trusteeship.

In Ambedkar's social life, labour is eminently respected. Labourers are to be given their due wages besides many other social and economic facilities. They should not feel that they are mere servants of the propertied classes. The moneyed classes should spend their money on the welfare of labour classes rather than on war. This would help the poor in many ways. "Labour may ask the moneyed classes a pertinent question saying : 'if you do not mind paying taxes to meet the expenditure on war, why do you object to raising funds when their purpose is to raise labour standard ? How many uneducated persons could have been educated and how many sick persons could have been restored to health, if the money spent on war had been spent on public welfare'".² Ambedkar does not believe in the annihilation of moneyed classes, but he wants a radical change in their attitude towards human affairs. They should develop a sense of social responsibility and social philanthropy in the use of their money. The poor people have also right to live happily. They should not be taken as destined merely to work and subsist miserably.

Ambedkar has no liking for a system, even for a religion, which regards social inequalities and economic disparities as predestined for certain classes. Some social reformers like Gandhiji,³ believe that the rich should treat their riches as a

1. LM., p. 131.

2. LM., p. 372.

3. Dhawan, G. : *The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 85-87,

trust for the people. To Ambedkar, it is not a proper solution of economic problems. It is an old ideal based on metaphysical attitude. It cannot work in today's society. The people have become more greedy and less liberal in economic relations. The moneyed classes suffer from an unlimited sense of property and possession. He says :

“The idea of trusteeship—as a panacea and by which the moneyed classes will hold their properties in trust for the poor, is the most ridiculous.....All that one can say about it is that if anybody else had propounded it the author would have been laughed at as a silly fool, who had not known the hard realities of life and was deceiving the servile classes by telling them that a little dose of moralre-armament to the propertied classes—those who by their insatiable cupidity and indomitable arrogance have made and will always make this world a vale of tears for the toiling million—will recondition them to such an extent that they will be able to withstand the temptation to misuse the tremendous power which the class structure gives them over servile classes.”¹

Ambedkar, as a socialist, does not find in the trusteeship theory any solution to the socialist problems. His outlook on life and society is very much more modern. It is not a metaphysical outlook that extols poverty and ignorance. The propertied classes, without State over their means of production, cannot be persuaded to do good to the needy and the poor. They take refuge in the metaphysical assertion that the poor are poor because of their actions done in their past lives. To Ambedkar, this is anti-social spirit. It helps them in escaping from the social responsibility which is the foundation of socialism. The Gandhian theory of trusteeship is, therefore, not suited to the present social and economic needs of the people. It cannot work in today's world.

Modern Civilization and Socialism.

Modern technology and civilization have produced some social and economic evils. It may be true. But these evils are not sufficient grounds to condemn them. These evils are not wholly due to modern machine and civilization, but they are also due to a wrong social organisation which makes private

1. WC., p. 297.

property and pursuit of personal gain, matters of absolute sanctity. Ambedkar says : "If machinery and civilization have not benefited everybody, the remedy is not to condemn machinery and civilization but to alter the organisation of society so that the benefits will not be usurped by the few but will accrue to all."¹ This exhibits in him a spirit of welfare for all—the essential feature of all socialist doctrines. Modern civilization seems to be an evil, because its fruits have not reached the doors of all. It is a defect of social organisation, not of civilization.

Ambedkar has a deep faith in man. He does not regard him merely as an animal. Man shares the constitutions and functions of animals, yet these are not his distinctively human functions. He says : "The distinctively human function is reason, the purpose of which is to enable man to observe, meditate, cogitate, study and discover the beauties of the universe and enrich his life and control the animal elements in his life".² It is reason in man that distinguishes him from all other animals.

Looked at from this point of view, man, in Ambedkar's idea of socialism, occupies the highest place in the scheme of animate existence. Man's aim should be something cultural along with material well-being. While the ultimate goal of a brute's life is reached once his physical appetites are satisfied, the ultimate goal of man's existence is not reached unless and until he has fully cultivated his mind. In other words, what divides the brute from man is culture. "Culture is not possible for the brute, but it is essential for man. That being so, the aim of human society must be to enable every person to lead a life of culture, which means the cultivation of mind as distinguished from the satisfaction of mere physical wants".³

The life of culture is not possible unless there is sufficient leisure. It is only when there is sufficient leisure that a man can devote himself to a life of culture. According to Ambedkar, "Leisure means the lessening of the toil and effort necessary for satisfying the physical wants of life. "The most urgent need that socialism has to face here in this country, is how to provide leisure to every individual. Leisure may be provided only

1. WC., p. 294.

2. WC., p. 294.

3. WC., p. 294.

when some means are found whereby the toil required for producing goods to satisfy human needs is lessened. To Ambedkar, it is possible : "Only when machine takes the place of man. There is no other means of producing leisure. Machinery and modern civilization are, thus, indispensable for emancipating man from leading the life of a brute, and for providing him with leisure and for making a life of culture possible".¹ In this way, he relates his concept of socialism with the utility of modern machines.

Today's society needs socialism. Socialism cannot be conceived without modern machinery and civilization. Reactionaries who condemn such radical changes [do not understand their purpose and the ultimate aim which the modern society has to strive for. For this purpose, Ambedkar does not undermine the need of a democratic society with its ideal of socialism. A democratic society, so organized, would not be indifferent to modern machine and civilization. If it is, it would defeat its own purpose. It would then be content itself with "a life of leisure and culture for the few and a life of toil and drudgery for the many". It would neither be a democracy nor a socialism. To him, a democratic society must assure "a life of leisure and culture to each one of its citizen." This is a genuine step towards socialism. The slogan of socialist society, therefore, must be "machinery and more machinery, civilization and more civilization."²

Technology is the key to progress and prosperity in Indian Society. Once Mr. Nehru said that "it is technology, not ideology, which can enhance the cause of human progress." But to Ambedkar, both technology and ideology are essential, if man is to make human society a place of material well-being and a home for spiritual brotherhood. Technology without ideology is blind and ideology without technology is empty in modern society.

Under Ambedkar's socialism, the common man is not to be compelled to work ceaselessly for a pittance and remain like a brute. His ambition was to see people work for "the mere love of work, hastening to their task as they do to a gala." Why

1. WC., p. 295.

2. WC., p. 295.

should not socialism become play, and why should not the same degree of enthusiasm be shown for work as is shown by young men in the pursuit of sport? It is possible only when work is work, and not coercion and slavery. And people are working devotedly for removing poverty and ignorance. This human attitude is most conducive to the bright future of socialism and democracy in this country.

Attitude Towards Marxism.

It is true that Marxism supplies a way of life to be worked out into a practical shape. From this point of view, it is essentially a theory of method. It seeks to lay down the principles upon which the transition from capitalism to socialism is to be accomplished; and its two essential doctrines are the class war and the revolutionary—that is, the forcible—transference of power to the proletariat.¹ In it, the economic element is the dominant, more accurately, determinant factor in man's life.

Ambedkar does not accept Marxism as it is. Though he accepts Marx's interpretation of history partially, yet he differs from him on many points. History has been interpreted by many persons. To Augustine, history is only "an unfolding of a divine plane" in which mankind is to continue through war and suffering until that plan is completed at the day of judgment. To Buckle, history is made of "Geography and Physics", while, to Marx, history is the result of "economic forces."

The theory of Augustine is purely based on theology. It is not acceptable to Ambedkar, because it stands neither to reason nor to human experience. As to Marx and Buckle, he says: "While there is truth in what they say, their views do not represent the whole truth. They are quite wrong in holding that impersonal forces are everything and that man is not a factor in the making of history." Here again in Ambedkar's social organisation, man occupies an important place. To him, "the impersonal forces are a determining factor cannot be denied. But that the effect of impersonal forces depends on man must also be admitted."² It is man who controls some of the

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1. Joad, C. E. M. : *Introduction to Modern Political Theory*, p. 88.
 2. RG., p.5.

impersonal forces and makes possibilities for instruments and machines, which are the basis of modern culture and civilization.

No society has a smooth sailing. Sometimes the old ways, old habits and old thoughts fail to uplift society and lead it forward. There are crises and times of decay and destruction. In this, some survive, some are destroyed. Some go under stagnation and decay. Ambedkar agrees with Carlyle when the latter says : "No time need have gone to ruin, could it have found a great enough a man wise and good enough ; Wisdom to discern truly what the Time wanted, valor to lead it on to the right road thither, these are the salvation of any Time."¹

As Ambedkar holds, this seems to be quite a "conclusive answer" to Augustine, Buckle and Marx, who deny man a proper place in the making of history. Crises in society can be met only when the new ways are discovered by man. Where there are no new ways found, society undergoes many troubles. Ultimately, it perishes. Time may give man some possible ways. But to set thing a right is not the work of Time. It is really the work of man. "Man, therefore," Ambedkar says, "is a factor in the making of history and that environment forces whether impersonal or social if they are the first and not the last things."²

Who changes the economic structure ? Do new machines invent themselves ? Did the hand-mill and the steam-mill, referred to by Marx, make themselves ? Do new methods of production and distribution establish themselves ? Do new social classes arise mysteriously and mechanically ? No, men and women alter the economic structure of society by promoting technical progress, distributing commodities in new ways, and recognizing certain rights of property on the ground of labour, occupation, conquest, acquisition, bequest, etc. All these economic activities are not undertaken and accomplished by implements and instruments, but by living men and women. Economic forces, thus, depend on the minds and wills of human beings.³ Both Ambedkar and Lala Hardayal here agree to criticize Marxism which denies man a proper place in human society.

1. Quoted by Ambedkar, RG., p. 7.

2. RG., pp. 7-8.

3. Hardayal : *Hints For Self-culture*, p. 57.

Ambedkar, in his thought, lays complete faith in man and his ability to control economic forces in harmony with social problems. From this point of view, he differs from Marxism which regards "economic relations as the be-all and end-all of human life." But Ambedkar accepts much of the Marxist philosophy without any difficulty, such as the class-struggle and exploitation theory. He also believes in Marx's evolutionary method through cause and effect : thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis, and gives more importance to the Marxian view that possession of private property is the cause of exploitation. Through surplus value the exploiters who have means of production, gain much.¹

Notwithstanding, Marxism does not satisfy him completely. He does not agree with Marxism when it says : "Religion is an evil, because it is sheer speculation and imagination ; rather it is a cry in the wilderness, wholly groundless and unscientific." The Marxists condemn religion and religious activity as "the opium of the people and the vale of woe."² Whereas to Ambedkar, religion is essentially man's valuable heritage. After studying the various religions of the world, Ambedkar comes to the conclusion that in questions regarding the betterment of human life and social organisation, religion plays a decisive role. Religion is a human force, which can be great and creative only in some human beings in each epoch. Religion is like a match, without which society cannot be lit. Both man and religion produce the light that enlightens the world.

Need for Rural Development.

Bringing the benefits of modern inventions and discoveries to the impoverished and neglected majority of men living in the rural areas in India must become a primary objective of economic development in a socialist society, says Dr. Ambedkar.³ The right of a man to cultivate his nation's land and the obligation of government to educate its citizens in order to be useful and productive human beings are the important elements in his idea of socialism.

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1. Cf. Ambedkar's speech : "Buddhism & Communism".
 2. Marx & Engels : *On Religion*, pp. 42-43.
 3. A speech delivered at Agra on 18th December, 1955.

He observes that the rural areas in many parts of this country have been dominated both economically and politically by landlords and moneylenders. Ambedkar vigorously challenges these conditions. He asks the people to start the reclamation of waste land in rural areas forcibly, if Government does not manage to give them employment. These people, however, must, he stressed, pay the land revenue as and when required by the government. There are many factors which hamper the progress of India's dream. One of these, as Ambedkar points out, is the negligence of rural areas. People are still living in outdated conditions. They must be educated and helped in right earnest, if a true socialist state is to be established.¹

For the welfare of the people living in big cities and small towns, industrialization is essential. Without doing so, Ambedkar thinks, there can be no advancement of society. But the industrial growth by itself is not enough; a politically and economically stable society requires a solid rural foundation which brings the peasant majority into the main stream of their national development. Thus, a key objective of his economic programme is an effective working balance between urban and rural development.

Ambedkar holds that a comprehensive programme of land reform is a political and economic must. But to him, the most important problems of rural areas are not only the economic advancement and educational facilities, but also vigorous campaign against caste evils, because caste consciousness hampers all economic growth. It creates conditions which are harmful for collective efforts in agriculture and other activities.² Any rural economic scheme should study the actual conditions operating in a particular part of Indian society. Caste and economic development are incompatible. Rural development, in the presence of caste relations, will be against the principles of socialism and humanism. Therefore, the great feudal estates based on casteism must be broken up and the land be distributed to the people who till it and who can collectively produce things for the rapid progress of both cities and villages.³

1. From the same speech.

2. AC., pp. 19-21.

3. From the same speech.

Although widespread collective land ownership is essential to a stable rural society, it is only one element in the process of socialism. There should be schools and agricultural colleges for girls and boys, common hostels and hospitals for all, roads and transport facilities, in all rural areas. All these things and projects will contribute much towards the orderly political growth of the villages in India and in this way, they can save democracy and socialism from immature decay and death.¹ In fact, the demand for fundamental change in rural areas of Indian Society is insistent and cannot be denied, ignored and overlooked by those who want a prosperous India for all.

Non-violent Method of Social Change.

Two more Marxist ideas with which Ambedkar does not agree, are (i) "the curtailment of human freedom", and (ii) "the violent method of social change." In Marxian society, there is no liberty for independent thought and expression. Whereas to Ambedkar, human freedom is the most essential part of society. Without human liberty, there cannot be a life of mental satisfaction. To him, mere material satisfaction is not sufficient. What man wants is happiness which is not the same as a high standard of living or material prosperity, but it is a high standard of culture—intellectual nourishment, that gives happiness to man. This is why, Ambedkar does not like Soviet Society where men are not allowed to write and express themselves freely—the soul of human well-being. He dislikes the ruthless suppression of all contrary opinion and the wholesale regimentation in carrying out plans and policies in the Russian system of social and political thought.²

The way and means, which Marxists or Communists wish to adopt in order to bring about communism, are not dear to Ambedkar. The means they adopt are violence and killing of the opposition. Here lies the fundamental difference between Marx and Ambedkar. Ambedkar believes in non-violent methods of persuasion, moral teaching and love. He wants to conquer his opponents by inculcating in them the Buddha's doctrine that "love can conquer any thing, and not power". Ambedkar would not allow violence, and the Marxists do. He

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1. From the same speech.
 2. Cf. Buddhism & Communism .

says : "If the mind accepts the communist system and loves it loyally and carries it out, it is a permanent thing, it does not require force, it does not require a soldier or a police to keep a man in order." Therefore, he adhered to the principle "that the world cannot be reformed except by the reformation of the mind of the man and the mind of the world."¹ It is true that hatred does not cease by hatred. It ceases by love and good-will.

Violence, force and killing of the opposed, as the means of social change, long appeared to Ambedkar, as erroneous and inhuman. He himself being a great jurist and educationist, believes in peaceful methods to bring about prosperity to the underdog. Through peaceful means, India achieved freedom. Ambedkar, when he struggled and fought for freedom, never advocated violence for realizing the goal of independence. Even after freedom, he adhered to the same principle of peaceful development, though things, at times, put him on his mettle. He never incited his people to do any harm and gain thereby something for themselves. He appeals to the mighty millions thus :

"Do not be allured by the communist success, I am quite confident that if we all become one tenth as enlightened as the Buddha was, we can bring about the same results by the methods of love, justice and good-will."²

Ambedkar's theory of State socialism has a peculiar merit in contrast to the theory of scientific socialism of Marx. It can translate the political and economic aspirations of the people into practical maxims without arousing the suspicions of the public to the extent that scientific socialism generally does. State socialism can be implemented through legislative methods by the public men without any bloodshed and travail. Whereas scientific socialism is unable to do so by peaceful means. The people can fight elections on the programme of State socialism and when elected, can easily affect the social and economic changes. This socialism also appeals to the moral sense of the people to understand human affairs. That is the outstanding merit of Ambedkar's doctrine of democratic socialism that

1. Ibid., para, 6.

2. Ibid., para, 7.

seems eminently suitable for the attainable of tangible results in Indian society. And it is enough to see that the people of this great country have adopted the same principles of social and political life that were conceived by Ambedkar.

A Place for Human Values.

Ambedkar firmly believes in the intelligence of the modern mind of the man. It is more practical and pragmatic, social and ethical, humanistic and altruistic, than it is theoretical and discursive. It is largely governed by social betterment and human consideration. To Ambedkar, morality is God and social service his religion. He takes most of his ideas from the practical idealism of Buddhism. What is known as his Social Humanism attaches great importance to social, political and economic relations. His theory of socialism does not ignore human values.

All values that we find in Ambedkar's political thought are both extrinsic and intrinsic ; the only difference is that of constancy—extent and duration. There are some types of experience that people tend generally to find intrinsically valuable. They are more or less pleasurable experiences that normally accompany the healthy functioning of organic impulses. These are called organic values. These organic values include the experiences of eating, drinking, sex, exercise, rest gregariousness, etc. They do not give merely bodily satisfaction. They are those widely varied conscious enjoyments, each with its own peculiar flavour, that are usually present, with the wholesome exercise of organic functions. Harmful in excess, these values are not only innocent but intrinsically good. These values are more extrinsic because they largely satisfy the organic needs of man and are essential for the furtherance of moral and intellectual enlightenment. These values therefore, are more extrinsic in nature than intrinsic and have been given due place in Ambedkar's socialist programme.

Ambedkar's political thought has given due significance to organic values. For without proper satisfaction, human well-being cannot be complete. He remarks : "...You should care more for your material good than for spiritual food. You do not get food to eat, clothes to wear, opportunities of educating your children, and medical help for want of money. You should,

therefore, be watchful of the political gains and you must develop your strength and struggle for gaining material advancement in life."¹

There are also fundamental human values. These values involve a substantial reflective element, and accordingly, cannot be shared by the lower animals. Valuable experiences of these types may be called reflective or human values. These human values are political—freedom of thought and expression, assembly and movement, political organisation and office, being fairly treated and free opportunity, equality before law. These values Ambedkar related closely with political power and rights.² He introduced them in the constitution of free India. People enjoy them now freely with dignity. Thus Ambedkar's humanism and socialism recognize the efficacy of political values and regard a human life as worthless when it fails to achieve these values. For where there are people without political rights, there exists strife. There cannot be social and political peace.

More intrinsic than political values are the social values to man. They are human association, aesthetic appreciation, understanding and constructive achievement and are consciously incorporated in Ambedkar's political thought. Human association involves an exchange of ideas, shared intelligent purposes, and sympathetic response to the human feelings of one's fellows such as cannot be enjoyed by creatures less sensitive than human beings. He says : "There should be varied and free points of contact with other modes of association."³ Aesthetic appreciation is a satisfaction obtained through seeing things as they are. To Ambedkar, a proper understanding of human relations is the key to human progress and peace.

More intrinsic than both political and social values are moral values to man. They are virtuous living, good conduct and character. These values are the results of devotion to the highest in life. People should be religious, if they wish to be virtuous. Ambedkar observes : "Character is more important than education. It pains me to see youths growing indifferent to religion. Religion is not an opium, as it is held by some.

1. LM., pp. 217-218.

2. SM., p. 11.

3. AC., p. 38.

What good things I have in me or whatever have been the benefits of my education to society, I owe them to the religious feelings in me.”¹

It is evident that Ambedkar’s political economy has a moral purpose. It studies economic activity from the point of view of its effect on human welfare. It is not concerned with wealth or economic relations as such, but in their relations to man and his choices. What matters much is the distribution of wealth equitably among the common people. In this respect, he comes in agreement with economist like Sismondi, Ricardo and Malthus to whom the problems of distribution are more important than any other economic problems.²

Ambedkar’s concept of society and socialism aims at creating more opportunities for the poor classes, ending inequality based on birth, eliminating discriminatory practices in social behaviour patterns, reorganising the political economy for the benefit of all, maintaining full employment and education, providing social security for the weak and the sick, and finally rebuilding Indian society on the foundation of co-operation, love and friendship rather than the division of men into rigid social barriers. The trend towards this aim in Indian society can be accelerated by conscious democratic effort. The aim can be accomplished only by educating the people in favour of democracy and socialism.



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1. Speech delivered to the Depressed Classes Youth Conference held at Nagpur, January, 1938.
 2. Roll, E. : A History of Economic Thought, p. 236.

CHAPTER 5

Government and State

GOVERNMENT AND STATE

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Faith in State Organisation.

Ambedkar attaches more importance to society than to the State, yet he regards the State as an essential organisation in a democratic way of life, especially when the society is in the grip of disorder and lawlessness. The State, to him, has "to provide against internal disorder and external aggression."¹ The State has its own role to play, though it has a secondary position. Ambedkar does not consider State to be an absolute one. He says : "No State is ever a single society, an inclusive and permeating body of thought and action."² He sees the State from its own merit of existence, *i. e.*, human service.

In this sense, he does not agree with Hegel, Hobbes, Green, Bosanquet, etc., the supporters of the absolute theory of State. To them, the State is "an end in itself, possessing rights of its own which necessarily over-ride, in any apparent conflict, the so-called rights of the individual."³ The individual, who receives his rights from the State, can have no rights which conflict with those of the state. The absolute theory holds that the State can never act without being a supreme power. The State is the natural, necessary final and form of human organisation. In its perfect development, it is both "omnipotent and absolute".⁴ Ambedkar accepts the idea of State as a human organisation, but not the final one, as its supporters believe, because there are many other sources of thought and action.

According to Ambedkar, every social organisation is more or less a composite organisation. There is, in most of them, a great diversity of populations, with varying languages, religions, moral codes and social traditions, forming a congeries of strong and loose associated groups. To him, in such a varied way of social life, State organisation is essential to do justice whenever there is conflict and dispute among the people who form a variety of organisations. He wants that a State should be stable

1. SM., p. 3.

2. PP., p. 330.

3. Joad, C. E. M. : Introduction To Modern Political Theory, p. 13.

4. Ibid., p. 16.

and the people should obey the laws it makes for the well-being of the society.

To Ambedkar, State organisation, *i. e.*, a government is based on obedience to authority. A willingness to obey the authority of the State is an important factor. It is necessary for the success of any scheme of government. He agrees with James Bryce, when the latter points out that while force can do much to build up a State, force is only one among many factors. It is not an indispensable factor. Ambedkar says : "In creating, moulding, expanding and knitting together political communities, what is more important than force is obedience. This willingness to obey and comply with the sanctions of a government depends upon certain psychological attributes of the individual citizens and groups."¹ This sense of obedience is produced by the combination of indolence, deference, sympathy, fear and reason.

But Ambedkar attaches varying emphasis to these attributes. These attributes are relative in their importance as causes producing a disposition to obey. In the sum total of obedience the percentage due to fear and to reason respectively is much less than that due to indolence and less also than that due to deference and sympathy. Deference and sympathy are, therefore, the most powerful factors which predispose a people to obey the authority of its government.²

Ambedkar stands for the stability of State organisation through deference and sympathy. There should be obedience towards government. Unless there is obedience, neither government nor socialism can be successful. He says : "Willingness to render obedience to the authority of the government is as essential for the stability of government as the unity of political parties on the fundamentals of the State. It is impossible for any same person to question the importance of obedience in the maintenance of the State. To believe in civil disobedience is to believe in anarchy."³ In this sense, Ambedkar has a strong faith in the State organisation and its utility for the people. For this, he wants the people to obey to the just and good attitude of government.

1. PP., p. 293.

2. PP., p. 294.

3. PP., p. 294.

Ambedkar heartily accepts the motto : "That government is best which governs least". But he is not prepared to accept Thoreau's emphasis on the fact "that government is best which governs not at all". It will create a way for anarchy. Without the government interference, many thing do not fit in the places to which they deserve. But it does not mean that Ambedkar regards government as an absolute authority. He wants that the people should not submit to the acts of coercion of any government. The government may, at times, be wrong and if the people are right, they should fight unto the last.

Ambedkar holds that the State and its organisation are a socially functioning body. It is for the good of the individual and society. It has to protect them from foreign invasions. With a deep faith in government's wisdom and goodness, he conceives the State as an organisation the aim of which is :

- (i) "To maintain the right of every subject to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness and to free speech and free exercise of religion ;
- (ii) to remove social, political and economic inequality by providing better opportunities to the submerged classes ; and
- (iii) to make it possible for every subject to enjoy freedom from want and freedom from fear".¹

His political philosophy thus embraces within its scope the existence of organisation other than the State whose function is to estimate the bearing of these associations upon the State, to strike a balance between their conflicting claims and to apportion their respective functions. From this point of view, his political thought is essentially in accord with the facts of society. He does not consider the State to be "an isolated, self-sufficient entity." He relates it with voluntary organisations. For without doing so, human relations may not be all embracing in relation to the State.

Though Ambedkar does not regard State as an organism like Rousseau, Hegel and Green, yet he accepts their view that the whole is essential to the parts, and however, lonely a man's walk may seem, he can never completely dissociate himself from

1. SM., p. 3.

society. To them, man stands in an intrinsic relationship to the State, which is "society organized as a sovereign political body." Man is moulded by society and society grows through the development of man, and with them grows the State, which is an end in itself.¹ To Ambedkar, the inter-relatedness of man, Society and State, stands to reason, but he again differs from the supporters of the organic view of the State as an end in itself. He accepts that the State is a human organisation and because it is human organisation, it has to serve the interests of man and society as a servant and not as a master.

State and the Individual.

According to Ambedkar, there was a social tendency in Indian society to subordinate the individual to the claims of the group and caste. An individual was considered only as a member of a group and he could not do anything he liked. If he could do—as an individual—by his power and prestige, then there was every possibility of his being excommunicated from the whole group and society. He had no right to upset the group, more accurately, functional groupism based on the group's norms or customs. He says : ".....in the ancient past... ..life was tribal in thought and action.....what was done by one individual belonging to the tribe was deemed to be done by the whole tribe. In all ancient societies, the unit was the tribe or the community and not the individual, with the result that the guilt of the individual was the guilt of the community was the guilt of the community and the guilt of community was the guilt of every individual belonging to it."²

The same tendency was found in State affairs. The whole of community was responsible for any act against the king or the State. The individual freedom was curtailed both by the society and the State, though some individuals on the basis of their group or caste prestige were free to express their views. They found good places and high status. Many rights and privileges were given to them. To most of the people, there was neither individual freedom nor any social and political rights. They were mere serfs and could not even talk and walk freely.

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1. Wayper, C. L. : Political Thoughts, p. 134.
 2. Ambedkar, B. R. : Who were the Shudras ?, p. 219.

Ambedkar did not appreciate this kind of suppression of the individual freedom. And if there was any individualistic tendency, it was conditioned by the social structure and social activities, and this was tantamount to the denial of personal liberty. Today, when India is free, Ambedkar stands for people's local freedom and rights. He attaches more importance to the eternal struggle of man for freedom. His achievement and success, in this sphere of life, have been remarkable. To him, the true freedom of man is not merely political. It is also social, economic, intellectual and spiritual. Only in such an atmosphere, can an individual grow and reach the status he desires. The State must undertake the responsibility of providing the people these liberties. The State, at present, is becoming more supreme in everything and individual freedom is tending to fade away. But Ambedkar endeavours to reach some balance between the central authority of the State and the liberty of the individual, though individual freedom should not be taken to affect adversely the best interests of society and State for class benefit.

Ambedkar regards the State as a means. By doing so, he protects the individual at every level in every moral and lawful activity from being uprooted and from falling under the arbitrary power of the State. And at the same time, the learned Doctor does not deny that liberty implies some restraints and that the State must have its own sphere to function in a proper way over the individual interest. The State, to him, will continue to exist as long as individuals, groups or societies exist. It plays an important role in establishing good relations between man and man, society and societies.¹ The State is not an end in itself, but it is only a means for the furtherance of human ends in the interests of a better future society. This is the meaning which he attaches to the concept of the State in his political thought.

The State exists to serve man and society. It is the main function of a State to help men in developing all aspects of their happiness and security. It may, therefore, be said that Ambedkar does not agree with the totalitarianism of Marx and Mussolini. He believes in a balance between the organizing

1. Cf. His "Communal Deadlock and a Way to Solve It."

power of the State and the deriving force of the free individuals. He is also opposed to the Machiavellian principle of State—governing the people and keeping them down. For it strikes at the sanctity and dignity of the existence of human race. Man and State can live together in all harmony. He combines individual respect with faith in State organisation.¹ It is man's faith and obedience towards State that can help it in discharging its most sacred duties for the happiness and welfare of the people.

Preference for Parliamentary Government.

As a faithful servant of the socially handicapped people, Ambedkar always looked to the central government to act as "a powerful curb on the provincial majority to save the minorities from the misrule of the majority". It is good enough to create a feeling of one nationalism and prevents anti-social and anti-national activities from growing stronger. "As an Indian, interested in the growth of Indian nationalism, I must take it plain that I am a strong believer in the unitary form of government and the thought of disturbing it, I must confess, does not please me very much. This unitary government has been the most potent influence in the building up of the Indian nation".²

Ambedkar has a strong faith in the people of India. He wants them to be united. It can be done only with a strong federal constitution. The constitution must have the consent of the people. He says : "It is all a matter of temper whether you will abide by the fall of your logic, or whether you will refute it, as Dr. Johnson did the paradoxes of Berkeley by trampling under his foot. I am afraid it is not sufficiently realized that in the present temper of the country, no constitution will be workable which is not acceptable to the majority of the people. The time when you were to choose and India was to accept is gone, never to return. Let the consent of the people and not the accident of logic be the touchstone of your new constitution, if you desire that it should be worked."³ It means two things. Ambedkar wanted to have a constitution in accordance

1. Cf. His "State & Minorities."

2. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 12.

3. Ibid., pp. 13-14.

with the wishes of the people and a strong centre to cope with eventualities—social, economic and political.

With these thoughts in his mind, Ambedkar stood for a parliamentary system of government. The system of parliamentary government, as it is in Britain, is best suited to this country. To him, this parliamentary tradition is not new to the people of India. It was well observed in India's past. He says : "Today parliamentary system of government is alien to us. If we go to village, we will find that villagers do not understand what is vote, what is party. They find it something strange, something alien. It is, therefore, a great problem as to how to preserve this institution. We will have to educate public, we will have to tell them the benefit of Parliamentary Democracy and of Parliamentary System of Government."¹

Ambedkar favours a parliamentary system of Government and at the same time, he is keen and enthusiastic to preserve this cultural tradition of his own land. He conceives three features of a parliamentary government, if it is to function impartially for the benefit of posterity. The first of these is the "negation of hereditary rule". "No person can claim to be hereditary ruler. Whoever wants to rule must be elected by the people from time to time. He must obtain the approval of the people. Hereditary rule has no sanction in the Parliamentary System of Government."² It becomes a tyranny. In the long run, it endeavours to preserve and maintain what it has got through force, coercion and threats, which is intrinsically wrong. It is against the democratic tradition.

The second feature of parliamentary tradition is that "any law, any measure applicable to the public life of the people, must be based on the advice of the people chosen by the people". "No single individual can presume the authority that he knows everything, that he can make the laws and carry the government. The laws are to be made by the representatives of the people in the Parliament. They are the people who can advice the men in whose name the law is proclaimed."³ Here lies the fundamental difference between the monarchical system of government and the democratic system of government. He makes a distinction thus :

1. Ibid., p. 35.

2. Ibid., pp. 35-36.

3. Ibid., p. 36.

"In monarchy, the affairs of the people are carried on in the name of a monarch and under the authority of a monarch. In democracy, the affairs of the public are carried on in the name of the head of the States ; but the laws and the executive measures are the authority on which the Government is carried on. the head of the State is the titular head ; he is merely a symbol. He is a concentrated 'Murti' (an image made of stone). He can be worshipped but he is not allowed to carry out the Government of the country. The Government of the country is carried out, though in his name, by the elected representatives of the people."¹

He does not want the people to be ruled by a monarch or by any singly party. The people should rule themselves through a representative type of government which, he thinks, is the best form of human government. It is a human organisation and is most suitable for human progress and happiness.

Lastly, the parliamentary system of government means that "at a stated period those who want to advise the head of the State must have the confidence of the people in themselves renewed." He observes that previously in Britain the elections to the parliament were held every seven years. But the majority of people agitated against this tradition. They wanted annual elections. The motive behind this agitation was very praiseworthy, indeed. It would have been the best in the interests of the people if annual elections were held, had it been possible, of course. But it was not possible. Parliamentary affairs particularly parliamentary elections, are very costly affairs. So some sort of compromise was arrived at and five years were considered to be enough. All Legislators were to go back to the people and obtain the fresh renewal of their confidence.³

The function of a true government is to protect the interests of the people at large. A good government is always desirable for any country, but good government, to Ambedkar, cannot succeed unless there is self-government. He combines good government with self-government. And good and self-government is always a representative government. The representative government is formed by a political body chosen by the people. This

1. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

political body, though chosen by the people, should not rule by force and other coercive methods.

According to Ambedkar, "Force, it cannot be denied, is the medicine of the body politic and must be administered when the body politic becomes sick. But just because force is the medicine of the body politic, it cannot be allowed to become its daily bread. A body politic must work as a matter of course by springs of action which are natural. This can happen only when the different elements constituting the body politic have the will to work together and to obey the laws and orders passed by a duly constituted authority."¹ Even the chosen people for forming a government have greater responsibility to obey the laws of the land. It is the practical wisdom of both the representatives and the people how far they carry the affairs of a representative, self and good government. This is the best parliamentary system of government. It is a means to an end. To Ambedkar, the end is human welfare and happiness.

A Federal View of State.

Ambedkar holds that virtue lies in between two extremes. This is the pivotal thread around which the whole of his social and political thought revolves. Here he has wisely carved out a golden mean between the unitary and federal forms of Government. He gives his own federal view of Government and State, which is based on a balance between the Central Government and its units. For this purpose, he produced a federal constitution. He says : "I feel that it is workable, it is flexible and it is strong enough to hold the country together both in peace-time and in war-time. Indeed, if I may say so, if things go wrong under the new Constitution, the reason, will not be that we had a bad Constitution. What we will have to say is that Man was vile."²

According to him, the federal view of State establishes a dual polity with the Union at the Centre and the States at the periphery, each endowed with sovereign powers to be exercised in the field assigned to them respectively by the Constitution. The federal State of his dream is not a league of small States, united in a loose relationship, nor are these States agencies of the Union

1. PP., p. 362.

2. Pylee, M. V. : *India's Constitution*, p. xii.

Government deriving powers from it. Both the Union and the State governments derive their authority from the Constitution. No State unit is subordinate to the Union in its own field. They have to co-ordinate with each other in order to provide larger liberties and material facilities for the people.¹

However, there is a complaint on the ground that there is too much centralization and the States have been reduced to municipalities. To Ambedkar, this view is founded on misunderstanding. He says : "The basic principle of federalism is that the Legislative and Executive authority is partitioned between the Centre and the States not by any law to be made by the Centre but by the Constitution itself. This is what the Constitution does. The States are in no way dependent upon the Centre for their legislative or executive authority. The State and Centre are co-equal in this matter."² It is clear that such a constitution cannot be called Centralism. It establishes a harmony between the federal government and states.

The chief mark of federalism based on a balance (of powers) according to Ambedkar, lies in the partition of the legislative and executive authority between the Centre and the Units. The present Constitution provides the necessary provisions for such partition.³ For federalism, "what is needed is neither complete independence nor total dependence but an inter-dependence that creates harmony, orderly progress and prosperity. It looks almost contradictory in appearance, but it is the essence of federalism ; and only federalism can provide such an effect. Unity while allowing diversity, oneness while providing for division, is the outstanding characteristic of modern federalism."⁴

Ambedkar's view of federal state attaches great importance to institutional means for the solution of human affairs. It has suited to the social environment and the political demands of the people. It has adopted a middle way between centralization and decentralization of power and authority for the reasons that :

- (i) There is a clear division of government power between the Centre and State Governments ;

1. Ibid., p. 267.

2. Ibid., p. 267.

3. Ibid., p. 268.

4. Ibid., p. 269.

- (ii) Each government is independent of the other in its own field ; and
- (iii) The Constitution establishes an independent judiciary to settle the disputes between the Union and the States with respect to the divisions of powers.¹

Ambedkar's concept of federalism means that the State is a federation in normalcy but unitary in emergency. To him, the word "Indian Union" indicates two things, *viz.*, (i) that the Indian Federation is not the result of an agreement by the units and (ii) that the competent units have no freedom to secede from it."² Here Ambedkar differs from Prof. M. Venkatarangaiya, K. C. Wheare, Patrick Ransome, W. H. Moore, A. V. Dicey, etc., to whom federalism is essentially a contract—being a contract, federation requires that the parties to it are independent.³ Ambedkar's view of federalism is not confederation, because in confederation the Central Government is subordinated to the States and is at their mercy, nor is it unitary, because in unitary government the States exist on the will of the Central Government. His view is federal, indeed, but without contract and freedom to secede, which means one strong nation to hold the people together irrespective of State loyalties. It is the wisdom of the people how far they make use of such a balanced concept of federalism. It avoids extremes in the political life of this country and, thus, paves the way for emotional integration and national unity.

Self-government Vs. Good Government.

Once in the House of Commons, Compbell Bannerman, in the course of debate on Ireland, said that "Self-government was better than good government." This statement was mistaken by the people to mean that he did not prefer good government in place of self-government. According to Ambedkar, Compbell was not contrasting self-government with good government. He was contrasting self-government with efficient government or rather with resolute government. To Ambedkar, there is no denying that self-government must be good government, otherwise it is not worth having.⁴ The primary concern of Ambedkar's

1. *Ibid.*, p. 269.

2. Dash, S. C. : *The Constitution of India*, p. 124.

3. Aiyar, S. P. : *Federalism and Social Change*, p. 3.

4. WC., p. 238.

life, in this respect, has always been to study and understand the nature of good government. He stood for a self-government which should be both efficient and good government. There was no preference either for self-government or for good government. During the freedom movement, he always demanded self-government and good government efficiently discharging its duties of service and sacrifice.

How can good government be maintained? Some people seem to be under the impression that as self-government is sovereign, it is bound to result in good government. Ambedkar does not agree with this view. Following Prof. Dicey, he says that the actual exercise of authority by a sovereign is bound or controlled by two limitations—external and internal. The external limit to the real power of a sovereign consists in the possibility or certainty that his subjects or a large number of them, will disobey or resist his laws.” It means that even the most absolute ruler cannot change every law at his pleasure. It also depends upon the readiness of his subjects or of some portion of his subjects to obey his behests. Even the authority of a Parliament is limited on every side by the authority of “popular resistance.”¹

Prof. Dicey says : “There is an internal limit to the exercise of sovereign power itself. Even a despot exercises his powers in accordance with his character, which is itself moulded by the circumstances under which he lives, including under that head the moral feelings of the time and the society to which he belongs.”² These two limitations, according to Ambedkar, determine the nature of good government. And if the rulers always act in contradiction to the wishes of the people, there cannot be any good government. If the people too, always defy the behests of the rulers, there cannot be self government. How far a good government is possible depends upon the harmony of the people in power and the people not in power.

To Ambedkar, the ability and efficiency of the governing class are not enough for good government. “What is necessary is to have in the governing class the will to do good or, to use Dicey’s language, freedom from internal limitations arising out

1. WC., p. 239.

2. WC., p. 240—Quoted by Ambedkar,

of selfish class interests. Efficiency combined with selfish class interests instead of producing good government is far more likely to become a mere engine of suppression of the servile classes.¹ Obviously, a good government, according to him, can be judged by its impartiality and justice, clean administration and physical facilities to the people which go to raise the social, economic, political, cultural and spiritual standard of the masses.

One of the essentials of a good government is that it should rise above all class considerations and conflicts. There should be the use of practical wisdom in selecting the instrumentalities of the government. Ambedkar fought not only for self-government, but also—both before and after the freedom—for a good government. He had a deep faith both in self-government and good government. For without self-government, good government is an imposition and a coercion. Self-government must always be good for any country. Self-government must stand for the better social and economic conditions of the people.

People in the Parliamentary Government.

Development of man being the fundamental aim of representative government, Ambedkar does not object to place power in the representatives of the people to judge the merit of the government. Their main function is to observe whether it functions in the right direction. For this purpose, he looks for the co-operation of the people for the success of government. The idea of opposition for the sake of opposition is perilous. "I do not believe in opposition for the sake of opposition. There ought to be the spirit of co-operation where we can gain something by co-operation".² All problems concerning human beings and their mutual relations depend on character and conduct, *i. e.*, the spirit of co-operation of the people.

The freedom, which the people have achieved, is not a fulfilment. It has brought new responsibilities and burdens on the shoulders of the people. They have to be self-disciplined. It is their bounden duty to preserve and enlarge that freedom. It cannot be done without practical wisdom and unity. Long ago, Ambedkar remarked : ".....'It is easy to give power, but

1. WC., p. 240.

2. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 58.

difficult to give wisdom'. Let us prove by our conduct that we have not only the power but also the wisdom to carry with us all sections of the country and to make them march on that road which is bound to lead us to unity."¹

In a country, like India a government deals with vital social problems. It functions very differently from an authoritarian State. It has to see that the people are not coerced and are given what they need according to their labour. Similarly, it is the co-operation and the temper of the people that will help the government in solving the intricate social and economic problems. Ambedkar, with a deep faith in people's government, urges the people to have a sense of co-operation with one-another. Without co-operation, neither freedom nor unity can be maintained.² The people are wholly responsible for the good or bad government in a democratic set up.

Ambedkar has a strong faith in the parliamentary system of government and he does not favour a "permanent governing class", in a democratic country. In all countries, "there exists two classes—the governing class and the servile class between whom there is continuous struggle for power." By reason of its power and prestige, the governing class finds it easy to maintain supremacy over the servile classes, and adult suffrage and frequent elections are no bar against governing class reaching places of "power and authority." Moreover, the members of the servile classes, on account of their inferiority complex, regard the members of the governing class as their natural leaders and the spirit of submission becomes paramount. They themselves rush to elect members of the governing classes as their rulers.³ In India, such things are inevitable because of the religious orthodoxy and social domination of the poor servile classes by the so-called higher classes.

To Ambedkar, "the existence of a governing class is inconsistent with democracy and self-government and that given the fact that where the governing class retains its power to govern, it is wrong to believe that democracy and self-government have become realities of life".⁴ According to him, democracy and self-government become good and real, not when a constitution

1. Ibid, p. 100.

2. Ibid., p. 52.

3. WC., p. 208,

4. WC., p. 208,

based on adult suffrage comes into existence, but when the governing class loses it hold to capture the power to govern perpetually. But this seems, to him, impossible for many years to come particularly in this country, where some governing classes are so crazy and mad after power, profit and prestige that they prefer to die before they leave their places of power.

The principal aim of the servile class should be dislodge the governing class from its position and to prevent it from remaining as governing class for ever. In doing so, they shall be serving the best interests of a true representative government. This is out of love for the democratic tradition and not out of any malice towards the governing class. The existence of such a class, otherwise, will be unrealistic for and dangerous to the bright future of democracy. To Ambedkar, those who wish that democracy and self-government should come into their own hands, and should not remain as mere forms, cannot do better than to start with the recognition of the crucial fact that the existence of a permanently settled governing class is the greatest danger to democracy.¹ He does not take a very formal and a very superficial view of democracy by making constitutional morality, adult suffrage and frequent elections as "the be-all and end-all of a democratic government."

According to him, freedom must be the privilege of all, and not of the governing class only. It is good, safe and realistic when freedom is shared by all. Unless it becomes true in practical life, the freedom of our country would mean not the establishment of a true democratic government, but a plan to resuscitate the ancient Hindu polity of a "hereditary governing class" ruling a hereditary servile class."² This tendency in a representative government is degrading. And it is because of this tendency that the common man belonging to the servile class, in India, is so fallen, so degraded, so devoid of self-respect, hope or ambition, and so lifeless, that he cannot survive worthily even now.

Ambedkar, thus, stands for a true form of democratic government. He advocates complete co-operation between the different groups of people. There should be no distinction on the basis of the tradition that the existence of servile class is

1. WC., p. 209,

2. WC., p. 210.

ordained by nature. Such is the medieval view of social existence. Now the common man should feel that he is one of the honourable citizens of India. The people, who are chosen as the representatives, should keep their fingers on the pulse of the people at all times. This is what Ambedkar stand for, in the parliamentary system of the government. So long as there is a hereditary governing class, no democracy, socialism and humanism can be realized in this country.

Despotism and Government.

Though Ambedkar realises the need and importance of a party system in a representative or popular type of government, yet he vehemently opposes the rule of a single party. He says : "It is undeniable that a party is an essential adjunct to Popular Government. But it is equally undeniable that the rule of a single party is fatal to Popular Government. In fact, it is a negation of Popular Government. The case of Germany and Italy furnish the most cogent evidence on this point."¹ According to him, the one party system creates "the possibilities of tyranny as well as the possibilities of misdirection of public affairs". This is an inherent attitude of the one party Government. This will be a form of despotism. "To have popular Government run by a single party is to let democracy become a mere form for despotism to play its parts from behind it".²

Today, there are many countries having one party rule. But under one party government, the tyranny of the majority does not cease. It becomes a menace to the people who oppose its policies and plans. Ambedkar does not want despotism in any form. It should be extinguished. He says : "Despotism does not cease to be despotism because it is elective. Nor does despotism become agreeable because the Despots belong to our own kindred. To make it subject to election is no guarantee against despotism. The real guarantee against Despotism is to confront it with the possibility of its dethronement, of its being laid low, of its being superseded by a rival party."³

It is evident that despotism is undesirable, if a real parliamentary government is to function. Despotism means the loss of freedom. To Ambedkar, "despotism is anti-thetical of

1. RG., p. 74.

2. RG., pp. 74-75.

3. RG., p. 75.

freedom whether the despotism is native or foreign."¹ It is the duty of the intelligentsia to protect the germs of a popular government by dislodging the rule of a single party. One party government means totalitarianism, which robs man of his basic liberty and individuality.

Despotism begets anarchy. Despotism and anarchy prevail when constitutional order does not exist or when a single party becomes the sole judge of constitutional authority. But both are lawless and arbitrary. Despotism stands for the anarchy of lawless rulers and anarchy for the despotism of lawless crowds.² To Ambedkar, both are repulsive and are opposed to humanitarian society and government. They should not have any place in the civilized countries of the present day world.

A Realistic View of State.

Ambedkar is an out and out a practical politician regarding the relations between society and government and State. His approach is realistic. It is based on practical politics. To him, the structure and organisation of the State should be based on facts. It should consider the actual circumstances which are prevalent in a society and should set them aright pro-bono-publico. In fact, State and government become intelligible concepts only in relation to the actual conditions of society. Hence political constitutions as well as institutions have value and permanence only when they accurately express those conditions of forces which exist in practice within a society.³

According to Ambedkar, a State is realistic and practical when it provides the primary needs of the people. At any rate, it is the fundamental function of a modern State to look after the organic needs of all its members. A State, to him should protect its citizens against external aggression, maintain law and order against internal disturbance and guarantee to its subjects minimum standards of administration and welfare, which are expected from a modern State.⁴ Without doing so, it will be really an organisation devoid of human purpose and political principle. The State, in this sense, as Ambedkar believes is moral and social in character. Men have

1. RG., p. 75.

2. Lippmann, W. : *The Public Philosophy*, p. 149.

3. Cf. AC., p. 10;

4. SM., p. 5.

legitimate rights and corresponding duties to perform. It is, therefore, wrong to conceive of the State, as Hobbes did, as a state of war. The State then will not be moral and social in character. It will be something very near to despotism and anarchy, which Ambedkar does not want at any cost and in any form.

Ambedkar does not want any State to restrict the movement of its citizens. To him, no individual should be disqualified to hold any public office or exercise any trade or calling by reason of his religion, caste, creed, sex or social status. For it would be the curtailment of individual freedom in a democratic government. A good State is that which guarantees protection against persecution of a community by another community and also against internal disturbance, violence and disorder, in any part of its territory.¹ It means that the State is not an absolute one. It has to obey the wishes of the people. There should be a harmony between different organisations including the State as it is also a human organisation.

The Rule of Majority.

Many types of government—oligarchy, monarchy, democracy, dictatorship, etc., exist today the world over. Democracy is near and dear to Ambedkar's plans and purposes of life. He does not want monarchy and condemns anarchy and dictatorship. "In anarchy and dictatorship," he reminds the people, "liberty is lost."² He has as much disregard for dictatorship, authoritarianism or totalitarianism as for anarchy. He knows well that these forms of government are incompatible with human dignity and liberty. This is why, he feels the need of a sufficiently strong and responsible government under which liberties are well protected, and notwithstanding, certain functional and constitutional checks should be brought to bear upon the government so that the liberty of the common man is not jeopardized.

Social unity among the people, according to Ambedkar, consists in "the social need for protecting the best", "having common rules of morality", and "safeguarding the growth of the individual."³ How far it becomes an actual state of society

1. Cf. SM., pp. 10-11.

2. BD., p. 317.

3. BD., pp. 323-325.

depends upon the efficient and proper organisation and function of government. He accords recognition to the democratic principle, on which it was granted by Rousseau, that the majority rule is good. Ambedkar says : "The majority rule is not accepted as a principle but it is tolerated as a rule. I might also state why it is tolerated. It is tolerated for two reasons (i) because the majority is always a political majority and (ii) because the decision of a political majority accepts and absorbs so much of the point of view of the minority that the minority does not care to rebel against the decision".¹

But like Rousseau, Ambedkar is also conscious of the fact that the majority rule may not necessarily be, as it is not always, in the interest of the whole community. He is aware of the fact that the majority rule may result in oppression of the individual or minorities. Ambedkar's main concern, therefore, is to safeguard the individual as against the tyranny of the majority. And this he aims to achieve not by taking away all power from the government and reducing it to a nullity, but by formulating a scheme of "checks and balances" on the lines of American Constitution.²

According to him, every constitution must have what the Americans call checks and balances, if democracy is not to be overwhelmed by the enemies of democracy. But the nature and form of checks and balances must be determined by two considerations. He says : "The first is the necessity of establishing a correlation between the political constitution and social institutions of the country, if democracy is to be real. As the social institutions of countries differ in their form, the checks and balances in its political constitutions must also differ. The second is the necessity of providing a firm flooring to the servile classes against the possibility of their being pressed down by the governing classes, by reason of their superior power".³ For these reasons, Ambedkar protects the minorities from being coerced and exploited by the majority rule.

Ambedkar, looked at from the above point of view, maintains that the will of the majority is essential for good as well as

1. Ambedkar, B. R. : *Communal Deadlock & A Way to Solve it*, p. 28.

2. WC., p. 242.

3. WC., p. 242.

responsible government, but, for him, it should necessarily provide concessions and considerations to the will of the minorities. Hence as a staunch advocate of parliamentary system of government, and in fact, as a practical political scientist, he introduced this system in the constitution of free India, which was welcomed by all political thinkers of the East and the West. Referring to the preamble to the Constitution of India, Prof. Barker says : "I am the more moved to quote it because I am proud that the people of India should begin their independent life by subscribing to the principles of a political tradition which we in the West call Western, but which is now something more than Western."¹ This Constitution provides equality of opportunity to all with equal human rights and maintains the parliamentary system and upholds individual liberty.

Functions of Government.

The most notable of Ambedkar's political thoughts, *viz.*, the thought of the separation of powers in the government, came from a study of Locke and Montesquieu. These great British and French political thinkers laid down that the freedom of the individual and stability of government rest on the complete separation of the governmental functions—Executive, Legislative and Judiciary. In fact, they have left a notable and lasting influence on the growth and development of modern political thought. Ambedkar, when he was a student in the Columbia University, was highly impressed by the American Constitution, particularly by the separation of powers in the government.

With a deep faith in the parliamentary tradition, Ambedkar fully agree with the view that there should be three necessary functions of government : (i) to make laws, (ii) to execute them and (iii) to punish those who commit breach of law. He believes that only by dividing the powers of government each department can function with the utmost ease and effectiveness.² These necessary departments are known as the Legislative, the Executive and the Judiciary.

1. Principles of Social and Political Theory, p. vi.

2. Cf. SM., p. 38.

The main function of the Legislative body is essentially to make laws for the development and reformation of the existing social and economic order. It has to create better laws and institutions for the people. This is the reason that Ambedkar takes the legislative method as the best means for affecting social and economic changes. He does not discuss at length the formation of the legislative body, but his main concern is how to establish a proper relation between the legislative and the executive bodies in order that they may work independently, and simultaneously, be answerable to and co-operative with each other.¹ This depends upon the unity and sincerity of purpose of both the organs of government.

Ambedkar did not favour the executive of the British type, because, if it be applied to India, perilous consequences would follow. In the British Parliament, the majority is a political majority, whereas in India the majority may be communal majority. Irrespective of its social and economic programme, the majority would retain its character of a communal majority. He, therefore, warned that if the British type was copied in toto, it would result permanently in vesting the Executive in a communal majority. He says : "The majority in India is a communal majority and not a political majority. That being the difference, the presumption that arises in England cannot be regarded as a valid presumption in the conditions of India."² There is no obligation upon the majority to include in its Cabinet the representatives of the minorities. If this is applied to India, the minorities will be crushed and the communal majority will be free to run the administration according to its own views and whims.³

The above type of government will not be a true form of parliamentary system of government in India. Ambedkar regards it as "Imperialism". For, an Executive of the British type will be "full of menace to the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, "of the minorities in general and the depressed classes in particular. He upholds the American form of Executive as a model and adopts it to Indian conditions, specially to the requirements of the minorities. In the American form of Executive the party is fully responsible to look after the

1. *Communal Deadlock*, p. 17.

2. *SM.*, p. 36.

3. *SM.*, pp. 38-39.

interests of the minorities and tries to adjust them in different higher public places, according to qualifications. While the British Executive has no obligation to do so. This is why, Ambedkar likes the American type of Executive. Moreover, the American form of the Executive also forms a democratic and responsible type of government.¹

According to Ambedkar, the following form of Executive can best serve the interests of a good and responsible government. The Executive is intended :

- (i) "To prevent the majority from forming a Government without giving any opportunity to the minorities to have a say in the matter ;
- (ii) To prevent the majority from having exclusive control over administration and thereby make the tyranny of the minority by the majority possible ;
- (iii) To prevent the inclusion by the Majority party in the Executive representative of the minorities who have no confidence of the minorities ;
- (iv) To provide a stable executive necessary for good and efficient administration."²

Referring to the functions of Judiciary, Ambedkar says : "Rights are real only if they are accompanied by remedies. It is no use giving rights if the aggrieved person has no legal remedy to which he can resort when his rights are invaded. Consequently, when the constitution guarantees rights it also becomes necessary to make provision to prevent the Legislative and the Executive from over-riding them. This function has been usually assigned to the judiciary and the courts have been made the special guardians of the rights guaranteed by the constitution".³

The above provision is essential to give protection to the citizen against arbitrary exercise of the Executive power by investing the Judiciary with certain powers of inquisition against the abuse of authority by the Executive. Ambedkar conceives two objectives : (i) "to give the fullest power to the Judiciary to issue what under the English law, are called prerogatives Writs and (ii) to prevent the Legislative from curtailing these

1. SM., p. 38.

2. SM., p. 38.

3. SM., p. 28.

powers in any manner whatsoever.”¹ All these functions of a democratic responsible form of government were, later on, incorporated in the Constitution of Free India—in short, Ambedkar stressed the need for an independent Judiciary to safeguard the rights of individuals.

There were the actual thoughts of Ambedkar regarding the functions of government before he came to form the new constitution. When he was entrusted the work of forming the constitution, he adopted a synthetic attitude. The present constitution is a blend of the American and British constitutions. He has established “a Parliamentary system of Government where the heads of the Executive sit in the Legislative and are under constant scrutiny by it. They are thus not separate from each other as in America where an elected President chooses his own Cabinet, no member of which is in the country’s Legislative. Having a written Constitution, we have given our Judiciary the power it has in America, to declare Acts of the Legislature invalid, even though the Legislature itself might by fresh legislation or even by amending the constitution, nullify the verdict of the judiciary, and re-enact the laws so declared invalid.”² In doing so, Ambedkar intends to create a judiciary and to give it ample independence so that it can function without fear or favour of the Executive or anybody else. The working and decisions of the present courts in India have vindicated the expectations of the father of the Constitution of India.³

Natural Rights and State.

Ambedkar has a strong faith in the separation of the government’s power and of the allocation of functions to various departments, in order that it may work with utmost ease, effectiveness and justice, for the betterment of existing social relations and the preservation of fundamental and natural rights of man. He regards rights as “natural” and “inherent” in the individual, *i e.*, “the individual has certain inalienable rights.”⁴

1. SM., p. 29.

2. An article by Mr. Sri Prakash : “The Judiciary and the Executive—I”, *The Indian Express*, dated 17-3-1964.

3. Pylee, M. V. : *India’s Constitution*, p. 220.

4. SM., p. 32.

These rights should be guaranteed and protected by the government. Ambedkar builds his theory of social and political organisation around his central concept of the individual and his rights. He speaks of the State as based upon a comprehensive social principle. To him, the State exists only to prevent injustice, tyranny and oppression. It, thus, has to serve the people—the weak and the needy.¹

Ambedkar wants that no State should violate the fundamental rights of man. For some rights are so essential that no human society can be prosperous without them. From a humanistic point of view, he is opposed to all kinds of discrimination in administration, even in private factories, and commercial concerns on the ground of race, caste and creed. He holds that society can do nothing without some organised power. Here arises the need of the State—the State with a constitutional authority. For the recognition of these natural rights—life, liberty and property, is intimately associated with the rise of constitutionalism and its theory. Ambedkar stresses the need not only of constitutionalism in its formal basis, but also of constitutional morality and some conventions for the practical success of a constitution.² Only when the idea of a responsible government is firmly rooted in the minds of the people, can the concept of such rights be fully implemented. Both the people and the State share equal responsibility of maintaining these rights.

Ambedkar speaks, in the political tone of Locke, that “the primary purpose of government ought to be the protection of the individual’s life, liberty and possessions—in short, his natural rights and that a government which does not seek to promote this end forfeits all claim to moral authority.”³ Ambedkar wishes a good, moral government, to protect the rights of the people in all their legitimate functions. He fought for these rights, throughout his life, and rebelled against communal absolutism. These rights, which have been set forth in the new

1. Cf. His address to the session of the All India Scheduled Caste Federation, held in Bombay on May 6, 1945.

2. Cf. *Thus Spoke Ambedkar*, pp. 41–49.

3. Murrar, A.R.M. : *An Introduction to Political Philosophy* p. 119.

constitution of India, framed after a long struggle, are now treated as inherent, that is to say, as basically related to man's well-being.

Non-political Army.

All problems of defence, including the peace and prosperity, of a country, depend upon the strength of an army. Ambedkar knows well that an army performs an appreciable role in maintaining internal order and defending from external aggression. From this view-point, he connects India's newly won freedom closely with the prospects of the army. He says : "One cannot ignore that what is important is not the winning of independence but the having of the sure means of maintaining it. The ultimate guarantee of the independence of a country is a safe army—any army on which you can rely to fight for the country at all times and in any army eventuality."¹ It is true that if India is invaded by a foreign power, as recently happened in the Chinese aggression against this country, only a trusted army can defend her independence and sovereignty. So he wants an army—strong enough to repel aggression launched from any quarter and to throw out the enemy from the land.

According to Ambedkar, "Equally important is the fact that the army is the ultimate sanction which sustains Government in the exercise of its authority inside the country, when it is challenged by a rebellious or recalcitrant element."² If any Government enunciates a policy that is vehemently opposed by a section of the people and they do not obey its laws and orders, then naturally and necessarily, it would need an army to maintain peace and order. Without an army or army type of police, no government can function in a manner suited to the discharging of its duties properly. It is essential to have an army, but Ambedkar wants a special type of army, which is pure in its conduct and character. He wishes to have a non-political army.

The successful working of any government is not a matter of theory. It does not need a deep understanding of politics. It requires practical measures. One of these, the most important, is to have a non-political army. Ambedkar is quite confident

1. PP., p, 360.

2. PP., p. 361.

that a non-political army can defend India's freedom. If it is infected by political bias, then the army in India would become a danger, ever to its own people. He says : "The question is whether Indians will be able to defend a free India. To that, I repeat, the only answer is that Indians will be able to defend a free India on one and one condition alone—namely, if the army in India remains non-political....."¹

According to him, an army's fundamental functions then would be only to maintain peace. Whenever it is disturbed, and to defend country's sovereignty from external aggression, whenever it occurs. Only in such cases, would it be pure, and devoted to its purpose and duty. If an army has a political bias, it would always think in terms of dethroning a particular party. This sequence would never come to an end as it has become evident in some Middle East Countries. Political upheavals backed by armies, or by armies alone, are an every day affair in such countries. There is no peace, no stability and no economic development. The result is poverty, enmity, ill-will, fear and mal-administration. So an army in India must strive unceasingly to keep the unity, solidarity and integrity of this great country intact without being influenced by any political ideology.

Even before the freedom of India, Ambedkar warned his countrymen not to have a politically tinged army. "I want to warn Indians against the most stupid habit that has grown up in this country of discussing the question of Swaraj without reference to the question of the army. Nothing can be more fatal than the failure to realize that a political army is the greatest danger to the liberty of India. It is worse than having no army."² If there is a political army, India cannot have a safe and secure Government. With a view to avoiding such unhappy happenings, Ambedkar has a deep faith in a non-political army, above the political affairs of its own country. Its most sacred duty is to maintain things in accordance with the directions of an elected government by the people or in accordance with the directions of the Constitution.

State Law and the People.

To Ambedkar, law is an important factor in maintaining social peace and justice among different groups of people. It is

1. PP., p. 361.

2. PP., p. 361.

a guardian of equality and liberty. "All citizens are equal before the law and possess equal civic rights. Any existing enactment, regulation, order, custom or interpretation of law by which any penalty, disadvantage or disability is imposed upon or any discrimination is made against any citizen shall..... cease to have any effect."¹ To him, Law is not only a legal function. It also regulates the life of the whole society and nation as well. It keeps within limits all men irrespective of caste, colour and creed.

Ambedkar's faith in individual liberty and dignity leads him to the rule of law. All persons have intrinsically equal value. It is the bounden duty of a government to see that the people are not deprived of equality before law. He says : "No State shall make or enforce any law or custom which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens ; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty and property without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction equal protection of law."² To see that there is no misrule of law, is the most important function of a morally formed Government of the people.

Ambedkar adheres to the principle of law behind the law. He was very much impressed by the American Constitution in which the concept of law behind the law is to be found. This concept follows from the federal view of Society and State. Society is an integrated way of living based on various voluntary associations. The State is one of them. There is to be a higher authority the function of which is to define the relationships of each part to the whole. That is done by a State through law, though law is not essentially the product of the State.³

The concept of law behind the law has been severely criticized, because it opens the door to rebellion and anarchy. However, according to Ambedkar, the possibility of revolt is everywhere if the masses are miserable and poor. Moreover, as he rightly thinks, men do not rebel upon little affairs, light and transient causes and if the circumstances are such that give rise to rebellion, then the things must be changed and be set aright. People count much in relation to the formation of law.

1. SM., p. 9.

2. SM., p. 9.

3. SM., pp. 5-9f.

Looked at from this stand-point, to Ambedkar, law is an obligation which depends upon the social and moral conscience of the people. He says : "As experience proves, rights are protected not by law but by the social and moral conscience of society. If social conscience is such that it is prepared to recognize the rights which law chooses to enact, rights will be safe and secure. But if the fundamental rights are opposed by the Community, no Law, no Parliament, no Judiciary can guarantee them in the real sense of the word."¹ Ambedkar seeks a harmony between the people and the legal power of the State.

Law should reflect the actual wishes of the people. Then it will combine the best elements found among the different cultures of the people. In this way, the State will continue to mould the life of the society. It will create in men a creative genius for the benefit of the individual Personality and the State. Neither the people nor State law can be separated from each other. By mutual co-operation, they can create new dimensions for human peace and justice.

Modern political theory has also accepted that the people and the State are inherently related to each other. Men can develop their abilities and talents within the moral purview of the State. Laws of the State thus, affect the standard of morality and similarly, the ideas of right and wrong, which represent the ethical views of men, also affect the laws of the State. This is what Ambedkar expressed in his political thought.

State and Religion.

Religion is, as it has been seen, an effort to improve the social conditions of the people. This is the most important function of a religion in which Ambedkar is keenly interested. Even in the sphere of education, religion is a decisive element. It strengthens social organisation and promotes the spirit of devotion to the common good. The State, therefore, should neither be indifferent to nor coercive towards religion. It should not interfere with the religious freedom of the people.

According to Ambedkar, the State should guarantee to its citizens "The liberty of conscience and the free exercise of his

1. BG., pp. 34-35,

religion including the right to profess, to preach and to convert within limits compatible with public order and morality.”¹ He stands for the religious freedom. He knows that the religious freedom is the soul of Indian culture and civilization. If one is introvert, it leads him to inner light and if one is extrovert, it leads him to social emancipation. In this sense, religious freedom is essential to all. To him, no individual should be compelled to become a member of any religious association or to submit to any religious instruction or perform any act of religion, without the assent of his conscience. Subject to the foregoing provision he says that parents and guardians should be entitled to determine the religious education of children up to the age of sixteen years.²

Looked at from the above view-point, Ambedkar wants his people to steer clear of all religious fanaticism. Coercion which has been the bane of human society for long, came in for scathing attack at his hands. It is a pity that most of the people are prepared to die for the sake of their religion rather than live according to it. To him, religion is for man. It has to look after the present needs of people. Only in such case, it can bring prosperity to the doors of all persons.

Ambedkar, as a humanist now comes out as a champion of religious liberty for forming religious associations and institutions. On moral side, these associations may be very helpful to State. He wants every religious organisation to be free “to regulate and administer its affairs within limits of the laws applicable to all.”³ Here again Ambedkar looks for harmony between the principles of religion and the laws of the land. Both are equally responsible to enhance the cause of humanity at large. There should be no contradiction and antagonism between religion and law. This is, to him essential for the betterment of human society.

According to him, all religious associations should be entitled to levy contributions on their members, who are willing to pay them, if their law of incorporation permits them to do so. Again he wants that no individual should be compelled to pay taxes, the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated for

1. SM., p. 11.

2. SM., p. 11.

3. SM., p. 12.

the use of any religious community of which he is not member.¹ He does not favour any religious coercion either by some community or by the State. To some people, violence or coercion are necessary for the modern State. But to Ambedkar, this is not wholly true. Force is needed at times, but not at all times, and in all places. State coercion, especially in religious matters, is least desirable in Ambedkar's scheme of social and political life.

To law, all religions are respectable. They deserve equal treatment before law. He has a strong faith in the principle of secularism. He says : "The State shall not recognize any religion as State religion".² It means religious tolerance. What happened in Pakistan, when the people declared their country as non-secular State, was not dear to his mind. He was very happy when the people of this great country declared India a Secular State. Secularism to Ambedkar, is a blend of tolerance, liberty and equality and leads towards a synthesis between nationalism and internationalism, though, even in this rational attitude, some people may discover an element of isolationism. But he does not become a victim of unlimited tolerance. He does not tolerate wrong ideals and practices. There are certain limits beyond which tolerance cannot go. The practice of caste and untouchability, economic exploitation and social tyranny, can no longer be tolerated. His secularism is of a radical type and rebels against any religious ill-treatment, hatred and discrimination.

Government and Prohibition.

The problem of prohibition in India has become a matter of wide and controversial discussion. Generally the people hold the opinion that complete prohibition is not practicable. There are certain reasons in favour of this view : (i) People are habitual in drinking ; (ii) They do not understand the significance of prohibition ; and (iii) Distillation has become a source of livelihood for millions of people.

Having observed these things, Ambedkar is opposed to the policy of complete prohibition for the following reasons :

- (i) "An enormous amount of revenue is sacrificed for nothing.

1. SM., p. 12.

2. SM., p. 12.

- (ii) People have not ceased to drink. There is enormous amount of illicit manufacture of liquor which is being sold to the public clandestinely.
- (iii) The money lost by Government is picked up by the illicit manufacture.
- (iv) Prohibition has demoralized Society. Formerly only male members of the family drank because they alone could go to the liquor shop. Now illicit liquor manufacture has become a Home Industry. Liquor being now made at home both men and women drink.
- (v) In addition to the loss of revenue on account of Prohibition Government has to undertake increased expenditure on Police to enforce prohibition which, however, they never do.”¹

To Ambedkar, the policy of prohibition is economically not sound. Even morally, it depends upon the people, and not on the Government, how far they reform themselves. All social and economic reforms depend upon the moral conscience of the people. In this country, government has enacted laws against child-marriage, dowry-system, prostitution, smoking in cinema houses, forced labour, discrimination in public places, untouchability, etc., but these things still exist in our society because people do not understand the importance of these laws. Social uplift and moral awakening of the people can help for the successful working of government plans and policies. This is why, Ambedkar leaves prohibition to the will of the people that they themselves should manage such things. Now the present government is thinking to scrap prohibition, because it has failed in moulding the character of the people.

Government and Education.

Ambedkar is always conscious of the backwardness of the poor people in the matter of education. To him, it is their most urgent need and the greatest weapon for forming their progress. He tries every possible means to disseminate education among the poor people. Education is a sound basis for making

1. Ambedkar, B. R. : *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, p. 33.

headway in human life.¹ The primary function of education is to initiate the child into the life of the larger community. It gives fascinating methods of opening up the mind and after some time involves reflective thinking. It leads on easily to the study of human life in its more obvious features. It makes man capable of analytical and synthetic thought. For these reasons, Ambedkar stresses the need of educating the underdog, for the real social and economic progress of the society.

For educating the poor people, Ambedkar made many efforts. He organized educational institutions and also established two colleges, *i. e.*, Sidharth College, Bombay, and Milind College, Aurangabad. Through his efforts, social and educational elevation of the poor classes was recognized to be the duty of all enlightened people in the country.² Like Booker T. Washington, Ambedkar laid a greater emphasis on practical education and economic development than on the right of the vote. Both took advantage of benevolence, sympathies and practical help of generous people. They attached great importance to the education and economic development of the poor people.³

"The cultivation of good citizenship in its various aspects is so essential to the life of a community that it can hardly be left exclusively to the efforts of private individuals. It needs a well-planned organisation; and it naturally regarded as one the functions of the State to provide this."⁴ Ambedkar, too, favours this remark of Prof. Mackenzie. He holds that the greater responsibility for providing educational opportunities should be that of Government. The Government should also see that these facilities are effectively utilized. He knows that the easier are the government opportunities for education to the poor people, the more are the chances for individual development and social progress. He wants to solve the educational problem through Governmental efforts and agencies.⁵

1. LM., p. 123.

2. LM., p. 124.

3. LM., p. 125.

4. Outlines of Social Philosophy, p. 107.

5. LM., p. 125.

A Humanistic Attitude.

It is proper to mention that the common people in India were often treated as sub-human, less than men and worse than beasts. This treatment engendered in Ambedkar a burning hatred for barbarism and an enlightened attitude towards humanism. He became the doyen of the Renaissance movement in India, and especially, the exponent of such ideas as liberty and equality under the common law, good government and moral state, parliamentary tradition and socialism. He wanted that both Government and State must be organized on human considerations so that humanity may not suffer long.

Ambedkar was one of the outstanding leader of various social and political movements; and his wide range of scholarship and liberal and democratic outlook made him an effective humanist. Many may not agree with him and his political philosophy, but he was certainly the most practical exponent of the Indian Neo-liberalism and Humanism. His social and political thoughts are generally in defence of the liberal and democratic state, and of those ideals, that can maintain and inspire it.

His writings demonstrate how the obstacles confronting a democratic Government and State can be overcome, gradually and peacefully; how obsolete economic and political institutions can be reformed and changed, voluntarily and constitutionally. In his humanistic attitude, the people cannot find the haughtiness of Hitler and chauvinism of Chou. He has the simple faith of a liberal mind and devoted heart to the cause of the poorest of the poor in the world. He believes in the rejuvenation of some social ideals and political values; he is confident that India, after being free from the foreign yoke, can enter into a new analysis and synthesis and can establish better relations among the different communities of the land.

His actions are characterized by a sincerity of purpose and a sense of responsibility, a concern for human welfare—individual and social—which constitute the essence of his democratic Government and State. He conscientiously and faithfully maintained these qualities, throughout his hard life, and at the same time, he believed in human labour and dignity and did not allow his concepts of Government and State to be tinged with coercion, totalitarianism and dictatorship. His concepts of these

organisations adhere to the five "Ps" of democracy : the People the Party System; the Parliament ; the Press ; and the Platform.

Ambedkar, as a political liberal and humanist, describes the functions of government in the wider context of man's social life which embraces the whole of mankind. For him, a valid theory of the State must also be a valid theory of Society, because political organisation is only an aspect of social life. He believes in the value and worth of the individual in society, the touchstone of all true functions of the State. The State, should foster the development of all the capacities of all its members by creating conditions necessary for such a development. He emphasizes that the end of society is to establish social justice *i. e.*, the common good, and the end of the State is to translate it continually into legal and fixed terms.

The concept of government and State in Ambedkar's political thought accepts the purpose of the State as the organisation of justice and happiness. It has to create conditions consistent with the interests of society as a whole, under which the individual may lead a fuller life in order to complete the fulfilment of his personality. Ambedkar does not agree with the Idealist's view of the State as a separate, mystic personality, "a march of God on earth" upon which the individual depends for his existence. To him, it is the people who make the State and without them there can be no State. The ultimate aim of the State is to enable man to achieve the best on earth. In this sense, the State is a means rather than an end in itself and it owes to its members a duty to build and sustain a social system within which men may live happily.



CHAPTER 6

Justice and Peace

· JUSTICE AND PEACE

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A Synthetic Social Attitude.

Ambedkar, being a son of a very poor man, was nourished with the environment of a common man's lot and as such he advocated his social and political philosophy in the capacity of an ordinary man. He did not claim any supernatural origin and did not, to the least, demand any special status to be bestowed upon him. He was one of the most outstanding teachers of modern India, and showed much sympathy and love for the weak and the needy. He did not beguile them by preaching that their aim in life should be to achieve some imaginary heaven. To him, the kingdom of righteousness lies on the earth. This can be reached by man himself by his right conduct. And right conduct is to be supported by right thinking. In his characteristic approach of humanism, Ambedkar attempts to bring about a harmony between the individual and the social, the real and the ideal.

According to him, people should follow what are called ideals or norms in society. He says : "Ideals or norms are good and are necessary. Neither a society nor an individual can do without a norm". But to him, one should not be a blind follower of these norms. These norms are the social instruments of a society to achieve social coherence and unity with the change of the phenomena of unity. These instruments, too, inevitably change as is observed by Ambedkar : "No norm can be permanently fixed. There must always be room for revaluation of the values of our norm. The possibility of revaluing values remains open only when the institution is not invested with sacredness. Sacredness prevents revaluation of its values. Once sacred, always sacred."¹

It is true that sacredness and social justice cannot go hand in hand. Sacred is something which is considered to be an absolute value. There are no two opinions about it. If the norms of a society are taken as sacred, the society would become static. Yet more, its very existence would be doomed. Because society is a process, a becoming, it always stands in

1. Ambedkar, B. R. : *Who Were The Shudras ?*, p. 14.

need of a revaluation of its value-system. Actually, in a process, of social switch-over—which has accelerated in the post second world war period—there is a value-orientation in Indian society. If the members of society do not change their norms, the result will be drifting back to ignorance, conservative traditionalism and orthodoxy. Ambedkar expresses his unflinching faith in the role assumed by norms in integrating a society, nevertheless, he categorically argues for the formation of new norms to fulfil the certainly changing social needs of the society.

Referring to the character of the principle of Justice, Prof. Barker recognizes a number of different values as necessary to an organized system of human relations. There is the value of liberty. There is the value of equality. There is the value of fraternity which he calls co-operation. All these values are present in any system of law ; but they are present in different degrees at different periods of time, and there is a constant process of adjustment and readjustment between their claims. The claims of liberty have to be adjusted to those of equality. And the claims of both have to be adjusted to those of co-operation. From this point of view, the function of justice may be said to be that of adjusting, joining or fitting the different social and political values.¹

To Ambedkar, exact justice can be maintained only if a society has a harmony between the real and the ideal. It would act against the principle of justice, if a society raises the real, namely, the existence of different classes, to the status of an ideal. This, to him, is a “deception because the ideal is in no way different from the facts as they exist. Such a social organisation, after raising the real to the status of an ideal, proceeds to make a show of giving effect to what it regards as an ideal.” This again, to him, a deception because the ideal already exists in fact.” To idealize the real and to realize the same ideal, is a kind of social injustice. He says : “To idealize the real, which more often than not is full of inequities, is a very selfish thing to do. Only when a person finds a personal advantage in things as they are that he tries to idealize the real. To proceed to make such an ideal real is nothing short

1. **Principles of Social and Political Theory**, p. 102.

of criminal.”¹ To him, it means “perpetuating in equity on the ground that whatever is settled is settled for all times. Such a view is opposed to all morality.”² Therefore, the principle of justice is suppressed in the kind of social relationships which do not change even when the human needs dictate.

The idealization of real facts means the denial of social morality—the soul of justice. The social system invested with such a spirit, prevents revaluation and re-orientation of values. Ambedkar says : “No society with a social conscience has ever accepted it. On the contrary, whatever progress in improving the terms of associated life between individuals and classes has been made in the course of history, is due entirely to the recognition of the ethical doctrine that what is wrongly settled is never settled and must be resettled.”³ The principle underlying Ambedkar’s notion of justice demands reconciliation and adjustment, change and transformation of wrong ideals and preservation of right norms and principles of social living. For, social justice is the reconciler and the synthesizer of social, economic and political values—“it is their union in an adjusted and integrated whole”.⁴

Society and the Individual.

There are two contrasting views of the relation between society and the individual. First, it needs an analysis what are these views. It has been maintained by certain thinkers like Fichte and Hegel that “Society is a sort of entity existing independently of individuals and in a real sense of superior worth.” Society is superior to individual. It has power and prestige over the individual interests. A social order is a concrete embodiment of the world outlook in which individual will have a very little significance. Society in itself is an independent body whose commands and rules are binding on all men and women.⁵

On the other hand, thinkers like Locke maintain that “Society is nothing more significance than a name for a group of indivi-

1. Ambedkar, B. R. : *Who Were The Shudras ?*, p. 15.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

4. *Principles of Social and Political Theory*, p. 102.

5. Cunningham, G. W. : *Problems of Philosophy*, 1956, p. 305.

duals, who alone are of significance and whose interests are alone basal in the social order." Locke defends this view, because to him, individuals are by nature "all free, equal and independent". Each individual is absolute lord of his own person and possessions, equal to the greatest and subject to nobody, though driven by certain circumstances, individual seeks out and wills to join in society with others.¹

From the above point of view, society, according to Fichte, Hegel and others, is something apart from individuals, "a sort of super-individual spirit"; and, according to Locke and others, society is simply "the people" who make up its membership. It is basically a conflict between the interests of the individual and the forces operating in society. It is a fact and cannot be denied that conflict is genuine.

Ambedkar holds a different view. Neither of these view of society is acceptable to him. "It is surely a fact that there is nothing called society over and above.....individual persons. Society as something apart from individuals is a pure fiction."² Equally, it is also a fact that an individual who by nature is "absolute lord of his own person and possessions, equal to the greatest and subject to nobody" is no less a pure fiction.³

To Ambedkar, the truth lies in a synthetic approach. Society exists in individual social beings, and he accepts that "the individual by nature is a social animal." Ambedkar, as a humanist, does not believe either in the superiority of social order or in the superiority of individual; society exists in the individual and the individual cannot live without society. He believes in an integrated view of man and society. Man apart from society is unconceivable and society apart from man is impossible. In other words, the individual is not superior to society, as capitalism holds; society is not superior to the individual, as communism believes, but society and the individual, to Ambedkar, are inter-dependent.⁴

1. Ibid., pp. 305-306.

2. Dewey, J. : *Ethics*, 2nd Edition, pp. 357-358 : Quoted by Cunningham, Ibid., p. 306.

3. *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 306.

4. Jatavamuni, D. R. : *Types of Humanism*, (an article), 1963.

In his political philosophy, Ambedkar regards man as an element of society, not in isolation, as a rational being essentially endowed with reason ; apart from society man has no meaning and value. It is the man who forms society and it is also the society that recognizes man and his relations with other human beings. Ambedkar's view of society and the individual may be summed up in the dictum, "Man is the cause of social relations." Man is not for social relations, but social relations are for man and, therefore, the social relations should be based on the common rules of morality in order to serve all men, in all circumstances and at all times.¹

Conservatism and Radicalism.

Human justice and progress are closely related with man's freedom of thought. But there is, on the question of freedom of thought, a conflict between conservatism and radicalism. The conflict lies in the basal character of the forces involved in it. Conservatism, which lays emphasis on the importance of the traditions, insists that, in the main, it should have right of way, whereas radicalism, which places the emphasis on individual insight as basal, tends to minimize the traditional beliefs. Let us see how Ambedkar has overcome this conflict between conservatism and radicalism.

A conservative advances the following considerations in support of the importance of traditional beliefs and customs : (i) Traditional beliefs play a very important role in the life of the group. So every effort must be made to preserve them without any doubt and criticism. Otherwise the traditional social structure may be undermined. (ii) There are many practical dangers involved in any critical attack upon these beliefs, the chief danger being the consequent threat of social disruption and anarchy. (iii) The traditional beliefs, which have stood the test of time are more likely to be true than those which are limited to the narrow confines of individual experience.² In other words, conservatism appeals to the practical utility of tradition as a stabilizing factor.

A radical, too, presents the following arguments in support of his claims : (i) Traditional beliefs, which are simply express-

1. From the same article.

2. Cunningham, G. W. : *Problems of Philosophy*, 1956, p. 158.

ions of points of view that belong to the past, are constantly being outmoded through the acquisition of new knowledge. They stand in need of continuous revision in the light of new facts. Otherwise they would prove harmful to the members of society. (ii) Since individual insight is necessary for social progress, to shackle the individual mind and its incentive by placing tradition above it is to block progress and bring the life of society to a dead standstill. (iii) The argument that the older a belief is, the greater chance it has of being true is based upon nothing more significant than a false assumption. The test of antiquity is no guarantee of its verity. The most hoary traditions are nothing but blind faiths or superstitions.¹ In other words, traditional beliefs are constantly in need of revision or rejection; individual insight must be freed from the hindering influences of the traditional and customary, if social progress is to be possible and if scientific outlook is to be brought.

To Ambedkar, the conflict between conservatism and radicalism may be overcome by adopting the golden mean. The golden mean lies in a synthetic outlook on life.² There is truth on both sides. It is true that traditional element in social life is of great significance and equally, it is also legitimate that society must be like open air in which the individual mind may breathe and flourish. But taken individually, both sides are involved in the evils of extremism.

According to Ambedkar, the worship of past traditions and beliefs is not good or in the interest of social development, when they have become outmoded and creating forces of disruption and disunity, fear and frustration. He cites the example of the traditional social structure of Hindu Religion. It is known as the theory of Varna System. This system with all human experience has become out of date. People no longer adhere to the real meaning of this tradition. This tradition, no doubt, stands in great need of revision. But Ambedkar stands for the rejection of this social order, because it has created barriers between man and man, hatred and contempt among

1 Ibid., pp. 158-159.

2. Ambedkar derived this principle from the teachings of his Master, the Buddha.

the different social groups. Only those traditions which are useful and are serving the common purposes of man must be protected. Harmful traditions must be rejected as soon as men realize their unsatisfactory nature.¹ In this sense, Ambedkar adopts a pragmatic attitude and asks the people to conserve only that which is profitable and workable in a satisfying way. He does not want the total rejection of the past traditions. He wants protection, revision as required, and rejection if necessary, according to the time, expediency and circumstances in human society.

It is evident that traditional absolutism, to Ambedkar, is not acceptable, because it is not only harmful to individual creativity and insight, but it is also an obstacle in the way of political fairness and freedom. Equally, Ambedkar does not stand for the absolute freedom to the individual. Individual freedom of thought—liberty of thought and expression has a prominent place in his political philosophy, but as he rightly observes, unlimited and absolute liberty destroys equality.² Thus, Ambedkar wants certain limitations regarding the exercise of the freedom of thought, though without individual insight and intelligence, there can be no social advancement : new ways and new values.

The extreme attitude of conservatism, when it subordinates the individual status and mind, misplaces its emphasis and makes its position untenable. Tradition is, but it cannot be taken as the only criterion of truth, when it is itself in question. Likewise, the extreme attitude of radicalism, when it belittles the importance of tradition, becomes intellectually unsatisfactory and practically even dangerous. A synthetic outlook is very necessary as conceived by Ambedkar.

To Ambedkar, conservatism must admit that the revision, even rejection if necessary, must be made in old standards and values in the light of new insights, discoveries and inventions. And Radicalism, too, must accept the importance of traditions and customs until newly acquired knowledge forces their revision and rejection. In this way, Ambedkar offers a synthetic outlook to overcome the evils of extremism : Conservatism and radicalism, which may tend to bring the two together in the

1. Cf. AC., pp. 78-79.

2. LM., p. 456.

interests—social and political—of all men. This is his human approach towards things, which throws moral responsibility on man and society and responsibility is more important than consistency. In short, justice is a task of responsible man who does not indulge himself in the extremes of life.

Justice and Social Barriers.

The moral standard of a society, precipitated in and enforced by the general social and moral conscience, is the source of the notion of justice. It depends upon the social structure how far justice is rendered to all. Considered from the wider horizon of social justice in a society, social barriers to liberty and equality have to be brought to extinction. If these barriers to social development are allowed to survive, then the principle of justice, will be crushed under the feet of vested interests. The negation of social barriers is so vitally important a condition of social justice that it is *prima-facie* for every society today.

To Ambedkar, the theory of Chaturvarnya is full of social barriers. This theory is deemed as infallible by some people. This system has to satisfy at least three conditions :

- (i) “It must be composed of four classes and only four.
- (ii) The interrelations of these classes must be regulated by the principle of graded inequality.
- (iii) Each class must engage itself in an occupation assigned to it.”

In such a social organisation, individuals are not to be found on equal social footing, but there is a graded hierarchy in which one is above the other in point of social status, individual rights and privileges. No class may transgress and entrench upon the occupation of another class. Each class has to work in its own occupational arena.

The very foundation of this social system again says the presence of social equality. Obviously, it is rooted in inequality—the very anti-thesis of the principle of Justice. Ambedkar opposes its root and branch as he says : “To me this..... is utterly repellent and my whole being rebels against it.”¹ If a social stratification divinely ordained—based on hereditary

1. AC., p. 42.

hierarchical status nourishes people's conservatism and continues operate ruthlessly in human society, its members cannot be treated on any principle of social justice. In Ambedkar's social engineering, there is no caste ; no inequality ; no superiority ; no inferiority ; no suppression ; and no exploitation ; all persons are equal. To him, the new society should be organized on equality and the absence of caste. Only in such a society, people may hope for justice.

Ambedkar does not undermine the importance of the individual in relating exigencies to new social rules. He believes in the intrinsic worth of each person and right ordering of social relations—the soul of all morality and social justice. The moral world is a world of individual persons, each intrinsically valuable, but all existing in time, and all accordingly subject to the conditions of a time-process. The intrinsic value of each personality is the basis of social and political thought, just as it is the basis of moral thought. And the worth of persons *i. e.*, individual persons, is the supreme worth in the State. The end of any national society is to foster and encourage, in and through partnership, the highest possible development of all the capacities of human personality in all of its members. This end is justice, or “right ordering”, of a society, and may accordingly be called by the name of social justice.¹ For such ordering of society, Ambedkar did everything and ultimately proved himself a staunch supporter of social justice by fostering new social and political values in the life of the people of India. He fought against social barriers and founded social justice on the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity—co-operation, in the constitution of this country.

Equality Between Man and Man.

Men are not equal—physically and mentally, believes Ambedkar. Some are robust, others are weaklings. Some have more intelligence, others have less. Some are more capable of doing things and others are not. Some are, by birth, well-to-do and others are poor. All men differ in many respects. But all they have to enter into what Darwin calls

1. Barker, E. : Principles of Social and Political Theory, p. 123.

"the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest." Only the fittest tend to survive. Why is it so? To Ambedkar, this is because of the rule of inequality. He accepts that this is a natural phenomenon and occurs in almost all societies. Men do not observe the rule of equality out and out.

However, Ambedkar argues : "In the struggle for existence, if inequality be recognized as the rule of the game, the weakest will always go to the wall. Should this rule of inequality be allowed to be the rule of life?"¹ To the social Darwinists, there may be a affirmative answer on the ground that it results in the survival of the fittest. Even more, to Nietzsche, only the superman must survive and rule over the masses in accordance with his own commands. To him, the superman is the only real man on this earth. In Nietzsche's social philosophy, the rule of equality has no value. The rule of inequality is the foundation of human society.

Ambedkar here differs from Nietzsche and Darwin. To him, the real question is : Are the fittest or the supermen the best from the view-point of society? There is no positive answer. "It is because of this doubt that religion preaches equality. For equality may help the best to survive even though the best may not be the fittest. What society wants is the best and not the fittest."² Obviously, if society is to save the best from ruin, then the principle of equality between man and man must be adopted as the rule of life. A society, which does not preach equality between man and man, woman and man, is opposed to the principle of social justice. It is not worth surviving. Ambedkar has a deep faith in practical discipline and wisdom, which the principle of equality between man and man obtains from the demand made upon the people to exercise some moral function.

The principle of equality, though not practicable in an absolute manner, is the foundation of justice—economic, social and political. It is also the basis of all democratic institutions. It needs protection from all persons who believe in love and justice. It is a necessary factor in human relations. Without adopting it, society cannot have the best men. This is why, Ambedkar says : "The best of men cannot be moral, if the

1. BD., p. 308.

2. BD., p. 308.

basis of relationship between them and their fellows is fundamentally a wrong relationship. To a slave his master may be a better—or worse. But there cannot be a good master. A good man cannot be a master and a master cannot be a good man.”¹

When the principle of social justice is applied to the caste-ridden Indian society, it (society) denies the right of equality to an individual who has been labouring under the atrocities of social suppression and high-handedness. Caste and social justice cannot co-exist. Dr. Ambedkar remarks : “To a low caste man a high caste man can be better or worse as compared to other high caste men. A high caste man cannot be a good man in so far as he must have a low caste man to distinguish him as high caste man. It cannot be good to a low cast man to be conscious that there is a high caste man above him. I have argued in my speech that a society based on Varna or Caste is a society which is based on a wrong relationship.”² In fact, a pattern of social relationship based on hereditary hierarchical order cannot in any way disburse justice to the members of the society as a whole.

Worth is the Measure of Man.

The Hindu social order is based on birth and not on the worth of the individual. “One is a Brahmin because he is born of Brahmin parents. One is a Kshatriya because he is born of Kshatriya parents. One is a Vaishya because he is born of Vaishya parents. And one is a Shudra because he is born of Shudra parents.”³ In the Hindu social system, social or cultural status is ascribed to a man on his birth in a particular high or low caste. Conversely, an individual is ascribed a status only on the chance of his birth and the status earned by him is not recognized by the society. In such a social organisation status is hereditary or divinely ordained and no heed is given to the individual’s personal achievement. The present trend, nevertheless, is towards a break-down of this hereditary status. It is because of the industrial and scientific impact on the minds of people in Hindu Society.

Ambedkar’s doctrine of social relationship differs fundamentally from this traditional theory. His principle of justice

1. AC., Appendix II, pp. 16-17.

2. AC., p. 17.

3. BD., p. 306.

puts weight on the achievement of man as a major yardstick. To him, there is no one outcaste by birth and no one is noble by birth. There is no predetermined social status to any one. It is open to people to achieve a status on their own merit. They must discover the necessary remedies for the sick society. Ambedkar did not care for the credit which every progressive society must give to its rebels. His aim was to make the people realize that they were living in a sick society which caused decadence and danger to the health and happiness of all people.¹

The basis of worth, that man obtains from education, was denied to the majority of people in the Hindu social order. Ambedkar opens the corridors of the temples of education and knowledge to all when he says : "Knowledge is the foundation of a man's life and every effort must be made to maintain the intellectual stamina of a student and arouse his intellect."² He asks the people to develop their thinking—power and make use of the knowledge they gain for bettering the lot of human society. He is more concerned with the use of knowledge and education. To him, education must teach man to know what is wrong and what is right. Man should then act accordingly.

Is not that a better and just society which promotes the happiness of others, simultaneously with the happiness of oneself and at the same time, tolerates no oppression, poverty and ignorance? Is not that an unjust society which closes the doors of education to its own members? These are the pertinent questions which he puts before the people who oppose equality and education for all. The society that he conceives is based on perfect justice with love to all and malice towards none.

Justice and Social Morality.

Lawlessness leads to anarchy, which in its turn is the brother of violence. These unpleasant things flourish in societies where common purposes, implemented by an effective State authority, are insufficient, to enforce peace and order. The principle of justice is prevailed upon by injustice and disorder. Here arises the need of man's discerning attitude to establish peace and justice where the State fails to do so. Those who believe

1. AC., Preface of Second Edition.

2. LM., pp. 442-443,

in Divine Dispensation wait that some-one will come as a messenger of God to do justice to the people. They say that moral order in human society is maintained by Divine Power.

But to Ambedkar, this does not stand to any reason. Moral order in human society is not maintained by any divine authority. He argues that if the moral law has originated from God, and if God is the beginning and end of the moral order and if man cannot escape from obeying God, why is there so much moral disorder in the world? What is the authority of the Divine Law? What is the hold of the Divine Law over the individual? There is no satisfactory answer to these pertinent questions. However, to some people the cosmos entered upon its life by God's will and direction. He imparted to the cosmos once and for all the energy which served as the driving force of a stupendous mechanism. God leaves it to Nature to work itself out in obedience to the laws originally given by him. To Ambedkar, this view exonerates God from social responsibility and moral disorder in society. There is no use of such an absentee God in Ambedkar's scheme of human life.¹

Man is responsible, as Ambedkar believes, for maintaining justice and peace in human society. No one can escape from the bearings of his actions, Man's actions also affect the social environment. There is a mutual effectuation between man and society. Society may benefit itself by a good moral order, if man's actions are good; and it may suffer from lawlessness, anarchy and violence, if man's actions are bad and wicked. The prosperity of man depends upon man himself. The development of human society, too, depends upon man. For society cannot be conceived without man. This is why, to Ambedkar, the behaviour patterns of man are responsible for any State of affairs in society. There is no supernatural being, authority or power, which is to function for moral decency in human society.² If any society suffers from poverty and ignorance, it means that men do not live an honest life. They neglect social responsibility—the mother of justice and peace.

Justice, peace and moral order, in the Buddhist terminology, all stand for righteousness. Righteousness means "right relations

1. BD., pp. 242-243.

2. Cf. BD., pp., 242-243.

between man and man in all spheres of life." One man living alone does not need any morality or justice. But when there are two men living in relation to one another, they have to find a place for morality and peace whether they like or not. Human beings cannot escape from just relations. For without them, society cannot grow. It cannot survive long. This is the reason why Ambedkar attaches a great importance to the need of right relations, *i. e.*, social morality, which sustains society in the hours of crisis. It can prevent the acts of barbarism, injustice and inhumanity. Man, by following the path of righteousness can pave the way for peace and justice, which serves as effective co-ordination among people themselves.

To the men, living together, morality is essential. They need it for establishing good relations. Ambedkar says : "Morality comes in only wherein man comes in relation to man".¹ It brings them together for love and friendship. In his social order, there is no place for prayers, pilgrimages, rituals, ceremonies and sacrifices. He does not seek any help for man through the observation of these rituals. He regards morality as the basis of all justice and human relations. "Morality arises from the direct necessity for man to love man. It does not require the sanction of God. It is not to please God that man has to be moral. It is for his own good that man has to love man."² Man is, thus, responsible for all things in human society. If he wants to be moral and peaceful, he has to love man. Love is the real foundation of mainspring of justice in human society. Where there is no social morality, no love, man cannot survive. Hatred has exterminated many innocent races and still is doing a great loss to human lives. If this mentality persists, then there is no chance for fair play and social justice.

The Need for Morality.

According to Ambedkar, a sense of sacredness in morality can help man to obtain right relations in society. "In every human society, primitive or advanced, there are some things or beliefs which it regards as sacred and the rest as profane. When a thing or belief has reached the stage of being sacred

1. BD., p. 322.

2. BD., p. 323.

(pavitra) it means that it cannot be violated. Indeed it cannot be touched. It is taboo." But the profane things or beliefs may be violated. Man can act contrary to them without feeling any fear or qualms of conscience. He cannot disregard what is sacred, because sacred is something holy. Its transgression means a sacrilege.¹ So if morality is made sacred, people naturally will adhere to the rules of moral code for their benefit.

Sacredness, in Ambedkar's social engineering, carries a different meaning. In Hindu society, sacredness means something divinely ordained, which cannot be changed in any way, at any time. But sacredness, to Ambedkar, stands for something common or universal. If it acts against human needs, it can be changed and put to severe test by man himself. When he talks of sacred morality, it simply means moral universalism, *i.e.* that there should be common social and moral rules for all men. Sacredness is not a divine or mystic source of human energy as some people believe in. It is a dynamic concept and not a static one.

To Ambedkar, three factors are responsible for making morality sacred. The first of these is "the social need for protecting the best." The root of this factor lies in Darwin's theory of the struggle of existence and the survival of the fittest. This struggle is fierce, bitter and bloody. Only the physically fittest tend to survive. To Ambedkar's social concept, this is an old story now in human society. The question is this : Are the fittest the best ? Would not the weakest, if well protected, be ultimately the best for advancing the ends and aims of society ? What is the way to protect the best ? He says : "Nothing less than to impose some restraints upon the fittest. In this lies the origin and necessity for morality. This morality had to be sacred because it was imposed originally on the fittest, *i. e.*, the strongest."² Here sacredness means the universal rules of morality applicable to all. This can save the best from being uprooted by the impersonal forces, though they may not be the fittest from the point of physical strength.

The second is the feeling of "common good." It plays an important role in making morality universal. It is natural that morality in becoming social may turn to be anti-social. "It is

1. BD., p. 323.

2. BD., p. 324.

not that there is no morality among thieves. There is morality among businessmen. There is morality among fellow castemen and there is also morality among a gang of robbers. But this morality is marked by isolation and exclusiveness. It is a morality to protect group interest. It is, therefore, anti-social."¹ This group morality is very harmful to both individual and society. "If society continues to consist of anti-social groups," Ambedkar observes, society will remain a disorganized and a factional society. The danger of a disorganized and factional state of society, is that it sets up a number of different models and standards. In the absence of common models and common standards society cannot be a harmonious whole. With such different models and standards it is impossible for the individual to attain consistency of mind."² Therefore, "A society which rests upon the supremacy of one group over another irrespective of its rational or proportionate claims inevitably leads to conflict".³ The only way to put an end to conflict, according to him, is "to have common rules of morality which are sacred to all."⁴ This can help all—the weak, the needy and the strong. Without making morality sacred, even justice cannot be obtained by them.

The third factor responsible for making morality sacred is "to safeguard the growth of the individual." Under group morality, the interests of the individual are not safe. Ambedkar says : "The group set-up prevent an individual from acquiring consistency of mind which is possible only when society has common ideals, common models. His thoughts are led astray and this creates a mind whose seeing unity is forced and distorted. Secondly, the group set-up leads to discrimination and denial of justice".⁵ If society is to obtain justice and peace, it has to make fraternity universally effective. Fraternity is nothing but another name for brotherhood of men which is another name for morality.

It is true that the primary aim of Ambedkar's moral universalism is to establish and maintain justice within an integrated society and a sane state. It is beyond the purview of the State

1. BD., p. 324.

2. BD., pp. 324-25.

3. BD., p. 325.

4. BD., p. 325.

5. BD., p. 325.

to insure : whether the citizens are performing the roles to which they are highly fitted. This, Ambedkar secures through his moral universalism. To him, the best social scheme is that which gives each individual the opportunities and facilities for moral development and cultivation of mind. In this sense, he emphasizes the need of the principle of distributive justice which extends to provide suitable accomodation, a suitable supply of water and light, libraries, schools, and many other conveniences, to all. An equitable arrangement, when all the circumstances are taken into consideration, is the demand for justice and peace.

A View of Evil.

Ambedkar does not take any supernatural view of evil. He is an empiricist-rationalist and to him, an empirical view of evil is positive. He finds evil in human society, *i. e.*, in human relations. Outside human society, evil cannot be conceived. Its conceivability is possible only through human experience. His view of evil, therefore, is more social than metaphysical, more practical than theoretical.

According to him, evil is the perverted form of social relations. When right relations, *i.e.*, relations based on liberty, equality and fraternity, between man and man, are twisted (distorted) for personal gain and group interest, evil comes into being. It denies justice and creates confusion and chaos. The cause of this evil is man's own "unsatisfying desire." Man, according to him, has a free will. Free will consists of desire and choice. Desire, which means greed (a sense of possession) to have more and more, is not satisfied. This unsatisfying desire causes the perversion of social relations. When man has enough control over his desire, he can mitigate social misery.¹ Evil, obviously, is not metaphysical. It is found in social and moral relations among human beings, like caste and untouchability. Caste and untouchability are nothing but twisted social relations, which serve the purposes of some groups of society. The relations, based on these, are the negation of social justice and moral principle.

It is evident that evil, according to Ambedkar, is not prior to man and society. Evil is possible only where more than one man live together. A man, living in forest, in utter isolation,

1. Cf. BD , pp. 355-358.

may not conceive of what the evil is. Two men, living together, form some relations, and when these social relations, which govern their daily life, are distorted for causing harm to one another for individual benefit, profit and power, evil dominates their mind. From this point of view, has a social phenomena, for an individual, living in isolation, is not responsible for evil acts.¹ Thus, to Ambedkar, when there is no man there is no social relation and, therefore, there is no evil. Human relations are the positive source of social evils. Men, and not circumstances, share a greater responsibility for violence, disorder and injustice in society.

Common rules of morality, as has been said elsewhere, are essential for establishing right relations among men. In the absence of common standards and models of social life, society becomes disorganized. It divides itself into many social units each of which possesses its own view of justice and morality. Each group claims to have morality, but this morality is for its own protection. It is for the profit of one group only. It prevents right relations and paves the way for anarchy and violence. So from the moral point of view, evil exists where there are no common rules of morality.² Evidently, Ambedkar's concept of evil is empirical and rational not mystical and idealistic. This view of evil has vital implications for political and economic relations. These relations have to be evaluated from man's own dispositions and merits.

From the above point of view, selfish desire is the basis of evil. Evil itself does not exist so long as human relations are right. In fact, evil individually consists in frustration of desire and socially, in the perverted view of right relations. If there were no selfish human desires, neither social evil nor moral travesty could exist. Even to hedonists, evil cannot exist without involving individual interests and his social relations. Evil, thus, stands as a conflict of individual desires and a perversion of right social relations. In today's society, corruption, nepotism, favouritism and dishonesty are the expression of man's inner frustration and unsatisfiedness arising out of distorted view of right relations. Self-contentment and self-control are the virtues which can help man to do justice for others. This is that Ambedkar firmly stands for in his concept of peace and

1. Cf. BD., pp. 363-366.

2. Cf. BD., pp. 324-325.

justice. In other words, evil should be eradicated tooth and nail, because it creates violence and gives rise to injustice and exploitation of man by man.

War and Peace.

There are some men who glorify the acts of war and violence. To them, war is one of the essential factors of morality. It is an integral part of God's mission, developing man's noblest attributes. There is no place for peace in this world. Perpetual peace is a dream and not even a beautiful dream. They say that war is the eternal form of higher human existence. States exist for the purpose of waging war. This glorification of war makes violence an act of virtue, an act of courage, the highest human energy which is well utilized in the acts of war, hatred and violence.

Ambedkar does not agree to such a glorification of war and violence. Neither does he regard war as an unavoidable element in human life. He believes that war is futile, though at the same time, he observes that "the problem of war is essentially a problem of conflict," It simply constitutes a part of a larger human problem. He accepts that war is the root of all sorrow and suffering in the world.¹ In fact, the conscience of man has developed with time and today war is not glorified. It is recognized as a bad means. It is an evil. A majority of people hate the acts of war and violence, because these acts hamper human peace and progress. War and violence, therefore, deny justice to man himself.

Negatively, Ambedkar accepts that war causes a great loss to human life and to material prosperity of the people. It leads to perdition, destruction and devastation and also affects humanity by creating hatred and ill-will. It is wrong to glorify it and call it a virtue. It is based on greed and enmity rather than principle and necessity. It does not make man humane. It is dangerous, perilous and harmful for human society. The guidance of war is temporary, while the guidance of peace is permanent and lasting to human ends. Ambedkar does not dilate much on the problem of war. He says in simple words: "War is wrong."² It should not be glorified and practised at the cost of human lives.

1. BD., pp. 57-58.

2. PP., p. 408.

Ambedkar believes that the solution of disputes and conflicts should be sought on moral lines of thought and action, because any settlement of human problems through arms is not ethical. He does not agree to agreement and negotiation under threat of acts of war and violence. He attaches great importance to the acts of obedience and duty giving priority to ethical means. He says : "...arms may be an element of strength. But to have arms is not enough, as Rousseau said : "The strongest is never strong enough to be always master, unless he transforms his might into right, and obedience into duty.' Only ethics can convert might into right, and obedience into duty."¹ He, thus, stands for a peaceful solution of all problems in human relations. It is only ethical wisdom that can avoid war and violence and make man devoted to constructive tasks of building human character.

Ambedkar's attitude towards war and peace is based on practical considerations. The denial of war does not mean a submission to evil forces. Commenting on World War II, he once said that it was not altogether a war for the division of the world's territories, but it was also a revolution which demanded a fundamental change in the terms of associated life between man and man, nation and nation. He further remarked that it was a revolution which called for the re-orientation of the values of associated life. It needed a re-planning of society. So the people must fight for the victory over Nazism, which, if successful, would put an end to the Nazi order. Under the Nazi order liberty was lost, equality denied and fraternity expunged as a pernicious doctrine. It did not stand for love and friendship. It was actually an order of hatred, war and enmity. To him, the fruits of victory over such evil forces were freedom and equality to other people and a new order of society to all.² In this sense, Ambedkar supported a war which meant independence, liberty and equality, a good government and a just society for preserving new values of life. In fact, people lived continually in the midst of fear. There was a latent crisis in the mind of man. Nazism had greatly degraded and disparted man. It was against this degradation that Ambedkar stood for war.

It is evident that Ambedkar does not compromise with wrong in the name of peace, though the world is torn up by

1. BD., p. 377.

2. LM., pp. 353-354.

the wrongs of man himself. According to him, peace obtained by surrender to forces of violence is no peace. It is an act of suicide and a sacrifice of all that is noble and necessary for maintaining a worthy and honourable life, to the forces of savagery and barbarism. "War cannot be abolished", he tells the people, "by merely refusing to fight when attacked. To abolish war, you must win war and establish a just peace."¹ To live peacefully is basically a matter of human right, the right of future generations to a healthy and happy existence. He believes that the humanity is now awakened. It should not tolerate the imposition of wrong ideals and ways of human life. Peace will ultimately triumph over the atrocities of war and violence.

The Meaning of Non-violence.

Ambedkar opposes war tooth and nail but he is not a quietist. He accepts that activity leads to growth : and quietism is another name for death. Human force is energy. It must be used constructively to achieve something. It should not be used for violent or destructive purposes.² To him, quietism is not a justification for the doctrine of non-violence. It has wider implications in all spheres of human life. He is for violence as well as for non-violence, but on the basis of human consideration and practical wisdom. There is not even an idea of irrationalism in Ambedkar.

Regarding means and ends, Ambedkar believes that success in any work depends largely upon the means as much upon the justness of the cause. If the end is good, there will not be much anxiety about its success because truth always prevails in the end. To him, the seeker after truth must possess boundless self-confidence which is generated in its turn from the conviction that the end sought is good and just. The struggle for truth must be ceaseless. The Satyagrahi must have the knowledge of what is wrong and what is right. And action that unifies the people for just cause is good. Where there is social unity among the people it means they have good causes and common ends. To Ambedkar, any fight in self-dependence, whether based on violence or non-violence is just, if the end sought is good and just. If the end sought is just, the insistence on its achievement and the fight for it must equally be just. If the end

1. LM., p. 354.

2. LM., p. 38.

is unjust and unfair, the insistence upon its achievement must be unjust. The justness of an end in some cases does not change with the means employed for its achievement; the justness of an end does not vary with the employment of different means as does a verb change with its subject.¹

However, it does not mean that Ambedkar supports the case for expediency in the way of a just cause. He attaches great importance to moral necessity of employing different means. Referring to Indian attitude towards non-violence, he says that Arjuna was right in resorting to arms in defence of a just cause. To him, it is not possible to observe the grand principle that non-violence is the most proper law at all times and in all places. Otherwise, man cannot stir even his eyelid for fear of killing the germs in the air, or eat fruits, or drink water, or breathe the air, or cut the grass or trees. He says: "The man who comes to kill you, or to outrage the modesty of a woman, or sets fire to another's house, or commits theft and is killed while struggling to escape dies by his own sins as all aggressors and wicked men do. If wounding one's feelings is violence, Gandhi's satyarah is also based on violence. Truly speaking, the law should be non-violence wherever possible, violence whenever necessary."²

There is no doubt that Ambedkar has a deep-rooted faith in the goodness of non-violence. But he makes a distinction between non-violence and object surrender. He says that it does not befit a man to live a life of surrender, servitude and helplessness. He fully agrees with Sant Tukaram that destruction of the wicked is also a form of non-violence. Though love and kindness towards all living being is a part of the principle of non-violence, yet the destruction of all evil doers is the principal element in Ambedkar's view of non-violence. Without this spirit of courage and justice, ahimsa or non-violence, to him, is an empty shell, simply a beautytude.³ Strength and character should be their ideal. Here he differs with Gandhian view of non-violence which is derived from Jainism. The Jain principle of ahimsa is an extreme one. Gandhiji himself made his principle of ahimsa a speculative idea by giving it a theological basis. He refers to "God as the be-all and end-all of Love or

1. LM., pp. 90-91.

2. LM., p. 91.

3. LM., p. 351.

Ahimsa (Non-violence)."¹ Ambedkar's principle of ahimsa is derived from Buddhism, which is based on the middle path. It has a social and political basis.

Ambedkar's concept of non-violence, as derived from the teachings of Buddha, is based on a clear distinction of Principle and Rule. He does not regard ahimsa as a matter of Rule. He rather accepts it as a matter of Principle, *i. e.*, a way of life. A principle leaves man free to act, while a rule does not. A rule either breaks a man or a man breaks the rule. His main purpose in doing so, is not to distinguish between "the will to kill" and "the need to kill". Ambedkar agrees with Buddha who does not ban killing, if there is a need. There should not be will to kill any person. The principle of non-violence, thus, avoids two extremes, *viz.*, the will always to kill and the will never to kill. It is up to the individual to decide wisely whether the need to violence is there.² In this sense, Ambedkar may be said to have an immense faith in non-violence as an end, but in relative violence as a means only in self-defence. In his political thought, such a view of non-violence has a greater meaning. It is the most proper form of Ahimsa. It cannot leave us desparate in dealing with other nations of the world.

Ambedkar occassionally suggests the use of violence. But this should not be taken in the sense in which violence has been adopted in Marx's philosophy. To Ambedkar, the necessity of violence arises only in self-defence, because in certain cases the use of violence is so essential that without it, self-respect and social security cannot be maintained. But in Marx's political thought, violence has been accepted as a method, *i. e.*, rule. It believes in an offensive attitude, whereas in Ambedkar's philosophy, violence is used only in defensive measures. It does not accept violence as a method or rule. The use of violence becomes inevitable on certain cases—only in self-defence—which no sane man can deny.

India's Foreign Policy.

The foreign policy of India is based on three props—peace co-existence between communism and free democracy ; and the opposition to SEATO. The main objectives of India's interna-

1. Husain, S. A. : *The Way of Gandhi and Nehru*, p. 13.
2. *BD.*, p. 347.

tional policy, according to Nehru, are the pursuit of peace, not through alignment with any major power or group of powers, but through an independent approach to controversial problems; the elimination of racial discrimination; the liberation of subject people; and the maintenance of freedom.¹ The originality of Nehru's policy is its adherence to the "Five Principles"—popularly called Panch-Sheela—Respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; Non-aggression; Non-interference in each other's internal affairs; Equality and mutual benefit, and Peaceful co-existence.

According to Ambedkar, the greatest problem in internal relations, particularly before the free nations of the world, is "the expansion of communism." The problem is positive for those believing in parliamentary government adhering to free democracy. Referring to the principle of peace, Dr. Ambedkar does not like the process through which peace is being maintained. He says: "We want peace; nobody wants war. The only question is, what the price of this peace is going to be. At what price we are purchasing this peace.....peace is being maintained by what might be called partitioning and dismembering of countries."²

Ambedkar indicates about the dismemberment of Austria—Hungary where different nationalities with different languages, different cultures, different races, were kept together under one sovereign autocracy of the Austrian Empire. The First World War brought about the end of the Austrian Empire on the well known principle of self-determination. But now what is being done is otherwise. There are countries which are culturally one, which are socially homogeneous, which have one language, one race, one destiny, desiring to live together. The people, (the mediators) go there, cut them up and divide the carcase, and hand over a part of carcase to the countries which are interested in spreading communism. In this way, peace is being compromised with the expansion of communism, which, according to Ambedkar, is very harmful to the other free nations of the world.

1. Das, M. N. : *The Political Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru*, pp. 201-202.

2. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 87.

To Ambedkar's belief, the communist countries are not faithful towards the principle of peace. They believe in the international expansion of communism. They are doing it consciously. He observes : "Here you have a vast country, (*i.e.*, Russia) endlessly occupied in destroying other people, absorbing them within its fold on the theory that it is liberating them. The Russian liberation, so far as I can understand, is liberation followed by servitude, it is not liberation followed by freedom. But the point is this—and it worries me considerably. You are, by this kind of peace, doing nothing but feeding the giant, every time the giant opens his jaws and wants something to eat."¹ India's foreign policy, according to Ambedkar, is helping this giant in many ways. It is feeding the giant regularly and constantly. It is very harmful, because this giant one day may turn to India. It may destroy her tooth and nail. This giant, as he visualizes, may say to her, "I have now consumed everything that there was to be consumed ; you are the only person that remains, and I want to consume you."²

The theory that communism and free democracy can live together, according to Ambedkar, is not true. It cannot stand to any convincing argument. "Communism", he says, "is like a forest fire ; it goes on burning and consuming anything and everything that comes in its way. It is quite possible that countries which are far distant from the centre of communism may feel safe that the forest fire may be extinguished before it reaches them or it may be that the fire may never reach them. But what about the countries which are living in the vicinity of this forest fire ? Can you expect that human habitation and this forest fire can long live together ?"³ Not at all. The forest fire has no mercy, no friendship and no love to those who wish to live together. The Chinese aggression against India has proved Ambedkar correct.

Foreign countries like Canada and England praise India's international policy. They congratulate the policy of co-existence. According to Ambedkar, "the statesmen of Canada can very easily say that the co-existence is possible because Canada is separated from China and Russia by thousands and thousands

1. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

of miles." Similarly, to him, "England after having pulled itself out from the great conflagration, now thinks that she is too exhausted to do anything and, therefore, likes to enunciate and support the principle of co-existence."¹ But the people of England know well that there is a distance between them. Canada and England are physically away from communist countries. To them, the policy of co-existence is naturally convincing. But they forget to account for the geographical factor in their view.

According to Ambedkar, the people must not forget that in the foreign policy of a country, the geographical factor is one of the most important factors. He says : "Each country's foreign policy must vary with its geographical locations in relation to the factor with which it is dealing. What is good for Canada may not be good for us. What is good for England may not be good for us."¹ Therefore, the principle of co-existence, to him, seems to be a principle which has been adopted without considering the geographical factors surrounding India's borders. It needs re-appraisal in the light of recent unhappy happenings with India's neighbours.

It is evident that Ambedkar is opposed to the policy of appeasement and co-existence. To him, alignment with free nations is good in so far as they are prepared for protecting India's freedom and sovereignty. He does not see any harm in becoming the member of organisations like SEATO. He says : "The SEATO is not an organisation for committing aggression on any other country. The SEATO is an organisation for the purpose of preventing aggression on free countries."² According to him, the Americans and the Britishers are following "a second line of defence and that second line defence is that Russia should not be allowed, or China should not be allowed to occupy any further part of the free world. He thinks that it is the principle to which all freedom-loving people should agree. The strength of SEATO can help India in preventing the aggression from communist countries. In this way, India can save a huge amount of money which is being spent on defence measures. She can utilize this amount in other development plans.

1. Ibid., p. 89.

2. Ibid., p. 91.

Is not India exposed to aggression? According to Ambedkar, "it is very much exposed to aggression.....how this country has been completely encircled on one side by Pakistan and the other Muslim countries. I do not know what is going to happen, but now that the barrier between Egypt and England has been removed by the handing over of the Suez canal. I think there may be very little difficulty in the Muslim countries joining with Pakistan and forming a block on that side. On this side by allowing the Chinese to take possession of Lhasa, the Prime Minister has practically helped the Chinese to bring their border down to Indian border. Looking at all these things, it seems to me that it would be an act of levity not to believe that India, if it is not exposed to aggression right now, is exposed to aggression and that aggression might well be committed by people who always are in the habit of committing aggression."³ And it has recently happened.

The foreign policy of India largely depends upon the "Panchsheela", which was also accepted by the communist China and recorded in the Tibet Treaty of non-aggression. The Chinese leaders failed to abide by this noble principle. According to Ambedkar, the Panchsheela is "the essential part of the Buddhist religion, & Mr. Mao had any faith in the Panchsheela, he certainly would treat the Buddhists in his own country in a very different way. There is no room for Panchsheela in politics and....not in the Politics of a communist country." It is because the morality of communist countries is always in a flux. "There is no morality. Today's morality is not tomorrow's morality. You can keep your word in accordance with the morality of today and you can break your word with equal justification tomorrow's morality because tomorrow's morality will be different."² Moreover, when the communist countries deal with other States, each transaction is a unit by itself. When India deals with other countries, she begins with good-will and ends in gratitude. But the communist countries neither begin with good-will nor end in gratitude. They follow what is expedient to them in the way of international relations."³ They do not lose any chance, if it profits them.

1. Ibid., p. 91.

2. Ibid., p. 92.

3. Ibid., pp. 92-93,

Principles have little value in the international relations, believes Ambedkar. They may be easily undermined despite their inherent value. He says : "Principles are undoubtedly very valuable, but I take it politicians have a great dislike for principles, particularly politicians who are dealing with foreign policy. They like to deal with things ad hoc, each transaction by itself, without any underlying principle."¹ From this point of view, it is true that the principles of Peace and Panchsheela are not bounding to the will of others, if they do not wish them success. In fact, the Chinese aggression crushed the nobility and creativity of India's principle of peace and co-existence.

Even Mr. Nehru, the harbinger of India's foreign policy, has realized that the Chinese communists are "intoxicated with power, and seek to bully India and that they have a low estimate of India's friendship. He is convinced that China is in an expansionist phase. He doubts if the Chinese rulers ever tried to understand the urges, aspirations, hopes and fears of democratic India, which has shaped her policies in the image of Gandhian ideals of tolerance, understanding and love. He is aware that people's faith in Panchsheela and Bandung principles has been shaken."² India's foreign policy need an "agonising re-appraisal". It should re-examine and re-determine the entire basis and structure of international relations, love and friendship, if she is to survive of honourably and perpetually along with the other free nations of the world. She has to understand whether her peaceful efforts are being taken as a sign of submission and weakness.

To Nehru, it seems, there is a feeling—"Asia for Asiatics." But to Ambedkar, only "in so far as colonialism is concerned, the principle is perfectly true. Asia must be for Asiatics, but are we dealing with a situation like this? Is Asia one today? In what sense? Asia is a divided house now. More than half of Asia is communist."³ And it would be very difficult for a divided house to stand long. It has adopted a different principle of life and a different principle of Government. The rest of Asia follows a different life and a different principle of

1. Ibid , p. 84.

2. Jain, G. L. : *Panchsheela and After*, p. 1.

3. *Thus Spoke Ambedkar*, p. 93.

Government. What unity can there be among Asiatic ? What is the use of talking about Asia for Asiatics ? There can be no such thing at all. Asia is already becoming the cockpit of war and strife among Asians themselves. Therefore, it is better to align ourselves with what we call free nations if we believe in freedom.”¹ In this way, Ambedkar advocates the need for alignment. It can help the people in many ways. Alignment is not servitude. It is friendship and co-operation in larger sense.

It is true that where freedom is menaced or justice is threatened, through naked aggression, the people should not be pacifists. In this sense, Ambedkar is not a pacifist. He wants to protect his country and make her prepare for war, if she is attacked. She should be prepared for meeting any contingency. Though she has every right to face aggression and to defeat the enemy, yet she does not have even a least idea to commit aggression against any other country. To him, the submission to wrong—and surrender to evil, is cowardice. It is against one's self-respect and dignity. In resisting evil and aggression, one should not lose the temperament of peace and justice. One should not be a victim of fear. One should have enough courage, confidence and conformity with the ideals and values one aims at to preserve them for posterity.

Nevertheless, it should not be assumed that Ambedkar opposes India's peace making efforts in international relations. He does not oppose peace, if peace is just and honourable. He wants courage, faith and forbearance to arm the human knowledge that guides and leads the people to sincere search for peace and freedom. He does not like hypocrisy in the name of peace and liberation. Let all the nations—small and big, live freely and peacefully. This is the principle underlying Ambedkar's concept of international relationship. It means the creative effort of adjusting the worn machinery of democracy to the existing conditions of scientific society.

Rebel and Revolutionary.

Ambedkar is, at times, branded as a reactionary by certain persons of immature thought. Who is a reactionary ? A react-

1. Ibid., p: 93.

ionary, as we understand, is a man who holds back the progressive tendencies of mankind and compels people to accept the traditional ways of thinking and doing. A reactionary is opposed to scientific outlook and new ways of behaving and practice. Ambedkar, in this sense, cannot be regarded as a reactionary. He did never try to recoil progressive steps and did not oppose any scientific outlook shown by any man. He is not a reactionary. He is a rebel, and more accurately, he is a revolutionary.

What is the distinction between the rebel and the revolutionary? A rebel is a non-conformist who would not suffer society's interference with some of his affairs; a revolutionary, on the other hand, would not rest satisfied with his own freedom. A revolutionary would seek rather to change the society itself, to mould it after a pattern which he likes. The revolutionary is an active rebel. Compared to the rebel, the revolutionary is more objective, and has or seeks to have a command over the forces that move and control the society.¹

From the above point of view, Ambedkar is not only a rebel, but also a revolutionary. He was non-conformist Hindu in his earlier days of life and did not allow anybody to interfere with his own way of reforming things in Hindu Society. He was not concerned merely with his own freedom and equality. He openly stood for the freedom of all those who suffered from slavery, injustice and exploitation. He wanted to change the Hindu society into the pattern of his own—a society based on the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity. He had a great command over the forces which moved the Indian society and broke the shackles of traditionalism, religious orthodoxy and blind superstition.

But Ambedkar was a rebel of social type as distinguished from the social one. "Criminals such as thieves and murderers belong to the a social type. A latently social rebel is one who protests against unjust or undesirable restrictions imposed by society. A person of this type arouses sympathy, and even admiration, in a section of the society, though he may be alone or the first to voice the protest."² Ambedkar was an intellect-

1. Devaraja, N. K. : *The Philosophy of Culture*, 1963, p. 125.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 125,

ual and moral rebel. He protested against the social tyranny and oppression of Hindu Society. He launched a powerful movement against the unjust social order of Hindu Religion, though he was alone to start with.¹ He did not care that he might be suppressed or killed by the reactionary forces.

He sought, through his rebellion, the removal of unequal behaviour patterns, unnatural and unjust restrictions imposed by caste and untouchability, *i. e.*, by the theory and practice of Chaturvarna system, and through revolution, he aimed at nothing less than a redistribution of the opportunities and facilities hitherto monopolized by the few. There are persons who cling to established habits of living and valuation, and refuse to share the newly aroused hope and ardour of the destitute and the downtrodden. Ambedkar was one of those who rebelled against such persons. He awakened those who needed help for revolting against inhumanity and barbarity of man by man, of class by class.

Ambedkar takes a broad view of human revolution. To him, human revolution is one of the most needed and fundamental forces of mankind which shape history. Revolution, in another sense, means a better change of life from barbarism to humanism, from violence to peace and mutual adjustment. Better change is the essence of human revolution in Ambedkar's moral philosophy. There is nothing in the world which remains unchanging. Men should strive for change, a better change in all spheres of human life. Only the dead stop growing and life becomes stagnant. Change is the law of human life so also the basis of human society.² In fact, there should be no hesitation towards change when it is for welfare and happiness of all men and women.

Why should men want revolution and change? "The inherent cause of revolution lies in the fact that some people refuse to admit that the world changes. Against the change

1. See the proceedings of the Round Table Conference, (1931-33), in which Ambedkar rebelled against Gandhi and Gandhism—an orthodox form of Hinduism : Also see the last two chapters of 'What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to the Untouchables' by Dr. Ambedkar.

2. AC., pp. 78-79.

that time calls for, they 'keep their minds closed and locked up and will not permit any new ideas to come into them.' They are frightened at the idea of thinking, but since change leads to the growth of mankind, the world moves on inspite of them. Such contradictory forces cause revolution."¹

Ambedkar was not a man to be frightened at the idea of any revolution—social, economic and religious, because he knew well that change is the reality in man and society. To him, without change, there can be no human progress. He admits that since man has evolved, change is necessary. If there were no change, the evolution of mankind would have stopped long ago, and there would have been no man and society in the present shape and thought.²

A rebel and revolutionary like Ambedkar does not find any sanctity behind the human institutions, orders and systems, which do not stand for the uplift and welfare of the people. If these institutions hold back human progress, they are certainly reactionary systems. Revolution to Ambedkar, is perfectly justified in abolishing them. He was determined to abolish the institutions of Chaturvarna : Caste and Untouchability, root and branch, because they snatched from the emerging forces, the instruments of revolution and change like education, arms and property.

Society, in order to become stable, peaceful and progressive, needs certain standards of living and relationship. The recognition of this principle, according to Ambedkar, is most useful for every society. For every society must have certain standard by which to judge whatever it has acquired and did. There are everywhere people who are immoral and fallen. There are two classes of those who are fallen. Those who have no standards and those who have certain standards. The former who have no standards—do not know that they have fallen. On the other hand, the later—who have certain standards—try to rise above from their fallen state. Because they know that they have fallen below the standards of morality and humanity.³

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1. Das, M. N. : *The Political Philosophy of Nehru*, 1961, p. 45.
 2. BD., pp. 240–241.
 3. BD., pp. 122–123.

Obviously, it means that if standards do not fit in time and place, they should be changed, otherwise human progress will not go ahead. Such a state of affairs that a society knowing that it has failed in maintaining certain standards, clings to old ways & habits, creates the conditions for revolution. Ambedkar fully believes in the overhauling of old set of values, if they are really harmful. He also supports the cause of revolution at this stage and becomes one with rebels and revolutionaries for better change in human life.¹

To Ambedkar, it is better to bring about a measured and planned revolution in an educated society. He does not like the idea of bloody revolution simply it can give quick results. Bloody revolution runs a great risk. He believes in the Buddha's principle that revolution and change be brought through the reformation of the mind of man and society. Change of mind and heart is necessary for permanent effect of revolution on men and women. He does not want quick results by bloody revolution, war and violence, but results that are stable and peaceful.²

Ambedkar is not merely a believer in rebellion and revolution, but also a man of practical habits in life. It is the goodness of his mind and heart that what he says he practises and what practises, he discloses to the people so that they may learn that. He does not keep any secret in life. For the most part of his life, he has been a revolutionary in the most practical sense, fighting against the foreign rule and internal exploitation, tyranny and oppression. Whilst working as a revolutionary, he was greatly impressed by Edmund Burke in political sphere, and permanently by Gautam, the Tathagat, and many fundamentals of their ideas and thoughts are, therefore, found in his approach to revolution and change. But in many circumstances, his approach was different from them. On the whole, he worked as a rebel and revolutionary with the philosophy of Buddha mixed up with that of his own.

Terrorism and Revolution.

What is the ultimate aim of revolution ? To Ambedkar, the ultimate aim of revolution and change is to understand man

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1. Cf. Ambedkar, B. R. : *Who Were the Shudras ?*, pp. 14-15.
 2. *Buddhism & Communism*, (article), 1956.

and accordingly mould the institutions. It means the human freedom. He stands for the freedom of all men, because without granting freedom to man, society cannot hold him responsible for his own actions. Man is responsible being, because he is free. He is free, because he is responsible being. A revolution must concentrate upon the immediate problems of man and society. Unless they are solved immediately, there can be no progress, peace and prosperity. The aim of revolution is to establish a creative and progressive society for the happiness of all men and women without any unnatural distinction of caste, status and creed.

According to him, revolutions are inevitable. All the same people must not forget the vast difference that separates a revolution from real social change. A revolution politically transfers political power from one party to another or one nation to another. The downtrodden should not be satisfied with mere and an empty change. The transfer of power must be accompanied by such distribution of power that the result would be a real social change in the relative strength of the forces operating in society.¹ Thus, the ultimate aim of any revolution must be the elimination of vested interests and exploitation and an appropriate distribution of opportunities and facilities that make human life happy : organised and well-adjusted. Revolution is always brought by those who are oppressed and tyrannized and those who want freedom, equality and justice.

Ambedkar was not a terrorist or a Mussolini of India as Sarojini Naidu called him.² She was wrong and had a fear of being woman. He did not believe in the revolution of Hitler and Mussolini. And he also condemned the method of terrorism. Terrorism is not a revolution, because it has no open mind and heart. Revolution needs clear ways and nice means. Terrorism is a means to frighten the people and not to change them by good and legislative means. No acts of terrorism has brought any revolution in any part of the world. Moreover, terrorism as a political method is dying down. It has no moral force. It cannot attract many sections of people. It has no relation with real revolution of human institutions and values. Neither

1. LM., P. 141.

2. LM . p. 465.

Ambedkar was a terrorist nor did he advise his people (or anybody else) to adopt such means for bringing about revolution and change. He admired brave and courageous men, but not the terrorists, because they are human beasts.

It is true that terrorism and gangsterism are bad means for bringing about any revolution in human society. In such methods just men are ruthlessly killed by the terrorists, because terrorists have no planned and measured ways to control the forces of society. It is impossible that Ambedkar, who was a believer in human law as a legislative means, could have believed in such inhuman methods for effecting change in society. In fact, terrorism has become outworn and profitless method and more, it hampers a real revolutionary action, and, therefore, all political terrorism and communal violence are harmful in any sane society of human beings.

An Advice to Buddhist Countries.

In the last days of his heroic life, Ambedkar broke away from Hinduism. He embraced Buddhism. It has some wider implications. "I prefer Buddhism, because it gives three principles in combination, which no other religion does. Buddhism teaches *prajna* (understanding as against superstition and supernaturalism), *karuna* (love), and *samata* (equality). This is what man wants for a good and happy life. Neither god nor soul can save the society."¹ And for the individual, he says, "Buddhism teaches social freedom, intellectual freedom, economic freedom and political freedom...equality not between man and man only but between man and woman."² He wishes to bring peace and justice in the world through the Buddha's religion of humanity. He believes that "the world will not be saved unless it follows it."

According to him, "If the younger generation of the Buddhist countries are not able to appreciate that Buddhism supplies a way of life which is better than what is supplied by the communist way of life, Buddhism is doomed. It cannot last beyond a generation or two. It is, therefore, quite necessary

1. LM., p. 487.

2. *Buddha and the Future of His Religion*, (an article by Ambedkar), para, 23.

for those, who believe in Buddhism, to tackle the younger generation, and to tell them whether Buddhism can be a substitute for communism. It is then only that Buddhism can hope to survive."¹ Obviously, Buddhism is a complete substitute to communism. It is unnecessary for the Buddhist people to go to communism. What they need, they can achieve through Buddhism. The only thing they have to do is to understand Buddhism in the light of modern thought and action. The Buddhist message of universal peace can be the basis of world friendship, which communism can never give to the millions of people.

From this point of view, Ambedkar says : "Buddhist countries that have gone to communism, do not understand what communism is. Communism of the Russian type aims at bringing it about by a bloody revolution. The Buddhist communism brings it about by a bloodless revolution. The South-East Asians should beware of jumping into the Russian net. All that is necessary for them is to give political form to Buddha's teachings."² In fact, the Buddhist countries, by going over to communism, can lose the charm of their cultural heritage. If they give deep thought to Buddha's teachings, they can solve their own problems themselves.

To Ambedkar, communism is not a sure remedy for the removal of poverty. Moreover, as he says : "Poverty there is and there will always be. Even in Russia there is poverty. But poverty cannot be an excuse for sacrificing human freedom. Once it is realized that Buddhism is a social gospel, its revival would be everlasting event."³ It would help the world and humanity at large in many ways. Therefore, according to him, "If the countries which are Buddhist can develop the will to spread Buddhism the task of spreading Buddhism will not be difficult. They must realize that the duty of a Buddhist is to spread Buddhism. They must believe that to spread Buddhism is to serve mankind."⁴

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1. *Buddhism & Communism*, (an article by Ambedkar), para, 2.
 2. *LM.*, p. 487.
 3. *LM.*, p. 487.
 4. *Buddha and the Future of His Religion*, para 29.

The Founder of Republican Party.

India's political life, today, is a game of a multi-party system, the Republican Party being one of them. It is an All-India Political Party. It was founded by Dr. Ambedkar. He was also the founder of All-India Scheduled Caste Federation. Though this Federation was a "National Party of untouchables",¹ yet it suffered from political aloofness and communal feelings. Even the founder realised this fact. "So far we were rather narrow-minded in our outlook, the only interest before us being that of our community. Now that we have achieved our freedom, we should change our outlook entirely and co-operate with others, keeping in view the interests of our community and help to consolidate our newly won freedom."² He did it upto the last moment of his life. It was the goodness of his character and beauty of his conduct that examined things in right perspective.

From this point of view, Ambedkar formed a purely political organisation the doors of which are open to all irrespective of any distinction based on caste, colour and creed. The guiding policy of this new organisation is governed by the following principles :—

- (i) "It will treat all Indians not only as being equal before the law but as being entitled to equality and will accordingly foster equality where it does not exist and uphold it where it is denied.
- (ii) It will regard every Indian as an end in himself with a right to his own development in his own way and the state only as means to that end.
- (iii) It will sustain the right of every Indian to freedom—Religious, Economic and Political—subject to such limitations as may arise out of the need for the protection of the interests of other Indians or the State.
- (iv) It will uphold the right of every Indian to equality of opportunity subject to the provision that those who have had none in the past shall have priority over those who had.

1. Weiner, M. : Party Politics in India, p. 226.

2. Thus Spoke Ambedkar, p. 52.

- (v) It will keep the State ever aware of its obligation to make every Indian free from want and free from fear.
- (vi) It will insist on the maintenance of liberty, equality and fraternity and will strive for redemption from oppression and exploitation of man by man, of class by class and of nation by nation.”¹

This party is a true reflection of Ambedkar’s practical wisdom and theoretical insight. Having a deep faith in democratic values, the party stands “for the parliamentary system of Government as being the best form of Government both in the interest of the public and in the interest of the individual.”² The policy of the party is to give effect to the above principles. It is not tied “to any particular dogma or ideology such as communism or socialism, Gandhism or any other ism.” It is ready to adopt “any plan of social and economic betterment of the people irrespective of its origin and provided it is consistent with its principles.” Its outlook on human life is said to be “purely rational and modern”, “empiristic and academic.”³ In this way, the party avoids Fascism and totalitarianism which stand for a complete and uncompromising denial of the principles of liberalism and democracy.

The programme of the Republican Party includes the removal of poverty, the control of the growth of population, the reconstruction of agriculture, the spread of education, the emancipation of the weaker sections through education, services, and economic well-being. To this party, “The remedy against poverty is more production and not the pattern of production”. For the control of population, it believes in “an intensive propaganda in favour of birth control.” It advocates the opening of birth control clinics in towns and cities of the country. For land reforms, the party stands for co-operative farming and collective farming with a view to more production and abolishing landlordism. This party holds that “education is the birth right of every citizen of India. Therefore, education must be open to all. Neither poverty nor any kind of mis-

1. Election Manifesto of Republican Party, 1962, p. 1.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

fortune should stand in the way of any one's right to receive education.¹

This party also stands for National Integration by solving the problem of Linguism, casteism and communalism. It says that casteism is like a cancer, which eats into the vitals of society most unconsciously. Casteism is the denial of social justice. It believes that social justice can secure complete emotional integration of the people of India.² It wants clean internal administration and a clear cut foreign policy and an effective defence of Northern borders of the country. As regards the question of resources, the party suggests : (i) levy of salt tax ; (ii) abolition of prohibition and saving of excise revenue ; (iii) nationalisation of Banks ; (iv) increase in the direct taxation ; and (v) avoidance of waste. It also attaches a great importance to labour welfare. It wants to determine a "National Minimum Wage level with suitable regional variations so as to enable the labourers to live the happy life."³

Ambedkar's task was to give the basic principles to such a political organisation, and if the people are convinced of their value and their worth, they ought to spread them. That is the wish of every founder of a new system. Jesus wished it for his system. Buddha wished it for his order. The same must be the wish of Dr. Ambedkar. It follows that if the Republicans have faith, love and respect for Ambedkar, their supreme duty lies not merely in assembling together to sing his praises and phrases but in organising themselves for spreading the gospel of their guide and guard. They ought to shun the habit of complacency and indolence. At present, the Republican Party is not what Ambedkar wanted it to be because sense of devotion and intensive propaganda, intellectual curiosity and effective leadership are lacking in them. They do not have mass contact, and if they have, it is only for votes and not for any radical change in their life. They must come forward with a strong faith in social service and human emancipation like the founder of this organisation, who paved the way for a new orientation : democracy, liberalism, rationalism, humanism, socialism, empiricism, love and friendship.

1. Ibid., p. 11.

2. Ibid., p. 13.

3. Ibid., p. 18.

A Humanist Political Philosophy.

According to Ambedkar, any philosophy is good if it is rooted in humanism. His thought is a type of Humanism appropriately called as Social Humanism. This humanism stands for that whatever is true for the human being must serve human interests, and not the interests of any supernatural being. It can provide a basis for a new humanistic manifesto, the benefit of which will reach the doors of each and every human being, living in human society. The humanist philosophy is the need of the present day world. His humanism upholds certain ideas, which every sane man should follow, if he is really to claim that he is human being.

The humanist political philosophy of Dr. Ambedkar accepts good and evil as two distinct and opposing qualities in human society. They are externally related to each other. Evil is human evil and good is human good. Man himself is to make good in the world. Good is a human enterprise and evil a human disgrace. Good is to be carried on by human efforts and instruments. Evil in human society is to be eradicated root and branch. It is not to be excused. And this effort is also a human responsibility. For all these things, there should be scientific method. It cannot be done by worship and prayer. This is a realistic approach and should not be the basis of this Humanist Manifest. It does not take any interest in mysticism. For mysticism takes man away from social responsibility, though a mystic is not harmful in larger sense. The only weakness of mysticism is its extreme individualistic attitude—self-infused personality, which yields nothing to human enlightenment in social, political and economic spheres. It has to be abandoned.

From humanistic point of view, man's life is not altogether free, sacred and immortal. It must be made free by human efforts. It must be made sacred by human sacrifices of active resistance to evil. Its immortality must be illumined by more enlightenment. In this sense, men are the makers of human happiness on this earth. Neither god nor any soul can help them. Even beyond the humanistic boundaries, if some believe in them, the world of men's ideas shall be what they believe and what they make it. The Humanistic Manifesto can be

fulfilled only in a society that sustains the zest of doing one's human job as a duty and love. So to Ambedkar, to fix the human mind upon human interest is to enjoy the best things that have come to mankind by human struggles and strivings.

Taken literally, Ambedkar's humanism would encourage each man to adopt beliefs or to accept things which work best for him in society. His philosophical attitude, thus, admits a thorough going relativity of human values; and a man's philosophy would quite rightly depend on his conduct, temperament and circumstances. Ambedkar does not ignore individual human interest, because it tends essentially to give way to social humanism. All things can be true only when they work for all men ultimately. Their truth cannot be determined by sectarian interest of societies. Thus the goodness of things is then determined by social experiments and the best results they produce for the benefit of mankind. It is evident that human mind aims at a kind of social harmony that is not independent of its wishes and even beyond its efforts. The mind that makes efforts should remain pure and impartial in its enquiry and examination of things; otherwise the human mind becomes entirely irresponsible. And irresponsibility is the vice of man.

Ambedkar's philosophical attitude is a combination of naturalism and humanism. "Naturalism denies the existence of anything beyond nature, behind nature, other-than-nature—such as the supernatural or other-worldly..... If there is anything in the world which inclines to set itself apart from nature as independent of the causal laws, be it free decision of the human will, product of creative imagination...naturalism declares that also to be a part of the scheme of nature: It is the Nature of man to be artful, artistic and artificial."¹ Ambedkar does not deny the truth of nature, but as he believes man is essentially a free human being. If man is not apart from nature, he, too, is not a puppet in the hands of Nature.

According to Prof. Dewey, naturalism cannot be divorced from humanity. It becomes itself humanistic in quality. It is something to be pursued not in a technical and specialized way for what is called truth for its own sake, but with the sense of its own social bearing and its intellectual indispensableness. It is

1. Hocking. W. E. : *Types of Philosophy*, p. 41.

technical only in the sense that it provides the technique of social and moral engineering.¹ Naturalism would stand to no value and worth, if it denies the values of humanism. And humanism, without naturalism, would be a kind of high idealism which would be unyielding and unprofitable to human aims and objectives. The combination of both can bring as Ambedkar thinks, better understanding and social results for human welfare. A philosophical and wasteful conflict between humanism and naturalism cannot contribute to amelioration of existing ills. In Ambedkar's philosophical approach, the conflict between the two is almost terminated. He does not draw any line between man and nature. He brings man near to the naturalistic view and seeks in nature the values which are beneficial to man.

Another philosophical implication in Ambedkar's thought is its sincere attempt to harmonize the claims of rationalism and empiricism. Rationalism in Ambedkar has been an expression of great confidence in human reason. Rationalism is one of the early results of his independent thinking, which brings him very near to naturalism and empiricism. Naturalism and rationalism are the most thoroughly anti-theological type of human attitude which gave way to man rely upon his own experience. It may be true that reason came into experience but it is equally true that experience without reason is meaningless and blind. Ambedkar bases his thought upon human experience but not without the help of reason. Reason helps experience in many ways. Reason and experience, if separated from each other, cannot work for a moment. From this point of view, Ambedkar has a deep faith in both human reason and experience. In fact, a combination of naturalism and humanism, rationalism and empiricism, nationalism and internationalism, is found in Ambedkar's philosophical analysis of human problems.

It is with a sense of uncertainty that modern philosophy is opening a way for new orientation of values. Modern philosophical thought is so pre-occupied with the puzzles of epistemology and disputes between realist and idealist, rationalist and empiricist, phenomenalist and absolutist, individualist and socialist, that many people are at a loss to know what will

1. Dewey, John. : *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, p. 139.

be the exact function of philosophy. To Ambedkar, there is nothing like this in philosophy. His philosophy of life encourages man to face the great social and moral defects and troubles from which humanity suffers. His philosophy concentrates its attention upon the analysis of the nature and causes of social and moral evils and upon developing a clear and strong attitude towards better social possibilities, understanding and rectifying specific social ills.¹

Philosophy cannot solve the problems of the relation of the ideal and the real, the material and the spiritual. But to Ambedkar, it can lighten the burden of mankind in dealing with the problems of emancipating man from the wrongs which man himself has fostered. For a long time human society has been committed to radically false traditions and ideals. Ambedkar's philosophy of life tries to make it easier for mankind to take the right steps for understanding and observing concrete social events and other forces. It is, thus, occupied with social amelioration, political enlightenment and spiritual awaking. For this, it attaches due importance to the economic well-being of the masses.

Ambedkar's political philosophy in particular is a matter of profound human importance precisely because it is empirically founded and experimentally applied. No human being in his natural state, thinks when he has no troubles to cope with, no difficulties to overcome and no social ills to remove. Ambedkar's life has been always thoughtful, because in his life there were numerous troubles, difficulties and hardships. The greatest task he undertook was the reconstruction of the society in which he lived for many years. In this sense, a life of ease, of success without effort, to Ambedkar, would be a thoughtless one.

Individual freedom and common good are the dearest and most precious things in Ambedkar's social and political thought. Man is born into a human society which by its institutional mechanism and natural growth provides the impetus and the opportunities for developing his self-social, political and moral. But the existing framework of society does not give appropriate chances for the realization of individual freedom and common

1. LM., pp. 463-464.

good. To Ambedkar, political thought embodies a social dynamism, because man is a political animal and a social being. From this view-point, he is right in pleading for the political and civic rights of the individuals with a complete change in the existing social structure which is based on conservatism traditionalism, orthodoxy and dogmatism.

Ambedkar has brought modern philosophical thought down to solve the social and political ills of man. He says : "My philosophy has a mission. I have to do the work of conversion ; for, I have to make the followers of Triguna theory to give it up and accept mine. Indians today are governed by two different ideologies. Their political ideal set out in the preamble to the Constitution affirms a life of liberty, equality and fraternity. Their social ideal embodies in their religion denies them."¹ He believes that what is a political ideal for most Indians will become a social ideal for all. In his philosophy, liberty and equality have a place ; but to him, unlimited liberty destroys equality, and absolute equality leaves no room for liberty. Law, too, has a place in his thought only as a safeguard against the breaches of liberty and equality ; but he does not believe that law can be a guarantee for breaches of liberty and equality. He gives the highest place to fraternity as the only real safeguard against the denial of liberty, equality and fraternity—which is another name for brotherhood or humanity, which is another name for religion. "Law", to him, "is secular which anybody may break while fraternity or religion is sacred which everybody must respect."² In other words, liberty, equality and fraternity, Ambedkar says : "are not to be treated as separate items of a trinity. They form a union of a trinity."³

Ambedkar's political philosophy, thus analysed, has a deep faith in fundamental human rights, in the equal rights of man and woman, in the dignity of the individual, in the social and economic justice, in the promotion of social progress and better standards of life with peace and security in all spheres of human life. The problem of political thought, to him, can not be entirely founded on theoretical and speculative arguments,

1. LM., p. 456.

2. LM., p. 456.

3. Pylee, M. V. : *India's Constitution*, p. 376.

but it must be closely related to the actual human affairs. Philosophy and social facts have to supplement each other. His study of social facts enriched his political philosophy. It led him to practical politics and at the same time, he applied ethical and moral tradition to it. A combination of thought and action helped him in many ways. It formulated his ideas which became embodied in his social and religious experiments. His philosophical approach is to revitalize thoughts and things for the good of man and society.

His philosophy is a synthesis of idealism and realism, empiricism and rationalism, naturalism and humanism, materialism and spiritualism, individualism and socialism, nationalism and internationalism. Ambedkar loves his country better than his family and community; but he loves humanity better than his country. Narrow thinking is bound to result in human conflicts which are injurious for the betterment of humanity. A broad and benevolent attitude alone can establish peace in the world and peace is absolutely essential for human progress and justice. There can be no peace, no justice, no humanism, unless people think in terms of the welfare and happiness of all men and of all countries. The social humanism of Ambedkar is an attempt at creating a favourable environment for such a state of affairs.

Summation.

Ambedkar looks towards the future rather than to the past with a progressive ^{mind}. He is very conscious of the dynamic nature of human history, but he is devoted more to only those ideas of history, which can enlighten the slumbering masses than to those which mar their human spirit and social dignity. Nobody should expect Ambedkar, a champion of human liberty and equality, to defend those social wrongs and political mistakes which engendered poverty, illiteracy and slavery to this country. Every great man has certain inconsistencies, foibles, because of his dynamic and humanistic spirit. A man who has no inconsistencies is not a man, but something other than man. Ambedkar, too, has certain inconsistencies in his social and political thoughts, though his attitude to human problems is very disect and dasing. His thought revolves round the central and firmly-rooted philosophy of life, individual and social, economic and political, that he holds. His philosophy developed through

many phases and during that development many changes occurred in order to make a coherent and harmonious attempt at solving human problems.

After an humble exposition of the political philosophy of Ambedkar, we arrive at the following significant conclusions :—

1. Ambedkar regards organized religion as more an obstacle than a help to a fair and honest political life. His political thought does not believe in the Hereafter functions of religion, because this view opens the way for injustice, poverty and inequality. A belief in other worldliness serves as a cloak for exploitation of man by man. Organized religion enables the priest to control over man from birth to death for his own vested interests. In this sense, organized religion makes for blind and irrational beliefs and warring fanaticism. It divides rather than unities the different societies. A religion, which saves society from disintegration and establishes right relations between man and man has an important place in Ambedkar's schemes of things.
2. His political philosophy recognizes nationalism as a fact, though India's nationalism is not an aggressive nationalism. Nationalism (and patriotism) demands action for the improvement of social and economic conditions of people. His idea of nationalism has necessary links with internationalism and seeks to ally itself with all progressive forces and free nations of the world. Today, people are living in one world and the only national outlook is to look at things from international point of view. His nationalism on the one hand, is a revolt against conservative traditionalism and on the other, an effort to remove poverty and a struggle against imperialism.
3. Ambedkar champions the cause of human freedom, because without freedom, there can be no good and happy life. It is a necessary means for achieving human happiness and social welfare. He does not want only the freedom of a country, but also the freedom of the people living therein. Political freedom is not enough. There must also be economic, social and intellectual

freedom for all round development of human personality. Freedom cannot be fully realized without equality and fraternity. Liberty, equality and fraternity are not to be treated as separate items of human life. They form an integrated view of human society the maintenance of which is possible only through self-discipline, social service and sacrifice of lesser interests.

4. Ambedkar regards imperialism—of any sort : social, economic and religious—as the enemy of all progress, peace and prosperity. It brings or imposes capitalism on millions of people, which is outmoded. Economic progress and social security should be maintained by some State control. Imperialism and colonialism are hindrances to human development. There should be no economic exploitation, social domination and political slavery in today's society and world.
5. His political philosophy regards democracy as the best means for realizing human values and it condemns fascism and totalitarianism, because they are most dangerous for human freedom and intellectual curiosity. They destroy intellectual freedom and suppress all contrary opinions. There should be no compromise with imperialism, colonialism, barbarism, facism and totalitarianism, because of their dehumanizing attitude. Democratic socialism is the keynote of his political thought. Constitutionalism is the only way to achieve it.
6. Ambedkar has an immense faith in the principle of non-violence, because violence does not provide man any final solution of economic, social and political problems. His view of non-violence is not non-violence out and out. He allows violence, but only in self-defence when aggression (or injustice) is prevailed over peace and justice, though it prefers non-violence to violence as far as possible. Non-violence does not mean submission to wrong or to strong. It is a dynamic weapon and requires courage and understanding to use it wisely. The principle of non-violence cannot be preserved without using violence whenever it is threatened, though he does not accept violence as a method or rule.

7. The present political philosophy is enshrined in the noble ideals of humanism, justice and peace, which stand for right relations and equal behaviour patterns. Man should enter a larger life of human brotherhood. Man is still in the making and he has to make himself the best in human society. Ambedkar's is a humanistic political philosophy and has roots in the heart of humanity.
8. The keynote of his humanistic philosophy as a way of life is the necessity for the participation of every mature human being in the formation of the values that regulate the living of men together. That is inevitable from the principle of both the general social welfare and the full development of all men as individuals. A political philosophy, without humanism and social dynamism, is unconceivable.
9. Man as a social being and political animal is the father of modern culture and civilization. His wants, his intellectual craving, his attachment to material things and human relations, have not always been the same. Many factors influence them, history modifies them, philosophy measures them, while the progress of education demands radical and revolutionary changes. In such a process of human life, elements of evil and conservative traditionalism should be eliminated.
10. His political philosophy stresses the need of love and knowledge. Love towards all men and knowledge of things as they are in order to make them suit for the present purposes and problems of mankind. The combination of both can save man from self-annihilation. Love can bring men together and knowledge can remove ignorance and fear, doubts and superstitions from their minds.



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