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## Bharatiya Vidya Stands for

1. Bharatiya Shiksha must ensure that no promising young Indian of character having faith in Bharata and her culture Bharatiya Vidya should be left without modern educational equipment by reason merely of want of funds.

2. Bharatiya Shiksha must be formative more than informative, and cannot have for its end mere acquisition of knowledge. Its legitimate sphere is not only to develop natural talents but so to shape them as to enable them to absorb and express the permanent values of Bharatiya Vidya.

3. Bharatiya Shiksha must take into account not only the full growth of a student's personality but the totality of his relations and lead him to the highest self-fulfilment of which he is capable.

4. Bharatiya Shiksha must involve at some stage or other an intensive study of Sanskrit or Sanskritic languages and their literature, without excluding, if so desired, the study of other languages and literature, ancient and modern.

5. The re-integration of Bharatiya Vidya, which is the primary object of Bharatiya Shiksha, can only be attained through a study of forces, movements, motives, ideas, forms and art of creative life-energy through which it has expressed itself in different ages as a single continuous process.

6. Bharatiya Shiksha must stimulate the student's power of expression, both written and oral, at every stage in accordance with the highest ideals attained by the great literary masters in the intellectual and moral spheres.

7. The technique of Bharatiya Shiksha must involve—

- (a) the adoption by the teacher of the *Guru* attitude which consists in taking a personal interest in the student; inspiring and encouraging him to achieve distinction in his studies; entering into his life with a view to form ideals and remove psychological obstacles; and creating in him a spirit of consecration; and
- (b) the adoption by the student of the *Shishya* attitude by the development of—
  - (i) respect for the teacher,
  - (ii) a spirit of inquiry,
  - (iii) a spirit of service towards the teacher, the institution, Bharata and Bharatiya Vidya.

8. The ultimate aim of Bharatiya Shiksha is to teach the younger generation to appreciate and live up to the permanent values of Bharatiya Vidya which flowing from the supreme art of creative life-energy as represented by Shri Ramachandra, Shri Krishna, Vyasa, Buddha, and Mahavira have expressed themselves in modern times in the life of Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, and Swami Vivekananda, Shri Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi.

9. Bharatiya Shiksha while equipping the student with every kind of scientific and technical training must teach the student, not to sacrifice an ancient form or attitude to an unreasoning passion for change; not to retain a form or attitude which in the light of modern times can be replaced by another form or attitude which is a truer and more effective expression of the spirit of Bharatiya Vidya; and to capture the spirit afresh for each generation to present it to the world.



आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः।

*Let noble thoughts come to us from every side*

—*Rigveda*, I-89-i

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**BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY**

*General Editors*

**K. M. MUNSHI**

**N. CHANDRASEKHARA AIYER**

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14

**OUR GREATEST NEED AND OTHER ADDRESSES**

**BY K. M. MUNSHI**

BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

# OUR GREATEST NEED AND OTHER ADDRESSES

BY

K. M. MUNSHI

*Preface By*

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## GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

IN March 1951, I organised the Book University of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. Its object is to produce books in a uniform get-up and at cheap price covering the best literature in the world and in particular the literature which stands for India and the fundamentals for which Indian culture stands.

As a first step, it has been decided to publish in English 100 books selected by the General Editors, out of which 50 will be taken on hand immediately. The books will be approximately of 200 to 250 pages, priced at Rs. 1-12-0 per copy.

It is also the intention to publish these and other books also in eight other Indian languages, viz. (1) Hindi, (2) Bengali, (3) Gujarati, (4) Marathi, (5) Tamil, (6) Telugu, (7) Kannada and (8) Malayalam. This common pool of literature will enable the readers to appreciate world currents as also currents in our own Indian literature which, though differing in languages, have a common technique and urge.

This scheme involving the publication of 900 volumes requires an all-India organisation as also ample resources. The Bhavan is exerting its utmost to plan and organise it.

The Bhavan by its objective stands for the reintegration of Indian culture in the light of modern needs and a resuscitation of its fundamental values, viz.:

- (a) the dignity of Man implying the imperativeness of social conditions conducive to his freedom so that he may evolve on the lines of his own temperament and capabilities;
- (b) harmony of individual efforts and social relations within the framework of the Moral Order;

- (c) urge for the creative art of life, by which human limitations are progressively transmuted, so that man may become the instrument of the Divine, and see Him in all and all in Him.

Fittingly, the Book University's first book is the *Mahabharata*, summarised by no less a person than C. Rajagopalachari, one of the greatest of living Indians; the second is on the *Gita* by H. V. Divatia, an eminent jurist and a student of philosophy. Centuries ago, it was proclaimed that "What is not in it is nowhere." After twenty-five centuries we can say the same thing. Who knows it not, knows not life, its beauty, its trials, its tragedy and its grandeur.

The *Mahabharata* is not a mere epic. It is also a romance, a tale of heroic men and women and of some who were divine, a whole literature, a whole code of life, a philosophy of social and ethical relations and of speculative thought, with its core of the *Gita*, the noblest of scriptures and the grandest saga working up to the Apocalypse in the Eleventh Canto.

The literature of India, ancient and modern, through all its languages, will also be brought into a common pool easily accessible to all. Books in other languages which may illustrate these principles will also be included. The world, in all its sordidity, was, I felt, too much around us. Nothing will lift, inspire and uplift as beauty and aspiration learnt through books.

I thank all who have helped and worked to make this branch of Bhavan's activity successful.

QUEEN VICTORIA ROAD,  
NEW DELHI:  
3rd October 1951.

K. M. MUNSHI

## P R E F A C E

I FEEL greatly honoured that the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan should have invited me to contribute a Preface to this collection of addresses by Shri K. M. Munshi, its Founder-President. It will be a fitting addition to the Bhavan's Book University which has already become a national institution, a meeting-place of India and the World, the living Past and the unfolding Future.

Shri Munshi's life-career has been a romance like one of his own great novels. He has packed into it both the fever and ecstasy of aspiration and the fullness and richness of realisation, and he has continually marched ahead, refusing to rest on his laurels however numerous, and he has after a life-time of unsparing effort and manifold achievement still not ceased to hanker after other and better worlds evolving out of our own "too too sullied earth". The "elements" are so mixed in him that he strikes one sometimes as a siege of contraries but more often as a subtly integrated personality, the diverse "elements" fusing into a complex unity. He has been lawyer, novelist, agitator, legislator, educationist, diplomat and Cabinet Minister—and everywhere he has laboured on the highest levels and won the most glittering prizes. The three main strands in his life-philosophy have been acceptance, rather than denial; comprehension, rather than exclusion; and integration, rather than suppression. At sixty-five, he is still whole-heartedly engaged in the creative art of life, still engrossed in the mighty endeavour of Becoming. By giving this permanent form to the occasional addresses of a thinker and statesman so eminent as Shri Munshi, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan has performed a truly meritorious service to the nation.

Delivered on diverse occasions during the last few

years, before widely differing and far-scattered human groups,—some as Minister for Food and Agriculture in the Union Government, some as Convocation Addresses, and others as presidential pronouncements before various gatherings,—this collection has nevertheless the stamp of unity, the stir of life, and the fervour of a deep-seated earnestness that is half-intellectual, half-spiritual in its impulsion. An eminent Advocate, Shri Munshi, whatever the forum, whatever the theme, is powerful, almost overwhelming, in his advocacy of the current cause, be it the need for the retention of English, or the promotion of Hindi, or the reverent maintenance of our well of living waters, the Sanskritic tradition; whether it be a plea for preserving our forest wealth, fostering Mother Cow who is really Mother Plenty, giving battle to the omnipresent goat who is the killer of all vegetation, or for growing more food, material as well as intellectual; or whether the swelling theme be the need to forge the links of understanding between sections within the country or between India and the World. But the hard-headed lawyer is also a patriot, and the lawyer-politician is an artist and a spiritual aspirant. Hence these addresses, besides being authoritative pronouncements on various topics of current national or broad human interest, are also sustained by the searching sense of actuality which the Mahatma had taught all who had come under his influence, and illuminated by the flame of spirituality that had been lit up long years ago at Baroda by Shri Aurobindo. A collection of occasional addresses, yes; but it is also a composite tract for the times, with a concord of parts, and an urgency that we cannot afford to ignore.

In an age of mere slogans, it was given to Shri Munshi, as Minister for Food and Agriculture, to enunciate in an inspired moment the message of *Vana Mahotsava*. As a

mantric battle-cry it has caught the imagination of large sections of the people. It has aroused mass consciousness regarding the importance of trees and revived "an adoration for these silent sentinels mounting guard on Mother Earth." Grow more trees! A simple exhortation. Yet short-sighted people, driven by poverty or greed, cut trees senselessly in our villages, and the public is apathetic, and the village officials and the revenue officers look on and do nothing. Villages like mine (where I write these lines) that within living memory had the look of orchards now present a bleak and desolate appearance. The trees that gave security to the village, kept erosion within bounds, gave shade to man and beast,—where are they? Charcoal buses ply without intermission, men have lost the habit of walking, and the forests are being ruthlessly destroyed. Do we hear the weird cries of the living trees that are felled down everywhere with such brutal indifference? I am here pointedly reminded of Thoreau's words:

"Does not the village bell sound a knell? . . . . I see no procession of mourners in the streets, or the woodland aisles. The squirrel has leapt to another tree; the hawk has circled further off, and has settled now upon a new eyrie, but the woodman is preparing to lay his axe at the root of that also."

Thousands of beautiful parrots that had their habitation in trees near the riverside are being chased from one felled tree to another soon to be felled, and tomorrow there will be no birds, no colour, no song, no joy in "Stupidity Street." Fresh saplings are occasionally planted: but the goat is at them without let and in spite of every hindrance, and we shall never see the saplings grow into trees. The English diarist, John Evelyn, published in 1664 a nobly articulated book entitled

*Sylva*, the burden of which was that Britain should plant trees and preserve her forest wealth, for Britain's safety depended on her navy, and the ships were really "hearts of oak." For us in India, trees hold the key to our very existence as a nation and as a people. We have elaborate hydro-electric schemes, no doubt, but when they are brought to the point of fruition (like the Papanasam Scheme in the Tinnevely District,) we suddenly realize that the trees are gone or are going, the rains play hide and seek, the flow in the Tambravarni is a mere pitiful trickle, and hence there is little water either for power or for irrigation—and in many places there is "not a drop to drink." In a tropical country like ours, with a population that is alarmingly on the increase, abundant water is the prime need. And water is very scarce. What, then, must we do? Shri Munshi answers categorically:

"If more water is required...for the needs of men and animals, the storage capacity must be proportionately increased. This means more lakes, more tanks, more reservoirs, more wells, and tubewells, more river dams, more river valley schemes; but above all more trees to attract rain, stop erosion and store moisture."

We have got into the habit of trying to cheat Nature and break the *Jiwan Chakra* or Cycle of Life. We wish to put little into the earth, but attempt to take out the maximum. We don't realize that it is criminal folly to waste in our mad scramble for success the accumulated treasures of the ages. But Nature is not mocked, even as God is not mocked. As Shri Munshi puts it with scalding emphasis:

"This organism of life consisting of vegetation, animals and men is one and indivisible. It is a single cycle of life. If the cycle is broken the organism is crippled; its life begins to disintegrate. Erosion starts; forests

disappear; water courses are silted up; soil loses its fertility; and man's feverish efforts to patch things up end in disaster. The desert slowly spreads its deadening finger over the land where lusty life once flourished."

The prospect is indeed terrifying. The Medusa is looming in the distance. The trees that hid the monster from view are disappearing fast. And the Medusa-stare will turn all into desert sand and stony figures—

"....no water but only rock

Rock and no water and the sandy road

The road winding above among the mountains

Which are mountains of rock without water...."

If the rot is at all to be stopped—and stopped it must be—a transvaluation of values is called for. Our education has a lot to answer for—and the so-called technical education most of all. Shri Munshi refers in scathing terms to the "white-collared officers with an authoritarian outlook who stand apart from the collective work of villages", to the educated "middle class" which lacks "the life-giving touch and smell of the soil", and to the sophisticated city-dwellers who have lost contact with the very mainsprings of life. Rajaji remarked the other day before a gathering of Madras educationists that "we should drop the stupidities of the middle class and find nobility in manual work." Shri Munshi's address on the Gospel of the Dirty Hand is one of the most instructive in the collection, and reminds us that work is worship and provides the basis of social humility and moral instruction. The mere intellectual lives in a fragile ivory tower, chews the languid phrases, regrets all our yesterdays, and despairs of all our tomorrows. He is apt to forget—which Shri Munshi, in his addresses does not let us forget—that from matter to Spirit is one gamut, and that it is in vain



to seek to effect a divorce between the two. To escape from the soil is to escape from one's moorings—and the result is death, not freedom. The main complaint against our educational system is that it is a glittering bunch of paper-flowers, not a living tree sustained by deep invisible roots. A modern university has neither form nor life, neither mind nor soul. It is run by red-tape that frequently snaps, and the noise of its wheels effectively scares away the best among the *socii* as well as the *discipuli*. The anarchy of electivism, the false lure of eclecticism, the sleepy meadow of secularism, the yawning abyss of disintegration, all have vulgarized and weakened education which, instead of functioning as the most vital of our nation-building forces, is developing into a national essay in costly futility, if not worse. Since education is in very truth “a process of creative self-culture”, Shri Munshi points out that our new education “must affirm the Man, his inner self, and his ultimate destiny as much as his historical and social responsibility.” It is an egregious error to assume that the Economic Man—that absurd creature who merely produces and consumes all through his life in accordance with Ricardo's equations—has any real basis in fact. Economic values are invariably linked up with spiritual values, and both cabbages and roses will always be grown in our fields and gardens. We plan to live, and we plan to live wisely and to live a beautiful and happy life. Hence there is pressing need at all stages of education to close the fissure between matter and spirit, and create conditions favourable to the full efflorescence of a new race of men and women in our country

“With flame of freedom in their souls  
And light of knowledge in their eyes”

a race of Indians who will conform to the Platonic ideal of "gymnastic fused with music". Puranic symbols like Rama, Sita, Savitri, Bhagiratha and Yudhishtira, historic symbols like Asoka, Vikramaditya and Akbar, the lives of our great Rishis and saints and men of letters, are our oracles of life, a store of energy without which we would be but hollow men.....stuffed men.....headpiece filled with straw. But the future too beckons to us; the roots may penetrate to the centre of the earth, but the branches should seek out the spaces of the high heavens. We grow or we perish; yet we cannot hope to grow in a vacuum.

In the realm of matter, we must needs repeople our country with giant trees and sturdy cattle; we have to conserve and enrich the soil; we have to operate smoothly and fruitfully the *Jiwan Chakra*. In the human sphere, we have to achieve social stability based on justice, fair-play, and fraternity; we have to shed the complacency that looks down upon the labourer, and we have to learn the wisdom of rating all honest work as equal. In education and in politics, we have to link up our institutions with our social and economic life and with the categorical imperatives of our national history and racial tradition. Intolerance is the very Himalayas of obstruction to all ordered progress, and truculent impatience is the dark unfathomed ocean that lures and drowns us all. Above everything else, there is need for the infusion of the Spirit into our self-doubting, self-divided and self-tormented lives. The machine age has given us at last the atom bomb, and fear has crept into our hearts. The industrial labourer has lost his dignity and become a 'sub-man'; the intellectual has allowed himself to be seduced into the ranks of conformists and fellow-travellers; the proper shepherds of the flock are in hiding, and the megaphones and the lurid headlines alone are active. We in India—

even we who live in a "backward" country—we who have but recently gone through the splendid baptism of rebirth as a free nation, have allowed the cleanliness and the freshness to be soiled by cynicism and despair. As Shri Munshi notes sadly :

"At present we are without the inspiration of a high purpose. Bharata Mata is Hind, a country; *Vande Mataram*, a national song, if you please. Love of our culture, we are told, is not a vital but a reactionary force. In our new-found wisdom, Dayanand, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Shri Aurobindo, and Gandhiji are not torch-bearers of a divine message, but just good enough to satisfy our national vanity. We acclaim Gandhiji as the Father of the Nation, and yet we decline to live according to those standards by which he lived or to try to be an instrument of God as he aspired to be....Why has this change come over us? Because a mighty fear is upon us. We are afraid of being ourselves, of being proud of ourselves or our Motherland or her role in history."

The educational technique in vogue in our country has made us half-men and weak men, it has denied us familiarity with goodness and greatness, and it has destroyed all power of initiative, all capacity for self-culture, all taste for the creative art of life. The parched tablelands of our famished lives need the downpour of the Spirit—for not otherwise can we be redeemed and brought back to life. Faith is what we have lost,—and faith in ourselves most of all. With the return of faith will commence a session of new activity, and the mists of failure and frustration will clear once for all and the Sun will then emerge again in all his glory. From matter to Spirit is the whole arc of omnipresent Reality, even as from the individual to the whole world and all humanity and the entire universe is a single unbroken harmony and

unity. The Spirit's wideness and transcendence hold the clue to the many seeming dichotomies and divisions in the phenomenal world. Not until our education and social life, our economic and political life, our national and international politics, are grounded in the Spirit and fed by its invisible streams can we reconcile our differences or solve our problems or win the battle for survival. Shri Munshi therefore fittingly concludes with the exhortation:

"We must move out of our narrow, egoistic self to a vast foundation which reaches out to a collective consciousness of oneness with the whole of India; from India to the One World; from One World to all Existence—not in thought, not in aspiration, but by the aspiration transforming step by step the way of individual life and the life of the organism.... We must see, not in theory, not in belief, but in living and feeling, all in ourselves and all in God; 'all in Him and Him in all.' Then we shall have one India, one world, a new era, and the dawn of a full life."

Such in broad outline is the 'argument' of Shri Munshi's book. Buoyancy and earnestness, the stern logic of facts and the compelling eloquence of clear statement, wide-ranging scholarship and an integral point of view give these addresses an urgency and an importance not ordinarily associated with such seemingly random sparks from an alert mental forge. I very much wish that our young men and women will read and digest this book and live up to the integral ideal outlined in its pages. It is a book for young and old, for the cynic who should shed his cynicism and the dreamer who must turn his dreams into reality; for the obscurantist who should come out of this stifling burrow and for the 'futurist' who hangs in mid-air and must drive his roots into the earth; for Rural Reconstructionists and Educational Planners, for

Hindiwallas and Dravidasthanis, for the villager and for the city-dweller, for the wise and for the not-so-wise—it is a book which none will find superfluous, and which for many would prove an eye-opener, a path-finder, and a reliable guide to a life of honest aspiration and sure realization.

“ARAVIND”,  
KODAGANALLUR,  
TINNEVELLY DISTRICT,  
*7th June 1953.*

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

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PART I .  
*The Fundamental Values*

# I

## VIKRAMADITYA: A LIVING FLAME

### I

THE urge behind the Vikramaditya celebrations is not merely a desire to glorify the past, nor to enjoy the present. It is the upsurging of a subconscious national motive.\* In the apotheosis of this hero we seek to express unreservedly our supreme belief. In this, we stand as we truly are—heirs to immortal greatness. Our country may be in distress, but that does not frighten us. Our educational background could make of us spineless intellectuals; but we refuse to be such. In these celebrations we are alive with the passion of a living vibrant faith. We shed the chains which fetter us. We stand up as men, true to the genius of our land. And as we look back with pride upon the golden age of a departed Vikramaditya, so do we look forward to the great age of a future Vikramaditya.

Of the millions in this land the vast majority are knit together by race and tradition; by the bonds of language and literature; by the closely woven texture of our social organisation. They are compact with the unity which Vikramaditya symbolizes today. Why, of all people in the world, should we alone be apologetic or ashamed of such a motive? Vikramaditya is an impelling conception and, therefore, a living faith. It is a faith in political power, strong and omnipotent, unsubjected to foreign power, emanating from and resting on our own strength; a faith inspired and supported by the genius of our own social order, and our literary and aesthetic heritage; a faith which is founded on Dharma.

The Dharma of which Vikramaditya is the embodiment

is not a religion—not ‘Hinduism’ as we are taught to call it; not the caste system as we know it; nor unworthy communal arrogance. It is a way of living. It is a culture in its most comprehensive meaning. It is the all-embracing law of life in which are included modes of life and canons of conduct; tradition and outlook; wealth of language and literature; a theory of life and social organisation and living ideals; all of which were moulded by the genius of our race and land. The belief in the Vedas as the ultimate source of Dharma gives to our people, to whatever race they belong, a conscious unity of life and history. The mythology which surrounds it embraces the sacred legends of rivers, mountains and cities, of heroes and sages, human and divine. The social organisation as shaped by it is based on family life dominated by patriarchal tradition, it affords shelter to every needy, helpless member; and imposes, as a corollary, a strict regard for feminine virtue, so essential to preserve the purity of race and culture. This social order is not based on class war, but an inalienable interdependence of social groups; on a hierarchy arranged according to the degree of culture attained by each.

In its changeless essentials Dharma is the Law, the Word, the Mother. All conduct is to be regulated by one unchanging law based on the absolute ethical values of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, non-waste and non-possession; and all conduct is to be inspired by a faith in human endeavour as self-discipline, leading man out of his limitations to become “The Supreme” in this life.

The Word is the literary heritage for which Sanskrit stands. It is the vehicle of Dharma conveying it from age to age. This shrine of our past, is the strength of our present and the inspiration of our future.

For, its basis Dharma has the living conception of the Mother—the holy Aryavarta—the Bharata Mata—our hope

and solace in this world and the next, inspiring in us an abiding veneration for those who lived and died so that She might live, free, great and eternal.

Around Dharma, acting as its guide, upholder and protector, has been woven our conception of Vikramaditya. Let us therefore, not feel hesitant about this, our hearts' desire. We may be circumscribed, we may feel it to be but a cherished dream, but let us be honest with ourselves; dreams are a greater part of us than the words we speak or the deeds we do. We desire, nay, we yearn for a Vikramaditya; for, he represents the only condition under which we can attain our full stature, when the Motherland will be a national home of power and culture by the right of our own strength.

Vikramaditya has been a great name, cherished for centuries in India. It has been associated with romance, song and fable. It has been linked with memories of Kalidasa, one of the greatest of the world's poets. It evokes memories of the majesty which was the Gupta empire in India.

But, more than anything else, Vikramaditya is the one romantic figure who is inextricably woven into the fabric of Indian culture. In his mythical vividness he is more living than the monarchs of Indian history. His name evokes the eternity and the greatness of that vast phenomenon which is India; not the India in bondage, not the degenerate India aping foreign ways, but the India which has a soul of her own. His is the luminous figure shining out of the dim memory of a forgotten past; and he leads us on to a destiny when culture in India will be leavened by dynamic political power, when power will be inspired by moral values which are intrinsically Indian.

## II

I will not go into the vexed question of Vikramaditya's identity. I leave it to learned scholars to decide whether

he rescued Aryavarta from the barbarians two thousand years ago, or whether he rooted out the Kshatrapas fifteen hundred years ago. To me, to you, and to the whole of India, Vikramaditya is not a dead conqueror, but a living hero. Who has not heard of and revered this comrade of Kalidasa and patron of the nine literary masters? Where is the child in India, during countless years, whose imagination has not been fired by the friend of Vetal, who bore on his shoulders the elusive corpse, which talked and talked and demanded an answer? Who has not yearned for the day when that mighty ruler will once again go about in disguise in our cities to learn of and redress our grievances? Have not generations lived in the hope of seeing once more the *Paradukhabhanjan* who will live in order to relieve our misery? Of all the heroes known to our history and mythology, Vikramaditya is the only mortal whom the popular suffrage of centuries has enthroned side by side with Shri Ramachandra and Shri Krishna in the national pantheon. In him we live and he lives in us.

To us the name of Vikramaditya has always been surrounded by the same aura of fascination as is associated with that of Napoleon in Europe. Kings aspiring to greatness have coveted no higher title than his name. Many rulers like Siddharaja Jayasimha of Gujarat spent their lives imitating his exploits. Was it not the inspiration of the title of Vikramaditya borne by the last Hindu ruler of Delhi which inspired him to go forth and fight the foreigner who sought to enslave the Motherland?

What is it that makes the whole of India celebrate this national festival in this two thousandth year of Samvat Era? What is the psychological urge that has driven us to this renewed apotheosis of an unforgettable hero?

To us who are in bondage to a foreign master, Vikramaditya is not only a historic memory, nor a mere name

to be proud of. He is the symbol of Indian unity; the Chakravarti who represents the aspirations of our nation. To us he stands for two thousand years of national memories; for all the past in which we take pride, yearn for in the present and all that we look forward to in the future; for that greatness which is born of a fusion of political power, national independence, social harmony and cultural magnificence.

I invite you to look back for a moment to the glorious memories of our race from which this apotheosis of Vikramaditya springs.

At the dawn of history the foundation of the world's civilization was laid on the banks of the Sindhu and the Narmada. When other peoples were just emerging from the Stone Age we had the City-State and trade organisation, the potter's wheel and the carver's knife, artistic metallurgy and exquisite seal-cutting, baths and public buildings, geometry, star-reading, magic formulæ and writing tablets. We had the worship of the Mother and of Pasupati, Lord Shiva. With that little icon of Pasupati buried for six thousand years in the sands of the Indus Valley begins the unbroken thread of our life which at present is seen in its luxuriance at Amarnath, in Kashmir and Rameshvar, at Cape Comorin, in the million temples where today the Nandi kneels to his master, the God of Gods, Mahadeva.

We passed on the torch of civilization to Sumer; Sumer passed it on to Babylonia and Syria; from thence it was passed on to the West.

Let me turn back to India.

Life grew fuller, richer and nobler. The banks of the Saraswati were studded with the *ashramas* of Vasishta and Vishvamitra, Bhrigu and Angira, the founders of Dharma. From there radiated a culture purified by the

noble grandeur of men who lived in God. Times changed. Divodasa destroyed the fortresses of Sambara. Vishvamisra fought Vasishta, and out of a conflict of races was born a hierarchy of castes based on culture.

This wonderful social synthesis—*Varnashramadharma*—provided an interdependence of social groups, the steel frame which buttressed the social order and Dharma itself. We have been taught to blind ourselves to all that this social order has done for us. But without this order we could not have offered resistance to the insidious advance of cultural disintegration which Europe carries among those alien peoples whom she seeks to exploit and enslave.

Again the scene changes.

Parashurama, the son of a Rishi, led the Aryans to the Narmada—the first of our heroes to destroy those who threatened Dharma. Rishis followed in the wake of his conquering hosts and from Varanasi in the east to Bhrukucaccha in the south. Vedic *mantras* of eternal beauty were chanted. Out of this conflict associated with the name of Parashurama was born an age of power and culture which transmutes alien people into members of an integrated society.

The scene again changes.

The tradition of the all-India Chakravarti Bharat began with the son of Dushyanta, the grandson of Vishvamisra, the Emperor who has given his name to the land, Bharatavarsha. At Hastinapura—at Asandivat to be accurate—the Empire of Kuru Panchalas was founded, which slowly spread from Takshashila near Peshawar to the frontiers of Bengal. There arose in our midst two mighty men, worshipped as very gods descended upon earth. One was Vyas, the first among the prophets to teach Dharma. The second was Shri Krishna, the lover, the



statesman, the warrior, to whom India offers its united homage as the majestic representative of India's power of which Dharma is the source. He was born so that the enemies of Dharma might be uprooted. He was born so that Dharma could be re-established. And, again, on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, the kings ruling over India north of the Krishna met. In that mighty conflict in which Shri Krishna supported Dharma, an all-India consciousness was evolved.

Around the conception of the Chakravarti were woven two great ideas. The Chakravarti was the suzerain of India, and also the upholder of Dharma. The concept of a conquering hero of the Aryans was thus converted into the idea of an all-India Emperor upholding Arya Dharma.

Jarasandha, the Asura of Magadha, was vanquished by Shri Krishna; his country was absorbed in Aryavarta. But vanquished Magadha conquered her conquerors. The Sisunagas (c. 700 B.C.) were the next Chakravartis of India. The Buddha contributed not a little to the idea of an all-controlling personality representing Dharma, though his influence, unlike Krishna's, was divorced from political power. Imperial power was forged on a country-wide scale when Chandragupta Maurya (B.C. 324-300), the Chakravarti, and Kautilya, the architect of a mighty political fabric, combined to implement the conception that India, united in culture, could also be unified in politics. But when Chandragupta's grandson Asoka came to the throne of Pataliputra, India's dream was realised. The Chakra of power and the Chakra of Dharma were wielded by a single hand. This dream, so wonderfully realised, thenceforth became one of the fundamental ideas of our ancient culture. In the national mind, all-India political power came to be indissolubly wedded to Dharma as the aim and end of corporate life. The mind became ready to

receive the seed of the Vikramaditya idea.

The glorious Empire of Magadha, which Sisunaga founded, continued till 79 B.C., giving India unity of social organisation and cultural outlook. But the power of Magadha declined. The Barbarians—the Bactrio-Greeks, the Parthians, the Yueh-chi's—broke into India. Then came this mighty Vikramaditya. No details of his exploits have come down to us, except that he drove out, repressed and absorbed the Barbarians—a mighty feat which has come to be written in the national mind in letters of undying fire.

Parashurama was divine; he destroyed the enemies of Dharma, but was too fierce to be loved. Shri Krishna was divine, too; he stood for Dharma; but he wore no crown. Asoka upheld Dharma but inherited an empire already rendered safe. But the appeal of Vikramaditya was greater still, for he was human. He drove out the Barbarians; he founded a political power of strength; he inspired literature and art; he protected the Dharma; above all, he looked after the needy and the distressed. He was a wonderful embodiment of the shining memories of Parashurama and Shri Krishna, of the Buddha and Asoka; infinitely nearer to us because of his more human and, therefore, more endearing qualities. Vikramaditya henceforward became the beloved of the nation.

The Empire of the Satavahanas succeeded the Empire of Magadha. The centre of Aryavarta, on account of barbaric encroachment was moved to the banks of the Godavari. From Paithan on the Godavari, which was then India's capital, the Satavahanas waged a holy war of Dharma. Satakarni, the founder of the line, is also considered to be the original Vikramaditya; be that as it may, he had the "Vikram" touch.

Gautamiputra Satakarni (c. A.D. 106-130), like a

second Parashurama, destroyed the Sakas, Yavanas, Pahlavas and the Kshatriyas. He was the flaming sword of Arya Dharma. His decisive victories gave renewed energy to that characteristic power of our culture to absorb alien peoples and their cultures. The Barbarians who opposed Dharma soon became its ardent followers. Rudradaman (A.D. 130-150), the son of the foreigner Cashtan, became an upholder of Dharma, while the Kushana conqueror Kanishka was another, a devout Buddhist, and a most powerful instrument in the spreading of Mahayana Buddhism in Asia. His grandson, Vasudeva, (c. 150-175) was a saiva, and a patron of Indian culture.

The author of *Matsya Purana*, writing perhaps at Nasik, was an unhappy man. The kings in the north were "contemptible and irascible". But he saw the rise of Dharma in Magadha. Chandragupta I established in 320 A.D. the Empire of the Guptas. His son, Samudragupta (A.D. 330-380), one of the most brilliant conquerors in history, subdued most of the kings in the country in a whirlwind campaign; restored Dharma in Aryavarta; performed an Asvamedha; and assumed the title of Dhar-maditya. His younger son Chandragupta Vikramaditya (A.D. 380-415), the original Vikramaditya according to one view, annexed Western India, and transferred the capital to Ujjayini; he was a friend of the great Kalidasa. India reached its highest glory under him. His son and grandson (A.D. 415-467) maintained the empire and upheld the Dharma.

The age of the Imperial Guptas is reckoned the Golden Age of India. Life and culture, science and letters flourished as never before. The administrative system—which practically continued till the British conquered India—became a part of life's structure. *Smritis* became the common law; Bhagwat Dharma, a national church;

the *Puranas*, the universal instrument of education.

Five generations of emperors in one family became defenders of the faith, of these the greatest was Vikramaditya. Among them Vikramaditya was the symbol of India, free and strong, the homeland of culture and of righteousness.

The invasion of the Hunas began about A.D. 475. In c. A.D. 500 Tormana occupied Malva. But by A.D. 533 a mighty warrior, Yasodharman, had arisen in Malva. He rallied the national forces of Aryavarta and broke the Hunas. This great Yasodharman, liberator of the land, is sometimes identified with Vikramaditya.

In c. A.D. 550 Isanavarman, the Mukhari, founded the power of Kanauja, which was soon to be the capital of Aryavarta. This passed out of his son's hands into those of Shri Harsha the Pushpabhuti, who came to the throne of Imperial Kanauja in A.D. 606 and became the Emperor of Uttarapatha (North). The Deccan carried on the imperial tradition of Satavahanas, and Pulakesi, the Chalukya of Vatapi, rightfully came to be called the "Emperor of Dakshinapatha". Shri Harsha was a true successor of the Imperial Guptas. Tolerant, learned, imbued with noble ideals and of unblemished character, he raised the empire to great heights of power and culture.

He died in A.D. 647 and political confusion followed. But by A.D. 700 Gurjaradesa had come into great prominence. Its warrior clans, under the leadership of the Pratiharas, had been forging ahead since A.D. 550.

In c. A.D. 735 the Arabs invaded India, possibly through Kacch and Kathiawar. Nagabhata of the Pratihara dynasty possibly ruling at Srimala, rose in mighty defiance, drove back the invader, and established himself at Ujjayini. He claims descent from Lakshmana, the brother of Shri Ramachandra, and has been compared with

Narayana rising from the primeval waters. His epic resistance sent back the Arabs, sadder and wiser. His descendants grew in power, waged wars against the Rashtrakutas of Karnataka and the Palas of Bengal, and ultimately captured the imperial capital, Kanauja. Nagabhata II (A.D. 800-834) became the greatest emperor in the India of his day.

Nagabhata's grandson Mihira Bhoja, whose records are still being pieced together, was one of the greatest kings of all time and revived the memories of Vikramaditya. From A.D. 836-888 he ruled the Empire of Gurjaradesa; he recaptured Sindh and reconverted the people from Islam; he supported the Brahmana Shaji king of Kabul in his fight against Islamic aggression; he was steadfast in his resistance to Islamic aggression; and held in abeyance the Rashtrakutas in the south. His sway extended from the Punjab to East Bengal. He claimed to be an Ikshvaku; was the defender of Dharma; as the rival of Shri Rama, he was reckoned not a mortal but a god. The Arab travellers attested to the might of this B'urah of Juzr, the Adivaraha of Gurjara. They described him as their bitterest enemy. He was, in fact and in spirit, "The Maharajadhiraja of Aryavarta," the title accorded to his son Mahipala (A.D. 914-96) by the poet Rajasekhara.

Our historians have still to tell us about this period. For about 200 years India saw the revival of its best traditions. It was the age of Sankara and Vachaspathimisra; of Medhatithi and Devala; of Magha and Rajasekhara.

When Sabaktagin and his son Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, one of the greatest military geniuses in history, invaded India, they were resisted by the Brahmana Sahi kings of Afghanistan and the Punjab, the father Jayapala, the son Anandapala and grandson, Trilocanapala. These were the guardians of India's gates against foreign aggres-

sion. In a gesture of sublime dedication they sacrificed themselves and their people to save their honour, their Dharma and their Motherland. These Vikramadityas of frustrated destiny "who were never slow in doing what was good and right" hoisted the proud banner of their ideals over a humiliated land. Only after 22 years could Mahmud subjugate the Punjab. Then he sacked Kanauja in A.D. 1022 and destroyed the magnificence which emperors from Shri Harsha to Mihira Bhoja had built up.

The shadow emperor—a contemptible relic of the *Raghukula-bhu-Chakravartis*, the world's suzerain of the divine line of Ikshvakus—accepted the vassalage of the Turkish raider, and was slain by the proud Vidyadhara Candella (c. A.D. 1009-1050), his vassal, for the crime of selling his honour to save his skin.

In the meantime, Bhoja the Magnificent (A.D. 1010-1054), the descendant of one of the Parmar hierarchs of Gurjaradesa, had waxed into a great ruler. And when in A.D. 1024 Mahmud marched on Gujarata, Bhoja led a confederate army, trapped the Sultan in Kathiawar and forced him into a disastrous retreat through the burning desert of Kaccha. Between A.D. 1020 and 1044 Bhoja was the greatest Emperor in the land, with power and magnificence, so reminiscent of the great hero that his memories and associations have been inextricably mixed up with Vikramaditya himself. A poet, a patron of learning, a builder of great imagination, a conqueror and a philosopher, he was one of the greatest of those who were ever called to the throne. Throughout life he had as his associates Rajendra and Rajaraja Cola, two great emperors of Tanjore, whose sway extended over the whole of the country south of the Krishna including the East Coast, Ceylon, Java and Sumatra.

This period came to an end when Mahomed of Ghura

in A.D. 1175 began his plundering raids against India. Indian rulers had so far waged war according to the well regulated canons of Dharma. Shrines, women and children, Brahmans and cows, even towns and villages, had always been immune from war-like attention. An enemy was not killed except in battle; and his women and children were as sacrosanct as one's own. The Central Asian raiders, anxious to plunder and destroy, knew no such limitations. They simply flung themselves, on their victims thirsty for blood and booty. The Indian rulers were no match for such antagonists; they were not lacking in strength, for of that they had plenty, but they were tempered by the fine feeling engendered by their culture.

While Mahmud of Ghazni was ruthlessly destroying Anandapala and his people, he was faced by a danger on the Central Asian front of his empire. Anandapala, according to Alberuni, sent him a message : "You are in difficulties, therefore, I will not fight you. I will send 5,000 men to your aid. Go and defeat Ilak Khan. When you come back, we shall fight." Mahmud declared a truce; accepted the 5,000 men, defeated Ilak Khan; returned and destroyed Anandapala. What a sublime sense of fair-play! But how quixotic against such a ruthless foe! Here is yet another instance. From A.D. 1193 Alibak and his successors destroyed holy places. Thousands of shrines were desecrated. Mosques rose in their stead. In A.D. 1264 the Vaghela king of Patan, issued a grant to a mosque in Prabhasa Patan, with the blessings of the religious head of the shrine of Somnath!

At this time we had no knowledge of the world outside India. We failed to heed, what Medhatithi had written in the time of Mihira Bhoja—"Never respect the difficulties of the enemy." We forgot the advice of Shri Krishna that such faint-hearted considerations were 'un-Aryan, and a

bar to heaven, disgraceful.' We went under, because we were too humane.

From A.D. 1200 there began a period of stern resistance. The Sultanate of Delhi was a raiding camp, wherefrom ambitious Turkish and Afghan military leaders swept over a civilized country with the help of trans-frontier mercenaries in search of loot, regardless of humanity. The court chronicles of the Sultanate naturally do not present the other side of the picture. It was a picture of resistance offered day after day to these freebooters : of men who flung away life to preserve their freedom; of women who courted fire to escape dishonour; of children whose bodies choked wells that they might escape slavery. This vast movement segregated the Muslim chiefs into the narrowest bounds of political action; stiffened bonds and hardened customs to save the social organisation; and gave birth to cultural agencies like the Bhakti school in order to preserve Dharma.

Many were the Vikramadityas of frustrated destiny who fought and died in a thousand ways so that Dharma might live. Their epic is still to be written. Of them all, the first was the brilliant and impetuous Prithviraja; the type and model of all later resisters. The first centre of resistance was Ranthambhor which, year after year, rose in defiance till it was wiped out. The noblest was Chitore, which again and again sent its young men to die so that Dharma might live. The last great resister of the period was Hemu Vikramaditya who, in A.D. 1556, fought Behramkhan to his last breath.

This titanic resistance resulted in blunting the fury of aggression, and creating a synthesis. Hindus and Muslims were reconciled to each other. Slowly, religious differences ceased to count; tolerance and mutual adjustments followed. Akbar, the real founder of the Moghul



Empire, which was essentially Indian, was himself a synthesis. A generous man, a tolerant ruler, a far-sighted statesman, an unrivalled warrior and a great empire-builder, he reared a super-structure on the united strength of Hindus and Muslims. He created a new India, an India of toleration and mutual understanding. He gave the country the peace it wanted. The generous-hearted Indians adopted him as their own : a kind of Vikramaditya by adoption.

Against Akbar stood the lone figure of Pratap, the proud heir to Chitore's undying glory, refusing to bend his knee to one whom he called the "Turk". He was built of the stuff of which the heroes of unattainable glory are made. He was an ideal in flesh and blood. He died, but became an immortal; a Vikramaditya of frustrated destiny, stronger than death itself.

But Aurangazeb undermined the synthetic empire. Shivaji in the south and the Sikh Guru in the north, the standard-bearers of Dharma, rose in revolt. The resistance which had been blunted by the broad statesmanship of Akbar now gained a new edge; and when Aurangazeb died the Moghul Empire was dissolved in A.D. 1707. On the ruins of that empire rose the Empire of Maharashtra. Shivaji had revived the spirit of Vikramaditya.

In the meantime, the Europeans came, to trade by guile but remained to rule by force. They hired Indian mercenaries; bribed or pampered effete and selfish rulers. Against this foreign penetration, many were the heroes who battled fiercely in defence of their land. But they failed; the imperial power of Poona, before it could consolidate itself, dissolved under the pressure of internal discords at Kirkee in 1818, and the last of the Indian empires collapsed. Foreigners came to dominate the whole land. When the last armed attempt to regain

independence met with failure in 1857, the country lay prostrate before its foreign conquerors.

We were far in advance of the world, physically, morally, mentally; but we lacked the art of organised destruction.

We were vanquished. We were disarmed. Our proud traditions of heroism were broken, obliterated. We now bear the badge of slavery in the land of our birth. Vikramaditya alone has remained with us, the lodestar of our desires—Vikramaditya, the quintessence of the power, the culture and the freedom which are ours by right.

## CREATIVE EDUCATION

I AM indebted to my friend, His Excellency, the Chancellor\*, and the Vice-Chancellor for giving me the honour of delivering the convocation address for this year; for, this has been a fateful year. This year saw our struggle for independence ended. We have also seen the land in awful torment, rent in twain, millions of our countrymen uprooted from their soil, and numberless innocents massacred. We have seen a mighty tragedy unfolded before us the like of which the world witnessed only at Calvary, nineteen hundred and fortyseven years ago. Now we see before us the gathering over Europe of war clouds which threaten the very existence of the human race. Much as I would wish to speak of purely academic themes, on this occasion, the situation vibrates with insistent issues such as cannot be ignored.

An age has closed and another has opened. In this, Job Charnok's city, where Warren Hastings first wove the web of our slavery you Sir, now preside, the last of its Governors under the British Crown, you who were one of the sturdy heroes of our battle for freedom.

Our struggle has been unique in the annals of the world. The British came, found us disorganised, and bought our soul by a promise of enforced peace. In search of a new dignity, we mimicked foreign ways and mouthed strange accents. We forgot our ancient dignity. Only the tremendous vitality of our culture saved us.

Ram Mohan Roy awoke to a new light which he saw with undimmed eyes; it was the quenchless flame of the Upanishads. Dayanand, almost in the hour of the national disaster of 1857, voiced the urge for a new integration of

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\* Shri C. Rajgopalachariar.

our culture, going back to the Vedas, our Rock of Ages. Ramakrishna, the noblest man of modern times, gave new validity to the heritage of the Gita. How can I, a novelist, forget the father of India's literary renaissance who, jointly with Alexandre Dumas, fanned my little creative spark into flame—Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya? Like a second Bhagiratha he brought down to earth our other-worldly, religious devotion in order to fertilise secular efforts. Vivekananda gave us back our lost dignity and our departed faith in our heritage. Surendranath, the trumpet-voiced, roused us to the vigour of a militant nationalism. When, with Japan's victory over Russia, Asia awoke to a new strength, Shri Aurobindo, with a prophet's vision, transmuted Indian culture into a neo-nationalism which saw the Mother in the Motherland. Then came Gandhiji, the architect of the steady hand and the unerring eye, and built the fortress of our freedom which resisted for over a quarter of a century the onslaughts of the mightiest empire in world's history. We won; we were free; we stepped into a new life.

Your Chancellor with his uncanny perspicacity realized—much to my chagrin, I confess—that the unity of India was unattainable in the context of a non-violent struggle, and as a result, India emerged compact, though truncated. Panditji, with the flaming eye of idealism, sought democracy; and India is today the greatest democracy in the world. Sardar Patel, the firmly-planted pillar of our security, stood for strength; and India has been integrating fast,—so fast indeed, that the map of India, with each new morning paper, looks like the fantastic dream of a none too sober student of geography!

India today is a free and sovereign nation; naturally, therefore, it faces the baffling problems which sudden independence brings in its wake. Internally, we find

around us the symptoms of political immaturity; administrative inexperience; the hunt for new-found power; a contempt for correct political behaviour; the distrust of tried leaders; a sense of irresponsibility; self-righteous dogmatism which, though plunged in power politics, thinks — and what is worse, acts—in terms of school room ethics; above all, the absence of an exuberant will to work.

For a nation learning to take the first stride in its independent career, conditions could not be worse. The war has left us terrible legacies: rising spirals of inflation; deficiencies in production; inadequacy of transport systems; the race for international alignments; and as if these were not enough, the prospect of another war 'to end all wars'.

On the other hand, both in India and Pakistan we have lost—I hope only temporarily—that spiritual maturity which we as a people had acquired by slow effort throughout the centuries. I use the word 'spiritual', not in its other-worldly sense, but implying the domination of the spirit over the things 'of the earth, earthy'. We rose by the noble examples of our sages, i.e., *satsanga* to noble conduct, i.e. *sadāchāra*; from noble conduct to noble principles, i.e., *satya*; from noble principles to absolute nobility which lies in self-realisation, i.e. *samsiddhi*, in the conquest of attachment, wrath and fear, in seeing Me in all and all in Me. '*Mām pashyati sarvatra mayi sarvam cha pashyati*'. But we inverted the Platonic concept of progress. We descended from ugly forms to ugly conduct; from ugly conduct to ugly principles, till we finally arrived at the absolute ugliness—the assassination of the one man to whom we owe not only all that we have but a consciousness of all that we were. I refuse to sit in moral judgment over those who fell from grace; I know that they had to face grave provocation; my blood boiled even at the harrowing tales of barbarism. But courage, restraint and

dignity make for culture only when they are maintained in face of grave provocation. If there were no provocation, these qualities would cease to be commendable.

These ills—adverse conditions, political immaturity and spiritual lapses—can be cured only if our universities rise to the occasion. They are no longer factories for turning out lawyers and officers to support the British rule; nor are they even middlemen for distributing the doubtful gift of Western culture. They can no more continue to be the agencies for maintaining the mechanical and commercial system of holding examinations. They have to be the seats of Indian culture.

Our universities are our only hope in the arduous task of building up the economic, intellectual and spiritual life of our nation. This age is invariably called the age of the common man, the age of mass uplift, the age of classless society, the age of every sweeping generalisation which modern mind can invent. But in truth it is an age—like every other age—when the finest minds are needed to add to the dynamic strength of the country. For, only these minds, when trained by our universities to the highest efficiency, can provide the superior intelligence, industry and force of character which will give to India the leadership of the world in action and thought. It will be catastrophic indeed if we sacrifice intensity to expansion, universities to elementary schools; the uncommon mind to the common; for, if the uncommon mind is allowed to run to waste the common man will never be raised.

A new life, it is said, postulates a new education. The aim of our university education must therefore be co-extensive with the new and full life which now is ours. Nay, education, being an art, must have for its subject, our whole present-day life, our political, social, economic and spiritual well-being. To attain this objective, the

university must be like the *āshrama* of old. In such a seat of culture, education was a spiritual endeavour where the teacher sat surrounded by his pupils, imparting not merely knowledge but courage, restraint and dignity, not by precept but by example; where the student lived not in order to have his presence marked, nor to secure a pass, nor to go on strike and enjoy an ill-deserved holiday, but to learn the art of shaping his own life, the art of moulding himself by humility, *pranipata*; by developing a spirit of enquiry, *pariprashna*; by service, *seva*.

Kalidasa, in *Shakuntala*, has given us a picture of an *āshrama*, a shrine of living culture with its marvellous surroundings, its well-mannered pupils, its tone and atmosphere full of peace; but we see its soul only when Kanva comes, that beautiful old man who, as it were, envelops his pupils, the deer, the bees and the flowers with an all-embracing humanity. The very presence of such a Kanva in our universities would be to the student like Plato, as described by Newman, "a stay for his mind to rest, or a burning thought in his heart, a bond of union with men like himself, ever after".

Not only the relation between the teacher and the pupil but also the quality of our university education must change. University education, all the world over, has deteriorated, partly due to electivism, partly due to a general state of disequilibrium, or rather a spiritual hypnosis in men which speedy industrialisation and rationalism of life has induced.

Electivism connotes that all subjects have an equal educational value, and that experimental and social sciences have the same value as classical and historical studies. This outlook is the offspring of Westernism, the way of life evolved by materialistic tendencies which have made a fetish of experimental science.

If there is one factor more than any other which has forced a moral crisis on the modern world, it is that westernised education, which has built up the militant organisation of materialism. Its products find joy of life only in low desires and sensationalism. The sanctity of the home has no appeal for them, for easy and swift divorce is to them an emblem of liberty. They deride self-discipline. They scorn moral values. They admit of nothing higher than that knowledge that subserves immediate practical ends. Naturally, in a world, wherein they are the *elite*, purges, mass murders, Belsen horrors, and the wicked displacement of men, women and children by millions appear normal. Where they do not destroy, they propose to establish soulless regimentation. We can have nothing to do with such an outlook. India wants to be a democracy and develop democratic virtues, which our young men will acquire if our universities, at an early collegiate stage, insist on an intensive study of subjects of purely cultural interest thus making the student responsive to higher values.

At the same time our national education must stimulate national productivity. In an international society which leaves much to be desired the moral plane, scientific studies and technical skill are essential for national survival. But in Bacon's words, "I cannot call upon men to sell their books and build furnaces, quitting and forsaking Minerva and the Muses and relying upon Vulcan."

India is passing from the organic society of the past, created by the unconscious forces of tradition; we are now evolving, as in Europe, a consciously organised society in which our higher aspirations have to fight against the deadly power of the machine which cuts into every aspect of life. We can only escape the fate of Europe if we—now free to go our own characteristic way—evolve a new education shaped by our own cultural traditions, which I have



ventured to name 'creative education' in my book *Creative Art of Life*. Such an education in the earlier stages should be formative; such as would teach the student permanent values in life, not merely arm him with effective skill; make him a useful instrument and yet a man of culture. His interests need not be narrow; nor need he be trained to look at life from the angle of his special subject; he must be equipped for a complete life. Indian traditions and outlook favour such an education; but for which the magnificence, continuity and vitality of our culture would not have been possible.

Such a formative education leads the student to shape himself. It is a process of creative self-sculpture; an art whereby life energy is so shaped and developed that with every effort the artist attains a higher stage of self-fulfilment. On the other hand, the present education leaves the student feeling inadequate, incomplete and unhappy; it is anything but creative. To be creative, education must give self-fulfilment which implies a sense of completeness freedom and growing perfection; a capacity which brings love and achievement in greater measure; a strength which rises superior to human weakness; and an increasingly true perspective of the unity and goal of life.

At all times to acquire the art of self culture is difficult for an aspiring learner who is a fresh young man of unformed habits. In the present age he is generally denied the atmosphere of a home where parents practise idealism and teach consecration. The material with which he has to work is his own individual nature of which he has little or no knowledge. Any system of education which takes into account these difficulties must provide three essential conditions. It must first train the student in precision, analysis, concentration and responsiveness to noble impulses; secondly, train him to co-ordi-

nate his faculties for concentrated work ; and, lastly, teach him to express himself through the inspiration of those masters in the art of self-sculpture, who have moulded India's culture. These conditions can only be satisfied if the ground is prepared by a study of the life-stories of our national heroes; of the history and culture of our country in the light of world progress; and of those literary master-pieces which India has given to the world, the *Mahābhārata* the *Ramayana*, *Shakuntala*, the *Bhagavata* and the *Bhagavad Gita*.

It must be realised that a student is a composite product of his individual talents and aptitudes; his heredity and environment; the associations which spring from his relations to his society and his country; the imponderable influences of the soil, the sights sounds and habits of his native land, and, above all, of the culture into which he is born. These factors may not all be apparent in the student ; but nevertheless they constitute his sub-conscious self. Creative education thus takes its stand on the fact that nothing alien to the individual nature of a student can be taught without denying self-fulfilment. The first step, therefore, in such an education is to teach the student to study, express and live up to the permanent values of his native culture.

Indian culture is not the same thing as the material equipment of life in India, which is civilization. Cultural values are permanent; they are an end in themselves. Civilization is the garb of life; only a means to lead a comfortable life. We are superior to Shri Ramachandra in civilization. We travel in aeroplanes; he travelled in canoes or on foot. But in absolute values, in pursuit of truth, in idealism, in character, in the beauty of human relations, he would be a bold man indeed who can say that he is superior to Shri Ramachandra.

Each nation has its distinctive culture which forms the source of its strength. Our culture is an organic growth, native to our soil, our history and the central idea round which our national life has revolved for generations. Many educated Indians once tried to ape British dress, manners and habits; some of them still do; but they failed in their attempt to force an alien culture upon themselves or others. Only when they sought self-fulfilment by living up to the values of Indian culture did they become true to themselves and succeed in giving strength to the group-life.

Shri Aurobindo spent his growing years in England imbibing the best in Westernism. But soon Indian culture asserted itself. He gave up foreign dress and ways of living. He studied Indian languages and literature. And it was when he tried to perfect himself in the peculiarly Indian art of creative life that he became a great apostle of modern Indian nationalism, a great thinker, and a yogi.

Gandhiji was educated for the Bar in England. But his sub-conscious self declined to accept Westernism. He had to recapture the fundamentals of Indian culture for himself before he became the architect of resurgent India, challenged Westernism, and stood out as a supreme artist of creative life-energy.

Our new education, therefore, must follow the lines of our culture. It must affirm the Man, his inner self, and his ultimate destiny as much as his historical and social responsibility. Of such an education there should be two basic principles:

First, each individual has an individual nature; his prime law must be to express that nature through those thoughts, words and deeds which are compact and intrinsically his own. And his highest destiny should be his readiness to die in order to fulfil the law of his being.

Second, education, to be truly creative, must make the

student more and more himself and, teach him to realise his potentialities to the fullest and thus to fulfil himself. In this way his personality will grow from strength to strength, producing the highest results through his relation to life.

It is an error to suppose that a man is truly educated because he is a good scientist or literary man though a bad husband; because he is a capable lawyer though a bad citizen; because he is a good patriot though a moral wreck. Human life is one. It cannot be divided into compartments. And no one can evade his responsibility to life as a whole by claiming that he is devoted to a part of it.

Our universities will fulfil themselves if they take into account not only the complete growth of the student but the sum total of his relations. Life-energy is one torrent, and its volume and intensity can be increased only by treating the whole of it.

Thank you Sir, once again. Now I have only to give one message for the young men : May your path be happy—*shivaste panthanas santu.*

### III

#### THE CULTURE-CRISIS IN INDIA

I FEEL both touched and honoured that your Senate should give me the privilege of delivering the Convocation Address this year. To be in Kashi is to be in the eternal heart of India. Here, Time stands still; here, for centuries young men hungering for knowledge have come to sit at the feet of masters. This occasion has a double attraction for me. This University is the creation of the noblest of our modern Rishis, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, whose memory has, for me, a deep personal association. Moreover, if I may betray a secret, at the instance of my friend the Vice-Chancellor and others, Gandhiji once tried to tempt me to come and stay in your midst. However, my life was rooted in other soils, and the cloistered seclusion of a university was not destined for me.

When your Vice-Chancellor invited me to deliver this address I found it a little difficult to accept the invitation. I am not fond of giving advice to young people who, in their youthful wisdom, seem to have no need of it. Nor have I any pretensions to the erudition befitting this occasion. I have therefore decided to speak on the culture-crisis in India—a subject which is oppressing me at the moment.

Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to be amongst university students. In your midst, I forget the weight of sixty odd years and the absorbing cares of a many-sided life.

However, I am not sorry to have lived the last fifty years; to have seen India attain freedom and find a new cultural reintegration opening out a new era of life before us. Since August 15, 1947, India, never integrated as now, has been governed for the first time by the best amongst us. She commands a prestige in international life which she

had hitherto held only in the Classical Age of the Guptas. We are free now to be true to our genius where we can, and to absorb alien influences only where we must. You, students of our universities, are heirs to the glorious culture of our race with its fundamentals woven into our social traditions and intellectual and aesthetic outlook. You will be the architects of our tomorrow.

Our culture, however, is facing a new crisis. India, like other modern countries, is passing through a phase of urbanised and industrial civilisation in which a dangerous measure of regimentation of life has become inevitable. During the last fifty years the United States has risen to world influence; Russia under Soviet Communism has developed a power, sinister in its capacity to create chaos; Western Europe including England has declined as a world influence; Asia, Africa and Latin America are moving towards political self-determination and independence. The struggle for existence has become acute. Traditional influences are being looked down upon and resisted. Science marches on, as it should; but religion and classics, the great steadying factors in human life, are neglected. Naturally, new and explosive ideas are rampant all over the world, and it would be suicidal to ignore them. The old life is threatened by the new freedom which each man claims; by the emergence of woman as an independent member of society; by the possible turmoil into which a democracy based on adult franchise may throw us; and by totalitarianism which threatens all free life with soulless regimentation. All these factors have been casting the world including India into a different mould. We, particularly those of us who are working in the universities, the crucibles of culture—have to take up this challenge and meet the culture-crisis facing us.

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Our universities cannot shirk their responsibility. We have neglected education in moral and social values. It is time that we studied these in our academies and gave them a purposeful shape. Now, in the light of the fundamental values which have made Indian culture great and undying, we must recapture this pristine strength for the weakening fabric of our social life.

The social values fundamental to our culture, the patriarchate family, the sacredness of the marriage tie merging the wife in the husband, and *chaturvarnya*, the fourfold order of society—gave us invulnerability in the old world. The new woman has arisen; she claims freedom and equality; she would share with man the life of the family in full partnership. I will not refer to the Westernised woman; she is a hothouse flower of ephemeral colour; she does not count in the long run. Under Western influence the sanctity with which our culture surrounded marital relations is disappearing; society in some sections is being vulgarised by farmyard morals which stalk in the garb of free love.

I want you, my young friends, not to lose sight of the fact that the stability of family life, and also of society, depends upon the oneness of husband and wife in their lifelong comradeship, confidence and interdependence. Why should there not spring from marriage a deep, conscious unity of purpose and ideas, and something much more, an identity of life and spirit, which in some of my works I have called the *avibhakta atma*—‘undivided soul’? Marriage must be sublimated into a thing of lasting beauty, if future India is to retain its firm foundation. The new woman should be free. She should also learn to make marriage not only a success but a source of joy and harmony.

Under modern conditions *chaturvarnya* has lost its

vigour and meaning. Heredity cannot be ignored, but it can no longer bar the progress of a man. Every man and woman in the world to come will have to be given equality of opportunity. We can neither ignore democratic institutions nor do without them. But if national life is to endure, we have to build our social structure on a fresh pattern of resilient strength.

There is a mad clamour for rights without duties. Workers want the right to strike; they disown the duty to produce. Politicians claim the right to govern; they equally claim to be indifferent to popular approbation which selfless service alone brings. Students love to assert the right to strike, which in their case means the right to stay away from studies. In my college at Bombay they once claimed even the right to choose the principal. On the discipline and sense of duty of university students depends the future of the country. How will the country survive if it catches the infection of trade unionism and clamours for the right to play truant at will? Stern discipline should be the privilege of the next generation.

If the old foundations of the family and of *chaturvarnya* weaken, with what shall we make them firm for our age? There can be only one answer. By strengthening our Nation State. Our nationalism has secured us freedom. We of the passing generation have given you its new constitution. It is for you now to give it stability. It is not an easy task. Our nationalism is not yet impregnable. Our new State suffers from inexperience and administrative inefficiency. A serious economic crisis is staring us in the face. We have not yet received that great gift of the gods—friendly neighbours. Corruption has entered deep into our body politic. Religious rivalries, narrow provincialism and linguistic division spell disruption. The cancerous growth of a pseudo-internationalism,



which draws its inspiration from Soviet Communism, has been attempting to undermine our strength. You, young friends, have to fight these foes wherever and in whatever form you come across them. When we outgrow the mania for revolutionary slogans, impose on ourselves discipline of body and mind, and turn to hard and patient toil, we shall be able to give stability to our infant State, harvest the gains of our independence, and give our culture time to reintegrate itself.

Our new State must, therefore, take the place of the former *chaturvarnya* in which the king was *dharmagopta*, the protector of the *dharma*. We are in a secular state and have accepted the fundamental law of human rights as a basic value towards which the democratic world is moving. But if human rights are to become a reality for everyone, we need not only the goodwill of governments, but the active encouragement and determined co-operation of the teachers and the students in universities. How many professors and students in our colleges have studied the constitutional guarantee of fundamental rights embodied in our Draft Constitution and the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights which are the supreme expressions of the will for peace and justice? How many are prepared to fight for these rights? Recent events show that we, in power, easily develop a ruler-complex inconsistent with democratic ideals. Nor is our public life so seasoned as to withstand a breach of this fundamental law on the part of those in power. Political studies in the universities must, therefore, set the pace for controlling such tendencies.

We have to arm ourselves, with anxious care, against the subtle propaganda which deludes mankind today. Even our professors are often misled into believing that a "People's War" is a fight for democracy; that a "People's

Age'' is an era when the common man achieves dignity; that exploiting every tension in the country to create chaos will bring in a glorious 'revolutionary' era. The sharp cleavage of outlook between ordered evolution and planned chaos must first be investigated in our universities. Where the dignity of man is not accepted, where there is an attempt to regiment life, where spontaneous popular movements are made to run in indicated grooves, there is not democracy, neither is there culture nor godliness but only the negation of all three.

One of the fundamental values of our culture has been boundless intellectual audacity, which was smothered during the Age of Resistance (A. D. 1000 to 1658). Thought and scholarship, however, during the period of Modern Renaissance (A.D. 1658 to 1947) awakened to new energy and power. The wings of higher intellectual speculation, have yet to gather strength, however. The tragic fact is that in many quarters which ought to know better, even higher education is considered a luxury. I know it is a passing phase; but, if in our universities we do not realise the danger underlying such an outlook, we are doomed.

Young men in our universities are rightly developing a thirst for technological careers. In the field of science, however, we are behind the advanced nations of the world. Our country, unfortunately, lacks both equipment and talent for higher research. Our population is increasing; our food supply is tragically short; our knowledge of technology is rudimentary. Science, therefore, is not for us a luxury but a matter of life and death.

Recently I read somewhere that the modern man is an 'economic' man. But education would fail ignominiously in its objective, if it manufactured only a robot and called him an economic man, accenting the adjective 'econo-

mic' and forgetting the substantive 'man'. A university cannot afford to ignore the cultural aspects of education, whatever studies it specialises in. Science is a means, not an end, whereas culture is an end in itself. Even though you may ultimately become a scientist, a doctor, or an engineer, you must, while in college, absorb fundamental values which will make you a man of culture. An engineer has not merely to build bridges; he has to be a devoted husband, a kind father, a friendly neighbour, a dutiful citizen, and a man true to himself. He will have trials and tribulations; his heart will fail him at times; he will then need the strength which true culture alone at times can give.

Of all the equipment that you can hope to acquire here, nothing will be more useful than the study of Sanskrit. If you cannot read it, read the translations in English or Hindi or in any other language that you know. It will make you a member of the great spiritual community to which the greatest men of our race belonged, and give you a capacity for universal understanding. A lifelong companionship with the *Mahabharata*, will give you, if nothing more, an interesting friend who will never fail you; it will lend you fresh vitality and strength; it will teach the fundamental values without which life, even in modern times, and however successful, is empty of all meaning. Without them there would have been no Ram Mohan Roy, no Ramakrishna Paramahansa, no Malaviyaji, no Tilak and no Gandhiji. Without them, we would not have existed.

To combine modern knowledge with ancient wisdom, to explore fresh fields of scholarship by research, and to inspire young men with a boundless love of knowledge, is the privilege and ought to be the aim of every university. Such tastes can only be imparted by the university

teacher. But I miss the Brahmanical spirit in the average professor and deplore it more than anyone else. It is, I realize, difficult for a teacher to keep this aim before him. I know that he is low paid, ill-kept, often treated as a wage-earner without the wage-earner's right to improve his condition through trade-union. It is wrong not to give to a man of learning sufficient to live on in moderate and assured comfort, and to drive him to seek other powers in order to improve his lot. A teacher is not a wage-earner: he is an apostle of culture. For centuries, we have maintained the true Brahmanical spirit. It loves learning for its own sake; it abjures—willingly and consciously—the love of wealth and power which come to the successful professional man, businessman or politician; it glorifies in *aparigraha*—non-possession—as an inalienable incident of the sacred privilege of being left alone to scale the unsurmountable heights of knowledge. It finds no higher self-fulfilment than to inspire in the rising generation a boundless thirst for knowledge and a character tuned to high ideals for their own sake. The rishi surrounded by his devoted disciples in an atmosphere of self-imposed discipline, of ceaseless pursuit of knowledge and ideals—that is a college, that is a university. When shall we awake to this realisation?

One of the cherished values of our culture, both for intellectual and aesthetic advancement, has been the supremacy of the Word—*Shabdabrahma*. Out of this value has sprung the importance of Sanskrit. It has been our national language *par excellence*, the treasury of our culture; it has unified the country; it has given us the power to reintegrate both our life and society. But our weapon for national uplift and consolidation is Hindi. If Hindi is to play its part, it must absorb not only the beauty and elasticity of Sanskrit and the resources of the

provincial languages but also the richness and vitality of English. It must become 'Bharati' in the real sense of the term, not merely the *lingua franca* or official language but in substance and form the language of India, just as English is the language of Englishmen and French the language of Frenchmen. But before it can acquire that status and power, our universities will have to work hard and acquire not merely a broad national but an international outlook for its development.

In this matter of vital importance, let us face facts, at any rate in our universities, where we can and must ignore catch slogans. First, Sanskrit is the source of our cultural inspiration, and Hindi though not fully equipped is accepted as the national language because it possesses the largest common measure of structural and verbal resources of Indian languages of the Sanskritic family. Secondly, English, forced on us at one stage by our alien rulers, is at present the effective language of our scholarship, law courts and national consolidation. This great language has become ours by historic necessity; it is our medium of international intercourse. Hindi can grow into a rich, expressive and effective medium of modern life only in close association with this world language, which is no longer foreign but belongs as much to us as to all other English-speaking nations. Let us shed our inferiority complex. As a free country we are not going to substitute the bullock-cart for the railway engine, nor Shakuntala's bark cloth for milady's voils. Nor shall we as a free nation give up English. Gandhiji, Shri Aurobindo, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others have been recognised masters of that language. Along with Sanskrit and Hindi we should have English as the instrument of our political and cultural advancement.

Our aesthetic achievements in the sphere of language and literature have been remarkable in the period of Modern Renaissance, but we cannot rest content with them. Our arts still lack the creative spark. It will come only when our men of culture bring joy and beauty in a greater measure into their lives. The terrifying other-worldliness and conventionalism which we developed during the Age of Resistance as defensive bulwarks still form a prison-wall around our spirit. There have also grown up in some parts a narrow puritanism and a vulgarised form of realism, called progressive writing; both of these threaten whatever little sense of joy and beauty Modern Renaissance has given us. But we in the universities ought to develop a wider and more universal view of art. The age of Calvin and Cromwell had their puritanic exaltation of the spirit, but the ages when great art and literature flourished were during the days of free spirits; in ancient Greece, when Sappho sang and Aspasia loved; in ancient India, when Vasantsena moved in grace and Yaksha sent his thrilling message to his lady-love; in medieval Europe, when Boccacio loved life for itself and Shakespeare took life entire for his theme; in modern Europe, when Goethe, Byron, Shelley, Victor Hugo, Dumas and Balzac gave to humanity a new, fresh richness of colour it never knew before.

Our universities must foster a love of literature. A great country like ours cannot rest content with beauty that is borrowed or inherited. We must create great literature not only with the beauty of Kalidasa but also with the power of Aeschyles; not merely with the lyrical sweetness of Chandidas and Mira but also with the passion of Sappho, the ethereal touch of Shelley and the magic charm of Goethe; not merely the narrative vividness and human

intensity of the *Mahabharata* but also the living art of story-telling of Dumas, the vibrant idealism of Victor Hugo, the power and universality of Shakespeare. Let us not forget that a considerable part of our Indian literature is cast in a conventional mould. If we want to have a great literature, we must break away from it. We must search for beauty and joy in our life, rich and varied. Beauty has no national frontiers, nor has joy. Life's vast treasures are before us. We have to bring them into our literature.

One of the most acute phases of our culture-crisis, of which the universities must take note, is the decay of the religious impulse. The transfer of the emotional urge from a God-ordained *Chaturvarnya* to modern nationalism, and the rise of the new woman who has appropriately become the radiating centre of a legitimate emotional stimulus, have naturally destroyed both the urge to medieval *bhakti* and its allied sentiment of other-worldliness. At the same time the cult of modernity has brought several evils, the most dangerous of which is the lack of faith in God, or for that matter in any higher purpose in life. Our university atmosphere for the last eighty years has been surcharged with an out-of-date rationalism which Europe made fashionable after the French Revolution.

Nevertheless, all great efforts, intellectual, emotional or social, whether by a people or by an individual, are acts of faith. Gandhiji would not have been what he was but for his undying faith that he was *nimittamatra*—an instrument of God. Communism flourishes because of a fanatic faith in its Father, Son and Holy Ghost—Lenin, Stalin and the U. S. S. R. It captures the imagination of our raw youth, because it gives something as a standby in

the vacuum which our faith-bereft education has created in the minds of men. *Shradhaya parayopeta*—those who are inspired by faith—are the noblest among men. India is a land of faith; we are a God-minded race; and so long as our universities stand away from this fundamental they will never produce the human power with which to meet our culture-crisis.

Our universities must therefore recapture the spirit of our eternal culture, not by short-sighted revivalism but by a living reintegration. In our land, the central idea of *Rita*, the Universal Law of the Moral Order, was first discovered and defined. With this as the inspiring motive power, not only did we acquire earthly goods and undying moral power but also the eternal secret by which a human being can shed his limitations and become divine. These have been India's achievements in the fields of the Spirit. We owe our present freedom and strength to them—at any rate through the wondrous phenomenon represented by the series of great men who have found self-fulfilment in living up to them. We are looked upon as the hope of the future and command the respect of the world not because of our military strength which is little, nor because of our high population which is really a handicap, but because Ramakrishna, Dayananda, Vivekananda, Malaviya and Gandhiji have brought to the modern world a fresh vindication of our ancient truths.

My young friends, here and now you have to catch a glimpse of those secrets and, in their light, to shape your personality. It will make you, in later life, more yourself than you are now. The only absolute value is 'to be'. 'To be' is greater than 'to do'. Mind is the reality, the cause of bondage and freedom and creative power. And on its training depends your personality.



No success, however eminent, no riches however unlimited, no achievement however applauded, can make you better, nobler, more in tune with yourself than the building up of your personality through the process of integration.

You must develop your personality in the midst of life, not away from it. Shri Krishna asked Arjuna to fight in the grim battle, facing murderous foes; he was not asked to retire to solitary caves or pathless jungles. '*Tasmad yudhyasva Bharata*' was not said to a coward who shrank from the world's toil and struggle. Stand fast to yourself—*atmanyevatmana tushtah*; fill your minds with great ideals and noble deeds; build up your individual strength by conquering limitations, attachment, wrath, malice; shed your weaknesses. A great power and beauty, not your own will thus enter into you, and the greatest of joy in life will be yours—to be used for a mighty purpose. But how shall we find this secret in life? Only through the faith that counts nothing in this world; nothing can give an undying zest for life, nothing can give a sense of self-fulfilment more than the worship of beauty, beauty in all its forms. If I may be permitted to adopt Plato's immortal aphorism, man's progress to divinity, as I see it, is marked only by his progressive contemplation and realisation of beauty in different aspects: from beautiful forms to beautiful life; from beautiful life to beautiful ideas; from beautiful ideas to Absolute Beauty. Let us study and appreciate the fundamental values of our culture. Let us adjust them to meet modern requirements. But let us not forget their absolute aspects: the dignity of man as man; the fundamental law of human rights, the harmony which the law of Moral Causation—truth, non-violence, non-stealing, non-waste and non-possession—works out through individual and collective lives; the incessant endeavour to

reach the goal of integrated human personality so as to realise the supreme joy which contemplation of Absolute Beauty alone can bring.

. This is the only way in which our universities can meet the crisis in our culture.

## IV

### SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF INDIAN CULTURE

#### I

I AM very happy indeed to be here to deliver the convocation address this year. I need not tell you how happy I am at the progress that has been made by the Bhavan's Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, and how disappointed I am to see that the progress has not kept pace with my programme.

The objects of our Bhavan demand that we should achieve "the reintegration of Indian culture through a study of those forces, movements, motives, ideas, forms and arts of creative life-energy through which it has expressed itself in different ages as a single continuous process." I propose, therefore, to speak to you of the ancient social foundations of our culture.

I would have preferred to use the word 'Bharatiya' for Indian. 'Bharat' is the Indian word for India. 'India', in origin and implication, comes from the Greek 'Indoi' which in its turn comes from the Persian 'Hindoi', a corrupt form of the river 'Sindhu', and is a foreigner's word for what we have been calling Bharat or Bharatavarsha for possibly over two millennia. The word India was the Britishers' name for our country; we took it with the English language and we have retained it for international use. Our modern languages know no such word. 'Bharatiya' culture would certainly imply the culture of India as viewed by Indians from India's point of view.

At the outset we must realise the connotation of the word 'culture'. It must be distinguished from 'civilization' which means the material equipment of an age. Shri Ramachandra and Sita, Christ and Socrates were less

civilized than ourselves; they wore barks or scanty clothes and travelled on foot or in canoes. We wear fine spun cloth and journey through mid-air in giant air liners. But he is a bold man, indeed, who can claim to be more cultured than they.

Culture is the characteristic way in which a distinctive people live. When certain well-defined ideas run through their history and shape their social institutions and their intellectual and aesthetic outlook from age to age, culture becomes an unbroken organic phenomenon like a flowing stream. In its course through time it gains vigour, richness and, above all, characteristic distinctiveness. We call our culture Aryan. In its dominant outlook it is a world culture which knows no parochial boundaries. It reflects, however, the fusion of widely divergent races like the Negroids, the Proto-Austroids or Austries, the Dravidians, the Aryans and the Indo-Mongoloid elements. But for its basic conception and its ultimate inspiration we have to look to the ideas and achievements of the Indo-Aryans who conquered not a people, but the spirit of all time.

In every age the vital solutions put forward by people of one culture are calculated to meet the essential problems created by contemporary civilisation in the light of certain fundamental values. These values are based on a few ideas, which themselves emanate from a Central Idea; and the best men among the people find self-fulfilment only in living up to this Idea. This Central Idea drives the stream of culture forward between the banks of Time, changing its course, throwing up formations, leaving behind weeds, meandering or roaring according to the conditions imposed by the pressure and material equipment of each section of time. When the conditions change, new wave crests are formed. But in its essential unity, its characteristic elements, and its direction it remains the same.

When the Central Idea drives and inspires the way of life no more, the culture dies and with it die the people.

The cultures of Egypt, Greece and Rome died; they are museum-pieces now. The culture of India, the oldest of them all, lives, for it has been relived, rekindled and reintegrated from age to age; it has shaped the conditions of every age and has been shaped by them. Because of it, India has stood the shocks of time. Vyas, Manu and Yajnavalkya, Buddha, Panini, Valmiki, Kalidasa and the author of the *Bhagavata* are living influences operating on life today. Shri Krishna's exhortation to Arjuna—the *Gita*—continues to provide the greatest of all forces, the sign-post to self-fulfilment to the best among men.

I have learnt this from a study of the lives of great Indians of the past and present; from an intimate familiarity with the lives and teachings of Dayananda, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Vivekananda, Tilak, Gandhiji and Shri Aurobindo. Age after age, the best amongst us never found self-fulfilment except by living up to the Central Idea of our culture, and that is why it lives. I sat, as you know, at the feet of Gandhiji for years and found in his daily growing personality the effort to capture this Idea. The other day I had the rare privilege of meeting Shri Aurobindo. I had seen him last in 1909 at Bombay. Now, however, I saw something different; the most beautiful old age imaginable in an atmosphere of inspiring serenity. He sat enthroned on an upholstered chair with a quiet, unaggressive dignity. His thin white beard and well-brushed, long hair framed a radiant face which bore me down with the unfamiliar weight of veneration. A deep light of knowledge and wisdom shone in his eyes. The wide calm of the Spirit appeared to have converted the whole personality into a radiant Presence,

not that of a thunder-wielding Jove but of one who shone with the light of Consciousness.

It was neither my old Professor whom I admired from a distance, nor the seer from whose teachings I had profited at several periods of my life. It was a being complete in himself. In my works, I have written about integrated personality. I have seen it in a vision. I have described it in fiction. I sensed it in the titanic efforts of Gandhiji to realise Truth and Non-violence. But this was absolute integration of personality; attachment, wrath and fear had been transmuted into a power which was at the same time beautiful and calm; the Central Idea in Aryan culture materialised in human shape. When, in our objectives I mentioned Shri Aurobindo as one of the great architects of creative life, it was an estimate; at that moment in Pondicherry, I saw, I felt, he was.

Indian culture must therefore be viewed, not in sections, but in continuous time.

## II

The long career of our culture can be divided into four distinct ages.

The first, the age of Expansion, can be traced from the chalcolithic civilisation of the Indus Valley, five thousand years ago when the country worshipped Shiva, the Pasupati in the Yoga posture, through the fresh young life during the age of Rigvedic mantras and the vigorous youth of the post-Vedic age of Janamejaya Parikshita; through the unbroken continuity during the age of Imperial Magadha (c. 700 B.C. A.D. 320), the Classical Age of the Guptas (A.D. 320-750), and the age of Imperial Kanauj (A.D. 750-1000).

The second age of our culture, that of resistance, can be traced through the age of disintegration (A.D. 1000 to

1300) at the end of which the Sultanate of Delhi became an imperial power in India. At the end of the twelfth century Central Asian hordes flung themselves on India to burn, to loot, to destroy. Indians, who only knew how to wage wars according to the laws of Dharma, were staggered by the totalitarian wars forced upon them. They then mobilised defensive resistance in other spheres of life, and the concentrated vigour of the barbaric onslaught was broken. Alien rule was segregated into the narrowest limits; inviolable defences—psychological, social and religious—were raised against any surrender to it.

The beginning of the third age, that of modern Renaissance, may be traced to the end of the seventeenth century. By about A.D. 1700 Ramdas and Shivaji in Maharashtra, the Gurus in the Punjab and the Rajputs in Rajasthan had exchanged resistance for aggressive defiance. An expansive mood was in the air. But before Bharat could reap the harvest of this upsurgence, fate subjected her to political and economic domination by Britain. Undaunted, the upsurgence spread to different channels, to unexpected forms and quarters. The movements associated with Ram Mohan Roy, the Great Revolt of 1857, Dayananda Sarasvati, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda, Tilak and Shri Aurobindo, Malaviyaji, Tagore and Gandhiji and the Congress, represent, each in their own way, the high-water marks of a progressively expansive attitude. Through the British universities, established in India to train Indians for subservient careers, the culture forced its way as the Sanskrit revival, a great political awakening and a cultural renaissance. When disarmed after 1857, India projected her urge for self-realisation into a peaceful but all-sweeping movement which reached its climax in the nationwide satyagraha activities.

The fourth age commenced on August 15, 1947, when

we became masters of our own destiny. But with our freedom has come a crisis in our cultural advancement. We have to face post-war problems, new world forces, and the power of a highly technocratic civilization with its industrial and urban problems, to all of which the fundamental values and the Central Idea in our culture have to adjust themselves.

In each age culture broadly expresses itself through four principal activities, social, intellectual, emotional and aesthetic, and spiritual. It has, therefore, to be studied in four corresponding aspects:

- (a) Social achievements, with reference to institutions like (i) the family, (ii) the social organisation, and (iii) the State;
- (b) Intellectual achievements like (i) political and legal concepts, (ii) speculative thought, and (iii) scientific advancement;
- (c) Emotional and aesthetic achievements found in (i) religious movements, (ii) linguistic and literary development, (iii) art forms and traditions, and (iv) embellishment of life;
- (d) Spiritual achievement—reintegration of fundamental values, and their adjustment to the dominant ideas and conditions of the age so that the Central Idea achieves fresh vigour and velocity.

### III

Before the first age of formation began, Aryans in India had inherited the institution of the patriarchal family. The house community of Pre-Vedic Aryans all over Asia and Europe lived round the family fire, and consisted of male descendants of a common ancestor. According to Fustel-de-Coulanges and Schrader, these Aryans, in sharp contrast with the matriarchal races, did



not recognise any relationship with the mother or her relatives. Maternal right was foreign to them; only later the paternal right was raised into the parental.

The basic institution of the Vedic Aryans in India was the patriarchate family. The father was the lord and master of the family, both of its members and its assets. Ancestor worship was the central creed.

The *pitris*, 'manes', watched over the family; they had to be given *pindadana*, offerings, at stated intervals or on stated days; they had to receive an Aryan after he had shuffled off his mortal coil when his son gave the *pindadana* to them. When his dead body was consigned to the flames, the *Jatavedas* (Agni) is called upon to give him over to the *pitris*. A son was, therefore, an indispensable link in the chain which bound a man to his *pitris*; if there was no son, there had to be a son by adoption, i.e., by spiritual birth; but he had to be taken from the same family. 'The son is a substitute for the father in performing religious rites', say the Vedas. The father, son and grandson owned the family property by right of birth. The *pritrī-yajna* and the *tarpana*, the *pindadana* and the *shraddha* kept the spiritual unity indissoluble. The son was the saviour of the family, for he carried the *kula* forward. The basic idea was that the *pitris*, the living males, and the sons, born and to be born, were an indissoluble unit.

The *gotra* was a group of families claiming descent from a common male ancestor and was the unit of society; a federation of *gotras* formed the *jana* which claimed an eponymous hero as the common but remote ancestor. Intermarriage between members of the same *gotra* was forbidden. Five such tribes formed the *pancha-janah* who constituted the conquering race in the *Saptasindhu* of Rigvedic times. Their common ancestor was Manu.

Manu's law had even then the reputation of having been handed down from the *pitris*; and to the Aryan it was the law eternal (*esha dharma sanatanah*). He prayed that his race might not stray from the path.

Pride of descent from a common male ancestor carried with it the need to demand unswerving loyalty of the women married into the family. Purity of descent is inconceivable without it. Marriage, in which man and wife became one, was the most inalienable of spiritual bonds. The purpose of marriage was '*garhapatya*', i.e. householdership, comradeship in the worship of gods, and procreation of sons to secure heaven for oneself and the *pitris*. The wife was half of oneself, *sharirardha*. A man was complete only when he took a wife and had a son. The fall of a wife was a great lapse. The gods would not forgive it. Thus was established the fundamental value of the identity of man and wife joined by the marriage tie.

These values laid the foundation of Aryan culture. Even Parashurama had to kill his mother because she looked at a Gandharva.

#### IV

The Aryans of the post-Vedic period were settled in the valleys of the Yamuna and the Ganga. Large kingdoms ruled by the Aryan clans had come into existence. In this age the patriarchal family unit—*kula*—had become firmly established as the foundation of the society. The father was the supreme *guru* and the master of life. Ajigarta could even sell his son for a hundred cows. The Pandavas had to pass through years of trial on account of their supposed doubtful origin.

With the dawn of history in the seventh century before Christ, Magadha, under the Sisunagas, emerged as the predominant factor in the life of the country.

Our culture entered upon an era of triumphant expansion first under the Sisunagas, Nandas and Mauryas; next under Pushyamitra and the Sungas; and later under the Guptas till A.D. 550. Later on for about four centuries, the culture centered on Kanauj carried on the tradition.

The Age of Expansion ended when in A.D. 940 the Rashtrakuta conquerors of the South broke the power of Kanauj and the Sultans of Ghazni from 997 A.D. onwards carried out their raids rudely shaking the foundations of life. But the North-West had been overrun by the Hunas and allied foreigners; Dakshinapatha, the Deccan, under the Chalukyas, was vying with Uttarapatha, North India, for all-India supremacy and culture began to lose both its purity and creativeness.

The Sutras invested the family with semi-divine sanction. They laid emphasis on the headship of the father, the corporate character of the joint family, and the indissolubility of the *gotra*. The economic basis of the family was the ancestral property; the economic bond was strengthened between the ancestor from whom the property was inherited on one side, and the owner, his son and grandson who acquired interest in it by birth. This laid the foundation of a stable economic order.

Intermarriage between members of the three castes (the *dviyas*) without offending against the principle of *pratiloma* was the rule. Marriage as a spiritual merger of man and wife became a fundamental value. *Paraskara Grihya Sutra* indicates this alchemy: "With thy breath I join my breath, with your bones my bones, with thy flesh my flesh, and with thy skin my skin." It was the age of Sukaniya, Arundhati and Anasuya, of Savitri and Sita. Arjuna in the *Gita* expresses horror at the lapse of women from chastity, and at sons of mixed descent. A woman's

loss of all rights in her father's property and acquisition of rights in the husband's, as laid down by the Smritis, provided the economic basis. In later centuries it accounted for the wonderful tenacity of our social institutions. During the later ages, this value was invested with tragic greatness; in the Age of Resistance, thousands of women cheerfully lived up to the idea of going through the sublime self-immolation of the *Jauhar*.

The Gupta empire was dissolved by the inroads made by foreigners in the North and the West. The four allied martial tribes—an interconnubial group—of Pratiharas, Chahamanas, Chalukyas and Paramaras became a military power, fought the East under the Palas of Bengal and the South under the Rashtrakutas and founded the Imperial Gurjaradesha which comprised West Punjab, East Madhyadesha, Rajputana, Malwa and Gujarat, with Kanauja as the capital of India.

From about A.D. 600, the North and South each had its own line of Emperor, the Gurjara-Pratiharas of Kanauja and the Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas of Vatapi. The cultural classes of the North had been, by heredity or education, deeply imbued with the values of Aryan culture. In the South, except in the case of Brahmanas, the culture was no more than an ideal pattern in which the existing social conditions were to be cast under the influence of Brahmanas and devout kings. Women in the South were in a sense free from the code which the Smritis enjoined; even in high society they were different from the women of the North, free in their intercourse with men.

With free intermarriage between the North and the South consequent upon frequent wars, intermarriage between the higher classes disappeared in the North. The martial races came to be much married. Disparity of cul-

tural outlook among the families who thus freely intermarried led to a lowering of cultural values. The wife became a mere dependent. Islam also appeared in Sindh and, as is seen in the *Devala Smriti*, the wife forcibly converted to Islam created a new problem unknown before. *Anuloma* marriages became rare. The education of women came to be neglected or was rendered impossible; castes slowly came to be segregated into compartments. The partriarchal family unit and the marriage tie were accepted as sacred values in theory; in practice, among certain sections of the society, they were disregarded.

With the disastrous inroads of Central Asian hordes, the Age of Resistance was reached. I have called this 'the Age of Resistance', because whatever cultural development we find during the period was more a product of determined resistance to the destructive forces which came into India from outside rather than of a direct contact with alien influences.

The Age of Resistance passed through several stages. The first and the darkest period was from Kutb-ud-Din to Akbar, and the second period of weakening resistance from Akbar to A.D. 1675. The administration of that law laid down by the Dharma Shastras, so far considered to be the duty of good kings, was neglected wherever the foreigners held sway.

The great centres of learning throughout the North were destroyed. The operation of free intellectual and moral forces was arrested. Society developed defensive conservatism. In about eighty years which passed between Medhatithi's commentary on Manu and Vijnaneshvara's commentary on Yajnavalkya, we find society completely changed in its attitude from an expansive, almost aggressive, outlook towards world conquest to a frantic attempt at conserving all that happened to be current at the time. The

joint family became more rigid; family life was allowed little scope for freedom. Women, the most coveted of possessions, were protected, treasured in families by infant marriage, and in many cases by *purdah*. The wife was merged in the husband, but was no longer his partner. She tended to deteriorate into a parasite; not that anyone made her so; but fleeing from the terrors of the onrushing tide of destruction, she was helplessly reduced to that position. For instance, nowhere in India today is the *purdah* so rigid as in Rajasthan, which for several centuries bore the brunt of the onrush and, resisting grimly, saved the social structure and cultural traditions.

## V

The second great institution, the social organisation of *Chaturvarnya*, can also be traced through the different ages. In the early Age of Expansion, particularly in the early *Mantra* period, Brahmana was the professional priest; Rajanya the ruler-king; Vaishya, the villager who constituted the bulk of the Aryan community; Dasyus and Shudras were the non-Aryan, dark-skinned, noseless people with strange gods. But the germ of the *Chaturvarnya* was there. Those men who as a class dedicated themselves to learning and meditation were recognised as the head of the community. By their far-sighted social wizardry they converted the political supremacy of the Aryans over non-Aryans into a cultural hierarchy of the *dviija* (twice-born) and the *non-dviija*. Transition from one class to another came to depend upon conformity to cultural standards rather than birth. The *Purusha Sukta* of the Rigveda period has left on record the first clear indication of the four-fold order of society. The four-fold order was devised to broaden and arrange the social system so as to absorb the non-Aryans without sacrificing cultural purity.

In the post-Vedic period, the four-fold order of society became a universal order, the men of learning and non-possession stood at the head; the Kshatriyas came next, though a clear tendency to look upon them as exalted is discernible. The incident of Brahmana Parashurama being made to suffer a defeat at the hands of Kshatriya Rama is an indication of a rival movement. But as the kingdoms grew, the kings could not do without divine sanction, and it was forthcoming only through protracted and costly sacrifices which a host of Brahmanas alone could perform.

When history opens with Magadha's imperial sway we see the struggle continuing in spite of the traditional arrangement. "The king had to find the *shrotriya*, for he was the half soul of the king; both were the upholders of dharma" say the *Shatapatha* and the *Aitreya Brahmanas*. But the Brahmanas, who had by then become the repositories of learning and statecraft, of poetry and science, were indispensable leaders of the community. They could prescribe law-texts; they could perform sacrifices; they could indulge in philosophic speculations; they could also produce political texts, the greatest of which—Kautilya's *Arthashastra*—has few parallels, if any, in the political literature of the world. The theoretical pattern of society as the four-fold order had its antagonists too. Nanda was one of them. *Matsyapurana* refers to irascible and contemptible rulers who tried to destroy the social system.

The foundations of culture were so well laid in *Chaturvarnya* that, with the period which opened with the rule of Pushyamitra, himself a Brahmana, *Chaturvarnya* became accepted as an immutable social order. No doubt each province and each movement interpreted it as it liked.

Shri Krishna in the *Gita* ranges the four-fold order according to qualities and actions, (*guna-karma*—

*vibhagashah*.) Yudhishthira, in his dialogue with Nahusha, himself expresses a doubt as to the validity of hereditary castes. In the *Mahabharata* Indra enjoins Mandhata to bring all the foreigners into the fold of dharma. And Kalidasa's works reflect the beauty and vigour of *chaturvarnya* at its best.

In the Age of Expansion, it provided a social pattern of universal application whereby new races were fitted into a living organisation, without destroying its stability and cultural standards. It utilised the principle of hereditary transmission of specialised functions to produce one corporation of men devoted to learning, another of men devoted to the martial arts, and a third of those pursuing trade and commerce. It stabilised society. It enabled the Brahmanas to work for intellectual and literary advancement. It enjoined on the Kshatriyas the duty to protect the social structure, to preserve the law, and, by humanising and regulating war, to render the continuity of culture possible. The Vaishyas were to carry on the economic life of the people, undisturbed by political earthquakes. While this order emphasised heredity, it also had elasticity. It enabled outsiders to be absorbed easily or a lower group to rise to a higher level by adopting a more cultured way of life. It provided India with a living social gospel wherewith to make internal life coherent and external conquest full of meaning. Medhatithi says Aryavarta is not between the mountains and the sea; wherever an Aryan ruler spreads his arms, establishes *chaturvarnya* and reduces the *mlechchas* to the position of shudras, there is Aryavarta.

In the Age of Resistance, *chaturvarnya* played its part magnificently. The Brahmanas, driven from their ancient universities, fled to distant villages, preserved learning and traditions, upheld the Smriti laws, and catered for the educational and religious needs of the people. The Kshat-



riyas, men and women, died in their thousands, to preserve freedom and faith. The Vaishyas bought from the barbarians safety for themselves and the rest, for their shrines and for their localities, and carried on their vocation with deft thoroughness.

When a cataclysmic upheaval followed the invasion the *chaturvarnya* became the fortress of life. Millions of refugees fled before the onrushing fury; subdivided themselves into rigid sub-castes; preserved their way of life; resisted aliens and their ways by the sharpest of collective instruments—social ostracism and sheer non-recognition of everything alien. If *chaturvarnya* had not reacted so defensively, India would have been a charnel-house of Bharatiya culture. If the Kshatriyas resisted in every fort and village and their womenfolk courted fire in order to leave a mighty tradition of unsullied chastity, the Brahmanas threw up *acharya*, *bhaktas* and poets who brought about religious upheaval and literary renaissance and kept alive the inspiration of Sanskrit. The flags of the mercantile fleet of Gujarat owned by the Vaishyas continued to fly in eighty-four foreign ports throughout this age. We, who are blinded by an admiration of the social apparatus of the West, fail to realise that *chaturvarnya* was a marvellous social synthesis on a countrywide scale, when the rest of the world was weltering in a tribal state.

“No doubt,” says Sydney Low in his *Vision of India*, “that it (*chaturvarnya*) is the main cause of the fundamental stability and contentment by which Indian society has been braced up for centuries against the shocks of politics and the cataclysms of nature.”

Indian culture has been a dynamic force throughout history, and no better proof of it could be found than in the vitality, tenacity and adaptability of its social structure.

## V MEANING OF CULTURE

### I

I AM deeply grateful to the organisers for inviting me to preside over this first All India Cultural Conference, inaugurated by our President. But I have had little time to do justice to an occasion like this. All I can do is to place before you a summary of my views. There are some, I dare say, who will say that my views are not what is called 'objective'—a word which stands for a distant, on-the-river-bank outlook, which generally raises no responsibility and leads to no creative effort. But my outlook is the result of what I have studied, written, felt and tried to live. It springs from conviction; it has been the parent of numerous creative efforts through the years.

What is 'culture'? Somehow, beauty in life is inseparably associated with culture. But then what is beauty? It is also associated with maturity of mind. But what again is maturity?

Culture is certainly not the material equipment of life,—neither the aeroplane we travel in, nor the radio to which we listen, nor the atom bomb which threatens our existence; they constitute civilization. Shri Ramchandra and Sita, Vyasa and Yudhishtira, Shri Krishna, Buddha and Christ wore bark, travelled on foot, and used crude weapons; they were less civilised than ourselves; but he would be a bold man who would say that we are more cultured.

'Culture', in the wider sense, must appertain to a well-defined people; it is their characteristic way of life; it is what makes them distinctive. On the other hand, the way in which all people live is not culture. To be a culture, the way of life of a people must have persisted in time; it must have flowed in time as a living stream, as an unbroken

organic phenomenon, shaping their social institutions, and giving purpose and direction to their intellectual and aesthetic outlook.

The culture of India, for instance, never lost its vitality: Its fundamental values maintained their continuity in spite of changing situations, tragic vicissitudes and varying civilizations. Throughout history they had and continue to have a meaning and purpose for our people. As a result, with every age, while preserving our sense of continuity, we have achieved cultural expression anew. We find the operation of this vital force nowhere more vividly than in the Renaissance which during the last fifteen decades has expressed itself in new forms of philosophy, literature and art, as also in the great individual and social experiments made to deal with modern problems in the light of our fundamental values.

## II

To recapitulate: Culture is a way of life dominated by a Central Idea—an Idea which is not a means to an end, but an end in itself, persisting through continuous sections of time. This Idea throws up fundamental values which are reflected in the collective outlook of the people who preserve that way of life. When this Idea loses its vitality, the culture dies, as happened in the case of ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome; for, when the streams of their cultures ceased to flow, there were left only inhabitants of Egypt and Greece without the vitalising inspiration of the older values, unnourished by a Central Idea.

When this Idea rushes on as a stream in time, the fundamental values which it has created are, like waves, shaped, broken up, driven forward or arrested by environmental, historical or economic determinants of each age. These determinants, though they change the volume and

shape of the fundamental values, do not destroy their vigour, content or meaning so long as they continue to be vitalised and reinvigorated by the energy of the Central Idea.

The history of a people has a meaning or a mission, a power, purpose or direction only if the best among those people keep the process, by which the fundamental values are vitalised by the Central Idea, working at high pressure. This high pressure is only achieved by a substantial number of the best among the people, having such faith in the absolute Idea that they find self-fulfilment only by living up to it. When an age does not produce such men, the culture becomes decadent and is on the way to extinction.

The real test of a living culture is: Do the best among its adherents continue to prize its fundamental values as absolute values—that is, values which are an end in themselves, and not means to an ulterior end? Do they in every generation find self-fulfilment by living up to the Central Idea?

Self-fulfilment is not a word of vague import; it is again absolute experience—a *satya*—a step in one's self-realisation—*samsiddhi*. It comes when the glow of being 'more of myself than I am', at every moment, becomes a living flame of strength to illumine every thought, word and deed. This glow can be produced only when one begins to strive to express the Central Idea of one's culture through art, letters, or any aspect of life, or through life as a whole. This is the joy of creative effort.

### III

In India, age after age, the best amongst us had faith in certain fundamental values created by a Central Idea. The *Mahabharata* has been rightly called the 'Collective Unconscious' of India; the *Gita* has nourished, age after

age, the urge to self-fulfilment of men from Arjuna to Gandhiji, and is even the strength to millions in the present generation, from the President of the Republic downwards. In Vishvamitra and Vasistha, in Bhishma and Yudhisthira, in Shri Krishna and Shri Ramachandra we immediately recognise the dim framework of our self-realisation. The mystic power, which enabled Ramakrishna to give new validity to old values, or Gandhiji to move millions into action, arose only out of the dim—often unconscious—realisation that they represented the Idea which our subconscious aspirations reflected.

I speak of fundamental values, and the power of the Idea behind them, not of the trappings in which they are clothed by custom or tradition, ignorance or religious belief. Traditions die and can never be resurrected. Most religious beliefs are the measure of man's intellectual horizon; when it changes, they change. But beyond all this, is the Idea.

What is this Idea which has kept our culture alive through ages? What is its nature, shorn of the trappings of the different ages?

This Idea affirms, as the aim and end of all life, the Absolute Integration of human personality, by making it the medium of expressing that joy, which fades not, nor tires.

Without going into details, I may refer to three aspects of this Integration.

*First*: Man is an inalienable centre of strength and dignity, the architect of his own fate, gifted with the power, to attain in full measure self-realisation—*samadhi*, *nirvana*, *moksha* or *kalyan*, or by whatever name it is called.

*Secondly*: Moral Order working through the ineluctable Law of Causation, shelters and upholds the universe.

*Lastly*: Faith in the Absolute—or call it God, if you

will, and willingness to be Its instrument in the fulfilment of Its purposes, is the highest destiny of man.

But this is religion and philosophy, not culture, you will say. What about social ideals? What about cultural development? What about the State?

Thousands of years ago, when man was but a timid creature living in prearranged social grooves—just a featherless biped—he was unconscious of eternal existence and was without dignity or destiny. But he had the power to strive an aspiration towards a higher life and a desire to visualize the highest. This led him to consciousness of God; to assert his spiritual element; to claim a dignity which made him the master; to stress inalienable fundamental values. This gave him the great secret: God descends to man; man, by becoming His instrument, becomes Him. Shri Krishna comes down as a 'descent', *avatar*. Arjuna merges in him by surrender, by becoming *nimittamatra*.

The rise of man to divine perfection by transcending his human limitations through surrender to the Absolute was accepted as a Central Idea on which the Indo-Aryans based their fundamental values and, later, the Indians, their culture.

This was not a mere religious or philosophical idea; it was a tremendous creative Idea. Man became a potential God. Following on this social relations, intellectual and aesthetic achievements, all so indispensable to him, were shaped by certain fundamental values inspired by the Idea.

I will touch upon a few fundamental values which this Idea threw up. Sex life was sublimated into an absolute bond; man and woman, on marriage, became one by spiritual alchemy—*Parvati-Parmeshvarau*—indissoluble like 'speech and sense' (*vagarthaviva*). Biological fact became a thing of the spirit. This value created the

invulnerable domestic unit of our society, and released vast creative energy expressed through literature and art; in characters of ineffable beauty like Sita and Savitri; and through life as the wondrous self-surrender of the Sati on the magnificent invincibility of the *jauhar*.

The other value revealed Father and Mother as one divinity, the inseparable Shiva and Shakti of one life. To humanity struggling to achieve a culture, it gave two solid foundations, the Father as the central link between the past, the present and the future, and the Mother as the inseparable source of strength. To the individual, it gave new dignity. This value displaced the matriarchate and established the home on a footing of strength and beauty. It gave rise to the *kula*, the *gotra* and the *jati*; to ancestor worship, and to the homage paid to the fathers of the race, as well as to sages, spiritual and royal. New values were created in the land where the *Pitris* had flourished; in the Fatherhood of God; and, above all, in the value of 'The World as One Family.' Once this value had taken root in the Collective Unconscious, 'love of all beings', 'the equality of the Brahmana, the Pariah and the dog', was the next step. Ramakrishna protested against the idea of *jivadaya*, mercy to dumb creatures. "God is in it, as in me," he said. "Then why mercy?"\* The final step was thus stated by Shri Krishna, "See all in Me and Me in all." The integration of personality implied an all-inclusive integration.

#### IV

No culture can be universal nor satisfy the craving of the human heart, nor solve our human problems till this value is accepted by all cultures. And our culture implies

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\*There is in the *Bhagavata* a verse of similar import: "Man should mentally bow to all these beings with great regard because God has entered into them as the spirit which is a spark of the Divine."

that the best of men among all nations must strive to achieve absolute integration of their personality by making it all-inclusive.

But the world is at war with itself; and this fundamental value is denied. Some cultures try to create values which assign man and woman to the realm of social biology, denying them the dignity of a spiritual unity and wanting to regulate them by farmyard morals. They also deny any fundamental value to the sanctity of parenthood, to the love of one's land, to God and His Fatherhood. Their values are exclusive; they divide humanity into the elect and non-elect; and the class-struggle casts its shadow on all hopes of fraternity. Even in the sphere of creative art, the values made by them impose an iron curtain between their art and literature and those of the non-elect. Once such values are accepted, they sublimate mankind as a unit in order to reduce the individual perforce to a zero. Some thinkers, obsessed by Hegel's doctrines, fell into the error of thinking them to mean that individuality should be subordinated to an ideal organisation in an absolute manner. Human dignity was thus reduced to a cipher; the omnipotence of the State over an infinite number of ciphers became an absolute idea. 'Beauty' itself was redefined, and reversing Plato's dictum, men were expected to march from ugly deeds to ugly ideas, from ugly ideas to ugly values, from ugly values to absolute ugliness. Man, according to them, is no longer a potential divinity, he is a piece of clay.

This is the negation of that Central Idea which lays down that man has knowledge, a will, and a power which are not only capable of leading him towards the Infinite but can also canalise the Infinite in order to uplift life itself and that without the Idea we cannot understand



nature's plan, the 'world a family' objectivity, the efficacy of thought, or the supremacy of moral order.

v

Absolute integration of personality, in spite of the religious concepts which surround it, is a matter of this world. It consists of integrating the whole personality of man in order to make it the supreme medium for expressing Beauty as unfading Joy.

Beauty and joy can never be divorced from each other. A thing of beauty gives unfading joy. Where there is no joy, there is no beauty. An architect expresses beauty through stone; a poet through words; a man of culture through manners; a *bhakta* through his emotions; and when we see these things, we feel more of ourselves than we were.

In an integrated person, his whole personality becomes the vehicle of beauty, a living symbol of inspiration, opening up the joys of self-realisation before us. The person who attains integration is a thing of beauty himself. He expresses harmony of thought, word and deed; he neither covets nor steals, nor wastes himself; he moves in an atmosphere of oneness with all; he has the humility to feel that he is but the medium of Perfection. In this Perfection, we, while meeting him, reach out to the Absolute, we discover the Divine in us.

The whole aim of culture is therefore to make life, art and literature not merely the record of passing passions or tickling sensations, lifeless traditions or base motives, but to make it an instrument for reaching out to self-realization, i.e. to an experience which gives to each one of us the joy of self-fulfilment in which one can say, "I am more of myself than I was". It is the self-same process in each case; the only limitation is the quality of the medium and the extent of its power.

## VI

### CULTURE AND FREEDOM

#### I

I AM indebted to the organisers of this Conference for giving me the privilege of inaugurating a Conference of such distinguished men and women. I am also glad that it is being held in Bombay, for, with a legitimate partiality for my home town, I may claim that, of all the cities in India, Bombay alone has a broad and international outlook, and its citizens have a deeper sense of appreciation of individual freedom than all others.

This Conference, as you know, is the first Congress held in Asia in support of the movement for a permanent international Congress of Cultural Freedom, the object of which is to combat the suppression of intellectual freedom in whatever form it may appear.

We meet, friends, at a time when the world is at the cross-roads, when the clash of ideas is at its highest, when a world conflict appears to be developing towards a tragic end with the grim certainty of a Greek tragedy. This is not the outcome of imperialist ambitions; there is a crisis of the human spirit brought about in the modern world by certain ideologies and as men of vision you—the intellectuals of the world—can alone help to cure men of the malady.

Man has mastered the art of organisation. He has acquired the power to destroy millions or to transform them into rigidly obedient machines. As a result, in vast countries once pledged to freedom, the independent individual is extirpated, and a ruthless embargo is laid on freedom of thought. More men of ideas are refugees in foreign lands today than at any time in history. With parts of the world gone mad with fanatic hate and ruthless

power, the man who wants to think his own thoughts and lead his own life finds himself powerless and isolated among contending zealots, and often has no place to pursue his own way of life.

This crisis of the human spirit is nowhere more discernible than in the facile manner in which intellectuals surrender their freedom. They appear to crave for the mechanisation of the world by a universal order which saves them the trouble of thinking and living up to their individual light. Liberty, which yesterday lifted the hearts of millions to the stars, is now replaced in many lands by the universal cry of 'Follow the leader'—an expression which conceals the herd instinct to fly from the dangers which their own fears have created.

We can easily trace the progress of this crisis in modern times. Some thinkers, obsessed by Hegel's doctrines, fell into the error of interpreting them as the idea that in the best of all worlds, individuality should be subordinated to an ideal organisation in an absolute manner. Human dignity, the necessary basis on which liberty must be founded, is thus reduced to zero. The omnipotence of the State over an infinite number of zeros became a cardinal doctrine of faith. Under the spell of this idea, aggressive well-knit power groups in several parts of the world have grasped universal power, first, in the name of progress, then, in the name of solidarity, later in the name of peace. The technique of wholesale terrorisation has been perfected. Rajaji, the Nestor of Indian politics, recently described it in Parliament as a "technique of secrecy and violence, a technique by which they get men to join their ranks by admitting them first and subsequently driving them into becoming criminal characters so that they cannot retreat."

The free set-up of democracy is fully exploited.

Civil liberty is cleverly utilised to strengthen power pledged to extinguish all liberties. Intellectuals, through lack of faith in their own convictions or out of complete failure to realise what they are doing, become easy instruments by their own subservience. The power groups, in this manner, first obtain control over the majority; then the majority is converted into a totality by dubbing non-conformity as crime, counter-revolution or high treason.

Even in the sphere of creative art, an iron curtain is imposed between the art and literature of the elect and those of the non-elect. Beauty itself is re-defined. Art and literature become mere instruments of party propaganda. No longer is Man a potential divinity; he is an insect; and his 'insectification' is invested with a mystical significance.

## II

I have a first-hand knowledge of the power group—the Communist Party of India which is working out this programme of 'insectification' in India. First, a hard core of ambitious, young intellectuals, saturated with the philosophy and art of class hatred, was formed in Bombay in the twenties. When the Congress formed the Ministry in 1937, Bombay's industrial life was dominated by this group; and one of the leaders, then underground, met me secretly. He told me that both of us were enemies of British imperialism; that we should combine to fight it hand in hand; and that, as Home Minister of Bombay, I should get the police to help them in their strike activities. I replied that I was a follower of Mahatma Gandhi, and if they scrupulously eschewed violence, I would agree. The leader replied: "As an honest revolutionary, I alone would remain the sole judge of the time and manner of striking." "As an honest Congressman," I retorted, "I will fight violence, wherever and whenever it raises

its head." Bombay, after a few months, began to breathe freely; but that achievement was by no means easy.

In 1942, the Father of the Nation launched the great non-violent struggle for freedom, known to history as the 'Quit India' movement. The Communist Party of India then helped the British attempt to crush the movement of Gandhiji. But they knew him not; they counted without the host; when he came out of jail he released mysterious streams of faith in independence, freedom and democracy. In consequence, this power group of violence lost the hold it had over the country.

In 1947 the Communist Party of India decided that the Nehru Government should be supported. It thought that our Government would collapse; that our national movement would be shattered; that our leaders would prove to be a set of Kerenskys. In February, 1948, however, the Communist Party of India changed its technique. It began to exploit the Congress struggle in Hyderabad in order to strengthen their position in Telengana. In 1948 I was the Government of India's Agent-General there. I knew what was being done; I know what has been happening since. The situation in Telengana and on the Andhra border is glorified in Communist Party circles as the high-water mark of their proud achievement. It consists of about 500 murders, 550 acts of arson, 430 acts of loot, 207 attacks on village officers, and 350 encounters with the police.

### III

The seduction of intellectuals has been made into a fine art by the Communist Party of India, many members of which are underground. It is a lamentable fact that intellectuals in India have little awareness of what they are being subjected to. A slogan is raised; "All groups, parties and classes must unite for progress." A

plea for a common front is put forward; the broad-minded intellectual walks into the parlour; an alliance is made. Immediately, selected party men secure key positions, and the whole movement begins to subserve the aims of the Communist Party.

The Communist Party of India masquerades as literary, dramatic or cultural movements, with such attractive labels as "progressive" or "people's". It exploits the weakness of our democratic set-up and ropes in innocents who are abroad in search of progress or a fresh solution. But a militant and advanced group of party men occupies the leadership, to guide, to control and to direct the movement as the external power group dictates.

The movements so artificially engineered are used to create a false public opinion. The freedom, as Rajaji put it, "that men engaged in subversive activities and their fellow travellers preach", is the freedom that they want to use for destroying (our) freedom. The ostensible object of the literary movement is to fight the formalised style of recognised authors and introduce social purpose in literature and art. The movements have a hard core of Communist Party members and begin by seeking support of established authors. New writers and old ones, seeking a fresh outlook, are naturally attracted to it.

The organisation at first functions as a literary or cultural association; new methods of criticism are introduced; old ideas are destroyed; enduring canons of creative art are ridiculed. After the prestige of the older authors and artists is exploited, they are driven out by intimidation and vituperation; and the rest of the members become the passive instruments of the Communist Party of India for the disruption of values of life and the creation of an atmosphere in which the subversive aims of the Party may prosper. It is unfortunate that such move-

ments have been penetrating into our educational centres, text-book committees, newspaper offices, and cultural institutions.

Why do groups of intellectuals in this country and in so many others fall a prey to this insidious indoctrination? Why is it so? Because the intelligentsia has no intellectual stability; it lacks abiding faith—faith in culture, faith in freedom, faith in human dignity, faith in man's destiny. This lack of faith is produced by our modern system of education which uproots all older sources of faith and has given no new ones. Ultimate responsibility however, must lie with us, with the thinkers and the devotees of art and literature. Why is our strength so easily sapped? Why does our inspiration lose its fire? Why do we allow our vision to be blurred by the ugliness of violence and deceit as never before? Why is our faith in freedom subordinated to a semblance of progress?

As a result of our lack of faith, ardent minds are emptied of the urge to see, to realize, to create truth and beauty in art as in life, and the gospel of 'insectification' walks in and takes possession of them.

I agreed to sponsor and inaugurate this Conference out of the faith which has sustained me for half a century.

Politically, I believe in freedom; in the rule of law; in the wisdom of democratic ways; in social justice. We, who draw inspiration from human rights, who believe in popular institutions and courts of law, have to stand four-square against the enemies of human freedom. We know our system is being exploited; we are conscious of being at a disadvantage against a determined and unscrupulous power group working insidiously. But democracies of the world are one brotherhood; and we, who swear by the principle of democracy, believe in the fundamental justice

of our cause, and we have to work for one world federation of free nations. The democracies, I hope, will not sell their soul for a hollow cry of peace. If there are those who seek to overwhelm them by intellectual enslavement or organised violence, they must throw up ramparts of power.

We in India need not be taught peace movements. The Father of our Nation was the modern Prince of Peace; our Prime Minister, the greatest living apostle of democracy, is also the most effective single force for peace in the modern world. India wants peace, but it is the peace of the brave and the free, never the peace of the grave.

As an Indian, as an heir to an ancient culture, I have faith in the creative ideas which the fathers of our race discovered in the days when Egypt and Babylon were infant States, ideas which have sustained India through the ages in one continuous stream of vigour. Our culture affirms, as the aim and end of life, the absolute integration of human personality, by making it the medium of expressing that joy which fades not, nor tires. It predicates Man as an inalienable centre of strength and dignity; the Moral Order, as the immutable law which shelters and upholds the universe; faith in the Absolute, the will to be Its instrument, the strength to be true to oneself by conquest of the fundamental limitations of wrath, attachment and fear and thereby reach the Infinite in this life.

Lastly, as one devoted to literature, I have faith in the urge which drives men to search for beauty in life. I adore the creative art which the world's inspired Masters—Vyas and Valmiki, Homer and Virgil, Kalidasa, Shakespeare and Goethe, Sappho and Mira have left behind them. The realm of Beauty is indivisible; it has no parochial limits, no national boundaries, no division of the sheep from the goat. I believe in the poet's right to live his own life, to feel and sing as his soul prompts, like a full-throat-



ed lark, unfrightened by the mighty snares—whether they are made of literary canons or moral pretensions, of social control or political regimentation. Forty years ago when my first novel created a storm, I—a penniless, struggling lawyer—declared my faith;

“Let me sing my song; if it wafts you to heaven, listen to it; if you dislike it, go your way; but force me not behind the bars of your ugly ways which violence and untruth have moulded. My art shall be mine; and no power on earth shall make me betray it.”

And by this faith I have stood true till today.

Intellectuals with faith can alone take up the challenge of this new enslavement. We cannot face this gospel by criticism; we must provide a new constructive faith in Man.

We must affirm that Man has a knowledge, a will and a power which can not only aspire to the Infinite, but also direct it into life itself; that his freedom and dignity are ends in themselves; that without them we cannot understand nature's plan nor establish social justice: that without them there can be neither efficacy of thought nor supremacy of the moral order, nor the expression of Beauty, nor unfading joy which is the attribute of the Divine.

## PART II

### *The Collective Organism of Life*

## SENTINELS OF CULTURE

It was with great pleasure indeed that I accepted the invitation to come to this world famous Institute to deliver the Convocation Address to outgoing foresters who have completed their training.

The cause of forestry, as you know, has always been uppermost in my mind. The Vedic culture which we have inherited was nurtured in the forests which our Aryan ancestors found covering the length and breadth of the country of their adoption. It was in our forests that sages sang the Vedic hymns and saints preached their message. In our *Puranas* there are constant references to the merit earned by planting trees. Manu, the lawgiver, laid down a heavy penalty for those who destroyed forests. Our entire religious background is composed of forest scenes: the Vrindavan of Lord Krishna, the Ashokvan of Sita, the Naimisharanya of the Rishis, and the Dandakaranya of Rama's exile.

It was to arouse mass consciousness regarding the significance of trees and to revive an adoration for these silent sentinels mounting guard on Mother Earth, that I thought of the Vana-Mahotsava; it has in fact done so. Our target of a crore of trees was exceeded, and over three crores of trees were planted. I have been repeatedly asked, how many of these trees have survived? True, the number of survivals is not very large. It is estimated that for every five saplings planted one at least will live to grow into a tree.<sup>1</sup> Our great task is to teach the man who plants a tree to adopt it as a child and rear it as such; this has to be a part of the national education. Vana-Mahotsava alone

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1. In fact out of 3 crores planted in the first Vana-Mahotsava of 1950, over 2 crores survived.

will inculcate this habit in the nation. The value of such national movements lies not in what is achieved in a single year, but, in its cumulative effect over a series of years. It is forest-mindedness which matters in the long run, not the number of trees actually planted.

I need not dwell on the role the forests play in a predominantly agricultural country like ours which is trying to build its shattered economy. Nor need I stress the importance of maintaining a covering of vegetation to condition the weather, to arrest the erosion of wind and river and to control the floods which hit the head-lines periodically. What, however, does need emphasizing is the part which forests play in agriculture which constitutes the main occupation of the bulk of our population. Nowhere are the ravages of man, of his cow and plough, so apparent as they are in the tree-lands of the fertile alluvial plains where a stage has been reached where the cultivator is compelled to burn his cowdung manure for lack of an alternative fuel. Ill-planned rural economy, resulting in the unbridled extension of cultivation engulfing grazing grounds, village habitations, tree-lands and communications, has recoiled on itself by the operation of the law of diminishing returns. The low returns per acre find an easy remedy in further extension of agriculture, establishing a vicious circle from which there is no escape. The dependance of the Grow-More-Food campaign on Grow-More-Fuel schemes, therefore, deserves wider recognition. You should exert yourselves to create a fuel forest for each village. We must produce sufficient firewood to divert the cow-dung manure from village hearths to village fields in order to restore their lost fertility.

Civilizations in the past have disintegrated and disappeared not because of external forces, but because of what they did to themselves. In Babylon, Egypt, and else-

where, we have the spectacle of proud and powerful empires losing their supremacy and vanishing under the stress, not of a foreign foe, but of a reckless destruction of their forests and the consequent loss of the soil which sustained life. Nearer home, similar trends are already discernible in the march of the Rajputana desert into the very heart of India. The shape of things to come has already cast its shadow over the land.

Foresters in the past have functioned in the splendid isolation which forests provide. The time has arrived when forestry must come to the aid of agriculture. It should be your endeavour, therefore, to place your technical knowledge at the disposal of the people and encourage them to protect and produce trees. Forests are the foster-mother of agriculture. It should be your mission to explain to the simple village-folk the role of forests in their agricultural economy and the disastrous consequences of breaking down the natural defences which tree-growth provides against hot and desiccating winds, dust storms and the other destructive forces of Nature. You must rid the mind of the common man of the notion that trees grow by themselves. You must bring home to the average farmer that forests constitute an indispensable element in agriculture, providing, as they do, timber for his hut and implements, firewood for cooking his food, green leaves for his manure, and fodder and grazing for his cattle.

Recent industrial developments have leaned upon our forest resources more and more. The match industry needs *semal* and other soft woods. Sportswear requires the mulberry; the leather industry, tanin; the rayon industry, cellulose; and even automobiles must depend on our plantations for rubber. The dependence of textiles on wooden bobbins and tamarind starch, both of which are forest products, needs no emphasizing. Other commercial

developments during recent years suggest possibilities for the extension of pyrethrum and camphor plantations. We must apply our energies and resources more and more to the production of soft woods for industry, and develop the hitherto neglected minor products such as gums, resins, fibres, drugs and oils.

The report which the Director of Forest Education has just presented to us shows us how varied and arduous is the training which you have all to undergo and how severe are the demands that will be placed on you in your future life—both physical and mental,—and I have no doubt that your training here has admirably fitted you to meet those demands. Though you will serve in different States, you are the sons of the same *alma mater*; and I trust that your *esprit de corps*, and your ambition to build up a reputation for the forest service of India, will grow with each year. I take this opportunity of felicitating you on the successful termination of your career at the College here, and sincerely trust that on your return to your respective States you will devote yourselves to the difficult task ahead and cherish the great heritage that we have in our forests.

## II

### LIFE'S CYCLE: HOW TO RESTORE IT

#### I

I CANNOT find any other phrase but Land Transformation to express my meaning. My first definition was a mere description. In August, 1950, I first defined Land Transformation as "the utilisation of land on a rational basis so that the available resources of land, water and livestock are developed to their maximum potential and the population assured of a decent standard of living."

I found, however, many activities of the Ministry of Agriculture isolated and unrelated and, therefore, insufficient. I wanted a comprehensive outlook, a philosophy of life in the soil; but why? How?

The first thing I realised was that man's well-being and progress are intimately related to the soil, the sunshine, the river system, the forests and the natural surroundings of his native land. All these form the whole; their richness and strength are common. If the equilibrium of common strength is disturbed, man dies.

The Carthaginians, the Babylonians and the Egyptians, of the ancient world were highly civilised in their time, but they emphasised man at the cost of nature, with the result that their over-exploited lands became deserts. Their empires disappeared; they were effaced from the earth.

On the other hand, many early races disappeared; the Nagas, Gonds and Todas, the Mayas and Red Indians remained under-developed and were driven to a precarious existence in forests and mountains. They found Nature, her forests and her swamps too powerful for them.

Man and his environment must act and react on each other perpetually in order to escape the fate of those races

which lived under conditions which disturbed the equilibrium, to restore it. Land Transformation therefore, is the art of maintaining the equilibrium between man and his environment.

In India, with her rich lands watered by great river systems, equilibrium was maintained for millenniums by the evolutions of the traditional art of Land Transformation, easily acquired by man on account of a very rich and easily controllable environment.

Rain came in plenty; it flooded the rivers and served the river-bank settlements. It was stored in lakes; in public tanks, large and small, in every village; in wells and tanks in most homes; in numberless trees. Every king built a lake; every emperor had to build many. Every rich man built a tank. Every well-to-do man built a well or a domestic tank for himself. An owner of a house with a tank was an aristocrat in those days; women members of the highest families kept it replenished by bringing water from the river. Villagers who dug their own tanks were the pride of the countryside. Villagers, on Bhim Ekadashi day, imitated the epic hero by the collective digging of field channels; they thought it a religious festival, but it had the effect of preventing water-logging.

The same was the case with nutrition. Every village ate primarily what it produced. Our cattle, too prolific according to modern experts, were an essential factor in maintaining the balance. Cows were sacred; they were to be kept and fed like a mother. Nandi was a god too. No higher religious merit could be earned than by presenting a studbull to a locality. This was religion; but the result was that the fields were fertilised with organic manure, and draft power and milk were provided for the community. Night soil and urine were not wasted; they were by the



natural habit of the villages, returned to the soil. Plentiful trees supplied manurial leaves also.

But the population grew fast. Religious faith which buttressed tradition was undermined. Kings neglected to build lakes; the rich ceased to provide tanks. The cow fell from the status of "mother" to being a mere animal; forests and trees were cut down; and, in consequence, rains became erratic, rivers were flooded or dried up, erosion grew apace. Cow dung, for want of fuel, was substituted for firewood. Men forgot collective activities; roads were neglected; fields became waterlogged; lands were over-exploited, and deteriorated. Thus equilibrium was disturbed and came to be progressively depressed to a low-grade stability.

In the British period, we began to forget the traditional art; we were not, however, taught modern ways except in a few demonstration farms—museum pieces—maintained under a costly administration and generally derided by the farmers. Few people realise the seriousness of this upset.

This equilibrium can only be maintained by preserving the integrity of the Cycle of Life, "*Jiwan Chakra*." I am no scientist, but the more I have thought about this, the more clearly it has appeared to me that Life's Cycle, in its two aspects, hydrological and nutritional, is at the root of the unity of Man and Nature without which life on earth must become extinct.

On earth, the quantity of water remains the same. Part of it rises to the sky by evaporation and returns in the form of rain, fog or snow. In its passage back, it runs into rivers, is stored in un-eroded soil, in tanks, lakes and reservoirs, in trees and vegetation which are mostly water. When made available from this store, it supplies the needs of men, cattle and other living things; it is used

in farms, plantations and forests; the rest, unused, runs back into the sea and evaporates into the sky. Part of it is sub-soil water, which has to be extracted and preserved. This is the hydrological cycle.

If more water is required in any country for the needs of men and animals, the storage capacity must be proportionately increased. This means more lakes, more tanks, more reservoirs, more wells and tubewells, more river dams, more river valley schemes; but above all more trees to attract rain, stop erosion and store moisture.

To make the hydrological cycle complete, therefore, Availability of Water must be equal to the Demand for Water;  $AW=DW$ . If  $AW$  is much greater than  $DW$ , man becomes a helpless victim of nature. If  $DW$  is much greater than  $AW$ , man withers, migrates or dies off. In Kashmir, Assam and North Bihar, there is water but not in controllable form. In Rajasthan there is demand but the supply is limited. In both cases, there is no equilibrium. In the fertile plains watered by the Ganges and its tributaries,  $AW$  is more or less equal to  $DW$ , and the equilibrium is maintained.

Again men and cattle and other living things want nutrition extracted from the soil through plants, trees and vegetation. Men, when not vegetarians, also draw their sustenance, though indirectly, through animal meat, from the same sources. Only a small part of it, in the shape of fish, is drawn from the water.

An important aspect of nutrition, which is often forgotten, is that nutrition received directly from the soil can sustain a much larger population than when it is derived from the soil indirectly through meat.

But the soil is not inexhaustible; it requires nutrition too, which must be returned in the shape of water, animal,

human and vegetable waste, leaves of trees and where insufficient, chemical fertilisers.

The nutritional cycle can remain unimpaired only if the nutritional Requirements of Men and Useful Animals are equal to the Nutritional Return to the Soil.

$$R(M + UA) = NRS$$

This completes the nutritional cycle. Life's Cycle is fully restored when the formulæ:

$\Delta W = DW$ ; and  $R(M + UA) = NRS$   
are fully maintained.

The nutritional cycle is based on the fact, which the ancient Chinese understood so well, that men and animals in a community can be fed only by returning to the soil, after treatment, the whole of human, animal and vegetable waste produced in that community.

This Nutritional Cycle is aptly described in the Chhandogya Upanishad:

*'Prthivya apo rasah apamoshadhayo rasah, oshadhinam purusho rasah . . .'*

(Water is the essence of the earth, plants are the essence of water and the creature—'man' is the essence of plants).

## II

The problem of completing the Life Cycle is formidable. The order of its magnitude I tried to work out in my layman's way from the meagre data which I could find.

We receive from the clouds 2,700 million acre feet of water; roughly 1,350 million acre feet go into the soil or evaporate; the remaining 1,350 million run off into the rivers, out of which only 10 million acre feet are used for drinking and other individual purposes of man and cattle, and 76 million are made available through artificial irrigation. On the basis of all our cultivable acreage and

our population, however, 450 million acre feet would be necessary for an ideal completion of the hydrological cycle. These rough estimates, however, require to be examined by those competent to do so.

If, within ten years, that is by 1961, we complete all our major and minor irrigation schemes, we should only have utilised another 100 million acre feet, while our estimated number would be 400 million persons, and 200 million useful cattle. This population requires on an optimum basis 500 million acre feet of water for irrigation and individual use, against which the expected availability, according to present indications, would be only 176 million acre feet. This supply would raise our irrigated area from 48 million acres to 75 million acres at the most, for, under our hydro-electric projects, quite a large proportion of the available water will have to be preserved for a variety of other purposes.

Now let us estimate the position of our nutritional cycle. India has at present 362 million men, 174 million cattle, 80 million goats and sheep, and 70 million monkeys and wild animals. In 1961, India is likely to have 400 million persons, 200 million cattle, 88 million goats and sheep, and 77 million monkeys and wild animals.

Today we produce about 45 million tons of cereals, 8 million tons of pulses and gram, and import 3 to 4 million tons of food; for our cattle, we also produce about 750 million tons of roughage. As against this, on the basis of the balanced diet recommended by the Nutrition Advisory Committee and other authorities, the requirements of our present human and cattle population should be 51 million tons of cereals and 1000 million tons of roughage respectively, besides about a million tons to feed monkeys and wild animals outside the forest area. Men and useful animals in this country, are therefore under-nourished to

the extent of 7 million tons of cereals and 250 million tons of roughage.

On the same basis we would, in 1961, require 56 million tons of cereals and 1,100 million tons of roughage, besides a million tons of food for monkeys and wild animals. The increase in food production to achieve this standard should therefore be equal to the gap between ideal requirements and our normal production, if imports are to be eliminated.

The question is how can this gap be filled?

- (1) The increase of water supply, if achieved as planned, can by itself irrigate only another 27 million acres, or produce about 5 million tons of additional cereals at the most.
- (2) If trees are to play their parts in the work fully, instead of 84 million acres of forests as at present, we should have 180 million acres of trees planted. If, according to our programme, we plant 40 crores of trees in 10 years, we will only have planted by virtue of this 1.5 million acres. But even this may help considerably in providing subsidiary food, manurial leaves, regulating water-supply and removing erosion to some extent.
- (3) Our cultivable area is 400 million acres; 123 million acres out of this are partly eroded, 244 million acres are sown and 62 million acres are current fallows. Out of 93 million acres classified as cultivable waste, only 10 million acres are definitely known to be cultivable. If, by 1961, we bring 10 million acres under cultivation, we may add roughly another 3 million tons of food.

We have, therefore, still to make good the balance of 50 out of 75 million acres with

assured water supply which may reasonably be expected to produce cereals. That is where intensive cultivation must come in as the most vital item in the programme which depends upon improved seed, compost and fertilizers.

- (4) At the present level of intensive cultivation, the rate of increase is about 33% of 1/3rd of a ton which represents average production, that is, 1/10th of a ton over 50 million acres. This however is a very doubtful proposition, because all of an area may not come to the same level of fertility or cultivation and these factors may not remain constant. How then are we to safeguard ourselves against these deficiencies? The answer lies in the utilization of manures, oilcake, fertilizers and night soil in a scientific manner.

The following table shows the estimated requirements of these manures, etc. that would be necessary to make good our deficiency by raising the average yield per acre from 820 lbs. to 1,300 lbs.

### *Requirements of Manures*

(in Million tons)

Am. Sulphate	Superphosphate	F.Y.M.	Night Soil	Cakes
1.2	0.9	22.5	7.9	1.7

For a theoretical increase of the yield to an even higher level, e.g. 2,000 lbs. per acre of cereals, the total quantity of manures will have to be increased as follows:—

### *Manures required*

(in Million tons)

Am. Sulphate	Superphosphate	F.Y.M.	Night Soil	Cakes
4.2	2.7	67.5	24.0	5.2

The theoretical yield of 2,000 lbs. per acre of cereals

may not, however, be realised all over the irrigated areas on account of other limiting factors over some of which we have no control. But as against this some increase is expected to take place in the areas outside the intensive cultivation blocks as a result of improvements effected by the general activities of our Programme.

### III

Here comes the importance of livestock. In the nutritional cycle, they perform the great function of converting the otherwise unwanted organic matter into a form in which it can be used for plants.

Mother cow and the Nandi are not worshipped in vain; they are the primeval agents that enrich the soil—nature's great land transformers—that supply organic matter which, after treatment, becomes nutrient matter of the greatest importance. In India, tradition, religious sentiment and economic needs have tried to maintain a cattle population large enough to maintain the cycle if only we would realise it. We have 134 million cows and bulls, and 55 million draught bullocks out of this number help to produce food and supply water. Their dung and bones provide the most valuable return to the soil. Our cattle produce 18 million tons of milk.

On the other hand, our *per capita* availability of milk is 5 oz. against the required quantity of 16 oz.; for our milch cattle have deteriorated in breed, are under-nourished and diseased. Against a million good bulls necessary for serving our cow population, we have only a few thousands. Rinderpest, that fell disease, kills every year a number which may be anything between 1 to 2 lakhs and seriously undermines the capacity for work and milk production in a large number of cattle. The vast number of our cattle means a great drain on the food and roughage resources of the cows, their waste is not utilised as it should be—even

though it is more precious than gold—to restore the nutritional cycle.

We won't eat beef; we will not let others slaughter cattle; we cannot feed them well, for they share between them: fodder which will satisfy only 70 per cent of them, and concentrates sufficient only for 20 per cent of them. The presence of useless and infected cattle, eating up the meagre fodder resources, is a national calamity.

Useless cattle must therefore, be segregated in waste lands, where they will neither breed nor be a burden on our food resources, and where their waste will enrich the soil. Key villages, key farms and the eradiction of the rinderpest are therefore, an essential part of Land Transformation.

The second factor which seriously disturbs the cycle is modern civilization leading to urban concentration. It has three characteristics:

- (1) The demand for water in urban areas is very much higher than the availability of water;
- (2) The nutritional requirements of men and useful animals therein are much larger, and their capacity to return nutrition to the soil is much reduced by artificial habits and unscientific disposal of waste;
- (3) Their dependence on the artificial paraphernalia of elaborate clothes, costly houses, furniture, paper and newsprint and match sticks, destroys trees, the storehouses of water, much faster than they can be grown, and compels the diversion of lands from nutrition to meet these needs.

When the urban population in a country increases, DW exceeds AW;  $R(M+UA)$  far exceeds NRS; and the storage facilities for water and soil availability are affect-



ed. Life's Cycle is disrupted to such an extent that the needs of urban areas grow.

Our habits are another factor which seriously disturbs the cycle.

Night soil and urine are wasted; cow dung is burnt; trees are cut down or not grown in sufficient numbers; leaves are not available in plenty; erosion spreads in all directions; and bones are lying useless or are exported.

Men and useful animals are deprived of their food through the failure to slaughter monkeys and wild animals by sentiment. Men will not change their food habits by taking to potatoes, sweet potatoes and vegetables, the yield per acre of which is high, nor do they stop wasteful food habits which have become almost inveterate.

Highly elaborate river valley projects, large-scale afforestation and the reconditioning of eroded soil are all necessary for bridging the growing gap in the cycle. But in India we are too poor and ill-organised to even make substantial progress in closing the gap by the methods devised by rich nations. There is only one way: "We must replant the philosophy of life in the soil." That is the basis of the Extension Movement which must not remain an agriculture officer's dream; it must mean the Land Transformation of villages one by one by which every attempt is made to restore the Cycle of Life through the collective enthusiasm of the villagers themselves directed to the definite aim of Land Transformation. This is a religious duty. An Avatar was needed to save the earth once; this time in India, the earth has to be saved by the labour of millions in whom He dwells.

### III

## ANIMALS: AN INTEGRAL PART OF LIFE

### I

I AM indebted to the Diamond Jubilee Committee for inviting me to be the chief guest on this occasion when, the grandparent of all our veterinary institutes in India, though it has reached the age of 65, is still young enough to celebrate its 60th anniversary. Incidentally, this reminds me of my own case. Five days hence, as the calendar has it, I shall be 64 years old. Bombay friends celebrated the jubilee four years ago; Delhi friends celebrated it two years ago; Ahmedabad friends, who are ready with a jubilee souvenir, still sturdily maintain that I am not sixty yet!

What qualifications have I, I wonder, to interest myself in animal husbandry. To adapt a well-known phrase from our sacred books, I know the cow but little—no more than a moving picture; by no more than the milk that I take, unless the bhaiyya has put in more than the usual proportion of water. My further knowledge is only derived from the memory of a cruel wound she inflicted on me once when I was young; from the schemes on paper when, sitting in Bombay, I planned the development of the Kankej herd at Anand; from her tremendous problems, again on paper, which are to me, as a minister, a nightmare. But perhaps that is the way I have to repay my debt to her; for, I am told, that from the moment of my birth I preferred the milk of mother cow. And I have loved her since!

The horse—another branch of my small knowledge of animal husbandry—has been for me a very disappointing animal. When as a lonely young boy, I sat alone in an empty carriage which my father kept, dreaming of

grandeur, my only companion then was the horse in the stable. I told him of my dreams; and he, in the manner of the worldly wise, snorted in contempt. When I rode him in the golden garments of a bridegroom in 1901 the wretched thing walked so slowly in the procession, which went over half our town, that he would not let me meet my bride for over four hours. Whenever I tried to woo him by riding him, that was thirty years ago, he would never let me sit in the saddle without having to clutch it, or giving me a severe backache. I recall days of poverty, when I yearned to possess a fine coach and two prancing steeds: but alas! when money came, the horse again gave me the slip, and I had to buy a rattling tin-can, which you glorify by the name of motor car.

This early friendship was perhaps at the root of my depiction of the horse in glowing colours in most of my novels, except once only, in my *Jaya Somnath* when I fell out of love with the horse and fell in love with a she-camel of the desert. There she ran through the burning desert to apprise the Rajput warriors of the approach of Mahmud Ghazni and laid down her life in defence of the Motherland and the guardian god of India, Somnath. But the horse lives in my heart—the ungrateful creature—as the most beautiful living symbol of strength and speed and power. When Richard III said, “a kingdom for a horse,” he said more than he knew. The horse is a kingdom in himself.

The career of your Institute has been fully described by the previous speakers. It has trained 1,100 veterinarians, some of whom have served foreign countries like Malaya and Brazil; it influences 258 dispensaries in the State of Bombay; it possesses an efficient biological products section which is going to be housed in its own buildings at Poona.

Within the limited means at its disposal the Institute has had a very long and useful career. With enthusiastic experts like Mr. Phadke and Director Chada it could be a great centre, if more funds were provided. I do not believe that financial stringency is the real cause of our inattention to animal husbandry. As we have to build up India into a great welfare state, money will always be scarce—for half a century or so. But the real reason is deeper. Love for animals is with us a sloppy, sickly sentiment. We, present day Indians, have no genuine appreciation of the value of our animals in the economy of the country. Certainly we have not the love which cherishes, protects and enters into the life of the animal. To our ancestors, Nandi was a god whose upkeep was a matter of high religious importance; mother cow was a living goddess of plenty, living in the same house, surrounded by the affection and devotion of the family. We had the national festivals—*Gopashtami*, sacred to the bull and the cow; *Dasshera*, sacred to the horse who was to be worshipped as a symbol of victory. We have degraded them; they are just animals; and our sin will be visited on our heads till we repair this wrong.

India is first and foremost an agricultural country, it is going to remain so in the foreseeable future; it must be developed as such; and whoever fails to see it invites condemnation. Forestry, agriculture and animal husbandry are inseparable and inalienable factors in its life, all of equal importance.

Our problems closely associated with veterinary science, are many and complicated. We have 174 million cattle—a quarter of the globe's total; 80 million goats and sheep; a meagre 1.1 million horses: and 0.3 million donkeys and mules. Our national sentiment forbids the slaughter of bulls and cows; and our

horror of taking animal life and our deep-seated conviction that animals like men are but different stages of the Divine Essence provide irresistible subconscious urges. Thus the animals are an integral part of the living cells of India's organism, constituted of humans, animals and trees and our soil, sunshine and water. Any solution to the problem of life in India, must therefore, take into account the peremptory need to restore the life cycle not in terms of killing off superfluous animals as the West would do, but by a planned increase in their quality, utilisation of their products and waste and of bullock power, the most important factor in agriculture.

Our first problem is one of pasture. Our cattle population requires 1,000 million tons of roughage; we have only 750 million. In 1961, we will require 1,100 million tons of roughage. But pasture lands are encroached upon or neglected. We produce roughage sufficient for only about 70% of our cattle and concentrates sufficient for only 20%. Wild animals, a menace to agriculture, share what we should keep for useful animals, because, again, we are too sentimental to kill them outright.

Our existing breeds of cattle and other useful animals are degenerating. There are a few first class stud farms for horses, but the race of pedigree horses has not yet influenced the miserable, puny breed of country horses; we have only a few thousand good stud bulls against the requirement of a million; no countrywide attempt is being made to consider the problems of camels, sheep, goats and poultry.

A large percentage of our animals are affected by fatal or decay-inducing disease like rinderpest, ranikhet diseases in poultry, pleuro-pneumonia in sheep and goats. The total mortality from these diseases, as from parasites and other contagious diseases, is enormous. Rinderpest alone

accounts for 60% of cattle mortality, and where it does not kill it leads to growing deterioration in milk yield and draft power. The lack of organisation in the matter of food resources has drawn the intelligent attention of the country; not so the lack of organisation in matters relating to useful animals, for the burden is invisible and the pace of deterioration is too slow to attract notice, much less to create panic.

Some of the earlier speakers have been good enough to give me some words of praise for what I have done; my regret is that I have not been able to do what I intended. I blame this on the fact that the term of my ministry synchronised with two very bad years when nature, locusts and panicky men combined to provide a very serious distraction.

A solution has however, been found in the Key Village Scheme for the serious and urgent problem of useless surplus cattle which we will not slaughter. It has a provision for *gosadans*—asylums of useless cattle. Six hundred of them would be required for the whole country; but they cannot be brought into existence all at once; their countrywide organisation requires vast uncultivable areas and money. Only three of them, as models, have been established, and it is planned to establish 169 *gosadans* within a few years. As a preliminary step, however, the All India Goshala Council of the Government of India has been reconstituted as the Gosamvardhan Council, which, in addition to looking after the development of *goshalas*, will look after the whole problem.

Two items connected with animal husbandry which find a place in the Ten Year Land Transformation Programme are the production of 60,000 stud bulls a year through Key Farms, and the complete eradication of rinderpest.

The Key Farm Scheme, with its emphasis on artificial

insemination, has already been brought into operation. By the end of March, 100 Key Farms covering 2,00,000 cows or she-buffaloes will begin work, yielding about 20,000 stud bulls next year. In the multiplication areas of the Key Farms, steps will be taken to eradicate the diseases at once by the enforcement of the Livestock Improvement Act and the Control of Contagious Diseases Act. The two centres at Aarey and Anand, which provide milk for Bombay, will be two of the biggest of such farms in Bombay.

Five Extension Schools which are to be established to train officers for Land Transformation, including a Land Army in the country, will also have Key Farms. The Anand Training School, which will serve the western zone comprising the States of Bombay, Saurashtra, Cutch and Rajasthan, was opened on 30th January, 1952. We should aim at establishing at least one Key Farm in each of our 250 odd districts in the country within ten years. For the present these centres will begin with a breeding plan and disease control, and will be associated with the extension activities which are projected for early beginning in at least 30 centres.

Disease control, which falls within your sphere, has also received attention. B and C States, which have under-developed departments of animal husbandry, are being helped to reorganise their resources. A target of 7,000 assistant veterinary surgeons, one for every 25,000 head of cattle, is aimed at.

## II

I did have some ideas however, to which I could not give practical shape.

I intended to have a camel-breeding farm in Rajasthan; for the camel, in spite of its inartistic shape, is a very useful animal for our desert areas and needs to be looked after.

Another important activity is the breeding of poultry ; a potential source for the increase of our food resources. Recently the neglected poultry section of I.V.R.I. has received some attention.

Another matter of great national importance, about which I feel much concerned, is the future of my friend, the horse, with whom the development of veterinary science is also closely connected. The Indian horse is a valuable means of transport in a vast country of uneven distances like ours. He is the inseparable companion of man in manly sport and adventure where stamina, courage and enterprise are involved ; an indispensable aid in maintaining internal peace and order and developing national defence. We require at least 600 first-class horses for the Army every year ; and for want of Indian horses we have to import a large number of good horses. He is invaluable for manufacturing protective sera, a priceless commodity for export. But he is neglected ; the horse-breeding industry is degenerating ; our good breeds have gone to Pakistan. And so far we are not only indifferent to him, but we are taking steps to ruin his future.

The reforms which I introduced in the Western India Turf Club gave a great impetus to the horse-breeding industry. As a result, stud-farms increased from 10 to 41 ; about five crores of rupees were invested in horse-breeding ; some of our horses won races in the highest class against keen foreign competition ; our horses fetched prices up to Rs. 91,000 instead of Rs. 3,000 in 1938 ; and in a few years our horses could have been a very valuable export commodity—an asset to national finance. I also had a scheme—only possible with a flourishing horse-breeding industry—to establish a network of horse-breeding stations, riding clubs, and travelling veterinary dispensaries associated with our race courses.



Since Vedic times race courses have been the only nursery of high-stepping horses. Indra himself was *Ajipati*, the Lord of the Race Course. But with the birth of freedom we entered an age of transition when, as historical experience shows, the line between moral wrong and legal wrong tends to be blurred. At such times plans for the swift redemption of human weakness by the seemingly easy method of legislative coercion find favour with zealous temperaments, and racing sometimes becomes an easy prey. It was not therefore possible for me, when in charge of animal husbandry, to make any organised attempt at horse-breeding.

I feel sad, very sad indeed, that the country has neglected the horse in the scheme of general national well-being. But my sadness is relieved by my certain knowledge that any attempt to enforce sinlessness by legislative coercion is doomed to failure, as it has always been so in the past ages. The horse will come into his own; the race course will flourish unafraid. A new race, like that of the immortal Chetak, the heroic companion of the dauntless Rana Pratap, will be born in India. The Konarak Horse will be admired not only in stone, but in life. Indian poets will sing passionate hymns to the new horse as did the Vedic *rishis* to the divine Dadhikravas.

Dadhikravas, fleet footed and true,  
Flies over his beloved course like a bird;  
He speeds with strength;  
Swift like the falcon gliding through the air,  
He speeds on lending new swiftness to each step.  
He, Dadhikravas, draws himself together;  
He runs along the winding course;  
With vigour, he overspreads the five-fold peoples,  
Like unto the Sun, lightening up the waves.

## IV

### EDUCATION IN LAND TRANSFORMATION

I SHARE in that pleasure already expressed by the President at finding that you have made time to attend this Conference, on the decisions of which will depend the future of the agricultural well-being of the country.

I ventured to convene this Conference because, with my experience of the last two years in dealing with our food and agricultural situation, I felt that its problems should be considered at the level of educationists.

The problems arise from the following main facts:

(1) At present we produce 45 million tons of cereals annually as against our requirement of 51 million tons to feed 362 million people adequately. With our population increasing at the rate of 4 millions a year, in 1961 the requirement would be 56 million tons. The draft outline of the Report of the Planning Commission envisages an increase of 7.2 million tons in five years. A considerable part of available foodgrains in the country is lost because of unscientific handling and storage, wasteful food habits, and through the destructive activities of pests, monkeys and wild animals.

(2) Our sources of supply are limited and not at their best. Out of our cultivable area of 400 million acres, 61 per cent is crop-yielding; 16 per cent is current fallow; 23 per cent is cultivable area, but now wasted. Out of our total cultivable area 123 million acres are being eroded or exhausted by primitive methods of farming. Only 48 million acres are irrigated; the rest depend upon a freakish monsoon.

(3) We have artificial irrigation of the order of 76 million acre feet of water against a requirement of 440 million acre feet. When we have completed our hydro-

electric schemes, say, in ten years, we will have 176 million acre feet of water against a requirement of 489 million acre feet in 1961.

(4) The average yield of wheat per acre in India is the lowest in the world, a little less than 9 maunds compared with the highest yield of 58 maunds in the country; the average yield of paddy is 820 lb. per acre as against the highest yield of 12,000 lb. Since 1913, England has increased her output of basic crops from 7 to 30 tons per man. India can advance only through the fulfilment of the Land Transformation Programme, i.e. intensive cultivation of 48 million acres with assured water supply; the cultivation of 10 million acres of cultivable waste; the planting of 30 crore trees and the production of 60,000 stud bulls a year, and the eradication of rinderpest which destroys the draft and milk capacity of our cattle.

The fulfilment of the Programme will depend upon the knowledge, ability and organizing power of those who are to carry it out; upon the means which can be provided to put this knowledge to use; and above all upon the development of a collective impulse for enthusiastic agricultural work as a supreme form of national service.

The three factors necessary to secure the fulfilment of the Land Transformation Programme are:

- (a) agricultural officers and workers;
- (b) an educated public creative of the atmosphere which inspires and sustains organizational activities;
- (c) the farmer on whose response results ultimately depend.

The Central and States Ministries of Agriculture—the principal agencies for the mobilization of human resources—were, a few years ago, subsidiary departments of the Government. Now they have been called upon to bear a

tremendous burden for which they have not yet been fully equipped with trained personnel and adequate funds. The bulk of the personnel of the Agricultural Ministries—mostly graduates in Agriculture—consists of white-collared officers with an authoritarian outlook, who stand apart from the collective work of villages, and have little experience of handling farmers. Nor do they know how to change the farmer's outlook on agricultural problems nor to inspire him to do productive work on a co-operative basis.

Our town-bred educated men, our most effective agencies for national uplift, make good officers, good lawyers, even good scientists. Their attitude towards agriculture, however, is that of an ignorant snob. Their knowledge is restricted to the food they eat and the milk they drink. They think that the handling of soil, or the planting of trees, or the mixing of compost is dirty work, beneath their dignity. The very atmosphere in which the educated live, their vigour, skill and inspiration, which should permeate the other sections of the people and thus ensure rapid progress, are, unfortunately for the moment, devoid of the life-giving touch and smell of the soil. Agriculture is, in consequence, denied the service of the best brains of the country.

The vast majority of our people, who depend completely on agriculture, are clever in their own way, but, being illiterate, are familiar with only primitive methods of farming, subject to a law of succession which aggravates the problem of fragmentation of land with every generation. They are, therefore cut off from the influence of the small and very inadequately equipped band of agricultural workers by a formidable psychological barrier.

The problem before us is therefore threefold:

First: how to create a well-equipped agricultural worker,

Second: how to make educated men soil-minded.

Third: how to break down the psychological barrier in the minds of our farmers.

This is not merely an agricultural problem; it is also a psychological and, therefore, an educational problem. To solve it, the philosophy of our life must be replanted in the soil; the urge must be created in the Collective Unconscious of the nation that Land Transformation is, in fact, the act of restoring our Life Cycle, the only plan to ensure our survival.

As I conceive it, we can achieve this end only in three ways:

First, by making our agricultural graduate not an officer but an agricultural extension worker or a highly trained practical farmer. This would involve a suitable change in our university courses to include a theoretical and practical course of agricultural extension and a practical training on the land for a part of the term. The graduates should be taught not merely the basic principles but also their practical application under conditions in which agriculture is carried on in India. The knowledge of agriculture should be related to rural life. Our agricultural departments have failed to bring about appreciable improvement in the standards of rural life because the officers do not realize how all aspects of life in a village are interrelated. Agricultural colleges should therefore, aim at giving an integrated view of rural problems to the graduate. A suitable curriculum should be framed with this end in view. Every agricultural college should also take up systematic rural reconstruction or extension work in at least 10 villages in their area so that professors and their students may come into daily contact with rural problems.

Second: by setting up a Council of Agricultural

Education, so that education in agriculture may not be isolated from the needs of the country in its uphill struggle to place our greatest industry, (giving Rs. 4,150 crores, i.e. 48 per cent of our national income), on a footing of efficiency. Last year, I found that even research in agriculture followed its own isolated and lofty path; we have now tried to relate it to the immediate needs of the people. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has been altered to become an All India Agency for research and extension in Agriculture. It is now for you to help in the setting up of a co-ordinating agency for the country which will from time to time relate education to the realities of the situation and make the development of our agriculture the supreme object of our national effort.

Third, by replanting in the soil the philosophy of life of the educated man and woman, and thereby creating in them a national impulse for agricultural work. This implies that at every stage of education, primary secondary and higher, every student should have some knowledge of agriculture and some living contact with land in its three aspects—agriculture, animal husbandry, and forestry. It must also be one of the aims of education to provide every student, no matter in what he specializes, with opportunities not only to have a living contact with land, but also to train in land transformation activity in the villages during the vacation months. How is this to be done is a question which I have been asking myself for months.

The answer is simple. We must have a vast organization of educated extension workers. India cannot have a large stipendiary land army as in the U.S.A. Unlike some totalitarian States she cannot regiment men into a land army to do compulsory agricultural work. For us the only way is to provide an atmosphere and training

for young men and women before they qualify as graduates, by inducing them to take up some land transforming activity as a part of their general education; by making them feel the glow of pride and enthusiasm in building up the nation's greatness brick by brick; and by converting Land Transformation into a faith and philosophy of life.

I have already placed before the country the idea of the Land Army; spasmodic activities are being carried out by auxiliary branches in some colleges and schools. In some parts of the country villagers have collectively taken up some land transforming activity. The help of the Ford Foundation will enable us to open five training schools in the country in a short time, where colleges can send some members of their staff to learn to organize the Land Army Branch. It is also proposed to organize a service of Land Transformation trainers who could be loaned to institutions to train students. Such training will give to the country the auxiliary branch of the Land Army, the steel-frame which will uphold the structure of the nation's new agricultural set-up, the agency through which to enthuse the farmer with a new collective outlook towards land transformation, the instrument to break the psychological barrier which separates the farmer from the leaders of progress and bring to the country a new consciousness of the need to secure agricultural salvation.

It is a laborious task; but once we realize the essential nature of this aspect of our national life, the Council of Agricultural Education will study and take such steps as the nature of the problem requires.

## V

### THE GOSPEL OF THE DIRTY HAND

#### I

I CONFESS I have been converted to the "cult of the dirty hand". When I accepted office, I was untouched by soil-mindedness. For the past 22 months, I have lived intensely in the soil and have been worried by its problems. I have come to realize that man has soared high, but lost his foothold in the soil. He has worshipped Shri Ramchandra, the Divine in man; but has forgotten that even He is inaccessible without Sita Mata, the daughter of the furrowed Earth.

Man has since his first appearance plundered the earth. In modern times, his technological skill and unnatural vanities have broken the Cycle of Life. We have robbed the earth of the green glory of her forests. We do not conserve the soil we exhaust. We do not care to preserve the water for which we thirst. We do not render to the earth those things which are hers.

The mountain sides are becoming bare; the rivers are silting up; the soil is losing its fertility. In every land on the globe, as well as in India, erosion breathes desiccating winds and the earth fails to yield the harvest which is needed.

Food is under-produced in the world—especially so in India. With Japan, we share the disgrace of being a nation enslaved by foreign bread.

There is yet time if we heed the warning. The whole world including India is becoming aware of the supreme problem of survival on earth.

We are tending towards a co-operative world effort in the search for improved seeds, effective fertilizers and means to enrich the soil. But more than these materials,



we need men, disciplined and energetic, with trained hands and wide vision.

You, the representatives of the co-operatives, can alone supply such men, the organization and the drive to rescue the Motherland from the impending danger.

But, above all, we want the faith, the will and the pledge to be soil-minded. This pledge has been delivered to us by the *Vedas*—our Rock of Ages—in the glorious morn of India's life:

Thou shalt not spurn food;  
That is the Pledge.  
For, life is food, and the body the eater thereof,  
In life alone rests body, and body in life.  
Thou shalt not forswear food;  
That is the Pledge.  
Thou shalt grow food in plenty;  
That is the Pledge.  
For Earth is food,  
And Akash enveloping it is the eater thereof.  
Thou shalt not turn away the hungry from your home;  
That is the Pledge.  
Food, therefore, shalt thou grow,  
More and ever more,  
By every means, and all.

अन्नं न निन्द्यात् ।

तद्भक्षतम् ।

प्राणो वा अन्नम् । शरीरमन्नादम् ।

प्राणो शरीरं प्रतिष्ठितम् । शरीरे प्राणः प्रतिष्ठितः ।

तदेतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितम् । ३. ७ ।

अन्नं न परिचर्षीत ।

तद्भक्षतम् । ३. ८ ।

अन्नं बहु कुर्वीत ।

तद्भक्षतम् ।

पृथिवी वा अन्नम् । आकाशाऽन्नादः । ३. ९ ।

न कंचन वसतो प्रत्याचक्षीत ।

तद्व्रतम् ।

नस्यायया कया च विधया बहूवन्नं प्राप्नुयात् । ३. १० ।

## II

But in the matter of soil, I take a broader view of the problem. It has oppressed me considerably for, whichever way we turn, we have to face it. We cannot survive, if we continue to utilize only 76 million acre feet of water for artificial irrigation, as at present, against a requirement of about 400 million acre feet. Our present irrigation resources supply only 23 per cent of the cultivated area in the country. Half of this is served by the Government canal system; the other half, by minor irrigation works, most of which require repairs, desilting, enlargement, or realignment. In Madras, for instance, there are 35,000 tanks conserving 2.5 to 3 million acres, all these requiring attention. Crop-cutting surveys indicate that an increased production of paddy is possible in that State: by irrigation alone production would increase by 67 per cent; by manuring, 33 per cent; by the use of improved seed, 20 per cent; and by combining irrigation with manuring, 56 per cent. We must examine this matter from the point of view of maximum output per unit of the minor irrigation works in relation to the frequency and depth of irrigation in the different agro-climatic regions of the country.

Out of the target of 7.2 million tons of additional food production fixed by the Planning Commission, 2.3 to 2.5 million tons will have to be secured from the 12,580,000 acres of *barani* land which first require to be irrigated. To achieve a similar target of 45 lakh bales of cotton, we will either have to divert land from foodgrains, which will mean importing milo from abroad at a cost of Rs. 37.5

crores, or irrigate the land already under cotton at a capital cost of Rs. 30 crores. The main problem of this country, therefore, is increasingly one of irrigation.

The maximum utilization of rain water either by suitable contour bunds, by minor or protective irrigation, block-bunding, as practised in Delhi, Ajmer and in Madhya Pradesh, or by the construction of table-top terraces for growing paddy, as in the Naga Hills, is equally important as the maximum utilization of ground water.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has organized work on water conservation and the control of soil erosion at the dry farming stations. This problem is more serious in the South where the soil lacks permeability and, in consequence, the problem of drainage water is more acute. The possibilities of dry farming require greater attention.

In this connection, however, I cannot but emphasize the long term view of our land resources. I wish ecological studies were actively pursued in this country and the relationship between human life and land, water, rivers and forests more closely established. With this in mind our national forest policy has, therefore, been integrated with production. It has been formulated on the basis of four paramount needs of the country.

First, there is the need to check denudation of forests in mountainous regions, especially in the Himalayas on which depends the water supply of the river systems of the Indo-Gangetic basin—the rich fertile core of India; to stop the rapid erosion in the ravines along the treeless banks of the great rivers, which deprives the adjoining fields of their fertility; and to halt the steady encroachment of the Rajputana desert upon the fertile plains around it.

Secondly, there is the need to establish belts of trees, wherever possible, for the amelioration of physical and

climatic conditions for the general well-being of the people.

Thirdly, there is the need to ensure continuous supplies of grazing material, small wood for agricultural implements, and, in particular, firewood in order that cow dung, so valuable as a manure for increased food production, shall not be used as fuel.

And lastly, there is the need for timber and other forest produce for defence, communications and industry.

The first three vital needs which the forests must fulfil form part of our overall problem of crop and soil.

One serious problem which faces India is that several million tons of food materials and millions of tons of valuable top soil are carried away annually to the sea in the muddy waters of the Brahmaputra and the Ganga. This destroys the nutritional cycle of plant life and progressively breaks the life cycle in India.

Sheep and goats also largely contribute to our problem of erosion through wind and water. The marching menace of the Rajasthan desert, is as you know, partly wind-made and partly goat-made. The goats destroy every vestige of vegetation long before it can flourish to enrich the soil. If you choose sheep and goats, you choose erosion and destruction; if you choose cattle, you serve the soil and win prosperity. Also if you choose goats and sheep and allow the cattle to deteriorate and become diseased, you choose the certain road to early doom.

Wherever I go I find that trees are being thoughtlessly cut down by villagers and the authorities more or less connive at this vandalism. We have, however, achieved some success. The *Vana Mahotsavas* have awakened the country to the need for more trees; the first steps; the scheme to establish an afforestation belt in the Rajasthan desert has been taken; and I hope that a Soil Conservation Department will be opened in the Forest Research Institute

as I have planned. But this tremendously long and arduous work must be undertaken, as far as possible, throughout the country and in right earnest. It was with this in view that I recently overhauled our National Forest Policy. In any planned drive for land transformation, it must be implemented.

I should like to add a few general observations on the main problem before the country. For the success of a really effective country-wide production drive, we shall have to depend on the willing co-operation of millions of small farmers; and we shall never be able to create in them the willingness to put in greater effort and produce more if conditions are not such that the small man in the village feels that he is being given a fair deal.

The Land Transformation Programme prepared by the I.C.A.R. is already working. A drive for minor works will certainly accelerate its tempo. The fifty Community Projects which are being planned will enable us to introduce the Land Transformation Programme in 50,00,000 acres of land within about two years.

In these projects it is necessary, however, that land transformation should remain predominant. We must guard against land transformation becoming subordinated to the idea of 'uplift', however laudable this may be; for, to our middle class workers and officers, uplift will come more easily than the utilization of land, cattle and forest resources to secure maximum yield. We must transform the soil and make the whole country soil-minded first.

The plan to eradicate rinderpest, the key farms, the fuel forests, the extension training school, the land army, the scheme to make college students work on the land during their holidays and to learn the Gospel of the "Dirty Hand" are all calculated to plant our philosophy of life in the soil. The Council of Agricultural Education,

founded recently, is making preparations to secure the revision of courses for agricultural degrees in the light of this outlook. I consider this new sense of values to be highly essential; it is the only psychological basis for a real production drive. India is an agricultural country, and soil-mindedness must colour the whole of our national outlook if we are to survive.

At the same time, I must give warning that a production drive will not succeed merely by economic and financial manoeuvres. The farmer's natural instinct is to weigh his efforts in the scale of financial gain; in poor countries like ours it has always obstructed a production drive in the national interest. The drive must have a mass emotional appeal which will produce the enthusiastic will to work and make extra effort a thing of religious significance. In Russia and China this appeal took and is taking the shape of resistance to the capitalist countries in general and America in particular; mass consciousness, while labouring to produce more, feels the urge to fight a vast battle of freedom. With us, what with the newspapers discrediting all that is done, and the anxiety of our experts and officers not to let our "objective" attitude be blurred by emotions, and our desire not to court resistance by emphasizing the war aspect of the food drive, we have failed to generate mass enthusiasm for greater production, and I fear we will find it hard to do so. An extension movement, as in America, will not do. We will have to supplement our efforts by a movement which appeals to our mass consciousness. The *Vana Mahotsava* and the Land Army, *Bhumi Seva*, were intended to make such an appeal. Such movements must be backed by all the resources of the Central and State Governments, and by the propaganda machinery at all levels. All activities must be co-ordinated into a Land Army

drive, with the nucleus of a small paid force of organizers, and with all the paraphernalia and propaganda necessary to prepare for the war of "New Freedom—Freedom from Foreign Bread" This drive must be associated with some cause which will release collective emotion, otherwise it will fail to create mass enthusiasm.

## III

Agricultural production, you will readily agree, has little in common with factory production. Production in agriculture is an organic process. It depends on rain and sunshine, personal skill and labour, laws of heredity and national tradition, economic movements and scientific methods; it has ultimately to rely on the collective will to produce and the vitality of that organism of life which lives, moves and has its being within the physical determinants—soil, rivers, mountains and climatic conditions—of a given country. This organism of life consisting of vegetation, animals and men is one and indivisible. It is a single cycle of life. If the cycle is broken the organism is crippled; its life begins to disintegrate. Erosion starts; forests disappear; water courses are silted up; soil loses its fertility; and man's feverish efforts to patch things up end in disaster. The desert slowly spreads its deadening finger over the land where lusty life once flourished.

Four thousand years ago the sacred Saraswati—now deified as the Goddess of Learning—was the mother of the waters; it ran its course through the Punjab and Rajasthan. On its banks the great *rishis* planted their *ashramas*, the first universities of the world. There, they sang their stirring chants to the gods of sky and earth, the gods of rain and fertility. There they founded a culture we style Aryan, which is the priceless heritage of our land. The Saraswati disappeared; it is now a strip of sand which

we call Ghaghar. The cities on its banks which were once bustling with life are buried under the sands of Rajasthan, five fathoms deep. Where Vasishta and Vishwamitra once offered sacrifices to the gods, sand storms now spread destruction.

Prabhas on the south coast of Saurashtra was a great international port long before the days of Babylon and Nineveh. Through its harbour poured the wealth of the ancient world, and adventurers went forth to the markets of Asia and Africa. It was a garden city. The temple bells of its ten thousand shrines sounded the glory of the guardian god, Somnath, the Lord of the Moon. Pilgrims, Indian and foreign, came to it in search of happiness in this world and salvation in the next. For fifteen centuries there flocked the kings of India to pay homage at Somnath's eternal shrine.

The port is gone. Its proud monuments to heroic deeds, the splendour of its carved shrines and the beauty of its pleasure gardens are destroyed and their ruins lie buried in sand. Tomb upon tomb marks the path of Death as it spread through the centuries to strangle this mighty centre of heroism, wealth and piety; sand dunes, like grim sentinels, stand guard over its ugly empire.

How were these changes wrought? Not by fire and sword, but by the folly of man which broke the Cycle of Life. Water failed and man knew not how to restore it. The soil turned barren and he knew not how to revive it. He failed to render to the earth those things which are of the earth; he made no heroic effort to restore the cycle of life. And he is gone.

We seem to be moving in the same direction. The glorious forests of ancient Naimisharanya, Nandanvan, Vrindavan and Dandakaranya are forests only in myth and song. Our mighty rivers are going the way of the



Saraswati. The great irrigation works which our kings delighted in building to tame the Rajasthan desert—the Sahasralinga Sarovar whose excavation has disclosed one of the wonders of the world and Bhoja Sagar, the lake *par excellence*—of ‘*tāl to Bhopal tāl*’—are waterless stretches of sand. The desert of Rajasthan marches on. The sides of the wooded Himalayas are losing their cover of vegetation. The river banks are cut by ravines. Millions of acres of land are being eroded. We conserve but a small part of the run-off water which we need. Goats, sheep, cattle and wild animals are multiplying; and we are multiplying too. The soil is becoming exhausted while the mouths to feed are increasing.

The prospect is terrifying. Our very survival is in danger. A challenge has been offered to our courage and tenacity and our will to work; and it is a timely challenge too. We are a free nation now, the architects of our own future. We are awake to the impending danger; we have science and technology to help us; and the consciousness of world unity brings us the help of friendly nations. But it is an uphill struggle; a struggle to transform our land, to utilize land, water, cattle and men, to restore the hydrological and nutritional cycles; a struggle, grim and long, to link up the broken segments of the Cycle of Life and thereby revitalize the organism of life.

The secret needed to win this struggle is simple: to be soil-minded; to realize that the roots of the organism of life are in the soil; and to begin with that and not with things spiritual as we so love to do. This is the Gospel of the Dirty Hand which we must learn anew. We talk of religion and philosophy, of the conquest of the spirit, of culture; we build scientific institutes and organize agricultural production and extension. We tabulate, total up and analyse statistics. But we do this, detached from the living

organism; in white collars and clean shirts; on paper and in offices—not in mud and rain, farm and forest; not with the spade and hoe. We wander in the realms of the mind or individual material existence, but forget that all this is rooted in life; and that life in its turn springs from the organism made of trees, animals and human beings; which in their turn depend upon the soil, the sunshine and the climate. But let us look at our present condition.

At the time when the Land Army was inaugurated, I invited a group of students from Delhi University. They turned up in tennis shoes and faultless white trousers. They were afraid of dirty hands. My boys of the Pusa and Anand Institutes, who look to me for guidance, only took to the gospel when I sent them to the fields to dig trenches. Perhaps they think me a passing infliction.

Thirty-five years ago I employed a domestic servant, a farmer's son. When he came to me he knew the gospel of the dirty hand. I made him a chauffeur, and started him on the road to forget the Gospel. He is now of the 'soap-using fraternity', and his sons and brothers are city-bred clerks and ignorant of the Gospel. This is literally the fate of tens of thousands of farmers' sons in our land.

My mother was an upper middle class lady of a well-to-do family. She tended the cow, when we had one; fetched water from the river; cleaned the house every month with cow dung paste; threshed and stored the grain from the fields, ground corn, cooked and washed, nursed the sick and aided the helpless. A lady of position in her own time, she knew the gospel of the dirty hand and was not ashamed of it. My daughter never soils her hands. The cook, the servant, the ayah, the nurse, the hired workman all help her to keep her hands clean. She is not an exception; she is but an illustration of our growing generation. Indeed,

tens of thousands of our women do not know the smell of the earth.

Large cities have sprung up in India during the last 50 years. Greater Calcutta has a population of about eight millions, Greater Bombay of four millions, Madras, Delhi, Ahmedabad and Kanpur have almost of one to two millions each. Every one of them is a strain on our food resources, water and fodder. None of their residents helps in restoring the hydrological or the nutritional cycle. Few of them know the Gospel of the Dirty Hand and those who come there long to forget it. With every new city that springs up, the gap in the cycle of life increases.

But why talk of others? I am a great culprit myself. I talk to you of the gospel but my hands are dirty only with the ink of my fountain pen. I have been wrongly educated. I have not been brought up to be faithful to the gospel. This is a growing malady. The Gospel of the Dirty Hand is forgotten, ignored, looked down upon and decried. And we rush headlong to our doom. It is not so only in India. This problem arises wherever snobbery-ridden modern civilization spreads its tempting net. This malady has to be studied thoroughly and eradicated.

I ask myself why this is so. The problems of agricultural extension and production tend under the pressure of modern conditions to become detached. We isolate the body from the spirit, material and social welfare from moral strength, the soil from the spirit, science from culture and culture from a still higher law. Naturally we fail to catch a glimpse of the truth. The truth is that the spirit is involved in the mind; the mind in the life of the body; the life of the body, in the organism of life, in which vegetation; animals and human beings are inseparably associated; and the organism, in the sunshine, soil and the water resources of the region. Conversely, each of the

former is the flowering of its predecessor in the series. And the life of the earth is again involved in the life of the universe, in a cycle which is too remote for our vision.

If you want to transform the spirit of man you must transform the body and the organism of life. Similarly, if you transform the land, the process of transforming the body, mind and the spirit goes with it. It is a single process resulting in a two-sided transformation. The Life Cycle cannot be restored by the mere use of ammonium sulphate and the execution of river valley schemes or even by the planning of forests and tree lands. To restore the cycle we must transform the values of life. We must transform the mind of the individual, make it conscious of the unity of men and cattle and trees. We must replant it in the soil. This also implies a change in the individual and his ways; in social conditions and land tenure; in the spirit and ways of co-operation; in education and health and in the individual and collective outlook.

The Collective Unconscious, which we in our pride of scientific knowledge ignore, has to be mobilized not merely to transform the material soil, but to create a love for it as the source of all strength; to imbue in us tenacity, courage and doggedness; to develop and maintain efficiency at a high level; to generate mass strength and produce in people the enthusiastic will to work. This is what the Gospel of the Dirty Hand teaches. For the soiled hand of the worker on the land has the magic touch which starts the unbroken chain of action and reaction from the soil to the spirit, transforming the very organism of life.

Let me trace briefly, how we are bringing, step by step, this Gospel back to India.

First step: an integrated production programme; the integration of forestry with agricultural production; the

research institutes harnessed to practical work in the fields.

Second step: shaping the I.C.A.R. as an overall organ shaping our transforming activities from the soil upwards.

Third step: the setting up of a countrywide organization for the field worker, who will be the nucleus in the widening circle of Ford Foundation training schools, agricultural college centres, community projects and finally, this seminar as a clearing house of ideas and experiences.

Fourth step: the reorganization of production activities and the Central Tractor Organization; intensive cultivation of irrigated areas; research in wheat rust and rice, and manurial problems; popularization of compost schemes and *Gramvanas* (fuel forests); the establishment of *Gosamvardhan kendras* (key farms) and the Land Development Corporation. But these steps are only preliminary preparations for carrying the Gospel to the whole country.

Fifth step: a big step was taken when forestry was reorganized, the Dehra Dun Forest Research Institute became an international centre; erosion and denudation of forests raised into national problems of the first magnitude; the control of the Rajasthan desert planned and inaugurated; *Vana Mahotsava* accepted as a national festival, restoring tree-consciousness to the country; and National Forest Policy formulated.

Sixth step: a campaign for a network of minor irrigation schemes in co-operation with the Land Army.

Seventh step and a very difficult one: the creation of soil-mindedness among the educated; *Indian Farming* re-organized: and agricultural publicity made conscious of two fundamental tests. First, for whom is the publicity intended? Secondly, what is the person addressed expected to do?

The spread of *Vana Mahotsava* to distant villages served as publicity and training in soil-mindedness, a ritual of the Gospel. It was a lesson in reaching out to the Collective Unconscious of our people.

*Bhoomi Sena* was but another similar step. It mobilized urban consciousness to some extent. In several parts of the country our school and college boys have been planting trees, constructing roads and digging channels as part of the Land Army. Through these two movements the Gospel has to be spread. The urban mind must turn to the soil and find kinship with the toilers on the soil.

But the gospel has yet to penetrate the educated mind in the country. The Vice-Chancellors' Conference has, however, decided to reorientate agricultural education so as to include practical training. The Council of Agricultural Education has been founded; its working section is meeting here to revise its courses. With the beginning of the next academic year, the Universities will probably begin to revise courses. Five Agricultural Colleges in the country, including the one at Pusa, will be centres of extension projects. Our college students have, however, to be made soil-minded. A scheme will have to be framed by you to start the Land Army auxiliary training classes for students.

With the aid of Point Four experts we are studying the problem of large scale publicity. I should like to draw your attention to one important aspect of publicity. Informative publicity has no power to move the collective mind to action. Such power comes only from an idea compressed into an expressive and significant phrase which moves men to action. We know the power which the words *Satyagraha* and "Quit India" wielded in our recent history; they opened the floodgates of mass response. *Vana Mahotsava* had the good fortune to become such key

words. The Land Army or *Bhoomi Sena* are passing into our stock of moving words wherewith to propagate the Gospel. The Key Village is a departmental phrase: it has no life: the thing it represents has neither a key nor a farm. Unless the words *Gosamvardhan kendra* are used, the idea will have no appeal.

I coined the phrase Land Transformation—*Bhu Parivartan* or *Bhumi Parivartan*—just to emphasize the anchorage of our movement in the soil. By using the word 'Extension,' you are shutting the door of mass consciousness on the work before you. The phrase Land Extension has no appeal to our sub-conscious mind, it was coined in America and its full significance is known to only a few. Even 'extension' in education is only familiar to our academic world, and has no meaning for the vast number of our educated men; to them 'extension' is just enlargement. It has no significance in terms of soil, to the farmer it is strange and unfamiliar, a new-fangled, incomprehensible idea. Moreover such a term is likely to encourage our middle class workers and officials to by-pass the unwelcome Gospel of the Dirty Hand. Let us use words which evoke a response in our sub-conscious minds.

Bhagirath was the divinely appointed master irrigator of India, bringing Ganga from God Shankar; and God Shankar's companion, Nandi, is the divine stud bull. Kamdhenu, the cow of plenty. Sita Mata—venerated throughout the country—is the daughter of the furrow; Baladeva, the lord of the plough, belongs to our pantheon. Shri Krishna, the divine cow-herd, the saviour of Govardhan, the lover of the cow, the tree and the flute, lives in every Indian heart. And *Mahavaraha*—the Divine Boar, who is God Himself—uplifted and transformed the earth. These are the names which will release springs in our

Unconscious and make of Land Transformation a vigorous cult.

But ideas, if they are to move, must be accompanied by the mass activity of the farmers themselves. That is why I plead for a Land Army. Let us make it a mighty national force.

From a Land Army, our next step will have to be a Farmers' Union or Association, which I suggested to the country when I inaugurated the Congress of Co-operation last month. Everybody interested in Land Transformation through business, vocation or taste must combine into a non-official national organization, if we are to achieve our aims quickly. It is a great work : the time is ripe.



## VI

### IF I WERE A KHALIF

I AM very happy to be in your midst this evening. The happiness, however, is not unalloyed for this will be the last time that I will visit the Pusa Institute as the Food Minister. I am happy because—If I were to describe in the language of our villages—it is a 'Farewell Hooka Party.'

I use the word "hooka" with no disrespect. Though I have never smoked a bidi, a cigarette, a cigar or even a hooka, I have always held the hooka in great respect. It is the aristocrat among the media for enjoying tobacco. There is nothing cheap, vulgar, horrid or obnoxious about it. You do not ruin the carpet by its ash; you do not puff out the smoke into other people's eyes; you do not ruin your lips by the touch of nicotine. Its beautifully delicate shape adds grace, charm and dignity to the smoker's personality; and the rhythmic noise that you make when you smoke the hooka often reminds one of the music of the spheres.

When the parting guest bids farewell to the host in the villages on my side of the country, they hold the farewell hooka party. Then the fatigue of the daily toil is forgotten. The memories of insults and hatreds vanish. The host and the guest find that there are no nobler beings on earth than themselves, the common partakers of the hooka. Blending their views in the divine melody of the hubble bubble the two then talk of old achievements with perfect self-complacency and look to the future with rosy optimism. Under the inspiration of the hooka, for a little while, they create a better world in the past, the present and the future—better indeed than God could create. This is such a 'Farewell Hooka Party'.

Your Director has paid many happy tributes to my

achievements. I can do the same thing to the Pusa Institute. Your Institute is one of the three research institutions—and the most prominent among them—which appertain to the Food Ministry; Dehra Dun and Izatnagar are the other two. To its well-deserved reputation in the past have been added, during the last two years, many other achievements to which you, Mr. Director, have already referred. You have been good enough to attribute this progress to me. But I will tell you a secret. During my first few months in office, there was a conflict between your institution and myself. The Pusa Institute wanted its role to be one of dignified *status quo*. I wanted it to move fast and catch up with the times. I decided not to visit it till it accepted the role of a vigorous centre of agricultural development. And in the confidence of this Hooka Party, I can let you into the secret that I won.

During the last two years, the Pusa Institute has been set on a new path of increasing activity and expansion. The addition of the College has given it large scope. The villages which are assigned to it and the land army units have made it the model for the whole of India, as it should be, being the premier agricultural institution in the country. Now it is a Key Village Centre and also a Centre for the Development-cum-Training project. In short, it has become a great centre wherefrom I hope the 'Gospel of the Dirty Hand' will spread, not only to the whole country but even to those foreign lands which will send their students here to be housed in the hostel, of which I am laying the foundation today. The more I have thought, the more I am convinced that not only the salvation of India, but the salvation of the whole world lies in creating new centres in which the transformation of land, is the basic dynamic force.

The human race has passed through the stage of

philosophic or cultural isolationism. The doctrine of *maya* appeals to us no more; equally the cult of materialism, which treats a human being only as an animal needing material comforts, has proved barren and dangerous to humanity. We cannot separate the Spirit from the matter, for, as I have said often, the Spirit rests in the mind, the mind in the body, and the body in the collective organism made up of human beings, animals, vegetation and land. Culture, therefore, which transforms values realised in the Spirit, cannot be disconnected from agriculture which transforms the soil. Land transformation necessarily involves the transformation of man's spirit, exactly as transformation of the spirit involves the transformation of land.

It is this vision which I have tried to translate into actuality, particularly with the Pusa Institute as the central laboratory in India. I want its boys—my boys as I would proudly like to call them—to go out into the world not merely as post-graduate students in agriculture, but as crusaders of this cult of transformation, the 'Gospel of the Dirty Hand.' You will be gossellers who will go about the countryside, transform the land and rescue it from scarcity, distress and extinction. On this occasion, I, therefore, charge you with the duty of being missionaries who will convert India to our Gospel. And I pray that as pioneers of the Land Army, you may be granted the zeal, the enthusiasm, and the irrepressible energy to convert hearts to create an enthusiastic will to work.

Our country is passing through critical days. We have too many problems, too many difficulties, too little time in which to meet them and too few trained hands with which to deal with them. Our soil is over-burdened by a plethora of useless cattle and wild animals. As a people, we

are too prolific. Our farmers are extremely poor; our land is being eroded; we have neither sufficient means nor money to meet all demands.

But our land is the Mother of plenty, if we but know how to make it *sujalam* and *sufalam*. We have in our people a very intelligent and industrious race, hard-working, tenacious, patient. We have freedom to mould our own destiny, a privilege which we had lost for a thousand years. We are led by men who have a faith in our future, men of high character and unwavering enthusiasm. But we must be men of faith, self-dedicated instruments for the achievement of that great purpose for which our Motherland, Bharat, has lived through the ages. As pioneers of the Land Army, I want you to dedicate yourselves to the great work of Land Transformation, of resurrecting our soil with faith in yourselves, in the Gospel and in the Motherland.

My two years will be over tomorrow. They have been difficult years; years of hard work and great anxiety; years when my energies were mainly directed to prevent collapse rather than to build afresh. But there have been compensations too. It has been a great adventure for me, who knew nothing of agriculture or animal husbandry; it was a trial too, for often enough I had to pray for strength; and many were the moments when God gave it to me, thus bearing me up. But in all these things I had the close co-operation of everyone: the President and my ministerial colleagues, right down to the chaprasi and the humble villager who began to plant trees at my call of *Vana Mahotsava*. Never, never, shall I forget, never shall I cease to be grateful for this noble response so generously given.

And, now, about the future. After the fashion of the 'hooka party', I must say something about your future, and what I would have done, had I been some one else,

The Pusa Institute, as I have said today, is growing into one of the great agricultural institutes not only in Asia, but perhaps in the world. If you maintain your enthusiasm, in the future, as you have done during the last two years; if within the coming two years you become a living centre of a key-village and a development-cum-training project; if you maintain the faith in Land Transformation and not allow it to be engulfed by the mere upper class uplift outlook, you will be a model for the whole world. From here the students will carry the Gospel of the Dirty Hand not only to the distant parts of this country, but to the Middle East and to South-East Asia. And after five years, I look forward to coming in your midst again to see for myself whether inspiration has been going out to the whole world from here. What I have failed to achieve, I expect you to realise.

Now, one thing more, I came to this Ministry, as I said, ignorant of agriculture. I learnt many things; I did many wrong things and some things right too; and there were also many things I wanted to do, but could not. Over our hubble-bubble, therefore, I may be permitted to say what I would have done had I been a Khalif of ancient days—say Khalif Haroun-al-Rashid of the Arabian Nights.

If I had been a Khalif:

First, I would have preserved a few specimens of our wild and useless animals in sanctuaries, and killed off the rest rather than let them share the food necessary to build our future.

Secondly, I would have sterilized all the useless and diseased cattle living in this country, segregated them in the forest areas, and made money out of their bones and skins.

Thirdly, I would have compelled every village to repair, de-silt and enlarge its wells, its tanks and every

possible water reservoir in order to preserve and utilise the maximum amount of the huge volume of water which we stupidly allow to run off;

Fourthly, I would have enlisted every able-bodied person to join the Land Army, to contribute whatever he could towards land transformation. No person would have been allowed to graduate nor to join nor to remain in Government service, nor be elected to any office, unless he did some work in the Land Army. Moreover no one would have been respected who refused to do this duty. If I had had my way, I would have seen to it that no girl offered her hand to a man who was too big to learn the Gospel of the Dirty Hand.

Fifthly I would have seen to it that a tree was planted every time a child was born, whenever a marriage was solemnized or when a death occurred.

And, lastly, and perhaps this is the worst of my dreams, if I had had the power, I would have seen to it that every decrepit, diseased, weak person under medical supervision, ceased to burden the land with feeble children.

And I would have done it all by propaganda, persuasion, education, moral compulsion, and—very wicked of me—by legal compulsion too. I would have stopped thinking, discussing, planning, regulating—and insisted on ‘*doing*’ first, *doing* next and *doing* last.

But, the light is sinking in the hooka; the water gurgles no more. Alas for me!

I am but one of many in a well-regulated modern republic under a Constitution which has more hedges than roads, and among a people who often think action to be an unpardonable crime.

But our hooka is broken. The age of the Khalifs is gone, and we must break up our farewell party.

But I have no doubt that some day, somehow, our Parliament will have to do what the Khalif would have done.

And, so, thank you and good-bye!

PART III  
*The Binding Forces*



# I

## STABILITY: THE NEED OF THE HOUR

INDIA is passing through a crisis. The origin of the crisis can be traced back to the British when they ruled this country. They encouraged separatist tendencies among our people, gave a veto to the Muslim League thus barring our political progress, and ultimately subjected the country to partition. Pakistan, first conceived as a revolt against the imaginary Hindu domination in India, later became a symbol of the *conquistador* spirit. Even now, when Pakistan is an independent state, it forges its internal strength by keeping alive a passionate hatred of India. This collective hatred resulted in eighty lakhs of Hindus being driven out of Pakistan. On its own admission Pakistan committed aggression in Kashmir. It has economically exploited its minority community, and has failed to come to a settlement with regard to crores of rupees of evacuee property. It has followed a foreign policy of which the main theme is vilification of India. Even during the time when our food situation was at its worst, when the sympathy of the whole world was with us, when the American people as a whole were anxious to give us a food loan, it was Pakistan who worked hard in the U.S.A. to see that we were not given it.

For the last year, from the Prime Minister of Pakistan downward, war threats have been hurled at India. The air rings with the cry of '*Jehad*'. Anyone who has been reading Pakistan newspapers will agree that there is a concerted attempt to induce war hysteria among the Muslim masses of Pakistan. Their army was moved near the Kashmir frontier; loudly it was proclaimed that Kashmir must be 'liberated'; today some of their papers talk of India being 'liberated'; a word coined by the Soviets,

which means nothing more nor less than ugly and bare-faced aggression by armed might.

We have borne all this provocation with exemplary patience, because we do not believe in war. With the exception of a small and thoughtless section of our people, nobody wants the partition to be revoked. Our Prime Minister is a man of peace; he wants no war, either with Pakistan or with anyone else in the world. His whole foreign policy, which he considers his life work, is based on throwing the weight of India on the side of peace—first, because peace is the legacy of the Father of the Nation, and, secondly, because without it India cannot be rebuilt. If we had wanted war, we could have marched our armies into Pakistan when it first raided Kashmir. We could have invaded Eastern Pakistan last year when a communal orgy drove thousands of Hindu refugees into West Bengal. But India did not do it, for she wanted peace. Even the strength of our army has been reduced. We still hope that some day Pakistan will be cured of her passion against India.

Though we want peace, we do not want the peace of the weak and the cowardly. We want peace which comes from strength and a love for justice and fair play. But recently, when it was found that Pakistan was indulging in provocative breaches of the cease-fire, that its armies were being marshalled on our frontiers and war hysteria was being fostered, the Government of India had to take precautions to see that our line of defence remained impregnable. It was purely an act of self-defence. Our Prime Minister has solemnly declared over and over again, that we do not want war, that we will commit no aggression. He has asked again and again for an unequivocal "no war" declaration from Pakistan; it has not been forthcoming.

This is the crisis. Does Pakistan seriously want war? I do not think so. She knows that India's armed strength

is more than a match for her own. The United Kingdom and the U.S.A., in spite of their partiality towards Pakistan, know fully well that a military conflict between India and Pakistan may kindle a world conflagration. Pakistan and her friends also know that India is in deadly earnest; that India will not tolerate any act of aggression; and that, if Pakistan invades India including Kashmir, we shall fight Pakistan with all our strength and resources. We have not won freedom in order to be enslaved by Pakistan. On this point the whole country is united. Faced with this eventuality, there will be no parties, no Hindus and Muslims, but only a solid India fighting for its freedom and the sacredness of the Motherland.

If Pakistan does not want war, why does she develop this war hysteria? The first reason is that her internal condition is such that the morale of the people cannot be kept up without their being lashed into war fury. The second reason is that it wants to bully India into submitting to its claim for Kashmir and to frighten the U.K. and the U.S.A. into acknowledging its claims. But we know that our case with regard to Kashmir is a just one. We are willing to have a plebiscite in Kashmir under conditions when a peaceful and just plebiscite can be held. We shall not forsake Kashmir as a result of intimidation, coercion or injustice.

But there is a danger; when a nation develops even a mock fury, when its army and its people work themselves up to a white heat of passion, a moment comes when self-restraint disappears, and the rulers are stampeded into a military conflict. This has been the cause of many wars in the past, and if it happens in Pakistan, we will know how to deal with it. But in the meantime our people should exercise the greatest self-restraint. They must guard

themselves against panic and war hysteria. They must not lose their heads. The stirring up of internal communal feuds would be the height of folly; even to attempt to stir up such feuds would undermine our strength. At this juncture there are none so mad as those who project prehistoric communal feelings into the present.

We hope that wiser counsel will prevail. Our Prime Minister has recently asked Pakistan to abate its war hysteria to discuss differences in a friendly atmosphere and settle the outstanding claims justly. Calmly and quietly, but with the determination of the strong, we must face the situation. We must seek a just peace with Pakistan by all and every means. If a war is forced on us, we should fight it to the end.

In order to face the crisis we must keep before ourselves, before our ministers, judges, lawyers, businessmen, farmers and industrial workers, before everybody—the fact that the security and stability of Free India are the breath of our life. In our love of ideas and ideologies—natural to a nation with a long tradition of Shastris and Pandits—we sometimes miss this supreme fact. Our greatest handicap in facing the crisis is a feebleness of mind which fails to perceive that noble ideas, civil liberties, economic stability, political objectives, party squabbles and communal rivalries can only have a place within a stable and secure State. If the people indulge in these subsidiary objectives and leave the essential basis to be safeguarded by ministers alone they will court disaster. Let us, therefore, maintain our strength and defend the stability and security of the Motherland in every possible way, then we shall have faced the crisis.

## II

### THE RULE OF LAW

I have great pleasure in inaugurating the Law Society of the Lucknow University. In doing so, I cannot but refer to the role which lawyers have to play in a free India.

Among certain people there is a superstition that lawyers are an unnecessary class; that they create litigation, are responsible for all the difficulties in life, and prevent people from behaving according to their own likes and dislikes. These complaints come from several classes. First there is the ordinary man who dislikes lawyers because of the general rule that ignorance hates knowledge. He thinks that, if the lawyers were eliminated, the law courts would disappear, and there would be no litigation. But he never inquires—for he has no such inquiring mind—as to what would be the ruling principle in a society in which there was no law of contract, no law of procedure, no law of evidence, and no constitution. These people forget that there is only one choice—either the rule of the *lathi* or the rule of law; according to their logic, the rule of the *lathi* is better than the rule of law. If the rule of law for which the lawyer stands were eliminated, we might revert to barbarism.

There is another class which does not seem to have any use for the lawyer, the exuberant politician. His view is that the executive—not including his political enemies—should be supreme; that if the majority which supports him in office, accepts any law, no limit should be placed upon it; that the law courts, in strictly interpreting the law or rejecting it in the light of fundamental principles, are arrogating to themselves the function of the legislature. In some cases, this criticism is even carried to the extent of condemning the Constitution because it invests

the Supreme Court with the power to lay down the limits of law.

This attitude ignores the very nature of political society. If there were no constitution and no courts to interpret laws, the law would only reflect the arbitrary will of the majority in the legislature. This will, as we know from experience all over the world, often tends to be guided by passion, prejudice and even vindictiveness. Sometimes it is fragmented by power rivalries and party factions. Where legislatures have a well-drilled majority, it is apt to mistake the will of the ruling group for the will of the people; but human nature being what it is, that will is not often guided by foresight or detachment.

It is, therefore, of the highest importance that, in a well-governed State, stability and equality should be guaranteed by the rule of law. This rule is not the arbitrary rule of the majority decision. It is the rule of law enacted with due deliberation and after due consideration of the opposite view and interpreted by the courts in the light of the fundamental law. It is the only guarantee against complete autocracy or irresponsible majority rule.

Our Constitution has been the mature product of collective deliberation. Sovereignty vests in the people, not in every citizen but in all the citizens organised into a republic. While the power of social control is vested in the legislature, it is limited by the individual freedom of equals guaranteed by Fundamental Rights. Thus a balance has been struck between social control and individual freedom. The only organ which can keep this balance even is the court assisted by lawyers.

In the ultimate analysis, the prejudice against lawyers arises from two sides—one from the ignorant man who thinks that the lawyer alone hinders the course of *Ramrajya* which is lurking round the corner; the other

from the impatient politician who finds in the lawyer an obstacle to an unrestricted exercise of his power to enforce the maximum of social control which he thinks best for society. Under pressure from these two sides, I have seen a fear creeping over the lawyers of this country. The practitioners are afraid to fight authority and the judges have been known to shrink from asserting judicial independence. It will be an evil day indeed for India if our lawyers, practitioners and judges fail to maintain the independence which the Bench and the Bar have built up during the last century. We will then deteriorate into the slaves of whoever is in authority; public spirit will die; and organised violence will be left as the only remedy for securing justice.

In these matters we must therefore take an objective view. The legislature is entitled to translate popular will into law. The judiciary has to assert its independence and defend the Constitution. Unfortunately, both sides, in their love for new-found power, have been over-enthusiastic. We, legislators, believe that we should legislate the nation into an Utopia in the twinkling of an eye, irrespective of our history, tradition, culture and national habits. The judiciary believe that it is up to them to protect the nation from hurried legislation that is too far-reaching in its implications by judicial fiat which are sometimes legislative or executive in character. Time and experience will bring the necessary restraint to the enthusiasts on both sides. In a healthy State, it is the duty of the legislature to secure stability and not ceaseless change; and it is the duty of the judiciary to develop judicial detachment and not to work up the ardour of a champion.

But one thing is clear. We are in an unfortunate age. In the name of social welfare we seek to control every

activity and amenity of life by a network of hastily made laws. As a result of this, there would be not a shred of freedom and not an avenue of redress were it not for the lawyers who are unable to step in, and interpret and uphold not only the law, but the fundamental principles of a well-regulated society. If this would only be realised, the unfortunate conflict in some of our States, between the executive and the legislature on one side, and the High Courts on the other, would soon disappear.

This imposes a great responsibility on the lawyer, whether he is a student, a practitioner or a judge. His role in modern society is twofold. First, he defends private causes and personal liberty. Secondly, principles and precedents are established by these carefully weighed decisions so that the rule of law is interpreted as the law of life.

The equipment of the lawyer must therefore be, not only specialised but also based broadly on a larger view of human relations. General culture can alone give this view. A lawyer's functions are not confined to a specialised vocation. He has to deal with commerce, property, succession, fundamental human relations like marriage and adoption, conflict of laws, and those relations between nation and nation which are daily becoming governed by international law. This requires a study of ancient and modern literature, of history and jurisprudence, of international relations and human values. To speak from my personal experience, I have had to deal with contract and property law, with the law of the ancient Romans, Hindus and Arabs, with international law, with personal law going back to the Vedas and the Sutras, to the Quran and the custom of the Gonds, and with the early religious doctrines of the Fatamite Imams, the Syrian Christians and the *Bhagvad Gita*. And, curiously enough, I have had



to deal with the topographical particulars of *Golok* where Vaishnavas go after their death, and to study the throne on which Shri Krishna sits with Radha and Lakshmi. And—from the sublime to the ridiculous—I have had to study the technique of gamblers, speculators and black-marketeers. There is, as you see, no branch of knowledge which does not help the lawyer to broaden his vision, sharpen his wits, and improve his advocacy.

With the rule of law and its interpreter, the lawyer, is therefore bound up the future of human freedom. The conflict in the modern world arises from the warring claims of human freedom enforced by law and of human regimentation enforced by violence. Lawyers, by their profession and training, are the high-priests of human rights, and, as such should have faith in freedom. If, under the pressure of world forces, they sell their birth-right, for a mess of pottage, for a passing 'ism' or a transient nostrum for prevailing ills, they betray the cause for which they stand. They should therefore acquire a broad philosophic view of human relations: otherwise their voice will be only the hired eloquence of money-hunters. In truth, the lawyer's voice must be the voice of justice, truth and stability. Only if they speak with that voice in this mad age, careering forward in the race for breathless change, will they fulfil their noble mission of stabilising life, as did Manu, Justinian and Vijnaneshvar in the past.

### III

#### THE BOOK IN INDIA

I AM indebted to the organisers of the All-India Library Conference for inviting me to open this Exhibition of "The Book in India". Incidentally, I am grateful to them for giving me an opportunity to tear myself away even for a brief moment, from the problems of this mad modern world, from the tales of massacres and surrenders, of scorched earth and heaven defiled, to the joys of literary and artistic achievement.

I have always worshipped at the shrine of the Word, the Word which moves and creates. So far as human life is concerned I subscribe to the opinion of Saint John: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God."

The romance of the Word is the most fascinating of all romances. It was born in the throat of some early ancestor of ours in the late Cenozoic period as a laborious repetition of grunts and growls expressing some crude sentiment of fear or sex. After the lapse of an incalculable period of time the Word transformed the destiny of man when some enterprising cave-dweller, while drawing a picture of some memorable hunt, was inspired to draw a graphic presentation of an object in such a manner that it represented an idea connected with the object itself.

The picture-writing of the pre-historic period then became the highest achievement of man. Such pictograms were, after ages, developed into the art of writing, when a picture was used not merely to represent an idea associated with the object drawn, but to represent a sound. The next triumph was achieved when, as in the Egyptian hieroglyphics, a system of phonetics was adopted in which a picture stood for the sound of each syllable in a name.

The Egyptians and the Babylonians, whom we meet at the dawn of history had already developed a system of syllabics. The Egyptians who were the first to evolve hieroglyphics are credited with the earliest books written on papyrus.

The next landmark on the Word's journey was erected by the Sumerians who are believed to have entered the Euphrates Valley with a civilisation which was centuries old and far in advance of any contemporary civilisation, save that of Egypt. Their origin, which was long considered to be mysterious, can now be traced to the Indus Valley, where a highly civilised people lived long before 3000 B.C.

No written documents have come to light to prove that India was the homeland of the art of writing. But the large number of seals and other articles showing a high degree of art, which have been discovered at Harappa and Mohenjo Daro, prove the existence of a pictographic script which has yet to be deciphered.

I will not detain you with the well-known achievements of the Babylonians and the Assyrians in the art of making books which as you know, were not only written on papyrus but also engraved on stones and baked clay. They were the first race, in so far as the available materials indicate, to establish libraries on a large scale.

The early Aryans, however, scorned to inscribe or engrave the immortal Word on transient material. They preferred to rely on human memory, which they converted into an undying vehicle for the transmission of culture. But the fact that the *Vedas* were not committed to writing need not lead us to the conclusion that the art of writing was unknown in the Vedic days. Non-existence need not be fallaciously inferred from an absence of evidence available to our generation. The exact connection between

the Indus Valley pictographic scripts and the ancestor of the early Indian scripts like Brahmi and Kharosthi has still to be established. But before the fifth century B.C. Indian scripts had already attained wonderful maturity. Their wide currency is proved by the reference to no less than sixty-four scripts in the tenth *adhyaya* of the *Lalitavistara*.

The script which is collectively called Brahmi in the form in which it first makes its appearance, is highly developed. The arrangement of the alphabets is strictly scientific. The principles of phonetics are properly observed. This perfection can only mark the culmination of a long continued process of evolution in the art of writing in India.

From and after the fourth century B.C. we have the evidence of foreign visitors to India to prove that Indians used birch-bark, cloth or the tender inner bark of trees on which to write. But the Indian climate so different from that of Egypt, has deprived us of the literary documents which the Indians of that age bequeathed to us.

The writing materials used in later centuries were many and varied, and possibly did not undergo a change for many centuries. The earliest known manuscripts on palm-leaves to which a date can be assigned are possibly a few fragments in the Godfrey collection which are of the fourth century A.D. and the Hourizi manuscripts of the sixth century A.D. The Chinese chronicler Hieun Tsang attests to the wide use of this material in preparing manuscripts, which were either written in ink or cut with a stylus and blackened with charcoal or soot.

*Bhurja-Patra* or birch-bark was also widely used for this purpose. The oldest manuscript on *Bhurja-Patra* is the *Dhammapada* in Kharosthi, dating from the first century A.D. The famous Bower manuscript and the

Bakshali manuscripts are also written on the same material.

Another material, possibly brought into use later, was cotton or silk cloth. A silk band inscribed with ink was discovered by Buhler, and a manuscript written on cloth dated Vikram Samvat 1418 (A.D. 1351-52) was found by Peterson at Anhilvad Patan.

On rare occasions wood, skin and stones were also used as writing materials. The Bodleian Library at Oxford possesses an Indian manuscript written on a wooden board. It is possible to infer from the *Vasavadatta* of Subandhu that skins were used for writing purposes. About two dozen documents written in Kharosthi on leather were found by Stein in Chinese Turkistan. Dramas written by the Cahamana King, Vighraha IV, and his court-poet Somadeva have been found carved on stones at Ajmer.

Paper, of course, was freely used from early times, though none of the manuscripts available can be dated earlier than the 13th century A.D. But in view of the fact that Indians are known to have made paper out of cotton since the third century B.C., it is permissible to infer that books were written on it. And if it is true, as Mackay and others surmise, that there is a specimen of an ink-well found at Mohenjo Daro, it may be taken that the use of ink was known in pre-historic times in India. The professional scribe was also an accepted feature of Indian life from the earliest times. He was known as *lipikara* or *libikara* in the fourth century B.C., *divirapati* in the seventh century A.D. and *Kayastha* since the 11th century.

The manuscripts were collected and preserved in libraries, styled *Bharatibhandagaras* or *Sarasvatibhandagaras*, which were attached to temples, monasteries, palaces and even to the private houses of the rich. The poet Bana,

about A.D. 620, kept his own reader and possessed a considerable private library. Hieun Tsang is said to have carried away a large number of manuscripts amounting to 657 texts to China, loaded on twenty horses. When he visited Vallabhipura, about A.D. 640, it was a powerful city rich in wealth and culture and contained a large library of sacred books. The fame of its university had reached China, for Sthiramati, a Buddhist sadhu, at the beginning of the sixth century, and another Gunamati, at the end of the same century, were invited to China.

The Sramana Punyopaya in A.D. 655 took away 1,500 texts from India to China. King Bhoja (11th century A.D.) had a large royal library which the Chalukya Emperor, Jayasimhadeva Siddharaja, after his conquest of Malwa about A.D. 1140, transferred to Anhilvad Patan. In the days of the Chalukyas of Gujarat, who were great patrons of learning, many libraries were founded. Hemachandra wrote books, possibly collected them, and inspired his pupils to write them, and the Jain temples treasured them in the *Bhandars*. The only copy of *Devicandraguptam*, the last play by Vishakhadatta, the author of *Mudrarakshasa*, was available to Ramachandra, the pupil of Hemachandra, from one of these libraries. The library of the Chalukya Vishaladeva contained the copy of the *Naishadhiya* on which Vidyadhara had written the first commentary of the poem, as also the manuscript of the *Kamasutra*, according to which the *Jayamangalatika* was composed by Yashodhara. This Vishaladeva collection also contained one of the manuscripts of the *Ramayana*, now deposited in the library of the University of Bonn. Vastupala, the great minister of the Vaghelas, was a poet and a great patron of literature. He established three libraries at a cost of eighteen crores of rupees, procured

for the poets the copies of literary masterpieces and helped them in the preservation of their works.

The art of writing books flourished before A.D. 1200 and was kept up thereafter. Centuries after the loss of royal patronage, and despite the iconoclastic zeal of Muslim invaders, Buhler found over 30,000 manuscripts in two Jain libraries at Cambay and over 12,000 manuscripts in the palace library of Tanjore. A tragic catastrophe overtook India when between A.D. 1186 and 1400 a wave of vandalism resulted in the destruction of hundreds of libraries and possibly hundreds of thousands of manuscripts.

But to China must go the supreme credit for discovering the art of communicating the Word in portable and popular form. The Chinese discovered the art of printing in about 202 B.C. so that the claims of Johann Gutenberg to have done so are unfounded. The first printed book in the form of a scroll was produced by China in A.D. 868, nearly six centuries before the Gutenberg Bible.

However in India the printing press was first brought out in September 1556 by the Portuguese missionaries who set it up at the College of St. Paul at Ranchol. Within two months they printed a theological book called *Conclusoes Publicas*. The missionary in charge of this work had an Indian assistant who, he says, "served us very well in the galley and has shown that he understands the art of printing..."

Of the early books printed in Goa, I should like to mention one, *Coloquogios dos Simples a drogas* written by Dr. Garcia das Orsas, a personal friend of Burthan Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar. The book is interesting not only for its medical and botanical knowledge, but also for the light it throws on the history and social and economic conditions

in the Deccan under Muslim rule in the sixteenth century.

Shivaji Maharaj set up a printing press, but as he could not get it to work, he sold it in 1674 to Bhimaji Parakh, an enterprising Kapol Bania of Gujarat, who not only set it up but called out an expert printer from England.

In 1712 the Danish missionaries brought out a press from Europe and installed it at Tranquebar where they not only printed a number of books in Portuguese but soon brought out the *Apostle's Creed* entirely in Tamil. This was the first book to be printed in any Indian language. The same press printed the *New Testament* in 1715. The Bengali script was first printed in 1778 by Sir Charles Wilkins who prepared a set of punches with his own hands for founding Bengali types. The first book he produced was Halhead's *Grammar of Bengali Language*.

The enterprising "Rustom Caresajee" of Bombay "in the Bazar"—presumably the Bazargate Street—"printed the first calendar for the year of our Lord 1780." The first book printed in Bombay, however, was in 1793 with some interesting remarks by Henry Becher who describes current historical references when a prisoner in the Dominions of Tippoo Sultan, from whence he made his escape: "Corrected and revised by the author. Printed in Bombay 1793."

The book consists of 164 pages with seven pages of Introduction and its size is 6½" by 4". The following is an extract from the Introduction.

"The Author has not dedicated this Infant Production to a Great Man or Friend in hopes of getting it recommended to the public. It is the first book ever printed in Bombay, and he trusts the Reader will overlook its Imperfections and Faults, with a candid eye; and hopes



he will not think his Time thrown away by the perusal of it."

The only copy of this book available in the country is in the Indian Historical Research Institute, St. Xavier's College, Bombay. It was picked up at an old book-shop at Kalbadevi by Father Heras for eight annas. It once belonged to one Sadoba Pandoorang whose name is distinctly legible on the title page.

Gujarati type was first moulded in Bombay in 1797 by Byramjee Jeejeebhoy Chapgar, an employee of the *Bombay Courier*, for the purpose of Gujarati advertisements which occasionally appeared in that paper. The first Marathi book, which appeared in 1805, was a translation of Aesop's *Fables* under the title of *Balbodha Muktavali*.

The first Gujarati printing press was started in Bombay by the adventurous Fardunji Murzbanji Mobed who started journalism on its prosperous career by his daily *Mumbai Samachar*, which is still going strong. The first Gujarati calendar for the S.Y. 1871 (A.D. 1814-15) was printed in his press and was published on November 11, 1814.

In 1817 a Mission Press was started in Surat. Mehtaji Durgaram, one of the pioneers of social reform in Gujarat, was the first to start a tract publishing society, the "Pustaka Prasarak Mandali". But the litho press which he wanted to instal in Surat met with a curious welcome. The English Collector of Surat was an arrogant representative of the ruling race. When requested by the head-master of the English school to examine the students in geography and grammar he exclaimed, "What? geography and grammar to the Blackies!" The man would not allow Mehtaji to set up the press within the limits of the town. The Mission Press may have worked in the town since 1817, but a press in the hands of a "blackie" might, he

thought, provide a weapon with which to attack the officials. Mehtaji however, remained undaunted and set it up outside the town.

Thus into India was ushered the era of the printed book.

The power of the book has increased in India during the last fifty years. Every Indian language has its books, either originals or translations, bringing together thoughts from every corner, of not only the country, but also the globe. We have admirable book-publishing societies, to give two instances,—the Kalyan Press of Gorakhpur and the Sasta Sahitya Mandal of Delhi—which serve as all-India universities for the masses.

The printing press is the intellectual counterpart of democracy. Just as every mind, no matter how confused or idiotic, has an equal vote with that of a genius or a saint, the printing press is able to give transient permanence—if I may use such a phrase—to any written word which passes through it. But just as democracy throws up the man of ability and integrity, irrespective of rank or riches, the printing press destroys the monopoly of creative art and throws open the portals of immortality to every great effort, no matter from whom it comes.

Though reams and reams of the printed matter being daily turned out all over the world are doomed to early oblivion, the printed book will enable the genuine Word to travel fast to all the corners of the world. Every book is therefore the shrine of the Word to be approached with veneration, for it contains the germ of Divinity. Books viewed in this way are more than life. They mould life itself; they make it worth living. They can make the hearts of men and women throb, their cheeks glow, their eyes sparkle. When they are works like the *Bhagvad-Gita* and the *Bible*, the *Mahabharata*, the

*Ramayana*, and the dramas of Shakespeare, they are majestic expressions, of not merely what Emerson calls the Universal Conscience, but also of that creativeness which alone ennobles, uplifts and inspires man in his struggle against the sordidness of life, and against the unbridled ferocity of nature and his fellow men.

When humanity reverts to sanity and peace, the energy which is now wasted in destruction will be utilised to bring the international wealth of literature to the poorest and humblest in every land, and to recapture the might of the Word.

## IV

### BOOK UNIVERSITY

I AM very happy to inaugurate this new activity of ours, viz. the Book University of the Bhavan. It is not a series of books to make profit; it is intended to provide for readers a university education in culture through world literature and particularly that which stands for India and the fundamentals of Indian culture. We also hope to have a similar series in eight of the Indian languages soon.

The books in this series are being selected with a view to fostering the life of the spirit in keeping with the objective of the Bhavan. This objective is to reintegrate Indian culture in the light of modern needs by resuscitating its fundamental values, and to achieve the following:

- “(a) the dignity of man, implying the imperativeness of social conditions conducive to his freedom, so that he may evolve on the lines of his own temperament and capabilities;
- (b) the harmony of individual effort and social relations within the framework of the Moral Order;
- (c) the urge for the creative art of life, by which human limitations are progressively transcended so that man may become the instrument of the Divine, and see Him in all and all in Him.”

These values which characterise our culture are *sanatana*—eternal—and have no frontiers in time or space. They appertain to basic human nature in its struggle to rise higher in the scale of divinity. They are not necessarily peculiar to Indian culture, being pursued in all countries by aspiring men; in India, however, more than anywhere else, they have been made the basis of culture. Their Central Idea has persisted through time and built up the Collective Sub-conscious of our race. These values find their meaning nowhere more expressively

than in the *Mahabharata*, our Book of Life, and its core—the *Gita*—Shri Krishna's Eternal Message.

We are proud, therefore, to begin our Book University with a summary of the *Mahabharata* by Rajaji, one of the greatest living Indians, and a dissertation on the *Gita* by our Vice-President. *The God That Failed*, one of the most outstanding books in modern literature, has also been included in the series, because it is the reaction of fearless and honest men to the militant doctrine which, in the guise of a materialist interpretation of life, attempts to insectify man and to deny him his divine destiny. In the world today we are stampeded into betraying that destiny either by the undisguised lash of power or the pestilential breath of materialism, both of which seek to deaden the call of the Spirit.

We need not be ashamed of our ancient culture nor hesitate to emphasise its fundamental values in order to inspire our outlook on modern life. We must not forget, in the bustle of a new-found freedom, that India cannot have a powerful present or a glorious future if it loses the inspiration of its great past. Our freedom, I am sure, will not be worth anything if we forswear the *Gita* or forget the divine purpose of life that it teaches. The fabric of our life will fall to pieces if, in search of foreign approbation or breathless change, we undermine the faith, devotion and moral urge which gathers the life of our masses round our shrines and traditions.

We are very patient and tolerant; and will often indulge those who are critical of our things even though they be held sacred by us. We love to improve ourselves by exaggerating our weaknesses. We even suffer cheerfully Dr. Ambedkar's distortions of what we cherish most; for, he is one of us and voices the bitterness bred of an age long

inferiority complex, which we ourselves are trying our best to combat.

But recently, William C. Bullitt, an ex-diplomat of the U.S.A., has, in an article in the October issue of *Life*, indulged in an ignorant and offensive attack on India by pointing to an ostentatious array of carefully chosen disparaging facts and insinuations, and particularly by an offensive reference to our religion and culture—on the lines of Miss Mayo, ‘a drain inspector’, as Gandhiji chose to call her. We cannot suffer this kind of indignity from a foreigner; we have our rights, it become our duty to protest, nay, even to warn foreigners that nothing will forfeit the goodwill and friendliness of India more quickly than such vulgar exhibitions by globe-trotting visitors.

Two of Bullitt’s priceless jewels are :

(i) “that Brahmins, by religious conviction, oppose passionately our democratic doctrine that unjust burdens should be lifted from the shoulders of all men and that all should have an equal chance; . . .”

(ii) that “ . . . the most widespread object of worship among the Hindus is the male organ of generation: the ‘Lingam’ . . .”

Any person with an elementary knowledge of India’s history or culture, which is certainly denied to Mr. Bullitt, will know how fantastic these observations are. Among the leaders of social, political and religious movements, and among the lawyers, teachers and social workers, who have led a crusade against the caste system brought democratic traditions to this country, and fought for political and social equality and economic justice the largest group, from Dayanand to Jawaharlal Nehru, has been drawn either from among the Brahmins, or from those who were deeply imbued with the spirit of Hinduism. Even the movement for the removal of untouchability which, compared to the barbarous treatment of Negroes in

America is certainly more humane and is fast fading out, has been led principally by men from this class; and no one has given it a greater stimulus than the Hindus led by Gandhiji who, though not a Brahmin born, lived a life inspired by the highest precepts of Hinduism.

As regards the reference to *Shivalinga*, Mr. Bullitt has insulted the deep and cherished faith of millions in this country whose friendship his people so ardently wish for. Mr. Bullitt with dogmatic ignorance, has, in a widely-read magazine, resurrected a doubtful view of the pre-historic origin of a religious cult; he has insinuated a vulgar attribute to a living and religious faith round the *bana* or *linga*, which for centuries has been accepted as the formless embodiment of the God Shiva. If he had tried to know anything of India, however, he would have learnt that the worship of *Shivalinga*\* has evoked the purest and the most precious impulses in religion, literature and art; that out of millions and millions who worshipped this 'living God' in a million shrines during the last many centuries, none ever dreamt that what they worshipped was anything but God till, of course, a few Western scholars mixed it up with the phallic worship in Greek religious orgies. Shiva is worshipped in this formless symbol as the supreme God of power and beneficence. His spouse, Uma, is worshipped all over the country as the Divine Mother who protects, blesses and saves. One of his sons, Subrahmanya, is the god of war. The other, Ganesh—the god of wisdom, fortune and valour—adorns the portals of every home in this country. Kailas and Amarnath in the snows of the Himalayas are His eternal homes. From the twelve eternal shrines of Jyotirlingas to the most obscure village temple is this Great God famed—not only the

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\*Rudra = Agni. Rudra became Shiva. The flame of Agni became the *linga*—this is propounded by Acharya Dhruva.

God of the rich, the learned and the powerful, but the guardian god of the lowliest in the land. What part has this Formless God not played in the ages?

Five thousand years ago Shiva was worshipped as the ascetic lord of the animal world; in the Vedas he was also the lord of the storms; later he was the benign god of gods—Ishwara—the Dancer whose elemental dance leads to the Creation's birth and doom.

In the early centuries of the Christian era, our country, inspired by the worship of Shiva in this living form, flung back the foreign invader and absorbed those who had settled here.

Through the same inspiration for about twelve centuries from the Chauhans to the Marathas, India fought and died with stubborn heroisms in defence of her land and faith and she triumphed. For fifteen hundred years, the shrine of Somnath inspired learning, devotion and heroism all over the country. For twentyfive centuries, under the inspiration of Kashi Vishveshwar at Banaras, literature, philosophy and the highest aspirations known to men have flourished as in no other centre of learning in the whole wide world.

Kalidas, in his *Shakuntala*, the heroine of which Goethe describes as the very essence of exquisite beauty, calls this formless image 'the One, the All-pervading lord'; Shankara, the greatest of Indian philosophers, when he sings of the highest of man's urges to divinity, finds no apter aspiration than an identification with 'Shiva', the name which he uses invariably for the Formless One. Vivekananda received his inspiration from the *linga* of snow at Amarnath; Shri Aurobindo, from the image of the well-known shrine at Srinagar. Gandhiji in his daily prayers included an invocation to this deity. And our President, one of the finest spirits in modern India, stood



with a hundred thousands of us, including some of the most learned scholars in the country, in awe-struck veneration and felt a new aspiration when Somnath—which to Mr. Bullitt was an 'eight feet black stone affair'—was installed; and far away in their homes millions throughout the country felt the breath of a new life. And now we are told by this haughty, ignorant American that all the strength and inspiration and urge to divine life in all these ages and in all these men was inspired by the organ of generation in stone!

I am sorry to have to refer to this article or to Mr. Bullitt at this length. But I more than anyone have every right to do so. I claim to be a friend of America. No one has more reason to be grateful to her Government and her people than myself. I have looked forward to the day when a closer bond between America and India would spring up for the ultimate good of the world. But I cannot suffer in silence the moral arrogance and cultural snobbery of some American visitors to India. The same attitude was disclosed by some Americans when the food loan was discussed in the American newspapers and legislature.

If their nation's hopes to lead the world of free nations are to be realised, the touring Americans should learn to think of other nations, not as barbarians waiting for the privilege of being carved out in the image of the Americans nor as people hungering for sexy 'Hollywood' culture in cinemas which make our night and day hideous, but as people with their own characteristic way of life and entitled to the same respect as they expect from others. Could there be any friendship between India and America, may I ask, if I visited America for a few weeks and then spoke of America contemptuously as a land of sinister war-mongers, dollar imperialists, bursting epicureans, and men

who starve the world by burning surplus foodgrains; of grossly barbarous treatment meted out to negroes and Red Indians; and of the dark tints of vice and degradation so graphically described in Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer's *Washington Confidential?*

Friendship between peoples comes from mutual respect and mutual toleration, not from snobbery. India may be a new nation; India may be in a difficult position; but India is not going to submit to such national defamation.

Today we also publish the second volume of our History of the Culture and People of India, *The Age of Imperial Unity*. The first Volume, *The Vedic Age*, has had the most favourable reception in India and England; and I trust this volume will have an equally good reception and will incidentally teach foreigners what India was and is.

With these words, I inaugurate the Book University.

## ENGLISH IN INDIA

I AM obliged to the British Council in India for giving me the opportunity to open this Exhibition of English Books and Periodicals. But I am not sure whether the British Council will get what they expect, for I have a sneaking feeling that I am here on false pretences. The British Council has invited the Minister for Food and Agriculture; they will be shocked to discover only a lover of literature and a nibbler at literary art.

The world is passing through a stage of intense nationalism when a frankly objective estimate of things is difficult. I am therefore in a dilemma as to whether to speak as a Cabinet Minister or as a lover of books and periodicals. Were I speaking only as a Cabinet Minister, I could say many things. Chesterton once said: "I know perfectly well what Mr. Bernard Shaw will be saying thirty years hence; he will be saying what he has always said. But is there anyone so darkly read in stars and oracles that he will dare to predict what Mr. Asquith will be saying thirty years hence?" But as a lover of books I have only one view; my opinion requires no revision. Besides three Sanskrit books, several English books have been my guides, philosophers and friends through life.

English literature today is no longer the pride of the Englishman alone. It is as much an Indian's, American's or Canadian's as an Englishman's. Most educated Indians have for the last three quarters of a century thrilled to the rich beauty of English poetry; lived in the wonderland created by English dramatists from the mighty Shakespeare to the irrepressible Shaw; moved in English life with the aid of the novelists from Fielding to Hardy; built their outlook with the help of

English thinkers from Bacon to Russell; and have absorbed the political and legal tradition of the great English politicians and judges. English periodicals, too, have had a formative influence on us. *The Nineteenth Century*, *Contemporary Review*, *The Times*, *The Manchester Guardian*, and *The New Statesman and Nation* have shaped our views on life and politics. The Magna Carta, transplanted to America in the eighteenth century and brought into Indian Law in its modern form by British and Indian judges and legislators, forms an integral part of our Constitution.

English literature has been great. In profundity and moral stature it has not yet touched Indian literature; nor in beauty the Greek; nor, again, in clarity and incisiveness the French; but all aspects taken together, it is richer by far than any other in the world. But more than this it has been, since the printing press, the most potent influence in unifying and uplifting the world. I know a little of the growth of our modern literature in India; and I am free to confess, in spite of my intense nationalism that, but for the tremendous influence of English literature, our languages would not have gained their present day vigour and expressiveness; our prose would have been stilted and lifeless as before; our poetry would have continued to be cast in outmoded and mediaeval grooves; and drama would simply not have been. It is difficult to say what shape the novels of Bankim, the father of modern Indian fiction, would have taken without Scott and Lytton; what flavour the exquisite touch of Tagore's poetry would have given without Shelley and Keats. In fact the modern literary renaissance in India has been the product of the impact of English literature on Indian literature with its Sanskrit traditions.

I have tried to pursue literary art though, I know,

with little success; but I am conscious that in my little literary output, and in fact in my whole outlook on life, the influences of two literatures—Sanskrit and English—have been inextricably interwoven. From my earliest days that I can remember, the men and women of the *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and Kalidasa's beautiful works formed part of my being. In that early world there also lived and moved and had their being the Napoleon of Abbot, the Caesar of Plutarch, the Ivanhoe and Richard Couer de Lion of Scott; the D'Artatgnan and Jean Valjean of the French masters; the Elizabeth of Jane Austen; and the Desdemona, Portia, Prospero, Shylock and Falstaff of Shakespeare. Last May I saw Catherine Hepburn playing Rosalind in New York. For three hours I was wafted to the gleaming dawn of my boyhood's romance; I knew practically every line of *As You Like It* by heart; every sentiment echoed to the fresh impressions of a vision of beauty which lay buried in the creative depths of my being.

The other day in Bombay I was watching a dance drama based on my novel, *Jaya Somnath*. I sat thinking of the influences which had led to that creation. In the characters I could trace the lineaments of not only the epics of the heroes and heroines of ancient and mediaeval India but also the epics of Greece and England. The episode was Indian; the setting and the cast were Indian. The motives and sentiments were Indian, too. The major situations were historical. But I found the whole novel to be curiously built up of materials and motives in which I could not fail to trace the influence of Scott and Dumas, of Homer's description of the siege of Troy and of the word-architecture of De Quincey. The ballet was made up of Indian dances, but in them was woven the technique of the English ballet. The music was Indian, but its lilt had

a curious mixture of our folk-tunes and English tunes blended through the medium of our classical melody.

Indian literary tradition fused with English literary art; Indian languages enriched by Sanskrit and leavened by the expressive vigour of English, thus producing a higher range of expression; Indian art forms inspired by the living art forms of English and European art—all this have been interwoven to produce a new expression, a new technique, and a vision of the new beauty which lies at the root of Modern Renaissance in India.

The introduction of English in India was no ordinary event. When English came to us, the world entered a new stage. India joined the brotherhood of the English-speaking world. It led, as I have said, to a cultural upheaval in India, to a wide vision. The barriers of latitude, colour and race were broken down; the East mingled with the West in the sphere of the mind; a great step was taken towards establishing direct human intercourse, and sweeping away national frontiers. Now English is no longer the language of England but the instrument of the One World which the sages envisaged long ago: 'the world a family', the world which we see being realised today through bloody battlefields and noble aspirations.

I am glad that the British Council has as one of its objectives the maintenance of the present high level of English in India. I wish it every success, for, much as I love my national language and my own local language, I want English to remain with us to enrich and vitalise them both. In the wider embrace of this world language we want to feel the kinship with the rest of the world.

To my countrymen I would say just this that history has placed in the hands of India a powerful instrument for spreading her message throughout the world. We should betray our ancient heritage and our future destiny if we

were to allow this weapon to rust. We sent out our *Panchatantra*, our numerals, our philosophical systems, our literary and spiritual heritage to the world through the lengthy process of international contact without a common language. But today English is ours and with its aid we can make ourselves felt more than through any other agency. It would, therefore, be criminal to ignore or neglect English in this country.

## VI

### HINDI: OUR NATIONAL LANGUAGE

#### I

I AM deply indebted to you for doing me the honour of calling upon me to preside over this Session. The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan is a conference concerned with our national language and literature. To be its president is a great honour. I know my limitations; I do not know Hindi well; I have not studied Hindi literature widely; I am not acquainted with the literary problems of the Hindi world. Last year you elected me President of the Rashtrabhasha Parishad. This year you have conferred this honour upon me. I can give you no other hope than that I will try to justify the confidence you have shown in me.

Gujarat has so far given two presidents to the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan—a great Indian ruler in Sayaji Rao Gaekwar and the world-revered Mahatma Gandhi. But I am neither a ruler nor a political leader. I am but a humble worshipper at the shrine of Saraswati. The happiest moments of my life I have placed at her feet. I am but an author; and God has been very kind to me. He has given me the privilege of seeing some of my works being read all over India. I am indebted to Him for this.

Udaipur, where this Session is being held is famed in history. Who does not feel elated at coming here? Every stone speaks of some heroic deed. Every rampart of Clitor is carved with the martyrdom of heroes and the *jauhara* of *satis*. Every mountain top echoes with the battle-cry of the dauntless Pratap. Here is Srinathji, the presiding deity of Bhagwat Dharma in mediaeval times, claiming the allegiance of the whole of India. Here you have the sacred shrine of Ekalingji, the guardian god



of the heroic Sesodias. Haldighat proclaims from here the courage of India. Here we can forget our thralldom to Britain. For a moment we can raise our heads in pride, remembering the mighty men who challenged the Moghul Emperor. Here we can look upon the future in the confidence that Aryan Culture is deathless and unconquerable.

But for the moment, I am sad at heart. Mahatma Gandhi has parted company with this Sammelan. It was at Indore that he brought me to it. Inspired by him and with his aid I started the "Hans" magazine in co-operation with the late Premchandji. At Nagpur he welcomed my scheme for an All India Literary Academy and accepted its presidentship. Today, when you have given me the honour of the presidential chair, he is not here to give me inspiration and strength. I cannot but feel heavy at heart.

I have read the correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and Tandonji. We see in it clearly the devoted loyalties of two men who have consecrated themselves to two different ideals. Gandhiji believes that it is not only desirable but also possible to harmonize Hindi and Urdu. Tandonji believes this to be not only impossible but also undesirable in the interests of the Sammelan. Gandhiji is a creative idealist. He seeks self-fulfilment by concentrating all his powers in order to realise them. He wants to strengthen India as a nation. He has laboured hard and long to build its fabric on Hindu-Muslim unity. He has written that the national language should be neither Sanskritised nor Persianised but should be written in Nagari and Urdu alphabets. Tandonji replied that the Sammelan believed Hindi to be the national language, and Urdu to be only a style of Hindi adopted by a certain section of the people. He also expressed the belief that

the natural alphabet of this language is and can only be Nagari.

The central principle of this Sammelan is that the national language of India is Nagari Hindi, that is, Hindi written in the Nagari script. For thirty-three years it has lived on this belief.

But Gandhiji is the architect of the nation. He is pointing the way to the time when Hindus and Muslims will know both the scripts and attain unity through Hindustani. Everyone must however, be prepared to dedicate himself to the truth as he sees it. The country will be benefited only if both the Sammelan and Gandhiji follow their respective truths with mutual toleration. If Gandhiji's ideal is true, the Sammelan will come round to that view and will not be ashamed to accept it.

But Gandhiji has not left the Sammelan because he has resigned from it. He has expressly stated in his letter that just as he has been able to serve Congress better by ceasing to be its member, so will he be able to serve the Sammelan more by resigning from it.

The problem of the national language is not an easy one. Untiring confidence, enthusiasm and sacrifice will be needed in order to solve it. Will the Sammelan be able to achieve this? If it does, it will not be difficult to win back Gandhiji.

Last year I placed before the Rashtra Bhasha Parishad my own views with regard to the national language. I cannot imagine any other possible national language than Hindi-Hindustani. The name of Hindi-Hindustani was brought into use by Gandhiji in 1934 when he founded the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad at Nagpur. It is not a new word. Before 1892 Bhoodev Mookerji had used it. That language I consider, by its very nature, to be the national language of India.

The language of Madhyadesha has come down to us through the centuries as Hindi-Hindustani. The Nagari Hindi is its naturally developed modern form. Urdu is its Persio-Arabic style.

We can never measure the importance of Hindi unless we realise the position of Madhyadesha—Midland India. It is the heart of India. Our culture was born there; it grew there; its finest products were born there. Its soul took shape in Brahmvarta; its life flowered on the banks of the Sarasvati, the Ganges and the Jumna. Sri Krishna's Mathura was its ancient home; Asidvant of Janmejaya Parikshita was its ancient capital; Sanskrit was its speech; Prakrit, based on the same language, was its literary language and is the ancestor of Western Hindi.

Between A.D. 500 to 1000 Kanauj was the capital of Madhyadesha. Rajasekhar was its poet-laureate. He has told us that of all people in the country, those of Madhyadesha were the most cultured. Sanskrit was dear to them. The poets of Panchal were the best in the country. Their speech was as beautiful as their style. Their language was exquisite. Their verses were well composed and their articulation was as sweet as honey. The people of Panchal were the pride of Aryavarta. The women of Kanauj were wonderful; their ways were widely imitated by women all over the rest of the world.

For 500 years Kanauj was the metropolis of India. From A.D. 800 to 950 the Emperors of the Pratihara dynasty, styled Gurjjaraesvars, ruled. Of them, Mihira Bhoj, Mahendrapal and Mahipal were styled Maharajadhirajas of Aryavarta. Their homeland was Mewar and Marwar. Harsharaj, descendant of Bapu Raval of Mewar, was the feudatory of emperor Mihira Bhoja. His son, Gohil II, captured by his master's orders, the cavalry of the Bengal king, Devapal.

The secondary language of literature prevalent in Madhyadesha was Sauraseni Prakrit. The literary form of its dialect was Sauraseni Apabhramsha. The local dialect of Western Madhyadesha was Gurjari. Mewati and Gujari, still spoken by the Gurjaras of Swat and Kashmir, are the relics of that speech.

In those days, to the north-east of Mathura and in the Delhi region the spoken dialect approximated to Sauraseni Apabhramsha. It is difficult to find examples of this Sauraseni dialect, but Gurjari ended in *au*; Sauraseni in *a*, e.g., *Ghodau* and *Ghoda* for horse. However there was very little difference between the two. Recently I collected a few of the folk-songs of the Gurjaras of Kashmir, who migrated north by about A.D. 1000. It is still possible to find in these songs, traces of the ninth and tenth century Gurjari used in speech.

At that time Apabhramsha was the national language in the country. Every province used its own modified form; in fact, there were about 27 varieties of Apabhramsha. But from Gujarat to Assam the same *Rashtrabhasha* prevailed, as the *dohas* of East Bengal testify. In the 12th century we find more or less the same language as that preserved for us by Hemchandra. An easily understandable variety of it prevailed in Malwa and Gujarat as is evidenced by the remnants of *Munj Prabandha*—a popular poem of the 11th century.

When the Turks invaded India there was a national language in the India north of the Krishna. It was understood by everybody and the authors of most provinces wrote in it. It had become the vehicle for expressing the national soul on account of the inspiration which it received from Sanskrit.

The Turks came. They established camps in the Punjab and in Delhi, and a new language of intercourse bet-

ween the Turks and Indians came into existence. The Apabhramsha of the time was developed into several varieties, Punjabi, Western Apabhramsha, Eastern Apabhramsha (Avadhi, Bageli, Chatisgari), and Behari (Bhujpuri, Maitihili, Magadhi, Chhota Nagpuri). These were different varieties of a commonly understood medium of speech.

Slowly the language of intercourse between the Turks and Indians was forged out of Vrajabhasha, Kanauji, Bundeli and the speech of Meerut, Rohilkhand and Ambala; and when Delhi became the city of Turkish power this language came to be used in that region. But the official language of Delhi was Persian. Hindi in its primary stage was only the language of the bazaar. Indians, however, continued to use their highly developed languages. Rajasthani assumed the shape of *Pingal*. The form *Pingal* was evolved from Apabhramsha. The elements of Gurjari were retained in the *rasas* of Rajasthan and Gujarat. In the Mathura region, the rich Sauraseni Apabhramsha assumed the form of Vrajabhasha and became the joint vehicle of literary effort for both Hindus and Muslims. Literature was also composed in Avadhi, Bhujpuri and Maithili. In Gujarat even up to the 19th century, poets took pride in writing in Vrajabhasha.

When the Turks established the Sultanate in Delhi Sanskrit was the one paramount language of religion and culture in the whole country; to the north of the Krishna, Sanskrit was the national language of the educated classes; in the South, of the learned. To the north of the Narmada, up to Mathura, Gurjari was spoken. North of this, and up to Banaras in the east, Sauraseni was spoken. To the east, were spoken Avadhi and Behari. In East Bihar and Orissa, the spoken language approximated to Bengali.

As a result of the formation of the Sultanate of Delhi, there sprang up in East Punjab, West U.P. and the region

of Delhi a new language of intercourse between the Persian-speaking Turks and Indians.

In the region beyond the Sultanate the literary languages were largely influenced by Sanskrit and Vrajabhasha and the language of popular intercourse remained the same.

The belief that a national language for India is a modern conception is unfounded. Sanskrit was the national language of the elite in the country. There was a secondary national language of the people understood by everyone and this was reflected in all the provincial languages, as is illustrated by the literature which has come down to us.

I can give you illustrations from the literature of fifteen centuries. Their authors were Hindus, Muslims—including the Emperor Akbar—and Sikhs, including Guru Govindsingh. They can be easily understood by those who know Hindi. Their vocabulary and literary elements are common. These elements were found 1,300 years ago in Apabhramsha, then in Vrajabhasha, and now in Hindi. In this way the greatest common measure of linguistic unity is found in Hindi.

I will now summarise. In India, north of the Krishna, in ancient times, different forms of the same language were used and of them the language of Madhyadesha was the most powerful. Since the beginning of history, that is, before 700 B.C., Madhyadesha has been the principal factor in the political, social and cultural life of India. The first speech of Madhyadesha was Sanskrit. Since then the languages of Madhyadesha have had an intimate relation with it.

Up to A.D. 1300 Sanskrit was the language of culture and of the court throughout India. Even thereafter, it continued to be so in the Deccan for about 200 years more.

If, by a national language, we mean that language, the cultural influence of which produces the greatest unifying force in the country, then Sanskrit is to-day that national language.

Between A.D., 1100 and 1300, north of the Krishna, Apabhramsha was the national language of the people and literature was composed in that language.

From that time up to about 1850, Vrajabhasha was accepted as the basis of the literary language of the whole of North India, and Behari, Avadhi, Hindi, Punjabi, Rajasthani, Nepali and even Marathi were its easily understandable variations.

On the basis of the 1931 census, 34,90,88,000 persons spoke Indian and Burmese language. Of these 25,37,12,000 used languages of the Sanskritic family; 4,67,18,000 used Dravidian languages which are predominantly Sanskritic; 2,14,12,000 used languages which are mixed with Sanskrit.

Taking the census of the same year, out of 100 Indians 90% spoke Indian languages; 35% had Hindi-Hindustani as their mother-tongue; 34% spoke languages closely associated with Hindi-Hindustani; 13% spoke languages predominated by Sanskrit; 6% spoke languages mixed with Sanskrit. The script of the languages spoken by 38% of Indians was Devnagari. The script of the languages spoken by another 27% was some form of Devnagari; while 20% spoke languages, the script of which was Dravidi.

Looking at these facts, it is obvious that only a language which is predominantly Sanskritic can be the national language in this country. Hindi is descended in direct line from the ancient national language of India. Its vocabulary is more or less familiar to 88% of the country. Those who speak it well and those who speak it

with a slight effort form 69% of the people in this country, with the result that Hindi does not have to be made into a national language; it already is one.

## II

Hindi as a national language is one thing. But I want "Bharati", as the language of our intercourse and politics, in which every Indian would write, in which every Indian would read, in which India would create her literature. I dream of "Bharati", the language for India, just as English is for England, French for France.

If the Sammelan were to concentrate on this objective for five years it would come into existence. What is there that cannot be achieved by faith and enthusiasm? I beg all of those whom my voice may reach to subordinate all other activities to this. India—Bharat—needs a Bharati University. The national languages of Rajasthan, Malwa, the C.P. and Gujarat, as well as the Juzr, or Gujaradesha of the Prathiharas of Kanauj, is Hindi, enriched with the elements of old Rajasthani. If we have a University in either Rajasthan or the C.P., the national language will be evolved all the sooner.

This is not merely a Sammelan on the Hindi language; it is also a gathering of literary men. Today every one of our provinces can claim new and forceful creations in literature. Unfortunately, all the wealth of our literature is not accessible to all the provinces. But the lines of evolution are the same everywhere. The last twenty-five years have seen an age of cultural renaissance in India. We have created a new literary tradition born of the impact of Western literature on the Indian. Novels, prose writings, dramas, short stories, biographies, autobiographies, lyrics, poetic dramas, poetic narratives, are all literary forms of our time. The historical romances of Bankim, the



poems of Rabindranath and Iqbal, the lyrics of Nanalal, the social novels of Premchand, the autobiography of Gandhiji and the national songs of Bharati, have an honoured place in the literature of the world. But our literature has not yet acquired the beauty of the classics.

India is the land of literary masters. Our contribution to the classical literatures of the world has been by no means small. Greece gave to the world the *Iliad* of Homer and the *Prometheus* of Aeschylus. Italy gave the *Aeneid* of Virgil and the *Divine Comedy* of Dante. England has given the *Hamlet* and *Othello* of Shakespeare; Germany, the *Faust* of Goethe; France *Les Misérables* of Hugo; and Russia, Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*. India alone has given the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana*, the *Shakuntala* of Kalidasa, the *Bhagwat* and *Ramacharita Manasa*.

These are the sky kissing pinnacles of pure literature. The majesty of such heights has remained inaccessible to modern India. Why? I have often asked myself this question during the 35 years of my devotion to literature.

One reason is that we have not abandoned the tradition of the medieval times. We still consider mere sentimental literature to be the best form of literary art. We cannot rid ourselves of our love of words. We cannot forget that literature must have a direct moral bearing. But the soul of pure literature is Beauty. From its every line, living personalities, realistic situations and the fundamental strength and weakness of the soul must leap out. In order to create such literature we must accept as a fundamental canon the idea that an author is free to create Beauty in any form he likes. One of the cherished beliefs in India is that a literary man is a slave of society. Even in Europe there is a fashion to contend that an author must create literature according to the mandates of the collective will. Stalin issued a mandate that literature should be written

according to the Five Year Plan. He founded the Soviet Literary Men as if they were workers in a factory. We hear of all kinds of control over them: that literature should be progressive, that it should devote itself to village life, that it should restrict itself to uplifting the depressed. All this deprives literary men of their independence. Such made-to-order writings are not literature, they are propaganda.

In 1916 I wrote a short story called "My Temporary Wife". Then Gujarat grew very angry. Some critics said that it would have been better if my hand had been cut off. When my novel *Prithvi Vallabh* was put on the screen, an association from Karnatak sent me a resolution and demanded of me that I should write a novel on the lines indicated by them.

But when I write, I do not write for others, but in order to fulfil myself. I tear my heart open in bringing forth its hidden treasure. If you can appreciate it, take it; if you cannot, throw it away. But I shall body forth in words only that beauty which is born of my imagination, those cultural values which make up my equipment and my ideas. I will not be a father to other people's children.

I am giving you, young authors, the ideals which I have cherished during the last 35 years of my service to literature.

An author is free, a law unto himself. Criticism, popular wishes, the dictates of your political thought and the mandates of your leaders, these are all fetters. Let them not stifle your creative art. No person or thing can clip the wings of your imagination save your own cowardice. Let your vision rest on a limitless horizon. No one has a right to restrict it. The beauty that is enshrined in your heart is the only deity that you need worship. Your salvation lies in opening your heart and bringing forth

the immortal gods enshrined therein for others to view and worship if they choose.

This law is the very breath of an artist's life. The literary man who shrinks from obeying it is not an artist. Like a buffoon in a show or a mercenary musician, he is no more than a hireling. For him there will never be the inspiration of the literary masters of the world.

The world's greatest master was Vyas. He did not write for his generation. Brahma created short-lived men and women. But this 'Brahma without four arms, this Hari with only two hands, this Shambhu without the third eye' created a world of men and women who are ever living and ever inspiring. Let the grace of this greatest literary Master of all time descend upon us, that the beauty of our creations may rise to the skies. That is my prayer.

## VII

### RASHTRA-BHASHA HINDI

I AM glad that we have all met here to review the position of Rashtra Bhasha Prachar. You have been the pioneers in this work and you have done your work under great difficulty and with religious enthusiasm. If Hindi is a national language today, we owe it to the silent and sincere work done for years by you, and others like you.

You have recently passed through difficult times. The internal situation of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan has added to your difficulties. When I was the President of that body, I suggested that the Rashtra Bhasha Samiti should be placed on an independent footing. But my view was not acceptable; I am sorry it was not.

You have suffered the fate of Narsinh Mehta's children. To those children, happy in their poverty and their father's godly life, there were sent costly presents by Ra'-Mandalik. Immediately they started quarrelling over them, scratching each other. Mehtaji came and saw what filthy lucre had done, and sent away the presents. Where vested interest comes in, missionary zeal walks out. If you are true missionaries, you must have the courage to continue your mission, trusting in God and considering the fulfilment of duty to be its own reward. If all you workers remain united, nothing will weaken your cause; if your faith weakens, no cause, no support, no organisation will survive.

Before the Constitution was framed, there was the Hindi-Urdu quarrel. After a hard fight, the formula evolved by Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar and myself was almost unanimously accepted by the Constituent Assembly. It defined the future of Hindi, the national language, as follows:

"It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language, to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India, and to secure its enrichment by assimilating, without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages."

I know you are very much perturbed that your Kovid Examination should not be accepted by the Bombay Government. The Chief Minister has now recognised those who have taken the degree. For the future, the matter has, I understand, been left to the Centre. I have no doubt that, if properly approached, the Centre and the State of Bombay will recognise the justice of your demand.

The Centre has appointed a Committee for the purpose of regulating examinations. This Committee has representatives of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan on it, and I am sure that no injustice will be done to you.

I know, however, what you feel. You thought that once the Constitution had decided on Hindi as the official language, your services would be appreciated, and that your work would be supported by the Provincial Governments, and that the old controversies would be forgotten. Now you find it is not so. The old controversy has assumed new shapes. Old influences, and memories of past differences still carry weight with some men in authority. You are naturally unhappy.

Even the law has been pressed into the service of prejudice. For instance, in the report of the Bombay Text Book Committee, on which all the old Hindustani protagonists had found a place, they have decided that the 'Hindi' of the Constitution is not the Hindi of U.P., but something to be made hereafter, in other words the Hindus-

tani of their hearts! As a lawyer I am not interested in fighting such amateur experts. But as your president, I must give you my own view. It is clear to me that Article 351 implies: (1) the existing Hindi in vogue as the base; (2) the native genius of such Hindi; (3) the future development of this Hindi; and (4) its enrichment by drawing upon (a) forms etc. of a different variety called Hindustani, without however interfering with the 'genius' of the existing Hindi, and (b) the vocabulary of primarily Sanskrit and secondarily other languages.

It will require more than a lawyer's conscience to say that the Hindi referred to in Article 351 is not the Hindi of the cultured in U.P. and Bihar.

But quite apart from law, at every stage of formulation, drafting and debate in the party in the House, I was intimately associated with the Part of the Constitution dealing with the official language. It would surprise me and most of the members of the Constituent Assembly who were parties to it that, when we were referring to Hindi in that Part, we were referring, with our tongue in our cheek, not to the Hindi, with the literary language as the base, but to the bazaar Hindustani which was to be made into a literary language for official use in the future.

Do not forget, however, two things. First, the constitutional formula for Hindi cannot change men's hearts all at once, nor their attachments and repulsions, affections and prejudices. It only gives an occasion to redefine one's attitude in terms of the formula. But this is a gain, in this way, that both sides, drawing their inspiration from the formula, will come together. We must be prepared for such prejudices and differences of opinion.

The second truth is that a language is made neither by teachers or pracharaks, nor by politicians and officers.

nor by pandits and philologists. It is made by the people and by those literary men who have the creative power over words. It is made by constant adjustment between the needs of daily intercourse and the demands for higher expression.

Governments cannot make languages. For centuries, the Muslim rulers of India had Persian as their court language; similarly the British rulers had English, for a century and a half. Yet Tulsidas and Surdas, Bankim and Tagore gave to our popular languages their rich, artistic expressiveness. The Nizam, through the Osmania University, tried to create an artificial Arabicised Urdu for Hyderabad. At the first touch of reality, it is falling to pieces.

Nor can Pandits make a new language. The Sanskrit of Bana and Bhatti, a laboured language, was fashionable for centuries in the assemblies of the learned, who lived apart from life. It could enrich the living language but little; it succeeded in smothering the living Sanskrit, the spoken language, and reducing it to a distant language of effort.

The attempt, therefore, to distinguish between the Hindi of North India and Hindi, the national language, is based on ignorance or on the super-confidence of a few language architects to create a new language for India. The attempt can never succeed.

Hindi is the spoken language of eighteen crores of people. Several Governments have adopted it. A dozen universities are going to make it their medium of instruction. Thousands of writers are shaping its power and richness. Tens of thousands of books are being published in it. He is a King Canute who says that the flood shall not come to other States, and that they will evolve their own Hindi.

In Gujarat, for instance, a few poets like Balashankâr tried to keep alive the old Nawabi-Gujarati with its Persianised words. But the 'ulfut', the 'begums', and even the 'bulbuls' disappeared; the 'prem' and 'pranayi' and the 'kokila' remain. 'Kismet' gave place to 'vidhi'. The 'Ao Jao' for imports and exports will go; 'Yatayata' will remain. That the language of high expression in India can only be drawn primarily from Sanskrit is a truth accepted by the Constitution which no effort can shake.

In the same way, the language of Pandits cannot force obscure words, pompous circumlocutions and phrase-mongering, borrowed from departed poets, on a living language. Hindi has a strange literary growth. Its seeds were sown a century ago by learned men in deliberate antagonism to the prevailing Urdu of the educated in the North. Modern Bengali, Gujarati and Marathi were natural growths and have been fostered by modern educated men during the last hundred and fifty years in a friendly atmosphere. Hindi has won its battle now; it is the language spoken and written in everyday life, and has a growing literature. Freed from antagonism, it will soon emerge as a virile language of natural power in the same way.

When we say that Hindi must develop under the influence of Sanskrit, it is not to say that it should be Sanskritised. A language grows in beauty, richness and expressiveness by the impact of highly developed languages as well as the spoken dialect. All modern Indian languages, except Urdu, have acquired grace and power by the impact on them of Sanskrit and English and in some cases the old Indian languages. This process must continue.

Authors of creative power from Bankim and Tagore in Bengal, Tilak and Apte in Maharashtra, and Narmad to Umashankar in Gujarat have moulded the modern Bengali, Marathi, and Gujarati languages. And Hindi authors of



today, including those authors who have adopted it as the national language, will make the Hindi of the future.

Another matter of importance is the use of technical words current in modern civilization and science and in international intercourse. In my opinion, it will be harmful to replace them, even if it were possible. If Hindi has to be a modern language, the English or the international technical words in use must be retained, maybe in an easily identifiable Indian form. English grows, and once Sanskrit grew, by ready assimilation of foreign words. This is the only way to replace English by Hindi as the medium of higher education in the country and fulfil the objective of making it the national language in fifteen years.

Do not, therefore, interest yourself in the formation of language. Many have tried experiments to force our Indian languages out of the ambit of Sanskrit; no power has been able to do so, and none ever will be.

Our role here is limited and, therefore, easy. Ours it is to carry the message of Hindi defined by the Constitution to all homes in the non-Hindi-speaking Provinces. And if we have the zeal and the faith which we have evinced so far, we shall come through victorious.

You remember what I told the Hindi world, as President of the Sammelan at Udaipur. I want Hindi to be Bharati—the language of India—as English is the language of England. This Bharati shall be the language emerging from the common pool to which all our Indian languages have brought their variety and expressiveness, shaped and influenced by the graces of Sanskrit and the power of the greatest of modern languages, English.

## VIII

### SANSKRIT THROUGH THE AGES

#### I

OF all the forces which bind man and make him a social and cultural being, the most powerful is the Word. In that sense, the worship of the Word, *Shabda-Brahma*, is one of the most pervasive forces of life. For instance, geographically, India owes everything to the Himalayas; in the sphere of social relations, as also in the spheres of the mind and the spirit, India owes everything to Sanskrit.

In pre-historic times, the early Aryans forged the Aryan language, the ancestor of many Indo-European languages. In the course of this process, certain ideas came to be compressed in words of fateful meaning; in the progress of time these words moulded the social, intellectual and spiritual life of the human race. In India, the Aryans used the Word in the primary Prakrit which they spoke, and which later became Classical Sanskrit, with extraordinary sanctity. This happened long before the *Dasharajna*, the Battle of Ten Kings, the great historical event recorded in the *Rigveda*. The Aryan tribes fought each other and fought against the non-Aryan Dasyus; but they were bound together by the spoken word. When the words came out in rhythmic chants they were *mantras*, divinities in themselves. Those who could compose the *mantras* were demi-gods, deserving worship. People believed the perfect word to be a divinity, and the man who commanded it, half divine. It was this belief which made Sanskrit in its infancy a living bond between different minds and tribes. The Aryans spoke Sanskrit; whoever came to speak that language was the elect; culture could be acquired only through it. This idea

has been at the root of all that followed in India's varied history. Rigvedic *mantras* were stylised lyrical poems intending to invest rituals with greater efficacy; but from the earliest *mantras* to the latest tenth *Mandala*, there are clear indications that the language was not far remote from the spoken language and was undergoing progressive change by use. But it was the *mantras* which kept the race together. The *Atharvaveda* though as old as the *Rigveda* in substance, was in form a later composition, composed at a time when the spoken language was not very different from that of the time of the grammarian *Patanjali*; but the hymns when canonised were given the archaic garb of the *mantras*. The *Brahmanas* again are described as the only genuine prose works in Sanskrit as a popular language now available. The *Upanishads* were also the vehicle of living thought in the dialect of the teachers and the pupil.

During the centuries which elapsed between the emergence of a dominant Aryan power in the Saptasindhu and the battle of the *Mahabharata* in about 1500 B.C., the primary Prakrit as the spoken language of the people evolved to very near classical Sanskrit. It was recognised as the great unifying force, for the central idea of Aryan culture was *Rita*—the overall law of life; and Sanskrit was *Rita* in action, unifying, uplifting and bringing one nearer to the gods.

## II

From the Bharata War to the rise of the Magadhan Power (1500 B.C. to 700 B.C.), when authentic history begins, this idea took hold of the collective unconscious of the race. Sanskrit was not merely a powerful living language in daily use among the people living in the valleys of the Sindhu and the Ganga and their tributaries. It was the language of literature, philosophy and law, which the gods spoke and to which alone the gods would listen.

It was best spoken in the Madhya Desha where the sacred Brahmins lived and taught; it was studied, spoken and taught in the hermitages which had been progressively pushing forward the frontiers of Aryavarta towards the east and the south. Wherever Sanskrit was spoken and taught, there was Aryavarta.

### III

Rigvedic *mantras* had become the divine Word, divinities with mystic power to be worshipped in their sound and accent alone; the Rock of Ages, to which all life turned for inspiration; the concentrated symbol, and embodiment of the Spirit, of all life. Ritualistic literature was sacrosanct.

The *Mahabharata* was growing into a wide literature of life, expressing epic heroism; legends of kings and rishis, sacred rivers and holy places; wise lessons in practical wisdom and philosophic and moral speculations resulting from man's efforts to attain the Divine. The whole unconscious of the race was gathered and made articulate. The *akhyanas* were composed by poets and narrators for the popular audiences of the time; some of the legends were taken from current folk stories. For many centuries after they were composed, they were recited in courts and halls and gatherings of men to inspire or to point a moral.

The *Dharmasutra* literature and the *Manusmriti*, the oldest law text, were for the use of the people who spoke the language. The *Upanishads* and the *Bhagvad-Gita*, the original of which was composed long before the seventh century B.C., embodied the intellectual speculations of the day. During these 800 odd years Sanskrit evolved vigorously not only as the spoken and literary language of a vast educated public and the vehicle of higher

intellectual, aesthetic and scientific expression, but also as the visual embodiment as well as the instrument of Aryan culture which was spreading far and wide, uplifting and moulding the different races.

#### IV

During the age of Imperial Magadha, from 700 B.C. to 150 B.C., the people in different parts of the North doubtless spoke the Prakrits; in the South they spoke their own dialects. Even canonical texts like those of Buddhism and Jainism as well as folk stories which provided entertainment were composed in the Prakrits. But they were just popular dialects; Sanskrit was the language of refined and polished expression; and their mutual reaction enriched Sanskrit and gave form and range to the Prakrits. But Sanskrit was accepted as the language of divine power. Wherever it was learnt, men rose in the cultural scale, and Aryavarta was born.

Between B.C. 150 and A.D. 320 India saw the rise of alien kingdoms in West and North-West India, followed by the birth of a powerful political and religious movement in Central and Southern India, which overthrew foreign rule and re-established *Dharma*. Sanskrit was the inspiration, the symbol, and the vehicle of this national resurgence. It is possible that the Shatavahanas and the Nagas, the spearhead of this resistance movement, made Sanskrit the language of official intercourse; for inscriptions begin to be composed in it from about the second century. The same movement gave vigour and influence to Shaivism and Vaishnavism, the most eminent teachers of which accepted Sanskrit as the language of the gods.

By the time *Rita* had become the *Dharma*, the law of life, and Sanskrit was *Dharma* in action. All higher

intellectual and moral life was developed and expressed through Sanskrit.

Buddha and Mahavira could preach in Prakrit in the sixth century B.C.; in the early centuries of the Christian era, Mahayana Buddhists resorted to Sanskrit for their religious and philosophical works, and in the sixth century Siddhasena Divakara had to invest Jain teaching with the dignity of Sanskrit.

During the golden age of the Guptas, Sanskrit became the mighty force which permeated the Collective Unconscious of the race and integrated it in the light of the fundamental values of the culture for which it stood. This happened not only in the North but even among the enlightened settlements in the South. In scope, form and quality literary expression reached its high-water mark during this period. It ushered in the works of Kalidasa, the final edition of the *Mahabharata*, the scripture of a hundred thousand verses and the *Ramayana* which was accepted as the poem of perfect form and beauty. Under the rule of the Gupta emperors who were munificent patrons of literature and religion, Sanskrit grew in vigour as the embodiment, vehicle and instrument of a powerful, all-pervading culture which became known as *Sanatana Dharma*. The homes of Sanskritic learning multiplied. Royal dynasties vied with each other in patronising Sanskritic poets and scholars. The dignity and graces of life came to be associated with Sanskrit, and even the imagination and idioms of the illiterate and the vulgar in distant parts were shaped by its richness.

In North India it was the language of culture and learning, of polished life and respectability. Education was overwhelmingly in Sanskrit. In the South, it was the language of cultural inspiration and provided literary form and substance to early Kannada, Telugu and

Malayalam. Sanskrit was very largely spoken in the country. *Shakuntala's* effortless beauty and *Shantiparva's* wisdom were composed by men who sang and spoke in a living medium of power for the benefit of a large public who were moved or inspired directly by it.

Sanskrit was during this period the goddess of learning—Sarasvati, Bharati. Wherever it was worshipped a new creative power was born; peoples of different origin speaking many dialects were welded together by a common consciousness of self-same images, ideas and values. The *Dharmachakra* rolled on; but the wheel was principally cast in Sanskrit; whoever taught or studied Sanskrit added to its speed.

## VI

From about A.D. 550 when the Gupta Empire fell, to A.D. 950 when the Empire of the Pratiharas was dissolved, North India was dominated by Kanauj, the imperial capital. The striking features of that age, which changed the face of Indian history, were the emergence of a North Indian Empire controlled mainly by North-Western India; the emergence of the South as a powerful factor in all-India politics; and the segregation of the three main castes from each other. The powerful ruling houses together with their followers, were descended from uncultured races from outside the belt where Sanskrit was the spoken language. *Varnashrama Dharma* as it was originally understood, lost its meaning. Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas were no longer indissoluble parts of one whole studying together and sharing a knowledge and reverence for Sanskrit. They no longer intermarried freely subject to the ban of *pratiloma*. Brahmanas, with their importance attained during Gupta times, became the aristocrats of high learning; at the same time Sanskrit

became the language of highbrow culture. At a lower level Prakrits and Apabhramsha were the languages of popular literature; and undeveloped dialects formed the media of intercourse among the common people; naturally these all assumed greater importance.

Nevertheless, Sanskrit dominated the whole country. According to the poet Rajashekhar, it was spoken all over the country; but in Lata (Gujarat) they hated it; in Marwad, Rajputana and Saurashtra they mixed it with Apabrahmsa; and in Madhyadesh and Gauda it was the language of educated men. Sanskrit literature, in consequence, acquired an aristocratic and learned character, and was written by the learned for the learned. The poets underwent an elaborate course of training, mastered several branches of learning including drama, poetries and lexicography, and rigidly followed strict rules. Naturally their works were not intended for popular audiences and lost the inspiration of direct experience. Bana was the great prototype and model of the age which began with Subandhu at the end of the sixth century.

Although the living literature found expression in Prakrit and Apabhramsha, it never escaped the influence of Sanskrit. Sanskrit thus became the language of the gods only attainable by lifelong devotion. As its sphere of use contracted, its importance as the ultimate source of all influence increased. It was indispensable to any one who claimed a respected place in life. Even when Mohammad Ghazni broke the spell of centuries, destroyed one kingdom after another, life throughout the land was governed by *Smriti* texts; the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* were woven into the texture of men's minds; poets and scholars pursued literary and grammatical acrobatics. Polymaths like Bhojadeva and Hemchandra wrote vast encyclo-



paedic treatises in Sanskrit and allied languages. Innumerable universities and *pathshalas* in different parts of the country carried on the study of Sanskrit as a spoken language. It was the medium of all learned intercourse and the royal courts resounded to the learned discourses of eminent scholars in Sanskrit.

## VII

With the advent of Alla-ud-din Khilji (A.D. 1296) Sanskrit entered a new stage. He destroyed many of the universities of North India. Wherever there was Muslim rule Sanskrit was deprived of patronage. Men of learning, to whom Sanskrit was the breath of life, fled to distant villages where in their homes or little *pathshalas* they kept bright the torch of their beloved learning. To the whole mass of the people, bowed down with misery, flying before the unsatiated vandals, Sanskrit remained the light, the strength, the hope of a glorious future, the pathway to salvation, something more than life itself.

Learned men threw themselves on the generosity of the ordinary public who were ignorant of Sanskrit, and then took to popular literature in the derivative languages. This led to the great renaissance beginning in the 15th century, of which the Bhakti and the Sant schools were the outstanding products. Spiritual and moral resurgence found their expression through the study and adaptation of the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana*, the *Bhagavata*, and *Gita-govinda*. In Hindu States, the patronage of Sanskrit scholars became a primary duty. Though the general public progressively lost direct touch with Sanskrit, the smallest town and even big villages maintained a *pathshala* and revered its students. In North India Vrajabhasha was the medium *par excellence* through which the influence of Sanskrit permeated both life and literature.

## IX

In the 19th century Sanskrit, as a spoken language, was confined to the *pathshalas* and their alumni; but the maintenance of a *pathshala* was the pride of every enlightened locality. Vast numbers of Brahmanas were required as priests, astrologers, pandits and *pauranikas*; and the *shastras* which they produced kept the influence of Sanskrit alive, though the quality of these men ranged from the encyclopedic pandit who could quote every *Shashtra* down to the village priest who could only mumble mutilated verses at the marriage or funeral ceremony. Even those who did not study Sanskrit were familiar with the numerous adaptations in their own regional languages, of great Sanskrit works. Sanskrit thus provided a vast agency for maintaining the bond throughout the land.

When the Moghul empire faded away, the last vestige of a shadowy political bond disappeared. What was left was the unity provided by the culture which was derived from and dependent on Sanskrit. Enlightened officials of the East India Company were at a very early stage fascinated by Sanskrit. They tried to preserve the great *pathshalas*. They collected Sanskrit manuscripts, edited, and published them; and when the universities were founded in the middle of the 19th century they made Sanskrit the predominant second language in the country.

The Indian universities were the birth-place of the powerful Sanskritic revival which, in association with Western culture, led to the modern Indian Renaissance: to the growth and enrichment of all our spoken languages and the development of a national language, Hindi. Sanskrit is the language of gods; it has brought us their gifts.

Indian unity during the last century was based upon British arms and by the conscious unity created by Sanskritic culture. British arms disappeared. Partition followed between two groups of men whose subconscious mind drew inspiration from two distinct sources. Today, in India, the Collective Unconscious of the people is represented by what Sanskrit stands for; their greatest conscious unity lies in a way of life dominated by Sanskritic culture. Today Sanskrit is religiously studied in most of our universities, colleges and high schools. In no less than 10,000 *pathshalas*, men devoted to a lifelong study of Sanskrit use it as a living medium. Possibly more than 25,000 people in the country speak it with fluency. Over 500,000 men follow the priestly vocation and bring God nearer to man with the aid of whatever Sanskrit they can use. The life of about two hundred million people echoes, on the occasion of a birth, marriage or death or in prayer or ritual, to the sweet accents of sacred recitals in Sanskrit. The episodes, characters, imagery and idioms of the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana*, and the *Bhagvata* have been woven inextricably in the texture of people's lives. The Indian languages, spoken by over 250 million have been and are being enriched by Sanskrit vocabulary.

India attained her solidarity and cultural vitality through Sanskrit and through Sanskrit alone has she retained them. With rare exceptions, the great and the noble, those who have influenced life as a whole, have at all times in our land found self-fulfilment with the aid of Sanskrit and all that it stands for. In the recent past India, though a subject race, regained her lost prestige through scholars whose vision had been largely enriched by Sanskritic studies. The universities of most civilised nations

find both interest and inspiration in these studies. Sanskrit and the closely allied Pali form the great cultural link which binds India to South-East Asia, China and Japan. Professor Norman Brown, the present Director of the Department of South-East Asian Studies of the Pennsylvania University, told me last year that students preparing to go to South-East Asia discovered that they could not understand its true spirit without a study of Sanskrit. Urdu, the official language of Pakistan, in spite of its Perso-Arabic vocabulary, is an Indo-Aryan language; and so is Pushtu, the language of Afghanistan. Persian is allied to Sanskrit. The thread of Indo-Aryan unity runs through Latin and Greek and the languages derived from them. A true appreciation of the spiritual aspirations of the Upanishads, the epic grandeur of the *Mahabharata*, the graceful charm of the *Ramayana*, the beauty of Kalidasa and the *Bhagavata*, and the inspiration of the *Dhammapada* and the *Bhagavad-Gita* alone can help our race to march forward on the path of inner strength.

## XI

Sanskrit being thus the natural basis of our unity, culture and vitality, deserves careful consideration of its future. The following four difficulties must be resolved.

First, the highly placed persons in this country, who have studied Sanskrit and believe in it as an integral element of our national life, are unorganised in their efforts to maintain Sanskrit in its pre-eminent position.

Secondly, in our universities and higher educational institutions, there is a growing outlook, borrowed largely from the West, that the study of a classical language is of little value. It is an outlook based on ignorance, for, to India, Sanskrit is not a classical language which merely

serves to add to the accomplishments of an educated man; it is a vital link in the nation's evolution.

Thirdly, the elimination of the princely order which, in spite of its many faults, gave generous patronage to the *pathshalas*, the traditional centres of Sanskrit learning which have so far kept the language alive as a spoken language, and also the decay of religious belief which denies to their products the means of livelihood.

Lastly, the outlook, fashionable in some westernised sections of the people, that a faith in Sanskrit as a vitalising force in the modern world is a sign of revivalism. Their children no longer hear from their mother's lips the Epics, which have made and preserved India. Nothing could be sadder than the fact that over sixty per cent. of the candidates for the I.A.S., the prospective rulers of India, did not know of Kunti, the noble mother, or of Karna, the soul of honour and generosity.

With the dawn of freedom and with the acceptance of Hindi, principally drawn from Sanskrit, as the national language, one would have thought that the encouragement of the study of Sanskrit would have been accepted as one of the first responsibilities of our Governments. Some Governments, like that of Uttar Pradesh, have done something. Others, however, have lacked the time or inclination to do so. But it is only a question of time. The basic importance of Sanskrit, which underlies our lives, has had no opportunity to express itself fully through the governing class which the struggle for freedom threw up. To anyone who claims to have more than a superficial outlook, it should be clear that our freedom can have no meaning if India loses her soul; that we can have no future if she abandons the principal source of her strength.

I will go even further and say that the world can only be redeemed by a wider appreciation of what Sanskrit

stands for; the efficacy of Non-violence and Truth, Non-waste, Non-stealing and Non-possession, and a faith in the integration of human personality, in the supremacy of the Moral Order and in the Divine Essence in Man.

The only way in which to vitalise the study of Sanskrit, so that it is not merely a matter of learning or research but is a cultural force of universal value, is to draw upon all the energy and resources which are at present being spent in promoting Sanskrit in diverse ways. At the same time, the general interest and widespread support for Sanskrit should not lose the element of spontaneity by being too regulated or centralised. The movement should, therefore, be vitalising and not merely controlling or regulating.

Those interested in Sanskrit should study the position of Sanskritic studies, each in his own sphere, from the following points of view:

(i) the place occupied by Sanskrit in our universities and higher educational systems;

(ii) the assistance given by Central and State Governments to Sanskritic studies;

(iii) the recognition of shastric titles as qualifying the holder for university degrees;

(iv) the position of *pathshalas*, their economic condition, and ways of providing economic assistance to them and careers for their students;

(v) the position of Sanskritic research;

(vi) the desirability of having easy examination programmes for those anxious to study Sanskrit privately;

(vii) the desirability of holding conference of all those interested in Sanskrit;

(viii) ways and means to make Sanskrit literature, and particularly the Epics, an element in mass education.

Our appeal must necessarily be in the first instance to educationists, professors, school masters, lawyers, men

of literature and education, a vast majority of whom are interested in Sanskrit in one way or another. It is for them to develop a conscious response to this movement. In the universities and colleges, particularly, groups of educationists, teachers and students could be found who would easily form themselves into centres of study. Naturally every *pathshala* is a centre of Sanskrit. On those Ministers, Vice-Chancellors and high officials who have an interest in Sanskrit, there lies a great responsibility; and if each one of them acts effectively in his own sphere, we can still preserve the vital strength which Sanskrit has given us through the ages.

**PART IV**  
*The Collective Unconscious*



# I

## OUR GREATEST NEED: FREEDOM THAT KNOWS NO FEAR

### I

I AM indebted to you, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, for the privilege you have given me of delivering the Convocation Address of your University this year. Such occasions fill me with delight, for they give me an opportunity of meeting bright young men on whose shoulders will rest the future of our Motherland; of catching afresh the enthusiasm of youth, unspoiled by the sordid world; and of speaking on the problems which shape our future destiny.

The young men who have received their degrees today, will find when they go out in the world, that it is a curious world indeed! Since 1914, it has changed its shape as never before, and we do not know what shape it will take when it settles down. But during this period of uncertainty it has been seized by an epidemic of fear. This is a psychological malady, and few realise its virulence and extent. It has, in fact, affected individuals, families, nations, and the world itself; and most people do not know what to do about it.

Its symptoms are found everywhere. Young men, pursuing studies, are afraid of hard discipline and well-planned persistence; and yet they want good careers and feel frustrated because they fear that they may not secure them.

A farmer is afraid to part with his crops cheaply but demands cheap cloth and cement; a merchant is afraid to pay income-tax, but claims soaring profits; a politician fears the loss of his position or office, but demands that others should accept him as a leader, his word as law, his outlook as truth.

In order to provide against this widespread fear we want things to be made safe and easy. We want cheap degrees and easy careers; a home which is not a heaven of mutual understanding but a temple of pleasure with no responsibility. We want the State to provide cheap food, good profits, provident funds, old age pensions, equality enforced by courts of law, justice regulated by parliamentary majorities, and peace with armaments to provide against the fear of aggression.

In substance we demand security by external adjustments, material comforts and economic safeguards; by collective bargaining, collective coercion, collective security; in fact, by the coercive power of collective fear induced by sedulously fostered propaganda, State action or international military combines. So obsessed are we with fear all over the world that, instead of meeting it squarely, we invite a mighty collective fear to secure for us freedom *from* fear. We undermine inner strength in the interest of an external strength of a social order in which only materialistic resources are taken into account. The result is that fear destroys the moral and spiritual foundations of life, which only come from a fearless habit of mind.

We are so possessed by fear that we even fear to rely on ourselves lest another and greater fear may overtake us.

Last year we had scarcity conditions in Bihar. Did the people bravely help each other and share the difficulties with a generous heart? No. People hoarded, shouted for help, reported imaginary starvation deaths, exaggerated difficulties. We raised the phantom of famine and were seized by panic; we made fear itself the real danger, not the scarcity.

Fear is so much with the present world that we fear

to be fearless. When I first became a Congress volunteer in 1902, a foreign power had complete hold over us. Economically, India was being bled white; militarily, it was held down by a foreign army; politically, it was so backward that it took the politicians a generation more before they could articulate the slogan, 'India for Indians'.

India had everything to fear, but she feared not. Then, young men saw in her ancient culture the eternal source of a new aspiration; to work out an intellectual, artistic and religious Renaissance became their life's mission. They wanted to raise the status of women, to break social bondage, and to bring love and freedom and light into daily life. They worshipped the ancient and modern masters who, like torch-bearers, showed the way to spiritual strength. To the aspiring and patriotic students of that time, Bharat was not a country but a Mother to be worshipped by self-sacrifice. To them, death in her service was a crown to be coveted beyond all prizes. *Vande Mataram* was a sacred chant to the tune of which some of them went to the gallows. They had hope, they had noble aspirations, they had unshaken faith which stood unflinching against starvation, suffering, even death itself. And our great apostles of militant Indian nationalism told us about our great Motherland and of God who had His divine purpose to fulfil through her. This mighty impulse brought us in fifty years political and social freedom, national consciousness, and a powerful cultural renaissance.

At present we are without the inspiration of a high purpose. Bharatmata is Hind, a country; *Vande Mataram*, a national song, if you please. Love of our culture, we are told, is not a vital but a reactionary force. In our new-found wisdom, Dayanand, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Shri Aurobindo and Gandhiji are not torch-bearers of a

divine message, but just good enough to satisfy our national vanity, and their lives are certainly not held to be good enough to inspire our lives. We acclaim Gandhiji as the Father of the Nation, and yet we decline to live according to those standards by which he lived or to try to be an instrument of God as he aspired to be. We will not offer our lives at the shrine of the Motherland; but we are happy to prostrate ourselves before the election committees out of an abject fear that the party ticket may not be ours and that with it may go our role of heroes or patriots!

We dare not face the truth, much less cultivate the faith or be ready to 'die in our Truth', as the *Gita* teaches; we will not live up to the canons of a dedicated life or be God-minded as our torch-bearers aspired to be. Why has this change come over us? Because a mighty fear is upon us. We are afraid of being ourselves, of being proud of ourselves or our Motherland or her role in history. We see only the over advertised triumphs of the physical and social sciences pointing the way to a new Heaven—freedom from fear by material safeguards.

The demand for material comforts is natural and legitimate. What the world wants, and is entitled to, is a better life: more food, more clothing, better shelter, some happiness and, above all, security. But what is difficult to understand is this craving for them, without developing the spiritual values by which we can earn them—courage, tenacity and the will to render life secure, the heroism to rise above the dread of losing these things before we attained them.

And what has been the result? Old fears have died; new fears, more hideous have sprung up. Physical ailments have been conquered; we have developed widespread mental ailments. The U.S.A., which has the

amplest material comforts, is in the grip of a collective fear and is fast developing into a dreadful power. The U.S.S.R., which is the largest monolithic society in the world is controlled in both its internal and external life by omnipresent fear and is in perpetual dread of world combinations. Other nations fear poverty and want, rising prices and unemployment, war and subjection. They fear democracy lest it may be too weak, and totalitarianism for it may cost them everything. They shudder at the prospect of a crumbling world: of myriads of broken lives, of sweeping death brought by atomic bombs, radio activity and germ warfare.

## II

Who is responsible for this situation? The truth must be told. We—those of us who control university education are everywhere the culprits. The educational technique which we have built up has undermined the belief that man, and man alone can help himself.

We have forgotten the truth that education is only the art of self-sculpture, and have been fascinated by the new slogan that man develops only when his material wants are met. We have not hearkened to the words of Shri Krishna that 'self can alone redeem the self': *Atmanaiva Atmanam Uddharet*.

Education has, as a result, weakened the power of society to meet fear. It has encouraged men to wait on externals, and has ignored its real aim of strengthening the fundamental aspiration of man.

This aspiration is fundamental to man, because it distinguishes him from the animal; because it comes to man in every age and is the only source of strength which makes him fearless; because, in spite of repeated setbacks, it comes to mankind with greater intensity, exercising a

yet more extensive sway. Even in the age of ample material comforts it impels man to seek something higher than the life of the senses and their satisfaction. It seeks living contact with Something which, his faith tells him, will alone lead him to that joy which knows no satiety. This Something may have different names; it may be called Love, Light, Beauty, Bliss, Freedom, Immortality, Peace, Self-realization, Integration of Personality, God; but, in the ultimate analysis, it is the aspiration to 'be' oneself, to realise oneself more and better day after day, and to found oneself on the certainty of absolute individual strength.

Why have we submitted to the hypnotic spell to the extent of forgetting this true function of education? The reason is not far to seek.

We are passing through the most tremendous crisis in the human spirit in the history of man. It has been brought about by a complete maladjustment between the material civilization of our times and the fundamental aspiration.

Science has made the world one, geographically and economically; institutionally, however, it is divided into national, religious, linguistic and economic groups.

The material facilities of our age have outstripped social institutions. Stratosphere airlines exist side by side with a bullock cart stage in social thinking.

Social institutions, which normally form the adjusting influence between the material civilization of an age and its cultural values, are out of step with both.

Cultural values which strengthen the spirit of man, family life, freedom, stability, peace, the sense of beauty, human unity, love and God-mindedness which transcends self, are all at a discount.

Under the influence of these maladjustments modern education has ignored the fundamental aspiration. The

physical and social sciences, undoubtedly very useful for the progress of mankind, have assumed an importance in higher education almost to the exclusion of those other studies which foster and strengthen man's fundamental aspiration and stimulate his basic urges towards a higher life. The strength to do right is not developed. The habit of the mind claiming that everything should be done by external adjustment is strengthened. As a result, the brilliant progress of science has outstripped the corresponding progress of the spirit; social sciences, unsupported by the growth of better men, have created far more problems than those they have solved. Man's faith in himself is destroyed; he is deprived of his dignity as a Divine essence and has learnt to think of himself in terms of an insect driven only by material forces.

In reality education is and ought to be the great harmonising agency between the fundamental aspiration of man and the material civilization of each age.

First, it strengthens in the young men and women of every generation the fundamental aspiration, and thereby imparts fresh vigour and direction to those cultural values which represent it.

Secondly, it creates the ideas and influences which shape social institutions in the light of cultural values to suit the material civilization of that age.

The secrets of education have been given by the great masters of creative life. Shri Krishna wanted man to rise to self-realization and enter Him, so that he might escape 'all evils'. Buddha demanded the development of an inner universal compassion for all before there could be peace on earth; Christ wanted God to be recognised as Love; Gandhiji, in our generation, wanted us to be the instruments of God and to abjure violence of the spirit. Shri Aurobindo made a bold bid to secure the descent of the

Divine through an effort of the consciousness so that the material world might be transformed, purified and uplifted. They all wanted us to work from within first; the work from without must flow from inner strength. For 'Mind alone', they all declared, 'is the cause of freedom or bondage.'

The exclusive stress laid by modern education on the work from without neglects inner development and frustrates man's destiny. It brings the downfall of man by turning him into an insect with physical needs only. We dignify the process by giving it a lofty philosophical label: the materialistic interpretation of history.

Why have the educationists of the modern world allowed themselves to be hypnotised into accepting a system which emphasises a helpless reliance on externals?

Man, as a result of the progress of physical science, has acquired the organised power to destroy millions or to transform them into rigidly subservient machines. In consequence, in vast countries once pledged to freedom, the independent individual is extirpated, and a ruthless embargo is placed on freedom of thought. More men of ideas are refugees in foreign lands today than at any time in history. With parts of the world gone mad with fanatic hate and ruthless power, the man who wants to think his own thoughts and lead his own life, has no place—not even in the cloistered seclusion of the universities—to pursue his own way and 'be' himself.

This crisis of the human spirit is nowhere more discernible than in the facile manner in which the intellectuals surrender their freedom 'to be'. They appear to crave for the mechanisation of the world by a universal order which will save them the trouble of thinking of, and living up to, the fundamental aspiration in themselves. Liberty, which yesterday lifted the hearts of millions to



the stars, is now replaced in many lands by the universal cry of 'follow the leader'—an expression which merely conceals the herd instinct to fly from the dangers which their own fears have created.

Men of ideas, and among them the educationists, the scholars and the teachers, who by their inner strength and inspiring character, should mould the life and outlook of the younger generation, are confused. Their mind is gripped by skilful propagandists who are in possession of the instruments of persuasion. The seduction of the intellectual has been made into a fine art. Those who have escaped the grip are the hunted of the earth.

### III

Let us realise that the triumphs of the physical sciences are a means and not an end; for, if they were the final aim, it would mean the early destruction of the human race, not merely the foreclosure of man's destiny on earth. Social sciences, where they analyse social conditions, provide the diagnosis, not the cure. The cure can never be a scheme of mounting material comforts, bringing the constant fear that they may be lost; they can only lead man to increasing insectification.

There is a popular belief that the modern apparatus of a secular State founded on a mere socio-economic basis is a complete guarantee against the collapse of the material well-being of nations. Nothing is farther from truth. The State is but a social institution; it can only function successfully if the fundamental aspiration is harmonised with the material civilization by appropriate values.

A secular State, let it be noted, is not a godless State; for, if it were, it would be a State which lives in and on fear. A welfare State, while attempting to secure material comforts for all, can only subsist on the recognition of the normal basis of life, on the foundation of the spirit. It

can come only from the inner strength of those who support it.

Ashoka was the first founder of a welfare State, not a godless State, but a State permeated by a broad-minded approach to all religions, a Kingdom of God. He insisted, as his inscriptions show, that all religions were to be respected; that criticism of religion was to be forborne; that the divinity of all religious truths was to be recognised; that the religions of all sects were to be studied. No higher gospel of tolerance has been propounded since the dawn of the world, and no greater harm has been done than by its neglect. And in pursuance of his tolerant policy he did not try to subvert the social order or religious belief, even in the interests of the teachings of Buddha which had so impressed him.

He set up a network of missions to preach Dharma; he declared that all men were his children. "And what little effort I make, what is it for?" he said "that I may be free from debt to the creatures, that I may render some happy here, and that they may gain heaven in the next world." The emperor constituted himself as the guardian of the moral and material welfare of the world. From Afghanistan to Mysore and Kurnool District, and from Saurashtra to the boundaries of Assam, the *Dharmachakra* was proclaimed. *Dharma Mahamatras* were in charge of Dharma; a *Stri-Adhyaksha-Mahamatra* looked after women; other officers were in charge of cattle and birds. Ordinances, proclaiming the importance of the family as the basis of morality, liberality and charity towards all, the toleration of all religious sects, the sanctity of all life and the organisation of international relations for enduring peace, were promulgated.

I have faith in these creative ideas. The fathers of our race discovered these creative ideas in the days when

Egypt and Babylon were infant states; they have sustained India through the ages in one continuous stream of vigour. They affirm as the aim and end of life, the absolute integration of the human personality by making it the medium of expression for that joy which fades not, nor tires. It predicates Man as an inalienable centre of strength and dignity; Moral Order, as the immutable law which shelters and upholds the Universe; faith in the Absolute; the will to be His instrument in the fulfilment of His ends; and the strength to be true to oneself by conquering the fundamental limitation of wrath, attachment and fear and thereby reaching to the infinite in this life.

On these values alone can we build a society of free and strong men. Modern education must impart these values to our young men, for they are fundamental to all culture, and especially so to ours. They can only be taught by reconstructing the whole fabric of modern education. For this certain basic studies are absolutely indispensable for all students.

First, a study of classical literature. For, only by such study can we enter into the spirit of the masters like Vyas, Valmiki and Kalidasa, Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare and Goethe, whose highest aspirations created men and things of beauty and greatness.

Secondly, a study of the lives and messages of great and noble men, Shri Krishna and Buddha, Socrates and Christ and, coming to modern times, Ramakrishna, Shri Aurobindo and Gandhiji, Mazzini, Abraham Lincoln and the Curies, the discoverers of radium, who realised or sought to realise the highest aspiration in a dedicated life.

Thirdly, a study of India's history which, while it describes the tensions and struggles, also provides the historic vision of this sacred land; how *Dharma* was discovered and flourished here; how the moral order became

the basis of life, how men developed the higher strength which defied the vicissitudes of ages; how poets sang, heroes dared and saints worked for her; how the inspiration of one book, the *Mahabharata*, and of one language, Sanskrit, gave her the continuity and strength to survive the ruthless savagery of medieval times; how we, in modern times, have seen the glorious phenomenon of a bloodless war of freedom, a free state based on popular will and respected by the world, and the birth of a cultural renaissance which has given to the age a message of peace and beauty.

Fourthly, a study of history which, flowing down the stream of time, is gradually enlarging the freedom and responsibility of men; which tells us, not of insects reacting to material wants or brutes endowed with destructive power, not only of the rise and fall of nations and empires, but of the growth and decay of cultural values and the progressive realization of the unity of men; not only of wars and conquests but of the deepening moral consciousness in the race and of its progress, as exemplified by typical men, who have found fulfilment in living up to the fundamental aspiration.

Fifthly, the repeated recital of the eternal message enshrined in works like the *Gita* which will transmute the mental content of the individual, lead him to 'be' more and more, give him a wider consciousness that 'God is in all and all are in God'—in truth the only value which can resolve conflicts and become the true shaping influence of our cultural and institutional life in a physically united world.

These studies may not be extensive or deep; but if imparted to our young men as the essential foundation of their education, they will strengthen the fundamental aspiration of our new generation, shape cultural values, and adjust social institutions to the requirements of material progress on the one hand and the needs of the Spirit on the other,

I would appeal to my young friends to ask themselves: Has my education in this respect been completed? If not, complete it now. Whether your choice is classics or modern languages, biology, medicine or engineering, you are human beings first and last. The gift of the fundamental aspiration is yours by right of birth. Do not, therefore, deteriorate into insects; do not deny yourself this first privilege of man—the unique right to ‘be’ yourself in the light of the highest possibility which man can achieve.

And to my friends, the educationists, professors and teachers, I have to say but the same thing in other words. If you deny your students the benefit of classical studies, the inspiration of great and noble lives, the historical vision of our Motherland and the human race and a *Swadhyaya*—a sacred recital to guide and transform life to its highest purpose, you will deny them the foundations of life and leave them fear-ridden insects.

Education, planned in the way I have ventured to indicate, will make our fundamental aspiration a creative force, establishing in man a wider feeling of himself till infinite strength and freedom of the Spirit will have been realized, irrespective of material comforts and the attachments, fears and repulsions of life. Such education will alone give us not the freedom from fear, but the real freedom—the freedom to conquer fear, the freedom that knows no fear.

The secret of fearlessness has been thus unveiled:

“Indifferent to praise and blame;  
To the world’s babble, unresponsive;  
Satisfied with whatever one gets;  
United to narrow home, and free;  
Of steadfast resolve, devoted unto Me;  
These are the men—  
Dear unto Me.”

## II

### WORLD CONSCIOUSNESS BEFORE ONE WORLD

THE concept of world Government is as old as the Vedic Aryans. Varuna was to them the universal governor; *Rita*, his law, governed men and beasts, birds and stars; and they envisaged that whole universe should be ruled by *Rita* and made Aryan.

The idea of a *chakravarti*, the world-emperor, was born later. He was *samrat* and *ekarat*, the world's ruler, as proclaimed by the *Brahmanas*.

A little later still, when the *Gita* was composed, Shri Krishna was recognised as the protector of the eternal *Dharma* and as such the upholder of the world. But the basis of this unity was the one-world consciousness realised by the *yogis*. "Those who see Me in all, and all in Me" were the wise ones. The world to them was one family.

At the dawn of history, the Jews also evolved the idea of God as 'King of Kings'. The Persians had a mundane King of Kings.

In India, again, the upholder of the *dharmachakra*—*Chakravarti*—was in theory the ruler of the earth; *ashvamedha* was the assertion of his title. Similarly there existed the idea of Rome's universal sway by law.

Geographical limitations restricted the scope of universal political rule. But Buddha, by universal compassion, wielded the *chakra* over the whole universe; so did Jesus, by the universal love of mankind. To the dominion of the spirit, there were no geographical boundaries.

The Roman emperors made gigantic experiments in world-government, but both of these empires fell to pieces due to the poorly developed communications of the ancient world.

The Popes symbolised the temporal and spiritual unity

of the Church, among Christians all over the world; the Khalifs wielded theocratic sway over the Moslems of the world.

To Indians, *chaturvarnya* was a universal organisation. Wherever it was enforced, the frontiers of Aryavarta extended; and the writ of '*Bhu-chakravarti*'—the world emperor—was upheld in theory, wherever *dharma* prevailed. Jagannath was the Supreme Lord of the world. A sanyasi, no matter where he lived, was a citizen of the world—without distinction of caste, race or religion, seeing "all in Me and Me in all".

Then came the incursions of the Barbarians and the reactions of mediaeval Europe to them. World-empires became a memory. The Catholic Church lost its temporal influence. The idea of a universal law binding the world disappeared from Europe. Group sentiments came to be enlarged into nationalism, a strong parochial sentiment which made of men 'us' and 'you' merely by reason of artificial geographical boundaries. Between nations, the rule of the jungle prevailed; there was no supremacy of commonly enforced law and no international conscience to respect it.

Even the spiritual consciousness of unity receded; Christianity was divided by colour. Hinduism lost its catholicity and small narrow groups were evolved, nevertheless the supremacy of *dharma* was accepted. Only mystics, poets and, later, humanists thought in terms of one world and a common humanity.

Rationalism, from its inception, announced equality, liberty, and fraternity for all men; and the French Revolution heralded a new age of a common humanity. Even politicians came to think of one world. Napoleon struggled to unite Europe under one rule but failed; the horse-age thwarted a super-national government.

Militant nationalism emerged as an exclusive force. Only the British navy ruled the seas, and for the best part of a hundred years, there was a sense of world unity among those whom the British did not want to hunt down.

The British Commonwealth, in spite of its shortcomings, has been the biggest world combine of nations. Nationalistic Germany, in World War I, tried to break it on the bloody battlefields of Europe, but failed. Democracy won. But nationalistic tendencies were too strong. The conquerors founded the League of Nations, but the prospects of a world government were destroyed by internecine rivalries and the isolationist tendencies of the U.S.A.

Humanity had not then learnt the lesson that a world government without the power to act cannot last a day.

World War II followed. Nationalist Germany was vanquished. Britain, in her hour of victory, became weak; there was an increasing vacuum where once her flag had flown in strength.

Russia, a powerful monolithic power engaged in absorbing Eastern European countries emerged as a potential world government. China, under powerful Communist rule, is its great ally.

The U.S.A. learnt the lesson of World War I and entered world politics to stay the Communist march towards world domination. Under its influence non-Soviet countries are gathering into a combine with the object of establishing or stiffening co-ordinated military centres all over the world, in order to resist aggression, and supporting the sagging economy of weaker nations. This has led to NATO, the proposals for a Middle East Command, and plans for the defence of South-East Asia.

After the fall of the League of Nations, the world again clamoured for a world organ, and the United Nations Organisation was founded. Though divided under



the influence of the two great power blocs, it is a forum where words replace weapons and the world's conscience, more often than not, becomes an arbiter. Parallel with increased armaments, open propaganda is being employed to influence this conscience. Thus the whole world has shown its readiness to support the moral force of UNO.

That is where India comes in, as a protagonist of the power of moral force. We have only the weapons of a man of peace; a sense of fairness, a burning desire for peace and a faith in One World. We have been friendly to both Russia and China. We are associated with the U.S.A. and the Commonwealth countries in democratic faith and economic collaboration. We have no expansionist ambitions. We can, therefore, mobilise the incalculable moral opinion which is able to prevent conflict, create mutual understanding, and form the conventions of world self-rule.

But in our present stage of human progress, we cannot wait till self-evolved traditions are formed. Moral force can easily be overwhelmed if violence and vaulting ambition are not held in leash. It will also fail if some accident should bring about the economic collapse of any vital link. All this presupposes the pressure of sanctions and economic adjustments maintained sufficiently long for the world conscience to throw up an irresistible urge for a world government by democratic methods.

Sanctions were attempted by the U.N. against aggression in Korea. Can these sanctions be rendered more powerful so as to evolve the framework of a world police force which no one will dare to defy? On the reply to this question rests the possibility of one government for the world.

But without one world consciousness, one world government by willing co-operation is an impossibility.

Science and swift communication have made the world one geographically. Our minds however have remained behind times still divided by the barriers of caste and religion, linguistic difference and national exclusiveness. The area of the mind must, therefore, be cleared of its out-of-date fences.

World consciousness implies harmony between different national cultures arising from a deep and catholic sympathetic understanding from the free passage of thought, and the recognition of beauty as a universal asset. The iron curtains which divide thought and art and ways of life must therefore, be torn asunder.

This implies a change in the mental content of our race, an overhaul of our educational and publicity methods, and also there should be the stamp of world consciousness on all that we do and say.

This is a long way for us to travel from our medieval outlook; God-consciousness—'All in Me and Me in All'—which is the root of world unity, must, therefore, be reawakened and enthroned in the hearts of men.

In the meantime, the world is moving fast. We see world consciousness forcing its way through outworn institutions. Mighty forces in search of security are breaking down national exclusiveness. We are being rudely awakened to a sense of unity in matters political, economic, scientific and even cultural. Both UNESCO and FAO, though they have not so far gathered world-wide direction are moving swiftly. An inescapable interdependence is weaving even nations which distrust one another into one single texture.

If world government, plenary in character, even though informally so, does not come soon, humanity is doomed. Man's destiny, however, points towards a world government, and it shall be fulfilled.

### III

#### TRANSFORMING LIFE

##### I

I AM deeply obliged to you for inviting me to deliver the Convocation Address of the Bihar Sanskrit Association. Your Association is one of the leading organisations in the country which foster the study of our great language, and it gives me unqualified pleasure to meet you all. I have always admired the enthusiasm of the Bihar Government for maintaining and spreading the study of Sanskrit, and the country should feel deeply obliged to them.

But let me not masquerade under false pretences. When I began to study *Kaumudi* at the behest of my father, I began with the first sutra *Iko Yanachi* and never went beyond it. In my B.A. examination, I managed to only get 3 marks more than the bare pass. My knowledge of Sanskrit is very meagre, and the speech that I am now delivering in Sanskrit has been translated by someone for me, not written by me. However, even with my slight familiarity with Sanskrit, I know its value; and I know what it means to us all, to India and to the world; and that is enough for me.

In spite of my ignorance, I happen to be a great admirer of Sanskrit. I am intimately associated, as you know, with many organisations promoting Sanskrit. I hold that Sanskritic culture provides the only basic unity in this country and is necessary for our national progress. I believe in the beauty and the greatness of its literature and the necessity of drawing upon them in the development of our national language. What is more, I believe that, if we fail to maintain Sanskrit as the living inspiration of our lives, we shall lose not only the great heritage our ancestors left us, but also the leadership of the world in thought,

culture and matters of the Spirit. Furthermore, the study of Sanskrit is essential in order that the spirit of man may transform life into a noble expression of God-mindedness which is absolutely essential for the progress of the race.

I value the traditional method adopted by our *pathshalas* as a means of keeping Sanskrit as a living language, and have often urged the necessity of modifying that Sanskrit education which now prevails in our schools, colleges and universities. But, as a lover of Sanskrit, I must tell you frankly that, unless the traditional methods are reorientated and revitalized, and unless our *shastris* cease to stand away from the flowing stream of life, our *pathshalas* will disappear and with them will go Sanskrit as a living, spoken language. It will recede into a classical language, an object of scholarly study, a dead material to be worked upon in a philological laboratory.

The present traditional method is a survival from the Age of Resistance when, after the 12th century, our Sanskrit universities were destroyed in Northern India; when research in science and art, then conducted through Sanskrit, came to an end; when Sanskrit ceased to be the spoken language of intercourse even among the educated throughout the land; when it became just a language of the learned aristocracy intended for the scholar who delighted in grammatical and rhetorical tricks.

The study of grammar, traditional philosophy and ritual became the principal object of the *pathshalas*. No doubt such studies have produced and are producing hundreds and thousands of priests, physicians, astrologers and *shastris* who have helped to keep alive, during countless terrible centuries, our religion, morals, culture and the integrity of our social system. I do not, therefore, want to minimize the services which this traditional system has rendered.

But a new era has opened. India is free. The incubus of centuries, the need for resisting alien influences, the fear of losing our soul, are all gone. We are the architects of our own fate. We have to rely upon our historic greatness to maintain national pride. We have to dive deep into the unconscious of our race in order to extract the treasures of life which our ancestors have woven into the depth of our being.

Naturally, therefore, the study of *Kaumudi* and the *Mimamsas*, and the turning out of pandits, shastris, jyotishis and vaidyas cannot be the sole aim of Sanskrit education. Its aim should be to maintain Sanskrit as a living language; to produce lovers of Sanskrit who will influence the ways of our every-day life, not merely through religion and philosophy but through every aspect of it. It should produce students fully equipped with ancient learning and modern knowledge imparted through Sanskrit, who could take their place in society as the exponents of our culture and as media for transforming life itself in the light of the gospel for which Sanskrit stands.

In this way, Sanskrit can transform our lives as it did in the days of yore. If, however, this has to be done, the courses in Sanskrit must be revised both in the *pathshalas* and the universities. The *pathshala* system must be reorientated, enlarged and vitalized by teaching not merely grammar, classics and philosophy, but history,—ancient and modern—physical and social sciences, literature, not merely of India, but of other lands as well, but all through the medium of Sanskrit. This is the only way in which our traditional system will serve a useful purpose in the future.

It is unfortunate that for well nigh 75 years, the study of Sanskrit in our universities has remained unattractive because of the emphasis on grammatical studies and cramming to the neglect of literary studies and the direct method.

For an Indian or a person who knows Latin or its modern derivatives there can be no language easier to spread than Sanskrit—not the Sanskrit of the rhetoricians, nor the flowery extravagances of Bana and Dandi, but the directly spoken Sanskrit which the *shastris* use in teaching their pupils.

If the *pathshalas* and universities make a point of using the direct method in teaching Sanskrit throughout the course and of making its beautiful literature accessible to the students before the grammar and compound rules make their life miserable, the popularity of Sanskrit will grow. That is what we want—easy spoken Sanskrit, spoken as it is by many *pandits*, particularly in the South, with an elasticity of expression which equals that of the advanced languages of the modern world. Through that medium, it should be our aim to familiarise the country with the best in the Sanskrit language, and no other language can be better than this. Thus only will Sanskrit be kept alive.

## II

There is, however, an ignorant attitude of mind which believes that the study of Sanskrit hinders progress. It is supposed to induce an otherworldly outlook, thus disabling a person from playing his part in the modern world.

The facts, however, prove otherwise. From Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Rajendra Babu, the men who have created powerful impulses in this country have derived their inspiration from Sanskrit. Even leaders like Sardar who were unfamiliar with Sanskrit, have derived the strength and inspiration of their lives from the *Bhagvad-Gita*.

The great architects of our national life during the last hundred and fifty years, from Ramakrishna Paramhansa and Dayanand Sarasvati to Shri Aurobindo and Gandhi, have found in Sanskrit a major influence.

It is due to the study of Sanskrit, that men from our universities have since 1857, enriched and vitalized our languages. The whole Modern Renaissance in India has drawn its inspiration largely from the impact of English on Sanskrit.

Some believe—and our traditional method lends colour to this belief—that Sanskrit is primarily intended for religious and philosophic studies and leads to ‘otherworldliness’. This is quite wrong.

The message of Sanskrit is as wide as life; and no more rich or virile message has been given to man. *Mahabharata* is the Book of Life; *Ramayana* is the quintessence of beauty; *Bhagvata* has unsurpassable literary grace; *Gita-govind* is the bible of lyrical charm; *Bhagavadgita* is the scripture of scriptures for an active, dedicated life. And their message is not ‘otherworldly’, from *Vedas*, our Rock of Ages, flow the living springs of power, strength and light.

The Vedic Arya is a warrior, a hero, who has ‘to transform the world by making it Aryan’.

कृण्वन्तो विश्वमार्यम् .

If the message of Sanskrit emphasizes the spirit of man, it emphasizes equally his duty to transform the mind in the light of its teaching. ‘The mind alone makes a man bound or free,’

मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः ।

and, therefore, ‘it has to be rescued from wherever it is roaming and brought under the control of the spirit’.

यतो यतो निश्चरति, मनश्चंचलमस्थिरम् ।

ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥

But Sanskrit teaching does not discard the body; it recognizes that the body is ‘the first instrument of the eternal law of the Spirit, i.e. *Dharma*.’

शरीरमायं खलु धर्मसाधनम् ।

‘Those that oppress the body oppress Me’, says the Lord. It only enjoins that the body should be transformed into a rich and effective instrument for transforming the world.

But there is no moral or ideological narrowness in this attempt to transform the world. Each man must participate in the activities of life, for that is Nature’s call, but he should act according to the mould and shape of his temperament.

स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ।

We have in our ignorance perverted even beautiful words. No word, for instance, has been more abused than the word ‘Yoga’. Yoga, in America, is a kind of hocus-pocus. In this and some other countries, it is advertised by charlatans; in the name of Yoga one will bury himself underground, and another try to poison himself without committing suicide. Yoga is often confused with retirement into the Himalayas or sitting between five fires. The Yogi has become ‘Jogi’; the ‘Jogi, has become the ‘Jogida’; from the man who has merged himself in God he has become a man with matted hair, and the minimum of clothing who begs in the streets.

We have forgotten that Yoga is transforming life by means of the Spirit expressing itself through words, deeds and personality.

Deeds are not wanton action, but action inspired by the Spirit. But this action is not restricted merely to personal salvation in the other world. The action has to transform life in this body and in this world; the world has to be won here.

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।

When Shri Krishna told Arjuna to be *nimitta matra*, he wanted him to fight in the present, in the battle-field and vanquish his foes.



Rishis pray for life—they certainly do:

"A hundred autumns, may we see;  
A hundred autumns, may we live;  
A hundred autumns, may we learn;  
For a hundred autumns, may we rise high;  
For a hundred autumns, may we flourish;  
For a hundred autumns, may we be ourselves;  
For a hundred autumns, may we become—  
Yet more of ourselves than what we are:  
Nay, not a hundred autumns, more than a hundred  
autumns."

पद्मे शरदः शतम्  
जीवे शरदः शतम्  
बुध्ये शरदः शतम्  
रोहे शरदः शतम्  
पूषे शरदः शतम्  
भवे शरदः शतम्  
भूये शरदः शतम्  
भूयसी शरदः शतात् ॥ अ० वे० १९. ६७.

This life is not merely a lop-sided, isolated, and detached existence but a full-blooded pursuit of self-fulfilment. Listen again to the Rishis:

"Through the mouth, may I continue to speak;  
Through my nostrils, may I continue to breathe;  
Let me have eyes to see and ears to hear;  
Let me have hair but not turned grey,  
Nor teeth turned to decay;  
Let me have strength and ever more strength in my arms;  
Let my thighs be strong and swift;  
Let my feet stand steadfast;  
Let my limbs remain unhurt and my spirit unbroken and  
undaunted."

वाक् आसन् नसोः प्राणश्चक्षुर् अक्षोः श्रोत्रं कर्णयोः ।  
अपलिताः केशा अशोणा दन्ता बहु बाह्वोर्बलम् ॥ १ ॥  
ऊर्वोर् ओजो जङ्घयोर् जवः पादयोः  
प्रतिष्ठा अरिष्टानि मे सर्वात्मानिमृष्टः ॥ २ ॥ अ० वे० १०

No more ardent aspiration for a fuller life has been expressed in any literature in the world. There is no weakness, no tedium, no 'otherworldliness'!

The aspiration rises higher and stronger,  
May we be ever youthful and in thy friendship woven, Lord

अजरासस्ते सख्ये स्याम

This ever youthful life has to be happy and free;

Let our bodies move in freedom;

Let our homes be for ever free ---

Oh, Divine Expanses of the Sky, grant us freedom.

उरु णस्तन्वे तन

उरु क्षयाय नस्कृधि ।

उरु णो यन्धि जीवसे ॥ ऋ० ८ । ६८ । १२

And with freedom, there is a yearning for happiness too; not then emaciated, self-torturing disregard of life.

Oh, Lord, give us the best of things:

The mind that is active and keen;

And fortune which is good;

Wealth, in increasing plenty; bodies, sound and strong;

And speech that is sweet, and days delightful.

इन्द्र भेषानि द्रविणानि धेहि

चित्तिं दक्षस्य सुभगत्वमस्मे ।

पोषं रयीणाम् भरिष्टिं तनूनाम्

स्वाद्यानं वाचः सुदिनत्वमह्नाम् ॥ ऋ० २।२१।६

The fullness and richness for which the Rishis pray arise from the power and richness of the Spirit, to transform the whole organism of life. The one message which India has given to the world is that life is one and indivisible. The strength of our bodies is not, nor should it be for selfish well-being, merely isolated from the collective life.

Lord, grant to our bodies strength;  
 To our draught bulls lend strength;  
 Make our seed fertile;  
 And to our children grant a robust life.  
 Thou alone, Lord, art the giver of strength.

बलं धेहि तनूषु नो  
 बलं इन्द्रानकुत्सु नः ।  
 बलं तोकाय तनयाय जीवसे  
 त्वं हि बलदा असि ॥ ऋ० ३।५३।१८

Again—

Lord, Thou art the protector protect my body,  
 Thou givest length to the day:  
 give me long life,  
 Thou givest the undimmed mind :  
 give it to me,  
 Whatever is wanting in me :  
 Give it to me, Lord.

तनूषा ऽ अग्ने ऽ सि तन्वं मे  
 पाह्यायुर्दा ऽ अग्ने ऽ स्यायुर्मे देहि ।  
 वचोदा ऽ अग्ने ऽ सि वर्चो मे देहि  
 अग्ने यन्मे तन्वा ऽ ऊनं तन्म ऽ आपृण ॥ य. (वा) ३।१७।।

And this identity of the individual with the organism of life has been nowhere more beautifully expressed than in the Taittiriya Upanishad, where the teacher asks the pupil to pledge himself:

Thou shalt not spurn food;  
*That is the First Pledge.*  
 For, life is food, and the body the eater thereof,  
 In life alone rests the body, and the body in life,  
 And, food, therefore, in food.  
 Thou shalt not forswear food :  
*That is the Second Pledge.*  
 Thou shalt grow food in plenty :  
*That is the Third Pledge.*  
 For, the Earth is food,  
 And Akash enveloping it, is the eater thereof.

Thou shalt not turn away the hungry from your home :  
*That is the Fourth Pledge.*  
 Food, therefore, shalt thou grow,  
 By all and every means.

अन्नं न निन्द्यात् ।

तद् व्रतम् ।

प्राणो वा अन्नम् । शरीरमन्नादम् ।

प्राणे शरीरं प्रतिष्ठितम् ।

शरीरे प्राणः प्रतिष्ठितः ।

तदेतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितम् । (३. ७ ।

अन्नं न परिचक्षीत ।

तद् व्रतम् । (३. ८)

अन्नं बहु कुर्वीत ।

तद् व्रतम् ।

पृथिवी वा अन्नम् । आकाशो ऽ न्नादः । (३. ९)

न कंचन वसतौ प्रत्याचक्षीत ।

तद् व्रतम् ।

तस्माद्ययाक्याच्च विधया बह्वन्नं प्राप्नुयात् ॥ ३. १० ॥ तै. ३.

This is not a philosophy of escapism but a victorious and joyful wisdom fit for heroes. Life is one great effort towards the victory of the spirit for good. The Rishi says :

The stream flows on : it is filled with stones,

Summon up your strength: stand firm:

go across it, my friends,

Leave the evil-minded behind:

let us cross over

Cross over to goodness and joy.

अश्मन्वती रीयते संरम्भवम्

उत्तिष्ठत प्रतरता सखायः ।

अन्ना जहाम ये असन्नशेवाः

शिवान् वयम् उत्तरेमाभिवाजान् ॥

ऋ० १० । ५३ । ८ य. वा. ३५ । १० अ० १३ । १ । २६

There is nothing other-worldly, no hesitation, no

weakness in this message. It gives us the will to victory, the will to work, the will to achieve, the creative will to transform ourselves and our world.

And no more stirring message has been delivered to man than this invocation.

Destroyer of forts, world's victor with thunder armed,  
He quells the army; with both hands he destroys it.  
Brothers, be heroes and follow him!  
Like unto him, gather up your strength.

गोत्रमिदं गोविदं वज्रबाहुं  
जयन्तम अजम प्रमृणन्तमोजसा ।  
इमं सजाता अनु वीरयध्वम्  
इन्द्रं सखायो ऽनु संरभध्वम् । ऋ० १०।१०३।६ सा. १८५४ ॥

The message is thus continued :

"We adore him:

He bends not before the strong, nor before the firm;  
He bends not before the arrogant foe nor the wicked behind  
him.

For him, the heroic Lord, the mountains are as plains;  
For him, there is for every deep, a ford."

न वीळ्वे नमते नस्थिराय  
न शर्भते दस्युजूताय स्तवान् ।  
अज्रा इन्द्रस्य गिरयश्चिद्वृष्वा

● गम्भीरे चिद् भवति गाधम् अस्मै ॥ ऋ० १।२४।८

This Sanskrit inspiration did not merely remain in literature. It created the Vedic Age with its potent impulse of a new culture; the expansive movement which followed the Bharat War; the mighty age of Bihar from 700 B.C. to 500 A.D., when Pataliputra ruled the country; the glorious age of Kanauj from 550 to 950; and the mighty resistance movements from 997 to 1947. We must look upon Bharat in the continuous stream of time, not in isolated fragments of periods.

Those who look only to the past, and forget the pre-

sent, invite death. Those who only look to the future, and forget the past speed to their doom.

No nation can be great in the present or in the future without pride in the greatness of the past.

The life of Bharat, its magnificent past, its fateful present and its glorious future are one phenomenon which has a living continuity. And the embodiment and instrument of that continuity is Sanskrit.

In this light should you build up a new approach to the study of Sanskrit. I commend to you one of the objects of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

“Bharatiya Shiksha while equipping the student with every kind of scientific and technical training must teach the student not to sacrifice an ancient form or attitude to an unreasoning passion for change; not to retain a form or attitude which in the light of modern times can be replaced by another form or attitude which is a truer and more effective expression of the spirit of Bharatiya Vidya; and to capture the spirit afresh for each generation to present it to the world.”

Revolutionary slogans, popular in this impatient age, have no sure foundation of faith and are mere stunts to capture or retain power. Revolutionary zeal is a mass emotion based on a narrow outlook to pursue a mirage so that the realities may be forgotten. Our people cannot be legislated or revolutionised out of our ‘Collective Unconscious;’ they can only be transformed by the slow and laborious process of vitalising and reintegrating the faith in our characteristic values.

England had a revolution; within twenty years Charles II had an England, which was true to its soul, not to the soul of the Puritans. France had a revolution; it abandoned itself to frenzy for a generation; its ‘Unconscious’ however asserted itself in the Napoleonic regime. Lenin wanted a revolution; Stalin only succeeded in estab-

lishing a regime on the lines of the Static, old order mechanism for enforcing obedience. In each case energy and peaceful progress were sacrificed to impatience and violence.

Our 'Collective Unconscious' can only be transformed along the lines of our historical evolution and by the faith which springs from Sanskrit and its culture.

Let the study of Sanskrit, therefore, give us a glimpse of not only the past, but of life, victorious and continuous. Let courses in grammar, rhetoric and philosophy be subsidiary to the development of the strong and vigorous outlook of a Vedic Rishi. And let all of us who believe in Sanskrit combine in India, and outside, to give humanity the faith to face the future.

The study of Sanskrit will, then, give us the vision and the will to triumph over life, over the forces of evil; a triumph which can transform the world and uplift it. It should give us faith that, with the help of God, "we shall bring the existing world within our encompassing might."

इमां नु कं भुवना सीषधेमेन्द्रश्च विश्वे च देवाः ॥ (सर्वे वेदाः)

And more; that in God shall we live and in God shall we triumph:

My words shall not be filled with untruth;  
Nor shall my mind to illusions submit,  
Nor, shall even my powers drift to the unrighteous ways;  
So long I bear as Hari, in my loving, longing heart.

न भारती मेऽङ्ग मृषोपलक्ष्यते  
न कर्हिचिन्मे मनसो मृषा गतिः ।  
न मे हृषीकाणि पतन्त्यसत्पथे  
यन्मे हृदोत्कण्ठ्यवता धृतो हरिः ॥

( श्रीमद्भागवते—द्वितीयस्कन्धे षष्ठोऽध्यायः—३३ श्लोकः )

## IV

### THE TRUE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

#### I

I AM very glad to have been able to visit Vaishali on this occasion, for, Vaishali has historic and sacred associations, not only for India or Asia, but for the whole world.

I congratulate those who organised this festival. Such festivals are the symbol and manifestation of the historic greatness of our land; they foster legitimate national pride in the heroism, learning and piety of our ancestors, without which national greatness is unthinkable.

In order to be great, a nation has to think and feel in terms of its historic achievements. We, as a race, have been a grateful race; it is now for us, as a free nation, to keep alive memories which, like the waters of life, replenish the youth of a people from generation to generation. In very recent times, Somnath has risen again. The memories of Chitor will I am sure, be revived and, so will those of Pratapgarh where Shivaji raised the standard of resurgent India.

You however, have been early in the field. You have revived in men's mind what Vaisali was, and what we owe to it.

Vaishali was famed for power, learning and beauty from the earliest times. The *Ramayana* calls it the 'best of towns'; *Vishnu Purana* refers to it with admiration. Possibly, it fell within the kingdom of Janak Vaidehi and echoed to the sweet laughter of Sita in her younger days.

2,500 years ago, it was "the city of gods", happy, proud and prosperous; with abundant food; crowded with richly varied people; adorned with many storeyed mansions, towering palaces, noble gateways, and triumphal



arches; surrounded by three forts; a city of flowers, gardens, groves and lotus ponds.

Before the dawn of Indian history in the seventh century before Christ, Vaishali was already a centre of power. Vaishali warriors invaded Magadha when its ruler, Bimbisara, was laying the foundation of an empire. Friendship was established however, and Chellana, daughter of the Lichchhavi chief Chetaka of Vaishali, the maternal uncle of Mahavira, became the queen of Magadha.

Bimbisara was murdered by his son Ajatasatru, who also embarked upon a career of conquest. Eastern India was then dominated by a confederate of thirty-six republics of which the Vrijjian (Vajjian confederacy) were the most prominent; and even among the Vrijjians, the Lichchhavis were the most powerful. The Vrijjians were at the zenith of their power, headed by the powerful Chetaka of the Lichchhavis; they were allied to the kingdoms of Kashi and Kosala; and Vaishali, like Athens in Greece, was then the republican metropolis of Eastern India.

The old rivalry between Vaishali and Magadha flared up; and Ajatasatru decided to destroy Vaishali. A long war followed. Even Buddha, who stood detached and superior to the world, came to Vaishali to advise its leaders. Buddha's famous advice contains a warning to all republics. He warned Vaishali of the two dangers which lurk in all republican States: and disunion and disrespect for tradition and elders; and a love for swift, sweeping changes. Vaishali fell, for it heeded not the advice of Buddha.

The realistic Kautilya, who knew better than any political thinker in any age the secret of strength, tells us of all the devices by which a republic can be destroyed. Even Shanti Parva of the *Mahabharata*, which favours democratic states, indicates that, if a republic is to survive, the elders

should be respected; secrecy of council should be maintained; and internal danger in particular be guarded against. A republic can be torn asunder by creating internal dissensions or corruption. How many democratic states in modern times have fallen or been undermined by the same vice! "Unity is the chief refuge of the *ganas*." No saner advice could be given to modern democracies, and more particularly to India in these days of her infant life as a republic.

But Ajatasatru knew his strength and the weakness of Vaishali. He declared: "I shall root out and destroy the mighty Vrijjians. I shall bring them to utter ruin." For years he sowed the seeds of disunion among the people of Vaishali. Across the Ganga he built an impregnable fort as a basis for his operations; Buddha prophesied that it would be the chief city of Aryavarta; and so it grew—grew into Pataliputra, the capital of India, for well-nigh 800 years, the centre of its imperial unity.

For over eight years the war was fought. Vaishali suffered, and was torn by disunion; its democrats argued incessantly; they could keep no secrets. Ultimately Vaishali fell. Ajatsatru obtained mastery over Eastern India. Magadha was placed on the path of all-Indian conquest.

Though Vaishali was included in Magadha, it continued to be a powerful city. Eight hundred years later, Chandragupta, the founder of the Gupta empire, took pride in marrying a daughter of the Lichchhavis, and his son Samudragupta, the great conqueror, throughout life took pride in being the son of a daughter of Vaishali's proud race. For over a thousand years, Vaishali was a mighty city.

## II

Vaishali was not merely the home of wealth, power

and beauty; it was also rich in learning and high aspirations. Here in Kundagrama, a suburb of Vaishali, was born Vardhamana Mahavira, the founder of Jainism; he spent twelve rainy seasons of his ascetic life here. The dust of Vaishali was also hallowed by the footprints of Buddha. Early in his life he lived here, practising austerities in the Ashram of the sage Alara Kalama. Many of his immortal discourses were delivered in its mango-groves or in the adjoining *Mahavana*.

Buddha and Mahavira have been beacon lights to struggling humanity for twentyfive hundred years. They had something which we all have, but they had it in an ample measure, more abundant than has been given to the best of us. Why are their lives a message to every age? Why have these two become symbols of man's redemption?

Mahavira was the son of Siddhartha, a wealthy nobleman of Vaishali, the head of the republican tribe of Jnatikas. His mother, Trishala, was the sister of Vaishali's chief Chetak, related to the powerful Bimbisara of Magadha. He was married, had a daughter, and lived a householder's life till he was thirty. Then a flame of mighty aspiration rose in him till he was consumed by it.

Similarly, Buddha was the crown-prince of Kapilavastu, loved for his beauty, admired for his virtues. He also had a wife and a son and the prospect of kingship. He too was caught up in the flame of a mighty aspiration, and this flame was used by millions like Amrapali in succeeding generations to light the fires of their little aspirations.

Amrapali was the daughter of a wealthy merchant of Vaishali, divinely beautiful and wonderfully accomplished. Even princes sought her hand. But she was a problem for the Lichchhavis. They ultimately solved the problem in a

curious way: she was too precious 'a jewel among women' and could not be the object of a monopoly. She became a hetæra, as Aspasia was in Periclean Greece. Even Bimbisara the conqueror was drawn into hostile Vaishali by her beauty, charm and reputation. He fell in love with her. She became his mistress. They had a son. This Amrapali, rich and beautiful, mistress of a mighty king, who had everything that a woman could desire, gave it all up. She was consumed by the flame of aspiration which Buddha embodied. The Lichchhavis asked her to give up the privilege of serving food to Buddha for a hundred thousand coins. "Masters mine," she said, "were you to offer me even all Vaishali and her vast territories, I would not give up this privilege."

What was the flame of aspiration which led Mahavira to attain *kaivalya* and Buddha to attain *nirvana*? Why was the lure of this aspiration mightier by far than power, glory, riches and happiness? Because men in all lands and ages have found self-fulfilment only in being consumed by this aspiration, an aspiration which leads one to the realisation of oneself.

This fundamental aspiration is what distinguishes men from animals. Animal needs, material comforts, the temptations and attachments of life are as nothing before the irresistible power of this flame in the hearts of men. When it rises sky-high, intense and pure and creative, it breaks the limitations of the human ego and soars higher towards the deeper and wider consciousness which embraces all men and animals, all life, creation itself.

Here in Vaishali let us try to capture, even for a moment, the warmth of this flaming aspiration; let us seek light, freedom, love and self-realisation. We too have the aspiration and also the spirit from which it rises; only our aspirations are weak, feeble, trembling, neglected due

to one sided concentration on physical sciences, our pre-occupation with materialism.'

The message of these Masters is that the spirit from which the aspiration rises can transform our minds, make them universal, widen our sense of life, establish a living oneness with existence itself. You may call it '*My-mindedness*', *God-consciousness* after the Gita, *jivdaya*—unity with all life—after Mahavira, or *karuna*—compassion—after Buddha; in essence it is the sense of oneness with existence itself, beautifully expressed as "seeing all in Me and Me in all". These Masters attained one world-consciousness, not through the United Nations, nor by arms, nor by press propaganda, but by the sweeping embrace of their universalised consciousness which, through the strength of their aspiration, burst the bounds of their narrow selves.

### III

Twenty-five hundred years have gone by, still our vision is just as restricted as ever, narrow, suicidal. The voices of Shri Krishna, Buddha, Mahavira, and Christ reach us through the corridors of time, but have we developed a sense of oneness in India, let alone in the rest of the world? The castes, the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas, the Shoodras, each have a different distinct sense of identity; and so have Biharis and Bengalis, Gujaratis and Maharashtrians, Tamilians and Telugus, Hindus and Muslims. We have one government; we have one nationality; we have one basic culture; we have in a way the unity of language inspired by Sanskrit; our ways of life are fundamentally the same; our philosophy of life is dominated by the self-same past. The best amongst us find self-fulfilment only by living up to the idea for which our Masters stood. Our men, cattle

and trees form an indissoluble organism of life. Yet the bulk of us have failed to develop that living, burning sense of oneness with all things Indian. This in spite of our knowledge that, if we do not evolve this sense of oneness, 'all in India and India in all', we will lose our freedom. With freedom gone, India will lose her soul. With her soul gone, India will die.

In the same way, in spite of incessant appeals to develop world consciousness, have we developed that sense of oneness with the whole world? We talk of the United Nations Organisation; we talk of the One World Movement; we talk of the message of the UNESCO; but in our heart of hearts we, our narrow selves are parted from each other. We emphasise the frontiers which divide man from man and nation from nation. The fact is that the fundamental aspiration has been tragically isolated from individual life, and the individual life from the life of the organism. We keep the aspiration alive by worship and prayer and festival; we do not allow it to transform the mind, the body or behaviour; little is done to transform the life of our collective organism. The aspiration of light, freedom, and love, expressed in a sense of oneness, is by the very nature of our outlook, just smothered; men and nations and classes hate one another in their pursuit of material welfare.

Our ordinary vision is woefully restricted; it is narrow, suicidal. Men deny the Spirit, and assert material life. Some deny material life, and assert the Spirit. Still more are just blind, they deal with the spirit and material life as things apart. This is at the root of the world's tragic failure.

We have to learn the true philosophy of life. .  
The spirit of man is rooted in the mind. The mind is rooted in the body; the body in material life. This life

is again rooted in the organism of life made of the tree, the animal, the man. The living organism is rooted in the sunshine and the soil, the rivers and the mountains and the climatic conditions of our land. The collective welfare, material, economic, social, political, moral and spiritual welfare, make for the health of this organism. Of them all, spiritual welfare is the most potent; for, by the sense of oneness which it creates, is the organism bound, maintained and vitalised.

There is yet a wider organism of life. We call it the world. It is a living organism though we know it not. It consists of a single organism, one world, dependent on the physical determinants of the globe.

The life of the globe is in its turn a part of the large, still wider life of the universe which has an organism of its own, physical, moral and spiritual. We are but the tiniest of its tiny fragments.

But underlying the whole universal organism is the Spirit unfolding itself through gradual stages to flower as the fundamental aspiration in man.

We must move out of our narrow, egoistic self to a vast foundation which reaches out to a collective consciousness of oneness with the whole of India; from India to the One World; from One World to all Existence—not in thought, not in aspiration, but by the aspiration transforming step by step the way of individual life and the life of the organism. We must see and feel more and more universal consciousness. We must see, not in theory, not in belief, but in living and feeling, 'all in ourselves and all in God; 'all in Him and Him in all'. Then we shall have one India, one world, a new era, and the dawn of a full life. Then only will the Masters who once trod the dust of Vaishali have lived, but not in vain.

## EDUCATION THROUGH COLLECTIVE WORK

## I

It gives me great pleasure to be in your midst, as Chancellor, on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of our University. This is a unique occasion; the graduates of all the colleges affiliated to the University have met here for this Convocation.

Our unity transcends our diversity. There are occasions in the life of an institution, particularly if it is growing at a fast rate, when it is necessary to feel the sense of oneness so that all can assess the responsibilities of growth.

The Vice-Chancellor has already referred to the phenomenal growth of our University during the last 25 years. It is now, in size and the numbers of its *alumni*, one of the largest in the country; in extent of jurisdiction, the biggest.

The last twenty-five years have not only been remarkable for educational progress in India, but they constitute a historical epoch. During this period, our life has been altered; the world has changed; and the problems and objectives of a University have been completely revolutionised. As a living University, it becomes necessary, therefore, that you should realise the new problems and seek new directions of advance.

## II

We must look back on the triumphs and tragedies of the last 25 years.

In 1926, when the University was founded, the country was a dependency of the British Empire run by Englishmen mainly for their own benefit and to encourage



the spread of their own way of life. The post-war boom of 1919-1922 had subsided. World economy was sagging. Germany was still in ruins; Russia, emerging from a bloody revolution, was just gathering strength; America had become isolationist; the United Kingdom and France, the victors in World War I, dominated the situation; and the hope of mankind was concentrated in democratic institutions and the League of Nations.

In India, the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms had given us some experience of parliamentary democracy, but had divided the country by separate electorates. The Indian National Congress was passing through one of its stagnant periods; Gandhiji sat at Sabarmati Ashram, waiting, watching and praying.

In 1928, the Bardoli Satyagraha gave an effective object lesson in the potency of Non-violent Satyagraha. The visit of the Simon Commission, the Nehru Report, the Satyagraha campaigns of 1930, and 1932-34, the Round Table Conferences, the Constitution Act of 1935 and the responsible Congress Ministries in the Provinces from 1937 to 1939 awoke the national spirit, already pledged to freedom, to action and expectancy.

From September 1939, with World War II, began one of the most hectic periods of world history. All hopes of peace were shattered. The League of Nations failed man. Hitler, temporarily dominated Europe. Brutality systematized and scientifically planned, held the world in thrall.

Our nation, in 1942, launched the 'Quit India' movement; the demand for Pakistan grew in proportion.

The Fascist powers ultimately collapsed, leaving many bitter legacies—economic, political and ideological—hindering the progress of man. Europe was in ruins; the War to end all wars ended with the world divided into two

hostile camps, one led by the leading Democracies and the other by the totalitarian Soviet, facing each other ready for a titanic struggle for the soul and liberty of man.

Human freedom and dignity, for which millions had died, were now challenged with a ruthless weapon much more insidious than open violence, the art of seducing the intellectuals to surrender their freedom. Moral and spiritual values were shattered all the world over, particularly in the West.

England, weakened by World War II, conceded us freedom; but in the process, the Muslim League extracted its price in the shape of Pakistan.

For a generation and more, our cultural Renaissance, which had led to a new literature, art and education, was subordinated to the supreme objective of winning freedom. Gandhiji dominated the scene throughout, upholding moral and spiritual values. In his technique of Non-violence, the world found a new solution for human conflicts.

On August 15, 1947, we became free. But the price of partition had to be paid. There was an outburst of savagery resulting in the influx of millions of refugees into our over-populated areas. Europe was in ruins; inflation prevailed in every land; the cold war parted the two international combines; and Free India found herself beset by tremendous difficulties on every side.

### III

Five years ago, Free India began her career with firm determination. Our achievements since then can fill us with legitimate pride. The country, fragmented by the Indian Independence Act, was integrated. Law and order, in spite of several subversive forces, were successfully maintained. Though practically deprived of British and

Muslim elements, our services, during the period of transition, carried on the task of administration and maintained order. Our army, despite the withdrawal of British leaders, maintained high efficiency; our frontiers were defended well and wisely. Internationally, we acquired prestige and influence.

India adopted a Constitution which, even in an uncertain world, has stood the strain of subversive tendencies, and has given us political stability. It has placed before us the goal: "Justice—social, economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and of opportunity; and fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation."

Our Republic, during the last five years, has maintained the rule of law. Civil liberty has been more respected in India than in any other country. The peaceful conduct of a vast election, on the basis of adult franchise, has created a new world record. In most parts of the country parliamentary government is functioning with vigour. The national traditions of leadership, founded by our great leaders, have been maintained at a generally high level. Groups pledged to untruth and violence have been arrested in their growth, brought into the open or rendered innocuous.

On the economic side, in spite of the Korean War and internal scarcity, we have, to a very large extent, combated inflationary forces. Production has increased; a technique has been evolved to fight that recurring scarcity to which centuries of neglect have exposed our land. We have become aware of the utter necessity of revitalising the Collective Organism of Life; of restoring the balance and unity of Life and Nature in our land; of transforming our soil, our water reserves, our forests,

our animal wealth and above all our human beings. The progressive erosion of the soil is being studied. The new National Forests Policy and the *Vana Mahotsava*; the Integrated Production Programme; agricultural expansion and the spread of intensive cultivation; the Five-Year Plan; the Community Projects; the Hydro-electric works; the establishment of key farms; the research institutes and laboratories; the spread of social service activities; and the growing popularity of family planning—all these indicate our solemn pledge to re-build our country.

## IV

During the last twenty-five years, from a country in bondage, we have emerged as a Free Nation facing the future with hope, strength and determination. Though India is friendly to all nations and most nations are friendly to us, the world is far from having a settled existence. A world war is not inevitable, but it cannot be left out of our considerations. This responsibility imposes an obligation upon all of us, particularly upon you, young men, to whom the future belongs, and therefore, upon the universities which should form, as it were, the atomic pile of moral, social and spiritual energy.

To the national movement, the student community contributed the fine frenzy of their youthful enthusiasm. We know of many teachers who sacrificed their all for their country. But the Universities as such stood away from the main current of national life. The growth of new ideas; the development of modern Indian languages and literature; our cultural Renaissance; the rise and growth of Indian nationalism; new forms of collective activity which we have evolved—all these, in their origin and inspiration, have been the work of men who found

the Universities insufficient: Dayananda, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Besant, Bankim, Rabindranath, Shraddhanand, Tilak, Shri Aurobindo, Gandhiji, Abanindranath, Sir Jagdish Bose and Dr. Raman. Our present national leader, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, has also found them wanting. University men have on the whole, chosen to stand away from the creative urges of collective life; to keep aloof from the rushing torrents of life, somewhat nervous of their strength, and often unable to guide them, shuddering even at the prospect of stepping into them. Such of them as plunged into 'the mighty surge did it in their individual capacity; and no sooner had they done it than they were no longer of the universities.

Today a new vision, a new life and a new spirit are inspiring workers in all fields—literature, art, science, agriculture, forestry, and social service—with new faith. It is spreading to many sectors of life; the Universities alone seem to remain untouched.

But life does not stop; the creative spirit does not wait. Either the Universities must take their share in the cultural, academic, scientific and moral progress to which this vision, life and spirit lead, or they will be cast on to the scrap heap. The choice is clear.

The Universities, therefore, have to adjust themselves to attain the two supreme objectives: First, the speedy transformation of our Collective Organism of Life; and secondly, the swift elimination of those elements in our national life which hinder such transformation.

If we do not achieve the first, we will be overwhelmed by economic collapse. If we do not achieve the second, we will, in a world full of conflicts, be again enslaved.

In order to carry out these objectives—

First, a University has to be a temple of learning and national culture, where higher knowledge is pursued and

imparted; where the mind is trained for the highest mental effort; where the material aspects of our collective organism of life are studied and the art of transforming it discovered and mastered; where the achievements, traditions and values of our land, on which the national idea is founded, are studied in order to make us conscious participants.

Secondly, a University has to be a laboratory, where the teacher, by his creative mental effort, captures afresh in his own outlook and character, the values of national culture; where values and patterns of social life current in the world are studied and adjusted to national values and needs; where the outlook is broadened simultaneously with the building up of character; where wider sympathies essential for a world community are acquired.

Thirdly, and pre-eminently, a University has to be an *Ashram*, a human aggregate with a soul and a collective will, where men of vision and faith work to make manifest the truths they cherish; where by example, precept and loving tenderness, they lead the students among whom they live to the higher discipline of the Spirit, so essential for integrating personality; where by collective endeavour of the teachers and the students, the training of mind and the control of egoistic impulses lead to a corresponding change in the spirit which transforms the actions of the body; and where by doing so they develop the art and the will to transform life, materially, morally and spiritually.

v

Let us search our hearts, and try to ascertain where we stand. It is only in the schools, the colleges and the universities, if anywhere, that knowledge and discipline can be acquired; and the creative spirit, the desire, the enthusiasm and the will to build up the collective life can

be fostered. The instinct is there in all young men. The desire, the enthusiasm and the will have to be created. Does our University help the student to find himself in this way, or does it allow his creative spirit to wither and die, under the blight of false values? This is the question which we, of all people, should ask ourselves.

In respect of every student who goes out of our University, we have to ask ourselves: Have we trained him well or ill? Have we given him mental discipline? Have we provided him with those fundamental values which form the basis of personality? Have we given him self-restraint through hard work? Have we helped him in the words of Plato to be 'divine and gentle'? Or are we turning him into a potential savage, conceited, self-assertive or indolent, neglectful of our best values, ignorant of our present needs, eager to combine with others in order to bully or overawe, ignorant of our life and thereby much less capable of transforming it by collective effort?

Let us face facts. Our young men, when they leave the University, are not filled with the inspiration of the trials and triumphs, the sacrifice and heroism of those who lived before us. We have not given them a thorough grasp of the continuity of Indian life through the ages. We have not taught them to respond to the vital influences that surge up from the depths of the "Collective Unconscious". Few of them know of Shri Ramakrishna's challenge to the barren rationalism of the nineteenth century; of Gandhiji's irresistible defiance of godless materialism; of Shri Aurobindo's message of the attainment of the highest destiny of man by the manifestation of the Divine Spirit on earth.

A University, above all, must radiate intellectual integrity and high aspirations. All of us, who are interested

in the University, must guard against the invasion of its atmosphere of academic freedom. The invasion may be by Government control in academic matters, it may equally be by trade union of teachers or students or power-hunters; it may also be poisoned by ideological cells controlled from outside and alien to our genius. It cannot be countered unless the un-learned, the half-learned, the patronage distributor and the electioneering boss, all the instruments or the victims of anti-national forces, are divested of their controlling power. They are enemies of the high values for which the universities stand and which it is the first duty of the universities to sustain, impart and propagate. Unless therefore the senior professors, pursuing higher knowledge and University-men dedicated to the high ideals of learning and discipline, have a determining voice in the affairs of the University, its freedom cannot be maintained. And in this atmosphere of freedom if collective action is not pursued, the University becomes a menace; for, every college which lacks academic atmosphere and every graduate who, when he goes out, lacks knowledge, self-restraint and high aspirations, are not only potential dangers to national progress, but to life itself.

Let me tell you this quite frankly. The vast reservoir of human material represented by our young friends, whom I see before me, have not been prepared for the strenuous work and determined leadership which Free India demands from everyone of her educated sons and daughters.

Unfortunately, the trend of education in our Universities has been towards easy academic studies. Irregular class hours, over-crowded colleges working in shifts and similar ills have denied to our youth the vitality of a vigorous academic life. Naturally, education has been a failure. It has given no mental discipline, steadfast



character nor stern self-restraint; and given neither the will nor the technique to work.

## VI

Let us realise this new responsibility of ours. We have to preserve and strengthen our freedom; to rebuild our country stone by stone and brick by brick. Reports of innumerable Commissions and Committees cannot do it; so far, they have led to no fundamental change in our outlook.

The new outlook must gear our national consciousness to our moral and spiritual strength. It has also to meet the demands of the hour; to strengthen our Collective Organism of Life, and to restore its balance. Nothing else counts. Our soil is losing its fertility; our forests are being denuded; our land is fast eroding; our population is increasing; our cattle are multiplying fast. With the growth of cities the cycle of life which replenishes the soil at the same rate as it is exhausted, is being progressively disrupted. We see the results everywhere; lack of food and purchasing power, recurring scarcity conditions, the ever encroaching deserts, the flooding rivers and population pressure.

Our University cannot content itself with producing candidates for Government service or the professions. We can only meet the demand of the hour by a complete overhaul of our educational system; by 'Education through Collective Work', education, not only through books, lectures, classes and examinations; and certainly not through unions and meaningless debates; but education through hard, unremitting work which creates, builds up and transforms life. Except at the specialized stage, where intense intellectual work or research work has to be conducted, every teacher and every student must build, pre-

serve and beautify his college; grow, as far as possible the food and vegetables needed; spin, weave, and dye the clothes he wears; dance, sing and play to develop a healthy attitude towards life; develop the muscle, and harden the body, steady the nerve, and train the eye by sports, drill and hard labour—till the college community, as one organisation, releases an enthusiastic will to transform drab life into creative joy.

We have to come down to earth. If need be, we must preach the 'Gospel of the Dirty Hand', to restore our exhausted lands to their pristine fertility. We are poor in other respects, but we are rich in human energy; we have to use every ounce of it in rebuilding our land.

Germany, defeated and devastated by World War II, has risen again. Japan, humiliated and suppressed, is rising again. This is due to the hard collective work of the men and women who had lost everything but the will to work. We have everything, but we have little will to work. Above all, therefore, our Universities must release an enthusiastic will to work on a nation-wide scale.

Teachers and students should, therefore, learn to surrender their capacity for work to the Idea for which the University exists; to harmonise inner and outer life: to convert their individual life and activity into a thing of power which will, in some small measure, transform the collective life of our nation and through it, the world community.

This is, as I said, a day of legitimate jubilation for us, the members and the graduates of the University. Equally, it is a day on which we should pledge ourselves to the harder work and nobler aims of transforming life through collective work. We should also, on this day, humbly pray that this University of ours, which has become the largest, may also be given the strength to be the best.

CONSECRATED WORK: THE ONLY BASIS OF  
NEW EDUCATION

## I

It gives me unqualified pleasure to be in your midst today, for the first time, as your Chancellor. I also take this opportunity of heartily congratulating all the successful candidates who have taken their degrees today.

I have little pretensions to being an educationist, but I love the young men and women in the universities, and my heart beats in unison with their ardent pursuits and high aspirations. I, therefore, try to voice their demands; not the demands which they know how to make, but the inarticulate ones which spring from their aspiring youthful hearts. That is why I have been driven to make educational experiments from organising a school for delinquent and destitute children to planning institutes of higher studies and even universities.

I have known this University by reputation for many years. I have had the privilege of claiming some of your Vice-Chancellors and Professors as my friends. Now I have the rare good fortune to be adopted by you, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, as also by the teachers and students of this University, as one of you, and that too, in spite of the unpalatable things which I sometimes say and do. My only prayer is that when I relinquish this office, it will have been mine to see this University of ours making an effective contribution in reshaping the future of the country.

Our University, in its none-too-long life, has succeeded more than any other university in the country, in developing a distinctive quality: the spirit of national unity. Following the best traditions of a national univer-

sity, it has refused in the appointment of staff and admission of students, to surrender to regional, provincial or communal considerations.

I do not know to what this has been due. Was it due to the inspiration of Lakshman—the noblest of men—whose name Lucknow bears? Or, to the social graces and cultural refinement of the Nawab Viziers' Courts? Or to the ethereal *bhakti* of Tulsidas and the exquisite sense of beauty associated with Surdas? More likely, it was due to the heritage of Madhya Desh or to give it its proper name, *Antarvedi*—which under the influence of Aryan Culture declined to build frontiers to the kingdom of the mind and the Spirit.

## II

But in this fast moving world, you cannot rest on your laurels; they have to be won over and over again day after day.

A new spirit pervades our national activities. Have we vitalised the life of the student by the magic touch of creative nationalism or equipped him to fulfil the mission of India's history? Have we translated the spirit by heightening the social, moral and spiritual awareness of the country?

Our scholars—some of whom were brilliant—have indeed extended the frontiers of knowledge; the late Professor Birbal Sahani, for instance, placed our University on the map in the world of science. Under the guidance of our distinguished teachers it has possibly produced more papers on social studies than most of the other universities. But I ask you, have these papers directed and helped to transform the life and character of my young friends here? Have our studies even taught the teachers and students to develop a code of national

behaviour that is both free and gracious, or to mobilise opinion to set up moral ramparts against violence and wickedness? Have they helped, for instance, to translate into reality the principle of equality of the sexes which has been accepted by the nation as a basic principle of our Constitution? Have they inculcated in the students a respect for womenfolk in general regardless of whether they are mothers, sisters, co-students, or strangers; do they stand the test of true culture? In short, have your studies affected the social climate of Lucknow?

If we cannot answer these questions with an emphatic "yes", the all-India spirit of our University remains but a habit of mind, a luxury, a pose.

We have helped to acquire knowledge; we have given some training to the mind. But these are meaningless and without consequence. The emotions are not trained by self-restraint and the spirit is not taught to manifest itself through action.

As I pointed out recently, a university has three aspects—the cultural, the emotional and the collective. In its first aspect, it seeks and imparts knowledge; in the second, it discovers and inculcates values; and in the third, it develops a will which releases collective energy. Our University fulfils the first aspect; but ignores the second; and the third, I am afraid, it knows not of. In this third and most vital aspect, the University has to be an *Ashram*, a human aggregate with a soul and a collective will—

where men of vision and faith work to manifest the truths they cherish;

where by example, precept and loving tenderness, they lead the students among whom they live, to the higher discipline of the Spirit, so essential for the integration of personality;

where the collective endeavour of all, the training of the mind and the control of egoistic impulses lead to a corresponding change in the spirit inspiring creative work; and

where by such work, they develop the art and the will to transform life, material, moral and spiritual.

### III

Our universities have, therefore, to release this transforming energy. Without such energy, social studies are barren; without it, social work has no soul and no creative power.

The keystones of such energy are values. They give the sense of right and wrong; they generate in the student the passion to distinguish between right and wrong; to vindicate the right and combat the wrong, so that truth may triumph in the end. It is at this point that such energy is transmuted into spiritual energy, the motive power of all dedicated life, which renders creative work possible.

The passion to fight for the triumph of higher values cannot be generated by hearing lectures or reading books; by collecting or tabulating data; by weighing the pros and cons by logic or learned argument. The barren path of intellect does not lead to this creative energy. It is released only by faith in man's dignity and his freedom to follow the bent of his temperament; faith in the Motherland and in Man's progress to Divinity; faith in the universal law on which all creative power is based, that "thou shalt enjoy only by giving", that friendship can only be won by love, achievement only by truth, vigour only by self-restraint, riches only by honesty and self-fulfilment only by giving up possessions. Such faith alone can give a sense of mission which comes to consider all work as consecrated.

## IV

A number of your students are taking as their thesis Gandhiji's philosophy. Has any one written a thesis on his faith, on which Gandhiji's life and achievements were based? Has the University carried out research into how such faith is acquired and used? Have we given even a particle of such faith to our young friends? I am afraid not. And if our young men lack such faith, it is no fault of theirs. Few of their teachers have the faith themselves; fewer still possess the technique wherewith to impart it to others.

Our present-day teachers who passed through the university during the last thirty years, were the sons of parents who had faith; but in the universities they only inherited the religious doubts of an out-worn rationalism and blindly accepted the physical and social sciences as the last word in human destiny. And such of them as did not believe in "the last word" were driven into obscurity, dubbed unprogressive and deprived of the self-confidence which faith in the Spirit ought to have given them.

No wonder the humanities are neglected, the literature of faith is ridiculed, and religious studies are arrogantly discarded.

Naturally, therefore, modern scholarship is being progressively denied the vision of poets and seers. Any vestige of such a vision remaining in the university is blurred by the breath of the reasoning mind. This mind forces you to shut your eyes to everything but the physical forces and material facts of life; it enslaves the urge to discover and stand by higher values; it weakens the soul's aspiration to a higher and nobler life. More arbitrary than a tyrant, it assumes that its limitations are the farthest boundaries of the mind and the Spirit.

This has completely upset the basis of true educa-

tion, the only aim of which can be to develop the perfect personality, physical, mental and spiritual.

In the days when asceticism was associated with supernatural powers, the Spirit was emphasised at the expense of material well-being. It was affirmed: "Man can live without bread, but not without faith."

Later, the social and physical sciences were not considered of absolute value, but emphasis was laid on spiritual development rather apologetically. Then it was affirmed: "Man cannot live by bread alone."

In recent times, the emphasis has been altered. The affirmation is: "Man can live without faith." The process of the insectification of man has grown apace. The only faith which man is asked to have in some quarters is that there should be no faith: "Man *ought* to live without faith."

But I see a change coming over man. Of this change, Shri Aurobindo was the great prophet, Gandhiji the great architect. Toynbee, our greatest living historian, has recently forecast the change. The affirmation of sanity should run: "Faith without bread has no body; bread without faith has no life. By faith alone can man win bread; with bread alone can his faith prosper; for both are life."

## V

It should therefore be the duty of our University, with such distinguished scholars as we possess, to embark upon a new academic life for our students. In the process, let us, by collective work, train them:

First, to develop and maintain mental and physical vigour and to heighten the zest for living by strenuous physical labour;

Secondly, to command the respect and affection of



all with whom they come in contact; to recognise the broad aspects of social life; and to hold values that are above material gain;

Thirdly, to win freedom from want by an honourable vocation and to study and work for a better economic order;

Fourthly, to integrate their personality; to develop the passion for fighting for the right; to release their spiritual energy by high aspiration and consecrated work.

This training will come only by continuous collective work and in no other way. The Message Eternal says:

Knowledge is better than practice;

Concentration is better than knowledge;

But higher than Concentration, is Consecrated Work;

For that alone leads to the poise of unbroken strength.

It is consecrated work, undefiled by passion or the lure of profits that leads to "perfect action", which releases spiritual energy and restores the physical, mental and spiritual balance of the individual and society.

That is why I have defined the new education as "Education through Collective work."

To what work will this University dedicate itself to release the spiritual energy of its teachers and students? What should we do from tomorrow? We can begin with the University itself. Some of the buildings need repairs; some of them require a coat of colour-wash; 4,000 students want hostel accommodation. Can we not pledge ourselves to this work?

Hereafter we shall organise collective work as part of our curricula; all of us, the Vice-Chancellor and myself included—will from now on, bring into the University

campus the faith of consecrated work. We shall make our grounds the most beautiful in Lucknow. We shall build our hostels with our own hands. By our good manners and gracious behaviour we shall become the guardians of the social and moral standards of Lucknow and give this dear old town a wholesome shock the like of which it has never received before.

Have we the courage to dedicate ourselves to this task? On the reply to this question will depend whether our University can help in building up the future of the Nation.

## VII

### MUSIC: THE LANGUAGE OF EMOTIONS

#### I

I THANK you heartily for doing me this honour. I know next to nothing of music and can scarcely recognise all but a few *rags*; my love of *tablas* began and ended with *dadra* and *dhumali*. When I wanted a harmonium, my father would not buy it; he was afraid of my being corrupted. When he died, I had no money; when I earned money, there was no time.

When I was young, the old tradition of music was dead in Gujarat and the new one was not yet born. At that time music had fled from respectable homes; it was sheltered only by the vagrant, the vagabond and the fallen women. It was often inseparable from the fumes of the *ganja* and the filthy language of the low-class *tabalchi*. Aurangzeb, as you know, attempted to bury music. When the mock mourners were carrying the corpse of music to the burial ground he said: "Very well, make the grave deep, so that neither the voice nor its echo may issue forth". In several parts of India we did still worse. We did not kill music; we branded it with infamy. In my young days, if a boy or a girl sang with full-throated ease, it was a grave offence against decency. When I sang snatches of Gujarati songs, I earned the reputation of being a wicked boy.

In Lucknow, however, you were more fortunate. You maintained the high traditions of classical music and so did Maharashtra.

One of my uncles, an old-time aristocrat, was a singer of some reputation in our part of the country; he employed instrumental musicians to accompany him; and a still

older generation had many fine classical singers among them including a great aunt. But that generation had died out in my boyhood. These ancestors and my wife's fondness for music appear to have given me a deceptive look; perhaps that is why I am taken as a musical expert. I have been called upon to preside over several musical conferences including an All-India one convened by Pandit Vishnu Digambar years ago.

## II

I knew Sri Bhatkhande, whose name is associated with your Vidyapith, very well. He was the soul of the All-India Musical Conference. Vishnu Digambar had his Gandharva Mahavidyalaya in Bombay. These two systematised the different schools of music and evolved a musical technique making it possible to impart education on a large scale.

One great defect of our old system was that every *ustad* was a standard unto himself; not one of them would accept any one as a peer; his *guru* was his only superior. At such a time, Sri Bhatkhande laid down standards which commanded respect all over India. By them, each artist came to know his own value and every artist could know the value of others. This was the only way in which Indian Music could come to occupy an honoured place in the field of education. The Vidyapith is a central body of well-recognised experts which evolves an authoritative course of systematic musical education on classical lines. The Vidyapith has a unique place in India, particularly North India. Its graduates have gone out to different parts of the country, doing fine work in the missionary spirit. The Music School of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, of which I happen to be the President, owes its existence to the guidance of my friend, Sri Ratanjankar and the in-

defatigable labours of one of the best products of the Vidyapith, Sri Nagarkar.

The time has now arrived when Indian music should find a place in the curriculum of every university. It is also essential that with the disappearance of the old time patrons of music, our Governments should provide for the musical Colleges in the country. In this respect, we can take pride in the fact that our Government has been the first to help in the preservation and growth of music by helping this Vidyapith. But if music is to grow, the Centre and the different Governments must help its growth.

### III

I am glad that your University has also associated Indian dance with music. Music, dance and song are inseparable elements in the great medium of joy. I hope the Vidyapith will ultimately aim at giving education in all the three branches. This, if I may venture to suggest, requires that the methods of presenting music should be altered. In old days people had more time and did not know what to do with it; now there are so many things to do that we have no time for any of them. I remember music parties in my young days when the musician finally got into working order an hour after he arrived; when every song took almost an hour; and between two songs there was an interval of half an hour, during which the irritating process of tuning instruments went on. We started with the *drupad* of *kalyan* at 9 p.m. after dinner and finished with *bhairavi* and *bihag* when the cock crowed—all this time we lay on the *gaddi* cracking jokes. If you want the public to appreciate music today, you must adopt modern ways of presentation. The modern public is more exacting; it has a greater value of time;

and in its ignorance has little patience for listening to voice acrobatics.

I know that your aim is not only to preserve and popularise classical music but to evolve nobler and higher forms of art expression through music. In our country, in literature, art, poetry and drama as well as in vocal and instrumental music, the impact of the West has produced a cultural Renaissance which is searching new horizons for fresh creative activity. It is in the very nature of this Renaissance that we should try to outgrow conventions, seek new inspiration and rediscover the fundamentals afresh. The musician must aim, therefore, at not only correctness in his performance, but also at beauty and expressive power in his voice and at grace and charm of execution.

Dr. Tagore once commented on our old time musicians thus: "They are not ashamed if their gestures are violent, their top notes cracked, and their base notes unnatural. They take it to be their sole function to display their perfect mastery over all the intricacies of times and tunes, forms and formalities of the classical traditions." However unpalatable the warning, it is true and we have to heed it.

#### IV

Though I do not know music, as an impressionist I love it. In order to enjoy it, I have to let my mind float in the stream of music. I believe with Heine that "the very existence of music is wonderful; I may say miraculous. Its domain is between thought and phenomenon; like the twilight, it hovers between spirit and matter, related to both; yet different from each." It stirs my heart; intensifies my emotions; awakes in me a longing for a higher, nobler, more beautiful life; and I fully

endorse Lamartine's experience: "Music begins when speech ends". This is your ideal, to make music the vehicle of the highest expression possible to man.

Correct but lifeless music, jars on my sense of the beautiful. Soulful music, even out of tune or time, often gives me a thrill of joy. The *rag* and *tal* are the grammar and syntax of music, but correct grammar and syntax cannot make beautiful poetry, nor correct *rag* and *tal* make music.

Music is the supreme language of emotions rarefied by intense yearning. A Mirabai's song or a beautiful folk *garbi* with its sound and sense and lilt harmonised into a thing of beauty has often moved me to tears. The camel-man's song in Udaipur coming out of the wilderness has brought to me an unwonted yearning for the boundless desert. A classical song sung in a beautiful flexible voice, effortlessly, to the throb of the *mrudang* and the accompaniment of the divine *sarangi*, has set my veins pulsating with ecstasy; and the distant Vedic chant floating over the evening air has brought to me a vision of the Ineffable. That is the music I want you to develop; and in doing so, never spurn any new art-form, for, that, is the way to go forward.

Young friends, you must act as missionaries of a great artistic movement which can bring nobler and more beautiful forms of music into our national life. Those of you who go out today from this Vidyapith will, I hope, have caught the inspiration of Sri Bhatkhande, the enthusiasm which characterises those who guide your University and the spirit of mission of Sri Ratanjankar.

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