ESSAY

SELF RELIANCE

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Contents

WHAT IS A NATION 2
INDIAN SOCIETY 9
THE SOCIETY OF THE MOTHERLAND..... 16
AN ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS 73
THE UNIVERSITY BILL..... 91
CIRCUMSTANCE AND REMEDY 99
TAKING A VOW..... 114
THE NATIVE STATES 122

WHAT IS A NATION

The renowned French thinker Renan has discussed the question of what a nation truly is. But before explaining his views on this matter, we must first settle the meaning of a word or two.

It must be admitted that Bengali has no equivalent for the word "nation." In common usage, jāti generally signifies caste or race—what in English is called "race." We shall use the word jāti as the equivalent of the English "race," and shall render "nation" simply as "nation." If the words nation and national are allowed to pass directly into Bengali, much ambiguity of meaning can be avoided.

In translating "National Congress" we generally use jātīya mahāsabhā—but jātīya may mean Bengali-national, Marathi-national, Sikh-national, or national in reference to any particular community—it does not signify all-Indian-national. Madras and Bombay, in their attempts to render "national," have not used the word jāti. They have named their local national assemblies the Mahajan Sabha and the Sarbajanik Sabha—the Bengali, without any such effort, has gained deliverance by simply adopting the name "Indian Association." In this a certain difference between the Bengali and other races such as the Marathi becomes apparent—and that very difference proves the weakness of the Bengali's inward sense of nationhood.

The word mahājan is used in Bengali only in one particular sense, and will not serve in another. The word sārbajanik cannot, in its substantive form, be made equivalent to "nation." The phrase "French sārbajan" does not sound proper as a substitute for "French nation."

One might abandon the word mahājan and adopt mahājāti instead. But since "great" (mahat) is often needed as an adjective before "nation" to denote

greatness, in such cases "great nation" would have to become mahatī mahājāti, and if the opposite meaning were required, there is a risk of becoming an object of ridicule by saying kṣudra mahājāti ("small great-nation").

But I feel not the slightest hesitation in adopting the word "nation" in its unaltered form. We have received the concept from the Englishman, and we are prepared to acknowledge the debt by retaining the English word as well. The Brahman of the Upanishads, the Maya of Shankara, and the Nirvana of the Buddha are seldom translated in English writing, and rightly so.

Renan says that in ancient times there was no "nation." Egypt, China, and ancient Chaldea knew no "nation." The empires of Assyria, Persia, and Alexander cannot be called the empire of any nation.

The Roman Empire had come close to nationhood. But before it could bind itself into a complete nation, it was shattered into fragments by the onslaught of barbarian peoples. These very fragments, through centuries of manifold conflict, gradually cohered into shape and became nations, and France, England, Germany, and Russia have raised their heads at the summit of all nations.

But why are these nations? Why did Switzerland, taking up its various races and languages, become a nation? Why did Austria become merely a kingdom, and not a nation?

Some political theorists say that the essence of a nation is its king. Some conquering hero in ancient times, through warfare, conquered a land, and the people of the land gradually forgot this; that royal lineage, becoming the center, forged the nation. England, Scotland, and Ireland were not one in former times, nor was there any reason for their becoming one—by the might of the king they have gradually become one. The reason Italy has taken so long to become a nation is that among

its numerous petty kings, none has been able to become the intermediary spreading unity across the whole land.

But does this rule hold everywhere? Switzerland and the United States of America, which have grown great by gradually effecting union bit by bit, received no help from any royal lineage.

That a nation exists without royal power, that a nation survives after royal power has been destroyed—such instances are not beyond anyone's observation. That the right of the king stands above all other rights is a notion no longer current; it is now settled that national right stands above royal right. What, then, is the foundation of this national right—by what sign may it be recognized?

Many say that the unity of race—that is, of race—is its distinguishing mark. The king, the dynasty, and the assembly of state are artificial and impermanent; race endures forever, and its claim alone is genuine.

But there is no country in Europe where racial mixture has not occurred. In England, France, Germany, Italy, nowhere can a pure race be found—everyone knows this. Who is Teuton, who is Celt—it is now impossible to determine. Political science keeps no account of racial purity. Under the dispensation of statecraft, races that were once one have become separate, and races that were once separate have become one.

The same holds true regarding language. There is no doubt that unity of language aids in the binding of national unity, but there is no compulsion in it that must necessarily produce unity. The language of the United States and England is one, the language of Spain and Spanish America is one, yet they are not one nation. On the other hand, Switzerland has three or four languages, yet it is one nation there.

The will of man is greater than language; despite diversity of language, the will of the whole of Switzerland has made it one.

Besides this, it is not even correct that language reveals the identity of a race. Prussia today speaks German, though a few centuries ago it spoke Slavonic; Wales uses English; Egypt converses in Arabic.

A nation does not depend upon unity of religious doctrine either. Whatever an individual may be—Catholic, Protestant, Jew, or atheist—there is no obstacle to his being English, French, or German.

The bond of material self-interest is, without doubt, a strong bond. But in Renan's view, that bond is not sufficient for the binding of a nation. Material self-interest can perhaps forge a merchants' council of business magnates, but within nationality there is a place for sentiment—it has a body, but it is not lacking in soul either. No one considers a mere business-house to be truly his motherland.

That geographical, that is, natural, division of boundaries is one principal cause of the differentiation of nations must certainly be admitted. The river's current has carried races along with it; the mountain has obstructed them. But does this mean that anyone can draw a map and show precisely up to what point the right of which nation ought to be fixed? In human history, natural boundaries are not the final word. Nations are not formed by territory, race, or language. Upon territory, the field of battle and the field of labor may fall, but the inward heart of a nation is not built upon territory. If by "community" we mean that sacred substance, man is its finest instrument. A nation, born of profound historical churning, is a mental substance—it is a mental family, not bound by the shape of territory.

We see, then, that race, language, material self-interest, unity of religion, and geographical arrangement are not the fundamental ingredients in the creation of that mental substance called a nation. What, then, is its fundamental ingredient?

A nation is a living entity, a mental substance. Two things have constituted the inner nature of this substance. Those two things are, in essence, one and the same. Of them, one resides in the past, the other in the present. One is the common ancient treasury of memory; the other is mutual consent, the will to live together—the will to properly preserve the undivided inheritance that has come into one's hands. Man does not fashion himself ready-made on the spot. A nation, likewise, comes to be expressed out of the labor, sacrifice, and devotion of a long-drawn past. We are, to a considerable degree, already shaped beforehand by our forefathers. Upon the valor, greatness, and glory of the past rests the very root of national feeling. A common glory in times past and a common will in the present time; the accomplishment of great deeds together in former days, and the resolve to do such deeds together again—this is the essential root of the formation of community. In the measure that we have consented to make sacrifices, and in the measure that we have endured suffering, our love shall be that much the stronger. We love the house that we ourselves have built and shall hand down to our descendants. There is a saying in ancient Sparta: "What you were, we are; what we are, you shall become." This exceedingly simple statement is, as it were, the national anthem of every land.

The glorious memory of the past, and an ideal for the future corresponding to that memory—to have suffered together, to rejoice together, to hope together—these are the real things; though race and language may vary greatly, the majesty of these is understood; their worth is far greater than the establishment of a common customs-house or the fixing of a boundary. It has been said that suffering together is a matter of this kind, because the bond of sorrow is stronger than that of joy.

That single, unified, intense expression which gives to the people the sense of having, together, once made sacrifice and endured suffering, and being once more

prepared to do the same together—that alone is a nation. Behind it lies a past, no doubt, but its directly perceptible sign is found in the present. It is nothing other than this: common consent, the clearly expressed will to bear life together.

Renan says: we have banished from the machinery of the state the right of the king and the dominance of religion—what, then, remains? Man, man's will, man's needs. Some will say that will is a changeable thing, often unregulated and untutored—if the guardianship of such a great and ancient treasure as national identity is entrusted to its hands, gradually all shall become fragmented and be lost.

The will of man does undergo change—but is there anything in this world that does not change? Nations are not immortal. They had a beginning, and they shall have an end. Perhaps in the age of transformation of these nations, some European community may yet come into being. But I see no sign of it as yet. For the present, the very diversity of these nations is good, is indeed necessary. It is they who are preserving everyone's freedom—were there one law, one master, freedom would be in peril.

Diversity, and often opposing tendencies, are aiding different nations in the work of spreading civilization. Each is contributing one melody to mankind's great symphony; and the imaginative grandeur that the whole, blended together, creates out of reality is beyond the effort of any single one.

However that may be, Renan says—man is not the slave of race, of language, of religious doctrine, or of river and mountain. That which a great assembly of many restrained-minded and sentiment-filled human beings creates as a conscious character—that alone is a nation. Through the sacrifice of particular individuals for the common good, this portrait of character proves its own strength for as long as it endures, and for that long it is known as genuine, and for that long it has the full right to continue.

I have finished with Renan's discourse. Now let us prepare to apply Renan's pregnant sentences to a discussion concerning our own country.

INDIAN SOCIETY

Wherever Turkey has seized territory, there political rule is one, but there is no other unity. There, Turk, Greek, Armenian, Slav, Kurd—none mingles with another; indeed, they exist together in some fashion only by quarreling with one another. That power which unites—that power alone is the mother of civilization—that power has not yet appeared like a Lakshmi of royalty over the Turkish realm.

In ancient Europe, the barbarian tribes divided up the vast Roman Empire among themselves. But they did not mingle within one another's kingdoms—nowhere did they leave a trace of union. Conqueror and conquered, becoming one body in language, in religion, in society, took the form of one nation or another. That unifying force which arose there was tempered by the blows of manifold conflicts, and, taking definite shape over a very long period, made of each nation the refuge of a particular civilization.

If, for any reason whatsoever, the minds of many people can become one, great fruit results from it. Among that community of people in whom this power of becoming-one naturally operates, some form of greatness or another manifests itself and appears—these very people give birth to civilization, these nurture civilization. The power to unite the diverse is the mark of civilization. Civilized Europe is spreading goodwill throughout the world and building bridges of unity—uncivilized Europe is creating division, destruction, estrangement; recently in China proof of this has been obtained. Why speak of China—here in India we ourselves can directly witness the work of both civilization and barbarism belonging to Europe. Precisely because a high ideal of union reigns at the very core of all civilization, we feel, judging by that very ideal, the shocks of barbaric division doubly as sorrow and insult every single day.

This unity of the collective mind of a people is not accomplished in the same manner in every land. For this reason, the unity of the European and the unity of

the Hindu are not of one kind—but that does not mean there is no unity at all among Hindus. One may not call that unity "national" unity—for the terms "nation" and "national" are not ours; their meaning has been bounded by the European conception.

Every race naturally regards its own particular unity as the greatest of all. That which has given it shelter and made it great, it recognizes in its very marrow as great; it does not feel any other shelter as shelter. For this reason, to Europe, national unity, that is, unity founded upon statecraft, is supreme; we too, taking that idea from our European teacher, have begun to feel ashamed at the lack of national feeling in our forefathers.

We must examine what the Hindu has accomplished of that great constructive work of civilization—the gathering of the diverse into one. Whether you call this power and function of unification "national" or by any other name matters not at all—the binding together of humanity is the essential matter.

Those whom the civilization of Europe, after various wars and bloodshed, has bound into one nation, are of one color. Once language and dress became one, no further distinction remained visible to the eye. It was not difficult for them to forget who was conqueror and who was conquered. Just as memory is needed in the building of a nation, so also is forgetting needed—the memory of division and conflict must be forgotten by the nation as quickly as possible. Where the appearance of the two sides is the same, the color the same, there it is easy to forget any kind of division—there it is natural that, living together, they should merge into one.

Those whom Hindu civilization gathered into unity after many wars and conflicts were of different colors. They are not naturally one. There was no easy means of forgetting the division between them and the Aryan race.

What happened in America and Australia? When the Europeans first set foot there, they were Christians, initiated in the creed of loving one's enemy. But they did not leave the original inhabitants of America and Australia by simply uprooting them from the land—they slaughtered them like animals. In the nation that has been bound together in America and Australia, the original inhabitants could not be assimilated.

There is no race that has failed to find a place within that most extraordinary and vast society bound together by Hindu civilization. The ancient Scythian-descended Jat and Rajput; the mixed-race Nepali, Assamese, Rajbanshi; Dravidian, Telugu, Nair—all, despite their various differences of language, color, religion, and custom, maintain a vast harmony within the immense expanse of Hindu society and dwell together. Hindu civilization, in taking such diverse peoples under its shelter, has deprived itself in many ways, and yet has abandoned no one—high and low, of caste and outside caste, it has bound all closely together, has given all the shelter of religion, has restrained all within the path of duty, and has drawn all back from decay and degeneration.

Renan has shown how difficult it is to extract the fundamental characteristic of a nation. The unity of race, unity of language, unity of religion, the geographical configuration of a country—the entirety of nationality does not depend on these alone. Likewise, it is difficult to determine and state where the root of Hindu-ness lies. Various races, various languages, various religions, various contrary customs and practices have found a place within Hindu society.

The larger the circumference, the harder it is to find its center. The field of Hindu society's unity is exceedingly vast, and hence, amid such immense scope and diversity, it is not easy to extract its fundamental support.

Here our question is this: to which direction shall we principally turn our attention? Which ideal of unity shall we give precedence?

We cannot disregard the effort toward political unity. For, however union may come about, it is for the better. Those who have been present at the sessions of the Congress have felt this: that even if everything else fails, union is nonetheless the ultimate fruit of the Congress. If we preserve this union and proceed, then even if the immediate occasion of union proves fruitless, it will certainly render itself meaningful in some direction or other; it will certainly discover what the essential matter is for the country—whatever is vain and momentary, it will of itself discard.

But we must understand this: in our country, society is greater than all else. In other countries, the nation has preserved itself and triumphed through various revolutions—in our country, for a period far longer than that, society has preserved itself amid all manner of crises. That we have not, in a thousand years of revolution, oppression, subjugation, sunk to the very depths of degradation; that even now among our lower classes and among our gentlefolk the instruments of humanity remain; that restraint in eating and refinement in conduct are even now manifest; that even now we make sacrifices at every step, that we know it best to share the wealth of much suffering with all—the sahib's palanquin-bearer, eating three rupees of his seven-rupee wage himself, sends home four rupees; the clerk on fifteen rupees, half-starving himself, is putting his younger brother through college—this is due solely to the strength of our ancient society. This society has not made us know pleasure as great—in every word, in every deed, in every relationship, it has instilled in our ears only the mantra of welfare, of merit, and of righteousness. It is necessary that we direct our gaze especially toward that very society, regarding it as our supreme refuge.

Some will say: society already exists, our forefathers have built and left it for us, there is nothing left for us to do. It is precisely here that our decline has occurred; it is precisely here that present-day European civilization has defeated present-day Hindu civilization.

The nation of Europe is a living entity. It is not merely that the connection between the nation's past and its present is inert—it is not that the forefathers labored to the point of exhaustion while the present generation, eyes closed, merely enjoys the fruits. Between past and present there exists a continuous connection of consciousness—an unbroken stream of action continues to flow. It is not that one portion flows while another is stagnant, one portion is ablaze while the rest is extinguished. Were it so, the connection would be severed—what relation has life with death?

Mere idle devotion does not effect union—rather, it drives one further away. The devotion that says whatever the Englishman wears, eats, says, and does is all good, incites us to blind imitation—and this drives us further away from true Englishness. For the Englishman is not so listless an imitator. The Englishman has grown great through the strength of independent thought and effort—he has not become English by idly enjoying things fashioned by others. Hence, in trying to play the Englishman, genuine Englishness will become all the rarer for us.

Likewise, our grandfathers became great not merely by lying inert in the laps of our great-grandfathers. They meditated, they judged, they tested, they altered—their mental faculties were active, and it was for that very reason they were able to become great. If our minds are not joined in union with that mind of theirs, if only an inert connection with their accomplished deeds remains, then we have no unity left with them at all. Between parent and child there is a connection of life—even after their death, the process of life operates in the same manner in the child's body. But if we find in our minds no evidence of the way in which the mental power of our forefathers operated—if we merely imitate them lifelessly—then we must understand that among us our forefathers are no longer a living presence. As the beard-wearing Narada of the theatrical troupe is like the divine sage Narada, so too are we like Aryans. We are a company of some grand theatrical troupe—performing, in rustic dialect and with artificial costume and props, the role of our forefathers.

Only if we awaken that mind of our forefathers upon our inert society shall we truly become great. If our entire society, from beginning to end, becomes alive and active through great ancient memory and grand sentiment, feeling in every limb and every fiber the flow of life of many centuries, and thereby renders itself strong and dynamic, then political subjection and all other misfortunes shall become trivial. The active freedom of society is greater than every other freedom.

The transformation of life is development; the transformation of death is decay. In our society too, transformation is proceeding at rapid pace, but because there is no conscious inward awareness within society, that transformation is heading toward decay and disintegration—no one is able to check it.

A living substance actively brings the external condition into accord with itself—while a lifeless substance is forcibly struck by the external condition and brought under its control. Whatever transformation is occurring in our society has in it no work of consciousness; there is in it no effort at harmony between outer and inner—transformation is coming from outside and falling upon our necks, and is loosening all the joints of society.

New conditions, new education, conflict with new races—this cannot be denied. If we wish to proceed as though these did not exist, as though we were seated three thousand years in the past, then that condition of three thousand years past will not aid us in the slightest, and the flood of present transformation will sweep us away.

If we, without merely acknowledging the present, invoke only the authority of our forefathers, our forefathers will not respond. Our forefathers, invoking their own authority upon us, are saying: "Make peace with the present, and preserve our achievement; do not, out of indifference, let it be utterly destroyed. Preserve the thread of our thought, and consciously join one age to another—otherwise the thread will of itself snap."

What is to be done? Each member of a nation sacrifices personal self-interest for the preservation of the national interest. In the age when Hindu society was alive, every limb and organ of society regarded the self-interest of the entire social body as its own sole self-interest. The king was a limb of society itself—upon him rested the burden of society's protection and governance. Above him, the Brahmin was appointed within society to keep the pure ideal of social dharma bright and eternal—their meditation, their knowledge, their pursuit of learning, all of it was the property of society. Because the householder was the pillar of society, the householder's stage of life was reckoned so honorable. In order to keep that household elevated in knowledge, in religion, in sentiment, in action, the diverse powers of society worked actively in diverse directions. The rules of that age, the observances of that age, were not meaningless by the reckoning of that age.

Now that rule remains, but that consciousness does not. There is no active effort of limb and organ with an eye toward the welfare of the whole of society. Only if we establish, as if alive within our hearts, that ever-vigilant sense of welfare belonging to our forefathers, and apply it throughout society, shall we regain the vast civilization of the Hindu. To give society education, to give health, to give food, to give wealth—this is our own work; in this lies our welfare—not to view this as commerce, to expect nothing in return but merit and welfare, this is sacrifice, this is union of action with the Divine—to remember this constantly, this is Hindu-ness. Not to set the ideal of self-interest at the center of human society, but to view human society within the Divine—this is Hindu-ness. In this, a sentiment of welfare extends toward all, from beast to man, and through constant practice, the abandonment of self-interest becomes as easy as the giving up of a breath. To bind all, from the bottom of society to the top, in one great, selfless bond of welfare—this is the object of an effort greater than all our other efforts. Through this very thread of unity we must accomplish the religious union of one Hindu community with another, and of the present with the past. This is our sole means of attaining humanity. It is not that political effort yields no fruit at all; but that it can assist to some degree in accomplishing our social unity—this is its chief glory.

THE SOCIETY OF THE MOTHERLAND

This essay was written after the Government's remarks concerning the alleviation of Bengal's water-scarcity were published.

The land of Bengal, "rich in water, rich in crops," has become parched with thirst. But, like the chātak bird, she looks only upward—if the authorities do not arrange for rainfall, she has no other recourse.

A deep rumble of thunder has begun—the Government has responded—perhaps some means of quenching the thirst will be found—therefore, for the present, we shall not sit down to express anxiety on that score.

Our concern is this: since we once had an arrangement whereby society, through the most natural rules, resolved all its own needs by itself—will not even a trace of that remain in this country?

Whatever needs the foreigner has created and continues to create for us, let the foreigner fulfill those, and welcome to it. Lord Curzon has risen up and busied himself with creating in food-deprived India a thirst for tea; very well, let the Andrew-Yule community keep our teacups filled; and that thirst for a fierier liquor, more scorching than even tea—which, like the splendor of a sunset at the hour of dissolution, tempts us day by day with its varied brilliant radiance—if the wares and the goddess-of-the-West undertake the charge of dispensing it, that too is not improper. But the thirst for water is surely a genuine, ancient thing of our own homeland! Before the British Government arrived, we had thirst for water, and for ages the means of quenching it had come about tolerably well—for this, the rulers' royal treasury never had to become agitated.

In our country, warfare, defense of the realm, and judicial affairs have been the king's business, but from the giving of education to the giving of water, everything has been accomplished by society so naturally that, though in these many, many centuries the reigns of so many, many new kings have flowed over our land like a flood, still they could not destroy our religion and reduce us to beasts, nor destroy society and render us utterly bereft of fortune. Between king and king there is no end of warfare—but in our whisper-soft bamboo groves, in the forest-shade of our mango and jackfruit trees, temples have arisen, guest-houses have been established, ponds have been dug, the schoolmaster has taught arithmetic, instruction in scripture has not ceased in the village schools, the Ramayana has been read in the temple courtyard, and the village square has resounded with the clamor of kirtan. Society has not needed outside assistance, nor has its beauty been marred by outside interference.

That so many welfare works and joyous festivals have, for so long, continuously blessed all, rich and poor alike, in this land—was it because zealous men had to wear out subscription registers going door to door begging, or because government officers had to issue lengthy warrants? Just as we need not clutch anyone's hand to breathe, just as no town-hall meeting is required for the circulation of blood—so too has every essential beneficial matter of society come about through the most natural rule in society itself.

That today we lament the lack of water in our country is a small matter. What has become far more grievous cause for sorrow is its root cause. Today the mind of society is not within society. All our attention has turned outward.

If a river that has always flowed alongside a certain village one day abandons that village and takes its course elsewhere, then the village's water is ruined, its crops are ruined, its health is ruined, its trade is ruined, its gardens turn to jungle, the ruined remains of its former prosperity, in the cracks of its crumbling old walls, give shelter to banyan and peepul, and become the haunt of owl and bat.

The stream of human thought is no small thing compared to a river. That stream of thought had, for all time, kept Bengal's shade-cool villages unblemished and joyful—now the flow of Bengali thought has become severed from that rural embrace. Hence its temples stand nearly in ruins—there is none to repair them; its water-tanks are polluted—there is none to cleanse the mud; the mansions of prosperous households stand abandoned—there the joyous sound of festivity no longer rises. Consequently, now the giver of water is the Government, the giver of health is the Government, and for arrangements of education too, one must return, garland-necked with servility, from the Government's door. The tree that once bloomed its own flowers is now, for rain from the sky, lifting up all its withered branches and filing its petition. Even if that petition should be granted, of what use is such an attainment made of castles in the air?

What the English call "state," we in our country call, in modern parlance, "sarkar" (government). This sarkar existed in ancient India in the form of royal power. But there is a difference between our royal power and the State of Britain. In Britain, the country has entrusted the entire burden of its welfare-works into the hands of the State—India had done this only partially.

Those who were like teachers to the land, who imparted secular and religious education to the whole country without wages—it is not that the king had no duty to support and reward them—but that duty was only partial; in truth, that duty generally belonged to every householder. If the king withheld support, if suddenly the country fell into disorder, still the education, secular and religious, of society would not be wholly obstructed. It is not that the king did not dig long tanks for his subjects—but he did so just as any prosperous individual in society would do. It is not that the country's water-vessel would run dry the moment the king grew inattentive.

In Britain, each person is free in his own comfort, amusement, and pursuit of self-interest—they are not burdened with duty; all their great duties are placed upon

the State's authority. In our country, royal authority is comparatively free—the general populace is bound by social duty. Whether the king goes to war, goes hunting, attends to state affairs, or spends his days in amusement, for that he shall be answerable in the judgment of religion—but the general people do not sit utterly dependent upon him for their own welfare; the work of society is astonishingly, variously divided among each member of society.

Given this state of affairs, what we understand by dharma is diffused throughout the whole of society. Each of us has had to practice restraint of self-interest and the cultivation of self-sacrifice. Each of us is bound to observe dharma.

From this it will be clearly understood that the vital force of different civilizations is established in different places. Wherever the burden of common welfare is concentrated, there lies the country's vital core. Strike there, and the whole country is grievously wounded. In Britain, if royal power should be overthrown, the ruin of the whole country would follow. This is precisely why politics is so much more grave a matter in Europe. In our country, if society becomes crippled, then, and only then, does the country's crisis truly arise. For this reason, we have not throughout these ages striven with all our might for political freedom, but we have preserved social freedom in every possible way. From giving alms to the destitute, to giving religious instruction to the general populace—in Britain, all such matters depend upon the State—in our country this is established upon the religious ordinances of the people themselves—hence the Englishman survives only if the State survives, while we survive only if we preserve our religious ordinances.

In England, the general populace, quite naturally, is always employed in keeping the State alert and active. Recently, having gone to school in the Englishman's classroom, we have decided that, regardless of circumstance, the general populace's foremost duty is to prod the Government and keep it attentive. We have failed to understand that one does not cure one's own disease by constantly applying blister-plasters to another's body.

We love to argue, and therefore it is not impossible that the argument might arise here: is it better that the work-burden of the people be diffused throughout the entire body of the populace, or is it better that it be specifically fixed at a particular place called "government"? My contention is that this debate may be conducted in a school debating club, but for the present it will serve us no purpose whatsoever.

For we must understand this: the State of the British realm is founded, in an unbroken manner, upon the consent of the whole of society—it has come to be expressed there through the natural rule of that place. By argument alone we cannot attain it—however excellent it may be, it is beyond our reach.

In our country, the Government-sahib is no member of society at all; the Government stands outside society. Therefore, whatever we expect from him, we must obtain at the price of our freedom. Whatever task society allows the Government to accomplish on its behalf, society renders itself incapable regarding that task. Yet this incapacity was not natural to our country. We have accepted subjection to many races, many kings, but society has always, forever, accomplished all its own work by itself, never allowing any outsider to interfere in any matter, small or great. That is why, even when royal glory was banished from the land, the goddess of social fortune never took her leave.

Today we have grown eager to hand over, one by one through our own efforts, every duty of society into the hands of the State, which lies outside society. Even our social customs we have allowed to be bound, unalterably and completely, by the laws of the Englishman—raising no objection. Until now, various new communities have arisen within Hindu society and introduced particular customs and practices of their own, and Hindu society has never condemned them for it. Today everything has come to be bound by the laws of the Englishman—today, any change whatsoever compels one to declare oneself non-Hindu. From this it can be understood that wherever our vital core is—that vital core which we have so carefully preserved within our own hearts, that innermost core of ours—today lies

exposed and unguarded, and there today paralysis has struck. This is the true danger; the scarcity of water is not the danger.

Formerly, those who became Rai Rayan at the emperor's court, whose counsel and support the nawabs awaited, did not regard this royal favor as sufficient—the favor of society was, to them, higher than royal favor. For gaining true prestige, they looked toward their own society. For the ultimate honor that even the capital of the King of Kings, Delhi, could not bestow upon them, they had to come and stand at the doorway of the cottage of their obscure native village. That even a humble person of the country would call them a person of great worth—this was greater in their eyes than titles bestowed by the Government of kings and maharajas. These men understood, in their very hearts, the honor of their native soil—the majesty of the capital, the glory of the royal court, could not sever their minds from their own village. For this reason, even in the obscure villages of the land, there was never any water-scarcity, and the entire apparatus for the cultivation of humanity was preserved everywhere, village by village.

Today we take no pleasure in the country's people calling us blessed; hence the natural course of our effort no longer moves toward the country.

Now it has come to pass that we must either beg from the Government, or require its prodding. Now, to relieve the country's water-scarcity, the Government must prod the country's people—the natural urgencies have all become blocked. Even fame from the country's people no longer appeals to us.

That our hearts have signed a bond of servitude to the fair-skinned man, that our taste has been sold off at the sahib's shop!

There is a possibility that I may be misunderstood here. I am not saying this—that everyone should cling fast to the soil of his own village, that there is no need at all

to go abroad for gaining knowledge and wealth. To that allure which is drawing the Bengali race outward, gratitude must indeed be acknowledged—it is awakening the entire strength of the Bengali, and broadening the Bengali's field of action, expanding his mind.

But it is necessary, at this very time, to constantly remind the Bengali that the natural connection between home and abroad must not become entirely inverted. One must earn abroad only in order to accumulate wealth at home. Even if one must exert one's strength abroad, one must keep one's heart within one's own home. Let one be educated abroad, and apply that education at home. But we, these days—

Home has become the outside, the outside has become home,

The stranger has become one's own, one's own has become the stranger.

For this reason, like the "duckweed of the current" imagined by the poet, we merely drift along.

But the mind of the Bengali is turning its face homeward—proof of this can be found from various directions. It is not merely that the scriptures of the homeland are drawing our reverence, and that our native language is becoming adorned by native literature—the country's craft products are gaining favor with us, the country's history is awakening our spirit of research; the provisions we had gathered for our begging-pilgrimage at the royal door are, day by day, helping us, bit by bit, to reach our own household door.

In such circumstances, it must be said that the country's work has truly begun. Now certain strange incongruities will strike our eyes, and these must be corrected. The Provincial Conference is itself a glaring example of this. This Conference is convened for the purpose of giving counsel to the country, and yet its language is

foreign. We recognize only the English-educated as our own near kin—that we ourselves are nobody at all unless we can unite, heart to heart, with the ordinary masses—this thought never even occurs to us. We are creating an unbridgeable distinction between ourselves and the common people. We have kept them standing outside all our discourse and deliberation. We have spared nothing—guile, artifice, trappings and equipment—for winning the heart of Britain—but that the country's heart is far more precious than that, and that its winning requires far greater effort, this we have never even considered.

The ultimate purpose of political endeavor is solely to unite the country's heart. But abandoning the country's language, abandoning the country's customs, and regarding manifold arrangements made solely for attracting the heart of the foreigner as beneficial political education—this has become current in our unfortunate country alone.

If we acknowledge the winning of the country's heart as the ultimate gain, then, setting aside all those procedures which we have habituated ourselves to regard as indispensable in ordinary activity, we must bring before our sight those paths which have always remained open for reaching the country's true self. Consider: had we actually employed the Provincial Conference for the true task of counseling the country, what would we have done? We would then not have constructed a European-style assembly, but rather held a great fair of the native kind. There, through drama, song, festivity, and merriment, the country's people would have gathered from far and near. There, exhibits of native produce and agricultural goods would have been displayed. There, good storytellers, kirtan-singers, and theatrical troupes would have been rewarded. There, with the help of magic-lantern shows and the like, the principles of health would have been clearly explained to the common people, and whatever we have to say, whatever counsel we have on matters of joy and sorrow, could have been discussed together, gentle and common folk alike, in simple Bengali.

Our country is chiefly rural. When this village, amid its own narrow confines, occasionally grows eager to feel the pulse of the great world outside coursing through its veins, then the fair is its chief means. This fair is, in our country, the invitation of the outside world into the home. In this festival, the village forgets all its own narrowness—this is the chief occasion for opening its heart to give and to receive. Just as the rainy season is the time for filling the reservoirs of the sky with water, so the fair is the fitting occasion for filling the village's heart with the sentiment of the wider world.

This fair is exceedingly natural in our country. If you call the country's people to a meeting on some occasion, they will come with suspicion, and their minds will take long to open—but those who gather on the occasion of a fair come easily, opening their hearts freely—hence it is here that the true opportunity for winning the country's mind occurs. The day the villages, laying aside plow and yoke, take their holiday—that very day is the day to come and sit among them.

There is no district in Bengal where fairs of various kinds, at various times of the year, are not held in various places—first, it is our duty to compile a list and description of these fairs. Thereafter, let us adopt, through the medium of these fairs, the occasion for becoming truly acquainted with the country's people.

If the educated gentlefolk of each district could awaken their district's fairs with new life, with fresh vitality; if, within these, the educated of the country would infuse their own hearts; if, at these very fairs, they would establish goodwill between Hindu and Muslim—without keeping any trace of fruitless politics, discussing remedies for whatever needs the district has regarding schools, roads and ferries, tanks, and grazing-land—then, in a very short time, they could render the motherland truly vigilant and active.

I believe that if a group of people, traveling here and there throughout Bengal to hold fairs in various places, were to compose new plays, kirtans, and storytelling

performances, and, along with these, bring bioscope shows, magic lanterns, gymnastics, and conjuring performances, they need not worry in the least about covering expenses. If, on the whole, they arrange for the landlord to fix a special rent for each fair, and obtain the right to collect a portion of the proceeds from shopkeepers according to due arrangement, then, through proper management, they could render the whole enterprise particularly profitable. If, after deducting remuneration and other expenses, whatever surplus arises from this profit could be applied to the country's own work, then the connection between the fair-troupe and the heart of the entire country would become exceedingly close—these men would come to know the whole country intimately, thread by thread, and how much work could be accomplished through them cannot be told in full.

In our country, from time immemorial, joy and festivity have been the medium through which the people have been given the taste of literature and religious instruction. Recently, for various reasons, most landlords have been drawn to the cities. Whatever entertainment there is on occasions such as their sons' or daughters' weddings is accomplished only by showing theatre and dance-performances to the wealthy friends in the city. Many landlords do not hesitate to collect subscriptions from their tenants for ceremonial occasions—in such cases, provision is made for sweets for the "common folk," but of that "sweetmeat" the "common folk" get not a crumb—it is enjoyed by the "babus" and the "sahibs." As a result, the villages of Bengal are becoming day by day more joyless, and that literature which once kept the minds of the young and old, men and women alike, of the whole country lively and refined is daily becoming more and more beyond the reach of the common people. If our imagined community of fair-organizers could once more set flowing the current of literature, the stream of joy, at the door of Bengal's villages, then this Bengal, green with crops, would not become, day by day, a dry desert at heart.

We must bear this in mind: just as the great reservoirs that once gave us water and health have become polluted and have thereby not merely caused us water-scarcity but are distributing disease and death among us—so too, most of the fairs that are current in our country in the name of religion have gradually become

polluted these days, and have become not merely unfit for the education of the people but a source of miseducation as well. In the neglected field of grain, grain no longer grows, but thorny weeds sprout instead. In such circumstances, if we do not rescue these fairs from becoming occasions for vulgar amusement, we shall be guilty before our motherland, before religion itself.

The moment one hears this, let not a group among us suddenly become excessively agitated—let no one say: there is seen to be extreme indifference on the part of the Government toward these fairs—therefore let us hold meetings, write in the newspapers, and with forceful essays begin to shake the Government's bridge—let the police commissioner, with his force of laws and regulations, come crashing down upon the fairs—let everything be cleared away at one stroke. Patience must be observed—there will be delay, we will meet obstruction, that too is granted—but all this is our own work. The goddess of the household has, from time immemorial, cleaned our home herself—the municipality's official broom may indeed sweep it clean, but let us not forget that it is the goddess's own broom that renders it sacred.

I have given but one example of what opportunity there might be for us to mingle with the people of our own country in the manner of our own country, and have given but a hint of how, by binding this opportunity within rule and bringing it under control, it might be transformed into a country-wide beneficial enterprise.

Those who do not even reckon the practice of begging at the royal door as a beneficial matter for the country have, in turn, been given the epithet of "pessimist," that is, those without hope. That is to say: to the extent that we have become despondent because there is no hope from the king, to that extent they regard such despair as baseless.

I say plainly: it is not because the king occasionally kicks us out from his lion-gate with his booted foot that I have, out of helplessness, considered self-reliance the

better course—never have I taken refuge in such consolation of the base and fortune-stricken jackal, greedy for the unattainable grapes. I say only this: that begging for another's favor is truly the mark of the "pessimist," the hopeless wretch. I shall never say that we have no recourse unless we take the leash around our neck—I trust in my country, I honor self-reliance. I know for certain that, by whatever means, if the foundation of that unity of homeland and race which we today, having realized within ourselves, are eager to attain success in, rests upon the ever-changing goodwill of another—if it does not become specifically India's own—then it will fail again and again. Therefore we must search, from every direction, for what India's true path truly is.

The establishment of kinship-relations between man and man has always been India's foremost endeavor. Relations must be maintained even with distant kin; even when children grow to adulthood, the relation must not slacken; proper kinship-relations must be maintained with village-dwellers too, regardless of caste and condition; guru and priest, guest and beggar, landowner and tenant-servant—with all of these a fitting relationship has been bound. These are not merely ethical relations prescribed by scripture—these are relations of the heart. Some are as fathers, some as sons, some as brothers, some as companions of the same age. Whatever man we come into genuine contact with, we settle upon some relationship with him. For this reason, in no circumstance can we regard man merely as a tool or cog in the machinery of our task-accomplishment. This may have both good and bad aspects, but it is ours, native to our country—indeed, it is greater than that, it is Oriental.

The example of the Japan war illuminates this point of mine. The war-enterprise is, without doubt, a mechanical affair—soldiers must become like machines, and must move like machines. But nevertheless, every Japanese soldier has risen above that machine; they are not inert like wood, nor are they beast-like, maddened with bloodlust; each of them is bound in relation with the Mikado, and, through that connection, with the homeland—it is to that relationship that each of them is dedicating himself. In this manner, in our ancient times, every warrior, relying upon his own king or lord, would offer himself to the cause of warrior-dharma—on the

battlefield they would not die like pawns and knights on a chessboard—they would die bearing the human bond of the heart, bearing the glory of dharma. In this, warfare often came to resemble a magnificent act of collective self-sacrifice—and Western critics say of such an act, "This is marvelous—but this is not war." Japan, by mingling this marvel with war, has become blessed in the eyes of both East and West.

However that may be, such is our nature. We can use the bond of necessity only after having purified it through the bond of the heart. Consequently, we must accept even unnecessary obligations. The bond of necessity is narrow—it ends within the office itself. If only the relation of master and servant exists between master and servant, then everything is settled within the exchange of work and wages—but if any kind of kinship-relation is once acknowledged in it, the obligation must be extended all the way to the marriage of sons and daughters and the funeral rites.

Let me give you another modern example of my point. I was present at the Provincial Conferences of Rajshahi and Dhaka. We regard this Conference-matter as a serious undertaking of importance, no doubt—but strangely, I observed that within it the spirit of hospitality was far more conspicuous than the necessity of the work itself. It was as if a wedding party had arrived—the demand and imposition regarding food, lodging, comfort, and amusement were so excessive that it was almost mortally exhausting for the organizers. Had they said: you have come to do your own country's work, you have not come to buy our heads—why all this chewing and sucking, eating and drinking, all this bedding and lodging, this lemonade-soda-carriage-and-horses, why this burden of provisions upon us—then the matter would not have been unjust. But to remain aloof, citing the excuse of work, is not the way of our people. However dreadfully businesslike we may become through education, still the host must rise above mere business. We do not wish to deprive even work of its connection with the heart. In truth, the businesslike aspect of the Conference did not attract our minds as much as the hospitality did. The Conference could not entirely exclude this native heart from its British-style frame. The organizers had accepted, as their own burden, the duty of

honoring the invited guests in the manner of hospitality, as kin. Their labor, hardship, and expenditure had swollen to what extent, only those who witnessed it can understand. Even within the Congress, whatever portion is hospitality is Indian, and it is that portion alone that does real work within the country—the portion that is businesslike has work for only three days, and for the rest of the year no response can be found for it. That service-relation toward the guest which is particularly ingrained in India's nature, if cultivated on a grand scale, would become a source of great joy for India. The hospitality that is practiced household by household once required, in ancient times, the performance of great sacrificial rites in order to give it full satisfaction—now, for a long time, all that has been lost. But because India has not forgotten this, the moment some occasion of the country's work brought about a gathering of people, at once Mother India threw open the doors of her long-unused, ancient, common guest-house, and took her seat of old amid the ruins of her sacrificial altar. In this way, in the midst of the Congress-Conference, when the whirl of British-style oratory and its crisp applause were at their height—even there, in the very midst of that tumultuous assembly, she who is our mother, with a smiling face, distributing among all a small portion of home-provisions, a little sweet prepared with her own hands, would come and go, scarcely comprehending what was actually being done. The smile on the Mother's face would have blossomed a little further still, had she seen that, as in the ancient sacrifice, in this modern sacrifice too, not merely book-learned people, not merely watch-chain-wearing people, but invited and uninvited, high and low, all the common folk alike, had freely become one. In that state the quantity of food would have been less, the pomp too would have been less—but everything would have been filled to overflowing with joy, with welfare, and with the Mother's blessing.

However that may be, it is clearly seen that India, even while sitting down to work, cannot forget the sweetness of human relation. She takes upon herself the entire burden of that relationship.

It is precisely because we so readily accept these many unnecessary burdens that, in India, a close relationship has been established between home and stranger, high and low, householder and visitor. This is precisely why, in this country, no one has

ever had to worry about schools, primary schools, water-tanks, guest-houses, temples, and the maintenance of the blind, the lame, and the afflicted.

If today this social bond has become fragmented—if the giving of food, water, shelter, health, and education, all social duties, have slipped from society and fallen outside it—then we shall see nothing but utter darkness.

Hindu dharma has indicated the path for feeling connected with the whole universe, transcending the narrow bond of home and village. Hindu dharma has engaged every individual in society, through the daily performance of the five sacrifices (pañcayajña), in remembering his welfare-relation with the gods, the sages, the ancestors, all humanity, and the animal and bird kingdoms. If this is properly observed, it becomes beneficial both individually, for each person, and generally, for the whole world.

Is it impossible, from this very lofty principle, to bind a daily relation between each individual and the whole country in our society? Cannot each person, remembering the motherland every day, offer a paisa, or even less—a handful, or half a handful of rice—as an offering to the homeland? Can Hindu dharma not bind each of us, every single day, in the bond of devotion in direct relation with our gods' abode, the hermitage of ancient sages' austerity, the motherland of our forefathers, India? Our welfare-relation with the motherland—shall that not become personal for each of us? Shall we hand over welfare-works such as giving water and giving education to others, and cut off our efforts, thoughts, and hearts entirely from the country? The Government is today giving fifty thousand rupees for the relief of Bengal's water-scarcity—suppose, under the fierce pressure of our agitation, they gave fifty lakh rupees, and the country's water-scarcity were entirely resolved—what would be the result of that? The result would be this: that the country's heart, which has all this while worked and found satisfaction within society through the thread of receiving assistance and welfare, would be surrendered into the hands of a foreigner. Wherever the country receives all its benefit, there it shall naturally give its whole heart. We lament that the country's money is flowing out toward

foreign lands by various paths and in various forms—but if the country's heart departs, if all connection of welfare with the country, one by one, entirely falls into the grip of the foreign Government, if nothing else remains to us—would that be a matter for less lament than the flow of money to foreign lands? Is it for this very reason that we hold meetings, submit petitions, and thereby call the effort to hand the country over completely, inwardly and outwardly, into another's hand—patriotism? This can never be so. This shall never, for all time, find favor in this land—because this is not India's dharma. We have not kept even our most distantly-related destitute kin at a distance, expecting them to hope for another's charity—we have given them equal place with our own children; sharing our hard-earned food even with our most distant relations, we have never for a single day imagined this to be an extraordinary matter—and shall we say that we cannot bear the burden of our own mother, our own birth-land? Shall the foreigner forever give our motherland food, water, and the alms of education, while our only duty is to keep shouting whenever the portion of that alms does not please our mind? Never, never! We shall each of us, every day, accept the burden of the motherland—in that lies our glory, our dharma. Now the time has come when our society shall become one great society of the motherland. The time has come when each shall know: I am not alone—however small I may be, no one shall be able to abandon me, and I shall not be able to abandon even the smallest.

An argument may arise here that it is not possible to encompass a very large area through the bond of individual, personal feeling. We can take a small village directly as our own and accept its entire responsibility—but the moment the circumference expands, machinery becomes necessary—we can never view the country in the same way as a village—hence the country's work cannot be done directly, it must be done with the help of machinery. This machine-thing was not ours, and so it must be imported from abroad, and the machine will not run unless we accept all the equipment and rules of the factory-house.

The point is not unreasonable. Machinery must indeed be set up. And unless the rules of the machine, whatever country they may come from, are accepted, everything will fail. Even fully granting this, it must be said: India will not run on

machinery alone—wherever we do not directly feel the bond of our personal heart, there our whole nature will be unable to be drawn in. Call this good or call it bad, curse it or praise it, it is the truth. Therefore, in whatever work we wish to attain success, we must remember this point.

We wish to realize the motherland within one particular person. We need such a person, who shall become the very image of our entire society. Taking him as our support, we shall revere, we shall serve, our great society of the homeland. By maintaining connection with him alone, our connection with every individual member of society shall be preserved.

Formerly, when the state was inseparable from society, the king held this position. Now, because the king has gone outside society, society has become headless. Hence, for a long time, out of compulsion, village-society has been accomplishing its own work fragment by fragment—the society of the homeland has not been able to form and grow so intimately. Our duty has been performed, no doubt, but precisely because it has been performed thus, narrowness has entered our character even to this day. It is not healthy to remain forever confined within a narrow completeness; for this reason we shall not grieve for what has been broken—we shall apply our whole mind toward what must be built. That whatever happens these days should be allowed to happen inertly, arbitrarily, out of compulsion, can never be to our advantage.

We now need a leader of our society. He shall have his council of associates around him, but he himself shall be the direct head of our society.

The unity of society shall be proven, in the eyes of each of us, through him alone. Today, if you tell someone to do the work of society, he will be bewildered thinking how to do it, where to do it, what must be done and to whom. Most people simply let their duty slip by, considering that its very neglect is its protection. In such a situation, there needs to be a center to which individual efforts can be drawn along

a defined path. No faction in our society shall be able to occupy the place of that center. In our country we see many factions where, in the initial rush of enthusiasm, however many flowers they may cause to bloom, in the end they cannot bring the fruit to ripeness. There may be various reasons for this, but one principal reason is: each individual member of our faction cannot firmly feel and preserve the unity of the faction within himself—loosened responsibility, slipping from each person's shoulder, in the end finds no shelter anywhere.

Our society can no longer proceed in this manner. For the power that is eagerly seizing society from outside day by day is unified, is firm—it has manifested its own sole dominion, in gross and subtle forms alike, everywhere, beginning from our schools and extending to the shops and markets of everyday life. Now, if society is to defend itself against this, it must establish itself with the utmost certainty. The sole means of accomplishing that is: to choose one person as leader, to make each member of society directly perceive society in that one person, and to feel the bearing of his complete authority not as an insult but as a part of our very freedom.

This leader of society may sometimes be good, sometimes bad, but if society remains vigilant, then on the whole no individual can do lasting harm to society. Moreover, the very consecration of such a leader is itself an excellent means of keeping society vigilant. Once society directly realizes its unity in one particular place, its power shall become unconquerable.

Under him, different leaders shall be appointed for different specific regions of the country. They shall address all the needs of society, carry out beneficial works, and preserve order, and shall remain answerable to the leader of society.

I have said before that every individual in society shall, daily, dedicate however small a portion to the homeland. Besides this, I do not consider it difficult to collect, from every household, on auspicious occasions such as marriage, a due share for this society of the homeland—like the customary gift given on such occasions. If

this is collected in the proper place, there will be no shortage of funds. In our country great monasteries and temples run on voluntary donation—will society not, in this land, willingly construct its own place of refuge? Especially when the country attains good fortune in food, water, health, and learning, gratitude will never remain inactive.

Of course, for now I am keeping only Bengal before my eyes. If, having settled here the leader of society, we can render our social freedom bright and enduring, then the other divisions of India shall follow our example. And in this way, if every province of India can attain a well-defined unity within itself, then mutual cooperation becomes exceedingly easy for each. Once the rule of unity enters and becomes established in one place, it begins to spread—but mere accumulation of scattered fragments, however much you pile them up, does not by itself become unity.

Japan shows us an example of how to harmonize the machine with the heart, how to connect the king with the homeland. Keeping that example in mind, for the formation and running of our society of the homeland, we can, at one and the same time, harmonize the authority of the leader and the authority of social organization—we can realize the motherland within one human being, and, acknowledging his governance, truly serve the society of the homeland.

To accumulate one's own strength in one particular place, to realize it there, and to have an arrangement whereby it can be applied everywhere from that particular place—how necessary this is for us will become clear with a little discussion. The Government, whether for its own administrative convenience or for whatever reason, has wished to divide Bengal in two—we fear that Bengal will become weakened by this. Expressing that fear, we have done enough weeping and wailing. But if that weeping and wailing prove futile, is everything then settled? Shall there be nowhere in the country any arrangement for remedying whatever ills are likely to arise from the division of the country? It is better that the seed of disease should not enter the body at all—but if it does enter and lodge itself, will there be no

governing power within the body to check the disease, to restore health? If we keep that governing power firm and clear within society, then no outside force will be able to render Bengal lifeless. Healing all wounds, drawing unity together, awakening the unconscious—this shall be its work. Nowadays, foreign officials distribute titles to us as rewards for good deeds—but we can truly become blessed only if we receive the praise and blessing for good deeds from our own homeland. If we do not specifically establish, within our own society, the power to reward on behalf of the homeland, we shall forever deprive ourselves of this one particular fulfillment. In our country, disputes between Hindu and Muslim occasionally flare up on trifling occasions—if there is no special authority anywhere in society to resolve such disputes, to establish peaceful reconciliation between both parties, to regularly define the respective rights of both, then society, wounded again and again, must grow progressively weaker.

Therefore, we must take one person as our support, and establish our society's heart, its unity, in one place—otherwise I see no means of self-preservation from the hands of decay and destruction.

Many may perhaps agree with this point of mine in general terms, but may consider bringing the matter into actual practice to be impossible. They will say: how shall we hold an election, why should everyone accept the elected one, first the whole system of governance must be established, and only then will the establishment of a leader of society become feasible, and so on.

My contention is this: if we sit down to take up all these arguments and deliberate them exhaustively, then we shall never at any time be able to descend into action. It is difficult to name such a person, or such a group in the country, against whom no one in the country, no faction, will raise any objection. It is not feasible to select a person after settling counsel with all the people of the country.

Our first task shall be—by whatever means—to settle upon one person, and, acknowledging obligation toward him, gradually, step by step, to build up a system of governance around him. If the proposal for the appointment of a leader of society is timely, if, because the king does not lie within society, a genuine want of a head has occurred in society; if, because we are daily being dispossessed of our rights through conflict with other races, society becomes willing to bind and raise itself up—then, setting up some capable person and having a group of people genuinely engage in work under him, this social-polity will, before our very eyes, gradually prepare itself—we shall attain even what we could not, calculating and imagining beforehand, hope to attain—the inherent wisdom of society will itself take up the burden of conducting this enterprise.

Powerful individuals are not continuously present in society at all times, but the country's strength accumulates in particular places and waits for them. If that power, which for the present lies unused for want of a capable person, finds nowhere in society a place to be preserved, then that society becomes empty like a leaking pitcher. The leader of society of whom I speak—even if he is not, at all times, a capable person—the strength of society, the self-consciousness of society, shall be sustained, relying upon him. Eventually, by the blessing of Providence, when capability joins with this accumulated strength, then the welfare of the country will, before our very eyes, expand itself everywhere with astonishing power. We, like petty shopkeepers, wish to see the accounts of profit and loss directly, with our own hands—but the accounts of a great enterprise do not tally in that manner. One great day arrives in a country, and on that day, under the guidance of a great person, all the country's accounts, profit and loss, appear ready in the grand ledger. In the time of the Emperor Ashoka, the account of Buddhist society was once drawn up in this manner. For the present, our task is to keep our office of work prepared, to keep the work running; on the day the great man demands the account, we shall not be caught unprepared and bow our heads in shame—we shall be able to show that in the credit column there is not utter emptiness.

One cannot find, merely by wishing, so great a person as we shall make greater than everyone in society. In truth, it is not that the king is naturally greater than all his subjects—it is the kingdom that makes the king great. The Mikado of Japan is great through all of Japan's wise men, all its practitioners, all its heroes. Our leader of society, too, shall become great through the greatness of society. All the great men of society shall make him great. The golden pinnacle atop a temple is not itself high—it is the height of the temple that makes it high.

I well understand that even if many should accept this proposal of mine favorably, still it cannot be brought unhindered into effect. Indeed, it would not be surprising if, from today, many clear statements and many unclear insinuations begin to circulate regarding the proposer's unfitness and various other relevant and irrelevant faults, errors, and slips. My humble submission is this: you must forgive me. Though I say I have not come to this assembly today to promote myself, I feel troubled lest this very statement itself seem an expression of pride. Whatever I say today, my whole country has moved me to say it. It is not my own words, it is not my own creation; it is merely uttered through me. Please do not think for a moment that, forgetting the limits of my own right and capability, I am putting myself forward excessively in the work of constructing the society of the homeland. I shall say only this much: Come, let us prepare our minds—cleansing our hearts completely of petty factionalism, false argument, backbiting, suspicion, and excessive cleverness, opening our minds today toward the special need of the motherland, toward the special call of our mother, rendering ourselves favorable to action; casting into the heap of rubbish, with full force, the futile bubble of aimless, exceedingly subtle argumentation, and forcibly uprooting blind self-conceit, with its hundred thousand blood-thirsty roots, from the dark cave of the heart—let us, in humble and modest reverence, consecrate the vacant throne of our society, giving shelter to a society bereft of refuge—at this auspicious moment, let us kindle the lamp of welfare in the maternal household-shrine of our country—let the conch-shell sound, let the sacred fragrance of incense rise—let the whole country, through the unblinking gaze of divine welfare, once feel itself wholly fulfilled.

After this consecration, whom the leader of society shall draw to himself, in what manner he shall engage society in the work of society—that is not for me to say. Without doubt, whatever arrangement is consonant with our eternal social nature, that alone he must adopt—taking as his support the ancient nature of the homeland itself, he shall give the new its fitting seat in its proper place. In our country he shall always have to endure opposition and calumny from particular persons and particular factions—of this there is no doubt whatsoever. But a great office is not a place of ease—amid all the clamor and tumult, he must remain firm and grave in his own glory, unmoved.

Therefore, him whom we shall choose with society's highest honor, we cannot offer, even for a single day, the hope of comfort and ease. In this arrogant new society of ours, which, refusing to revere anyone with all its heart, is daily rendering itself unworthy of reverence—upon that thorn-strewn, envy-laden seat where he must sit enthroned, may Providence grant him strength and forbearance in full measure—may he find his reward within his own heart, in peace and in action alone.

Do not distrust your own strength—know for certain that the time has arrived. Know for certain that within India, a unifying dharma has reigned throughout all ages. Falling into manifold adverse circumstances, India has nonetheless always managed to construct some arrangement, and for that very reason has been preserved to this day. In this India I place my faith. This India, even now, at this very moment, is slowly building an astonishing harmony between the new age and her own antiquity. May each of us be able to join in this consciously—may we not, driven by inertia or the impulse of rebellion, oppose it at every moment.

The conflict of Hindu society with the outside is nothing new. From the very moment of entering India, a fierce conflict arose between the Aryan peoples and the original inhabitants here. In this conflict the Aryans were victorious, but the non-Aryans were not exterminated like the original Australians or Americans; they were not expelled from the Aryan settlement; despite all the differences in their

customs and practices, they found a place within one social system. Taking them in, Aryan society became diverse.

This society was once more, for a long period, disrupted. In the time of Buddhist influence, through the attraction of Buddhism, close contact occurred between the people of India and numerous foreigners; this contact of union was even more significant than the contact of conflict. In conflict, the effort of self-preservation always remains vigilant—in the excessive intimacy of union, everything very easily becomes homogenized. This is precisely what happened in Buddhist India. During that time of religious flood sweeping across Asia, the customs, practices, and rites of various races came flowing in, and none could check it.

But even amid this excessive lack of restraint, the genius for establishing order did not abandon India. Gathering together whatever was native and whatever had become habitual, India once again arranged and built up her society in orderly fashion; she became even more diverse than before. But throughout this vast diversity, she wove one thread of unity everywhere. Today many ask: where, in this Hindu religion, this Hindu society, full of manifold mutual inconsistencies and self-contradictions, does its unity lie? A clear answer is difficult to give. It is likewise difficult to find the center of so vast a circumference—but the center exists nonetheless. It is not hard to understand the roundness of a small globe, but those who examine the round earth in fragments perceive it as flat. Similarly, because Hindu society has united mutually inconsistent diversities into one, its thread of unity has become deeply concealed. This unity is difficult to point out with the finger, but that it exists firmly even amid all this apparently contradictory diversity, we can clearly perceive.

After this, the conflict with the Muslims arrived in this very India. It cannot be said that this conflict did not attack society at all. At that time, throughout Hindu society, the process of seeking harmony with this external conflict began everywhere. Between Hindu and Muslim society, such a point of connection was being created where the boundary-lines of both societies came to merge; the

Nanak-panthi, the Kabir-panthi, and the lower-class Vaishnava society are examples of this. In our country, in various places among the common people, whatever reshaping is taking place regarding religion and custom, the educated class keeps no track of it. Had they kept track, they would have seen that even now, deep within, this living process of harmonization has not ceased.

Recently yet another powerful foreign force, bringing with it another religion, custom, and system of education, has come and arrived. Thus, of the four principal religions upon which the four great societies of the world are founded—Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Christian—all have come and met in India. It is as though Providence has opened, in India alone, a great chemical laboratory for some grand social synthesis.

Here I must admit one thing: that the mixture and disruption which occurred in society at the time of Buddhist ascendancy left, in the subsequent Hindu society, a lingering trace of fear. Toward novelty and change of every kind, an infinite suspicion has become embedded, quite literally in the marrow, of society. In such a condition of permanent apprehension, society cannot advance. It becomes incapable of victory in competition with the outside world. A society that applies its entire strength solely toward self-preservation can no longer easily manage its own movement. Even while acknowledging occasional apprehension of danger, apprehension of injury, every society must maintain, alongside stability, an arrangement for movement. Otherwise it must survive crippled, must remain confined within narrowness—that is a kind of living death.

Post-Buddhist Hindu society wrapped itself in a net, in order to protect, tooth and nail, whatever it had and whatever remained, and to keep itself entirely sealed off from outside contact. In this, India has had to lose one of her great offices. There was a time when India held the seat of teacher in the world; in religion, in science, in philosophy, the courage of the Indian mind knew no bounds; that mind sent forth its power unrestrained to claim distant, difficult-to-reach regions in every direction. In this way, India has today fallen from the very throne of teaching she once

conquered—today she must acknowledge herself a mere pupil. The reason for this is that fear has entered our minds. We have, out of fear, closed off ocean-voyaging from every side—both the water-filled ocean and the ocean of knowledge. We were of the universe; we came to stand only in the village. The timid, feminine power within society, meant for accumulation and preservation, defeated and gained sole dominance over the curious, adventure-loving, exploratory masculine power. Hence we have become, even in the realm of knowledge, possessed of a rigid, tradition-bound, feminine nature. The commerce of knowledge that India had begun, which was daily growing and spreading the world's wealth, has today entered the jewel-box of the inner chamber and considers itself entirely safe there; it no longer grows—whatever is lost simply remains lost.

In truth, it is this very office of teacher that we have lost. Sovereignty over kingdoms was never, at any time, the ultimate treasure in our country—its absence was never a mortal deprivation for our land. The right of Brahminhood, that is, the right to knowledge, the right to religion, the right to austerity, was the very support of our society's true life-force. From the moment mere observance of custom took the place of austerity, from the moment, forgetting our own historical dignity, no one in our country hesitated to acknowledge himself as Shudra, that is, non-Aryan, except the Brahmin—when the Brahmin, who bore the burden of distributing ever-new fruits of austerity and ever-new wealth to society, abandoned his own true greatness and, descending to the threshold of society, took upon himself merely the duty of standing guard—from that moment we have ceased to give anything to others, and we are rendering even what was our own useless and corrupted.

This must certainly be known: every race is a limb of universal humanity. It is through the contribution it invents to give to, to assist, universal humanity that each race attains its establishment. From the moment any race loses the vital force of that invention, from that moment it exists merely as a burden, like a paralyzed limb, in the body of that vast Man. In truth, mere survival is not glory.

India did not fight for territory, did not scramble for trade. Today, Tibet, China, Japan, fearful of encroaching Europe, wish to bolt shut every door and window—yet these very lands, Tibet, China, Japan, once called India their teacher and, with untroubled hearts, gladly invited her into their homes. India did not roam the whole world, agitating it to the very marrow with soldiers and merchandise—everywhere she established peace, consolation, and religious order, and thereby won the devotion of mankind. Whatever glory she thus attained, she attained through austerity—and that glory is greater than that of any emperor.

Having lost that glory, at a time when, gathering up all her bundles, we sat huddled fearfully in a corner—it was at just such a time that the Englishman's arrival became necessary. Under the powerful blow of the Englishman, the flimsy fence of this timid, fugitive society has broken in many places. Just as we had kept ourselves distant, fearing the outside world, so now the outside world has come rushing in, tumbling right onto our very necks—now who has the power to check it? In this catastrophe, in the very breaking of our wall, we discovered two things. We saw with our own eyes what astonishing strength we once possessed, and it did not take long to also discover what astonishing weakness we had fallen into.

Today we have understood full well that self-preservation does not mean sitting huddled, hiding at a distance. To awaken and actively employ our inward, latent strength in every possible way—this is the true means of self-preservation. This is Providence's law. The Englishman will overwhelm our minds only for as long as our minds abandon inertia and fail to put their own initiative to work. There is no benefit in sitting in a corner, dying of lamentation, merely crying "It is lost, it is lost." Even the effort to survive by imitating the Englishman in every matter, donning a disguise, is merely self-deception. We cannot become true Englishmen, and even as counterfeit Englishmen we shall not be able to withstand the Englishman.

The sole means of resisting the daily selling-off, at the price of water, of our intellect, our heart, our taste, is this: that we ourselves, whatever we are, become that fully, consciously, simply, and vitally.

The strength that lies bound within us shall be freed precisely through the blow of conflict from abroad—for its work in the world has now arrived. The strength that our country's ascetics gathered through austerity is invaluable; Providence will not render it fruitless. It is for this very reason that, at the fitting time, He has awakened inert India through such acute suffering.

The realization of unity amid multiplicity, the establishment of unity amid diversity—this is India's innermost dharma. India does not know difference as conflict; she does not imagine the other as enemy. For this reason, without renunciation, without destruction, she wishes to give a place to all within one great order. For this reason, she acknowledges every path—she sees the greatness of each in its proper place.

Because this quality exists in India, we shall not be afraid, imagining any society to be our adversary. In every fresh conflict, in the end, we shall expect only our own expansion. Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Christian shall not fight and die against one another on India's soil—here they shall find a harmony. That harmony shall not be non-Hindu—it shall be specifically Hindu. However much its limbs and organs may belong to various countries and lands, its life, its soul, shall be India's own.

If we remember this task assigned to India by Providence, our aim shall become fixed, our shame shall depart—we shall find the trace of that deathless power that exists within India. We must bear this in mind: it is not that we shall forever accept the knowledge and science of Europe merely as pupils—India's Saraswati shall unfold all the parties and factions of knowledge and science into one hundred-petaled lotus, and shall remove their narrowness. Our Indian sage, Dr. Sir Jagadish Chandra [Bose], has helped bring the fields of material science, plant science, and the science of life within one boundary—I cannot say that he will not one day bring even psychology to stand together with these in one chamber. This very accomplishment of unity is the principal task of Indian genius. India is not one to abandon anyone, to keep anyone at a distance—India wishes to acknowledge, to

receive, everyone, and to establish, within the vast One, everyone's particular pre-eminence—this path she shall one day point out before this quarrel-torn, division-riddled world.

Before that great and glorious day arrives—"Call her Mother, just once!"—she who alone is Mother, ever engaged in drawing each one of the country close, in dispelling disunity, in offering protection; she who has, through various forms and various occasions, been silently instilling the eternally-preserved treasury of her knowledge and religion into the inmost heart of each of us, and has thus preserved our minds from destruction in the endless night of prolonged subjugation—rather than crying out with all our strength to secure for her a tiny corner in the alms-house of some arrogance-swollen rich man, let us instead perceive her directly, in the midst of the country, in the sacrificial hall surrounded by her own children. Can we not repair this Mother's decaying home? Lest we fail to settle the sahib's bill, lest our decoration and furnishings and pomp fall short—is it for this that our Mother, who was once the Goddess of Plenty (Annapurna), must now arrange for her own food at another's kitchen door? Did not our country once know how to disdain wealth, once know how to make even poverty graceful and full of majesty—shall we today, prostrate and grovelling in the dust before money, dishonor our own eternal, native dharma? Shall we not, once again today, take up that same pure, restrained, simple way of life, and engage ourselves in the service of our ascetic Mother? In our country, eating from a plantain leaf was never shameful—eating alone was shameful; shall we not recover that shame again? Can we not, in order to prepare ourselves today to serve the whole country, give up some comfort, some extravagance, of our own? Can what was once perfectly easy for us have become entirely impossible for us today? Never. Even in this time of the deepest sorrow, India's silent, vast influence has been slowly, imperceptibly, rendering itself victorious. I know for certain that this rote-learning of our schooling of these few days cannot violate that eternal influence. I know for certain that India's solemn call is echoing, every moment, in the depths of our hearts; and we, unbeknownst to ourselves, moment by moment, are moving toward that very India. Today, wherever the path leads toward our welfare-lit home, there, standing at the outset of our journey homeward—"Call her Mother, just once!"—acknowledge, just this once, that today we have made ourselves ready to serve the

Mother with our own hands; acknowledge, just this once, that every day we shall offer our worship-oblation toward the country; resolve, just this once, that we shall not, having sold off, without remainder, all the welfare of our birthland to others, roll ourselves, with utterly complacent hearts, like a trampled, blighted gourd, downward from step to step of degradation, until we come to lie, utterly wasted, at the very bottom of ultimate disgrace.

THE SOCIETY OF THE MOTHERLAND

The essay entitled "The Society of the Motherland," which I first read at Minerva and afterward at the Curzon stage, occasioned certain questions from my esteemed friend Sri Balaichand Goswami. He did not send me these questions out of any private curiosity of his own; rather, wheresoever the least shadow of doubt might arise in the mind of any person devoted to Hindu society, he drew my attention thither, and for this he has earned my heartfelt gratitude.

But to write in the manner of question-and-answer is to reduce writing to something little better than a lawyer's cross-examination. In such disjointed composition, no matter is ever made wholly clear; and therefore I attempt here, in the form of a brief essay, to set forth my thought with greater completeness.

When Karna cast away his natural armour, his death drew near; when Arjuna could not lift his Gandiva, he was overcome by a common brigand. From this we may understand that strength does not reside in one single place—one country guards its own strength within its weapons, another wears strength as an armour covering its whole body.

Where Europe's strength lies, our strength does not lie. Where Europe exerts its effort for self-preservation, for us to exert effort in that same direction is futile. Europe's treasury of strength is the State—that is, the Government. That State has taken upon itself the whole burden of the country's beneficial works—the State gives alms, the State gives learning, even the guardianship of religion rests upon the State. Therefore, to keep the governance of this State in every way most capable and vigilant, to protect it from internal decay and external assault, is the means by which European civilisation preserves its life.

In our country, the power of welfare resides within society. It has pervaded the whole of our society in the guise of religion. It is for this very reason that, through all this long age, it has been the preservation of religion—that is, of society—which India has known as her sole means of self-protection. She has not looked toward the State; her gaze has remained fixed upon society. It is for this reason that the freedom of society is, in truth, the freedom of India. For the freedom to do good is freedom indeed, and the freedom to protect religion is freedom indeed.

Through all this long age, amid manifold misfortunes, this freedom remained unbroken. But now, unknowingly, blindly, we are surrendering it day by day into the hands of others. The English desired dominion, and dominion they have obtained; yet they are taking hold of our society as though it were a mere incidental gain—we are handing it over to them, freely, as though it were but a windfall.

Here is one proof of this. The law of the English has taken upon itself the burden of protecting our society. Perhaps it protects it truly; but we cannot remain content merely by understanding this to be so. In former times, one who rebelled against society, having received punishment at society's hands, would at last come to terms with society. By that settlement, matters were resolved amicably. The result was this: whoever departed from some social custom would, as a separate community, take refuge in some particular corner of society. No one would claim that in Hindu society there is no distinction of custom and practice; distinctions there are, in plenty—but those distinctions, bound within the rules of social conduct, do not wound one another.

Today, this can no longer be so. Should any group depart, in any particular, ever so slightly, it must be severed altogether from Hindu society. In former times, such severance was accounted a thing of dread. For then society was so powerful that to live disregarding it was no easy matter. Hence whatever group adopted some divergence did not go forth defiantly. And society too, being free of doubt as to its own strength, would at last, with magnanimity, duly absorb into itself those who had followed a different path.

Now, whatever group diverges even a little must be cast out. For the law of the English has taken upon itself the office of determining what is Hindu and what is not—the office of reconciliation lies neither in the hands of the English nor in the hands of society. The reason is this: from such divergence no one suffers any loss

or gain—under the shelter of the separate law framed by the English, nothing of consequence befalls anyone.

The freedom of society is, in truth, the freedom of India. For the freedom to do good is freedom indeed, the freedom to protect religion is freedom indeed.

Through all this long age, amid manifold misfortunes, this freedom remained unbroken. But now we are surrendering it, unconsciously, blindly, into the hands of others every day. The English desired dominion; dominion they have obtained; and now they are taking society itself as a mere incidental acquisition—as a windfall we are surrendering it to them without price.

Behold one proof of this. English law has taken upon itself the burden of protecting our society. Perhaps it protects it well enough; but we cannot remain content on that account alone. In former times, one who rebelled against society, having received chastisement at its hands, would at length come to terms with it, and the matter would be settled by mutual accord. The consequence of this was that whoever transgressed some social usage would, forming a separate community, find shelter in some particular quarter of society. None would say that there exists no diversity of custom within Hindu society; diversity there is, in abundance—but that diversity, being bound within the limits of social usage, does not wound one another.

Today this can no longer be. The moment any sect departs, however slightly, in any particular, it must be severed wholly from Hindu society. In earlier days, such severance was reckoned a calamity, for society then was strong enough that to defy it and yet endure was no easy matter. Thus whatever sect adopted some divergence did not go forth in open defiance; and society, being assured of its own strength, would in time, through its own generosity, duly receive the followers of the divergent path back into itself.

Now, the sect that diverges even a little must be abandoned outright. For it is English law that has assumed the office of deciding what is Hindu and what is not—the office of reconciliation belongs neither to the English nor to society. The reason is this: from such divergence no one suffers loss or gain; under the shelter of the separate law framed by the English, nothing of moment is disturbed for anyone.

Therefore, in the present day, Hindu society can only cast out—it can no longer absorb. And the power merely to cast out is no means of self-preservation, no means of preserving one's own life.

When a decaying tooth begins to press upward, it disturbs the body with pain. But once it has come loose and fallen away, the body preserves itself in health. If, recalling the pain of that upward pressure, the body were to resolve to cast away all its teeth, we should then understand that its condition is not good—we should understand that a weakness has befallen it.

In just this way, to be utterly without the power to make one's own whatever new development may arise within society, to be driven helplessly to reject it—this is no sign of society's vitality; and to seek the aid of English law for the purpose of such rejection is a means of social suicide.

Where society, dividing itself, casts the divided portion outside itself, it is not merely diminishing itself—it is creating a permanent hostility close beside its own home. Little by little, as time passes, this hostile faction will go on growing, and Hindu society will find itself ever more encircled by a ring of formidable adversaries. If our condition is to be merely one of continual loss, then surely cause for grave anxiety has arisen. In former days this was not our plight. We did not lose—we bound all things together by ordered arrangement and preserved them whole; this was our distinction, this was our strength.

Nor is this all. It is no secret to anyone that, deeming certain social customs harmful, we ourselves have stirred up English law against them. On the day that a family must summon a policeman to discipline its own children, what further use is there in attempting to preserve the family? On that day, exile to the forest is the better course.

Muslim society dwells in our very own quarter, and Christian society strikes against the inward parts of our own society like a flood. In the days of the ancient lawgivers, this problem did not exist. Had it existed, they would themselves have determined the rights of these other societies in relation to Hindu society—determined them in such a way that perpetual conflict between them would not arise. Now, at every

turn, disputes break out between one faction and another—and this discord is the cause of unrest, disorder, and weakness.

Where open conflict does not arise, there, imperceptibly, from within, society is being shattered into fragments. This wasting disease, too, is no ordinary malady. In this manner society exercises no authority whatsoever over the determination of its boundary with others; nor is its authority even awake to the prevention of its own decay. Whatever happens of its own accord simply happens; and when matters have advanced far and become plainly visible, then, now and again, hands are thrown up and lamentation begins. But to this day no one has ever stemmed a flood by lamentation, and lamentation is no cure for disease.

Had foreign education, foreign civilisation, not so overwhelmed our minds, our intellects, our social freedom would not so easily have come to be lost.

When a grave disease disorders the patient's very brain, then indeed the physician takes fright. The reason is this: it is the brain itself that manages the body's system of resistance against disease; and when the brain itself is overwhelmed, then the physician's medicine is deprived of its foremost ally.

The mighty and manifold power of European civilisation has, with great ease, overwhelmed our minds. That mind is the very brain of society; and if it surrenders itself into the hands of foreign influence, then how shall society preserve its freedom at all?

Thus, because the educated of our society have allowed their hearts and minds to be overwhelmed by foreign learning, some revile them for it, some mock them with satire. But no one calmly considers why such a thing has come to pass.

Physicians tell us that when the body remains strong and active, it can withstand the assault of disease. In a state of slumber, colds, coughs, and malaria find their opportunity to seize and overpower it.

I ask pardon for comparing the influence of Western civilisation to disease. In its proper place, everything is good; out of place, even a good thing becomes refuse. Kohl smeared upon the cheek instead of the eye becomes a matter of shame. This is the sole justification for my comparison.

Be that as it may—had our minds, in all matters, remained vigorous and alert, then the West could not so have overwhelmed that mind of ours.

By an unhappy chance, when the Englishman came to our door bearing his cunning craft, his science and philosophy, our minds at that time were inert. The austerity by whose power India had once ascended to the position of the world's teacher was then exhausted. We were then merely turning the leaves of old manuscripts, now and again, in the sun, and rolling them up again to store away. We were doing nothing at all. The days of our glory could be seen, like a shadow, far off along the horizon behind us. Even the bank of the pond before our door appeared, by comparison, grander and more real than that distant range of mountains.

Be that as it may—when our minds were thus inert and inactive, a vigorous power suddenly, like the monsoon clouds before the parched month of Jyaistha, encircled the whole horizon with its thunder and lightning, its rushing winds and pouring rain. How could this fail to overwhelm us?

Our means of survival is to awaken our own strength in every respect. That we sit idly consuming the wealth left by our forefathers—this is no glory of ours; that we extend that inheritance further—this alone, once we come to perceive it throughout every part of society, will engender within us a true reverence for ourselves, and our delusion will begin to dissolve.

I have shown in my essay the reason why this inert, inactive state of ours came to be. The reason for it is timidity. Our attempt to remain huddled within whatever little we possessed was itself the cause of our being overwhelmed by the assault of foreign civilisation.

But that very thing which first overwhelmed us is now awakening us. The same fierce light that dazzles the eyes upon first breaking from sleep gradually comes to aid the very power of sight. Now we have begun, wakefully and consciously, to perceive the ideal of our own country. Against the onslaught of foreign invasion, we are beholding the glory of our own land, largely and directly.

Now, the anxious question of how this ideal may be preserved is driving us to search out various paths. Just as fire—if we had simply sat still and let all be swept away, such misfortune would not befall us, step by step, every single day.

That I have, mesmerising all with the magic of language, nursed the secret ambition of melting Hindu society into a single mass—such an apprehension has been entertained by certain writers of the *Bangabasi*. I hope others do not share so profound a distrust of my intellectual powers as this gentleman evidently does. Does this feeble hand of mine hold Shiva's own great bow? Shall I, merely by writing an essay, make all India one? If indeed such were my ambition, why then trouble to refute my own words at all? If some boy dances about, does anyone suspect he harbours a secret design to cause an earthquake, and hasten to warn the householders to be on their guard?

That the power of legislative wisdom establishes unity amid India's diversity can never mean this: that India, by the sweep of some steamroller, flattens all her variety into a level plain. The West knows the destruction of the other, the banishment of the other, as its means of self-preservation; India knows the making of the other into one's own as the fulfilment of the self. To make this diversity one, to make the other one's own—this is not to melt them into a single indistinguishable mass; rather, it is to mark out clearly the boundaries of each other's rights. Must this too be shouted aloud in our own country as a discovery? If today we cannot establish unity amid diversity, cannot make the other our own—if the moment we hear a strange footstep, the moment we see a guest or stranger approach, we snatch up a stick and rush out crying "Who goes there!"—then we must understand that, for our sins, the Goddess of Fortune of our society is abandoning us; and this fortuneless, unguarded house must henceforth be defended, day upon day, by nothing but our cudgels—while its guardian deity, who with a smiling face once called all within, gave to all a portion of the sacred offering, and preserved this house in perfect silence and perfect peace, waits now only for the chance to slip away unseen.

Gosvami Mahashaya has asked me what I mean by "new" when I propose the composition of new forms of *yatra* and *kathakata* and the like. Why should not the old suffice?

The poet of the Ramayana, having sung at great length of Rama's filial devotion, his fidelity to truth, his brotherly affection, his conjugal love, his tenderness toward devotees, and many other virtues, brought his great epic to a close at the end of

the sixth canto, the Yuddhakanda. And yet, it was needful to compose anew the Uttarakanda. His personal and domestic virtues alone were not sufficient; his duty toward the people at large, resting with far greater severity upon all his prior virtues, crowned and completed the portrait of his character.

Our *yatra* and *kathakata* contain much instruction, and that instruction we do not wish to abandon; but upon it a further, new lesson of duty must be built. What is our duty toward god, toward the good, toward father and teacher, toward brother and servant, and how far one must sacrifice for their sake—this we shall learn; and alongside it, what our duty is toward the common people, toward the country, this too must be newly taught to us. Is there in this anything to give any party particular alarm?

One question that has arisen is whether I support the crossing of the seas, and if I do, whether the rules of Hindu religious observance must then be set aside.

On this matter, my view is this: I do not call it a virtue to be born into this world and then to remain averse to knowing the world. But in the present context, I consider it unnecessary to give excessive prominence to such matters. For I am not saying that society must be built according to my own opinion. I am saying that, for the sake of self-preservation, society must awaken, must take authority upon itself. Society, having gained that authority by whatever means, will resolve all its problems for itself. What form that self-wrought resolution will finally take, I cannot say. Therefore, to sit down and examine with excessive minuteness the few words I have said in passing on this subject would be idle. If I call to a sleeping jeweller and say, "Brother, open your shop of diamonds and pearls," will he then sit and debate with me whether we differ on the design of a bracelet, and therefore my words are unworthy of his attention?

Fashion your bracelet as you please; over its design you and I may debate for a lifetime—but for now, wipe the sleep from your eyes and open your treasury of gems—word has come that robbers are about, and while you lie senseless, sunk in slumber across your own threshold,even now the burglar's crowbar is not resting for one moment upon your ancient foundation wall.

THE TRUE MEANS OF SUCCESS

This essay was composed at the time when it was proposed that primary education in Bengal should be conducted in four dialects. Since that plan has now been abandoned, certain passages of the essay have been omitted here and there.

The chief benefit of unbroken English dominion in India is this: that it is drawing together the many peoples of India into one. Even should the English not wish it, this process of unification will, of its own accord, continue to work. Even should a river intend to divide a country, still it joins one region to another, carries commerce, creates markets and bazaars along its banks, and cannot but open paths of communication. In a disunited land, even the rule of a foreign king is, in like manner, a bond of union. It is by this same benevolent design of Providence that British rule has been granted its glory in India.

It has been seen, everywhere in the history of the world, that the advantage of one party, purchased at the cost of depriving another, can never long endure. Righteousness rests upon harmony; when that harmony is destroyed, righteousness itself perishes, and—

Dharma, when slain, slays; dharma, when protected, protects.

The English grow strong through the Indian Empire; but should the English seek to render India weak, then this advantage to one side alone can by no means long endure—it will bring about its own ruin. A disarmed, dispossessed, famished India's very weakness will destroy the British Empire.

But the power to view statecraft on so grand a scale belongs to very few minds. Especially when greed grows great, the power of vision grows correspondingly small. Should any statesman, in blind covetousness, dwell upon the fancy of holding India forever under our dominion, he most assuredly forgets, even as he dreams it, the very means by which India might be long retained. To hold forever is not possible at all; that is a fruit against the law of the world, which even a tree must in the end let fall—those who would bind and prop it up to keep it forever must, in truth, shorten even the span for which it might otherwise have been kept.

To weaken a subject country, to sunder it by disunity, to prevent strength from gathering anywhere within it, to keep every power lifeless under one's own dominion—of what particular age is this the statecraft? It is the statecraft of an age

in which Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, and Browning have passed from among the living, and only Kipling remains to be crowned poet; an age in which Carlyle, Ruskin, and Matthew Arnold are no more, and only Morley remains to lament in the wilderness; an age in which Gladstone's thunderous voice is silent, and all England is bewildered by Chamberlain's glib frivolity; an age in which, in the bower of literature, that flower which once enchanted the world no longer blooms, and only the thorn-bush of politics rears itself with monstrous vigour; an age in which the country's compassion no longer overflows for the afflicted, the weak, the unfortunate, and hungry Imperialism proclaims the extension of self-interest to be its highest virtue; an age in which the place of heroism has been usurped by commerce, and the place of religion has been usurped by patriotism—such is the statecraft of that age.

But whether we too shall call this age one of misfortune or not depends entirely upon ourselves. The true nature of things is best revealed in the day of sorrow; and without such revelation of truth, no nation has ever, at any time, found deliverance. What must be done by oneself is never accomplished through petitions; and where self-sacrifice is required, mere expenditure of words is of no avail. It is to teach us these truths thoroughly that Providence sends us sorrow. Until we understand this, we must be struck, again and again, from sorrow to sorrow, from insult to insult.

First, we must understand this thoroughly: if the authorities, harbouring some apprehension, have grown resolved to obstruct, as far as possible, the paths of our unity, by what manner of protest can we dispel that apprehension? Can we, in public assembly, conjure such a spell of words as would in a single moment set their minds at ease? Can we say that English rule over us forever is our sole good? And even if we did say so, is the Englishman so foolish, so ill-informed, as to place his faith in such words even for a moment? We must say this to ourselves, and it is plain enough even without our saying it, that until the power of unity among our diverse peoples has genuinely and permanently arisen, English rule remains necessary to our cause—but not one day beyond that.

In such a case, should the English, moved by self-interest—should they, looking to English national advantage—call that advantage by whatever grand name you please, even calling it Imperialism—should the English, looking to their own

interest, declare, "We shall make our Indian empire permanently secure; we shall not adopt the policy of uniting the whole of India as one"—then what answer is there to such a statement, save sermons pitched at an impossibly lofty level? It is true that in our country literature is gradually growing more vigorous and robust; that this literature is gradually spreading, little by little, from the higher to the lower strata of society; that the knowledge, the ideas, which were once confined to the English-educated alone, are now becoming diffused among the common people; that by this means, slowly, the feeling, the sorrow, the aspiration of the whole country are becoming one and coming into clear expression; that ideas which at one time were mere rote-learned lessons of a foreign schoolroom are day by day becoming, in the language of the homeland, in the literature of the homeland, the very own utterance of the homeland. Can we say, "No, this is not happening," and by saying so, throw dust in anyone's eyes? Can a burning lamp shake its own flame and declare—no, I have no light?

In such circumstances, should the English wish to build four great dams to check and render lifeless this ever-widening flood-tide of unifying literature, what can we say? We can say this: that by doing so, the progress of our language will gradually be obstructed, and our literature rendered lifeless. When the proposal to divide Bengal into two parts was first raised, we said, even then, that such a measure would render the divisions among us ever more entrenched and permanent. When the woodcutter cuts the branch of a tree, if the tree should say, "Alas, what are you doing, my branches will be lost by this"—the woodcutter's answer is this: "Do I not know that when a branch is cut, a branch is lost? Am I a child?" But must we, even so, place our trust merely in argument?

We know that debate takes place in Parliament too; there, one side answers the other; there, one side, upon defeating the other, rejoices, believing the fruit of victory won. We cannot in any way forget—here too the means of gaining that fruit is the very same!

But the means cannot be the same at all. There, both parties are, like the left hand and the right, limbs of one and the same body. The seat of their strength, for both alike, is one. Are we, too, in like manner, one? Where the power of the Government is established, is our power established there also? If they move a certain branch

and a certain fruit falls, shall we too, by moving that selfsame branch, obtain that selfsame fruit? Do not open your books when the time comes to answer; what Mill said on this matter, what Spencer said, what Seeley said—of such knowledge I have not the value of a farthing's use. The manifest scripture lies open, spread across the whole country. There is no need to search very far; cast but a single glance within your own mind. When an agitation arose among us over the University Bill, what manner of suspicion did we entertain? We suspected that the Government was attempting to hinder the progress of our education. Why should they do such a thing? Because, having learned our lessons, we had learned to feel, and to voice, discontent regarding the administration. Grant, if you will, that this suspicion of ours was mistaken—but that it arose at all, in that there was no mistake.

In the land where Parliament exists, there too, over the Education Bill, a fierce war of words once raged—but could either side, even in dream, have entertained such a suspicion as this: that since one inevitable consequence of gaining education is that it delivers men's hopes and desires from narrowness, awakens their minds to a consciousness of their own strength, and makes them eager to extend the field for exercising that strength—therefore it is better not to indulge so grave a mischief? Never; both parties there held this in mind: that regarding the promotion of the country's welfare, they had merely fallen into differing views. To correct such an error and set the matter right yields its fruit at once, hand to hand; and therefore, there, to argue and to act are one and the same thing.

In our country, that reasoning does not hold. For here, work is done at the pleasure of the master, and we are not the masters. The logician will say, "What manner of talk is this? We give the Government many crores of rupees; and since the Government's very sustenance depends upon this money—why should we not have authority?" We shall demand an accounting of this money.'" When the cow gives her calf milk twice a day, and by drinking that milk the calf grows sleek and strong, why does not the cow shake her horns and demand of the calf an account of the milk? Why she does not—that, the cow's own soul knows, and her Indwelling Spirit knows.

The plain truth is this: that according to the difference of circumstance, the difference of method also arises. Consider, for instance—if the English wish to

obtain some advantage from the French State, they do not attempt to silence the French President with argument; they do not even preach him sermons—rather, to win the goodwill of the French authorities, they must resort to all manner of stratagem—and it is for this very reason that a wily ambassador is permanently stationed in France. It is said that once, when Germany was England's friend, the English ambassador bearing the title of Duke rose at a banquet and offered the German Kaiser the very napkin to wipe his hand. By this he gained much advantage. There was a day when, at the Mughal court, at the Nawab's durbar, the English had to employ much flattery, much expenditure of wealth, much secret stratagem. On that day, how many burnings of the heart they had, with astonishing cheerfulness, to swallow down and conceal, there is no reckoning. When one must carry on the business of advantage-seeking with another, this is inevitable.

But in our country, if a helpless people such as ourselves must seek some advantage from a powerful party, can it be won merely through agitation? Milk that contains butter, if churned, yields up its butter; but if the milk containing the butter remains in the dairyman's house, while I go on endlessly churning the water in my own vessel, shall butter ever be got by that? Those who are devoted to their books will swell their chests and declare—we ask for no favour at all, we ask for rightful due. Very well, that too is well and good.

Consider: should your property have fallen into another's tyrannous possession, then even a rightful claim requires that one court the goodwill of the usurper in order to recover it. To speak merely of "the English" is not to speak of some machine of iron. Behind that name are men of flesh and blood—men who are, in greater or lesser measure, subject to the sway of the six passions. They have not escaped the grip of love and hatred, nor come to this country already wholly liberated souls. That when they are inclined to do wrong, catching them red-handed is a fine method of correcting that wrong—this, no one will say. Indeed, even in a court of law where argument upon statute alone should decide the matter, not even the barrister dares to rely on the sheer force of argument; often, reading the judge's mind, he must abandon even a sound argument, and often must concede a verbal defeat to the pleader—the reason being that the judge is no

mere book of law, but a living man. Is it not needful, then, to have some regard for the human nature of the very one who is to make the law?

But what our arrangement is, what our aim, and what our method—these we have never clearly thought through. Just as in war, victory alone is the essential goal, so in politics, the achievement of one's aim is the chief object—and though we may say this with our mouths, we never truly lay it to heart. We think of our political field of duty as though it were a schoolboy's debating club—as though the Government were our fellow-student and rival, and as though, could we but silence him in argument, we had won the match. Just as, in the medical texts, the treatment may be most excellent and yet the patient die, so here too our oratory, however splendid, fails of its object—of this we see proof every day.

But today I stand before the people of my own country—all that I have to say is addressed to them alone. It is only because this occasion has arisen to speak my mind before them that I have come here today. Otherwise, I have not the least desire, even for a single day, to go whirling round and round in the vortex of these endless controversies, these fleeting excitements. If the lamp of life is to be lit, shall it be kept burning in such a scattering wind? In our country, this is the time for quiet reflection and silent labour—not a time for squandering one's strength again and again, moment by moment, and scattering one's mind. That undisturbed leisure, that unbroken peace, in which a seed slowly germinates and the sprout day by day grows into a tree, has of late become a rarity in our land. Petty blows come raining upon us from every side—an eagerness for immediate retaliation or instant redress breeds restlessness throughout the country, and it becomes hard to guard oneself against the turbulence of that restlessness on every side. In sickness, when suddenly pain arises here and burning there, the patient cannot but grow agitated at each instant to relieve it. Though he knows his agitation is futile, knows that at the root of these local and momentary torments lies a disease requiring medicine and requiring time for its cure, still he grows restless. We too, in just this way, grow separately restless at every provocation and become inattentive to the fundamental remedy. It is not that restlessness that has drawn me here today—I have not come here to indulge that fleeting, futile satisfaction which comes of proving the authorities' present proposal irrational; I have come, having found this occasion, to raise before my countrymen two or three fundamental points. The national question that has of late brought us grief, and which brings us grief again

and again from time to time, will disturb our sense of proportion if we fail to view it in connection with the vast foundation that underlies it. If I make the grievance arising from the primary-education measure but a minor occasion, while making its immense underlying ground the principal object of attention, then I hope none will grow impatient with me on that account.

I wish to confess one thing about myself. I do not allow myself to become excessively agitated over how the authorities may, on any given day, deal with us. I know that there is no use in growing restless with fear of the thunderbolt every time the clouds thunder. First, the thunderbolt may fall, or it may not. Second, where the thunderbolt is being prepared to fall, there my presence is of no consequence; my counsel, my protest, my entreaty finds no place there.

Third, if there be any means of protecting oneself from the stroke of the thunderbolt, that means is not to hurl back a feeble answering thunder from one's own throat—that means is to be found only through scientifically grounded endeavour. Wherever the bolt falls, the copper rod to draw off the lightning does not descend simultaneously from that same place—that must be calmly and deliberately fashioned by oneself.

In truth, the political matter I have come to this assembly to discuss today may be wholly empty noise; yet it would be no wonder if tomorrow some other, graver matter should arise. How many times, at every turn, must we go rushing about like this? Today, he at whose door I beat my head in vain gave no answer—I sat and waited, hoping that whoever comes when his term expires might show some mercy. Even if he shows mercy, there is no ground for assurance—another may come and, catching the merciful one's generous gift by the ear, exact it back along with interest to date. Can we place all our hope and trust upon so vast an uncertainty?

There is no use in resenting the law of nature. If a moth, saying "by eternal religious law my wing ought not to be burnt," leaps into the flame, its wing will nonetheless be burnt. In such a case, its duty would be, without wasting time mouthing pieties, to keep a respectful distance from the fire. The English will govern us; they will wish to keep us wholly under their dominion; and wherever they apprehend even the slightest slackening of their administrative grip, there they will at once forcibly drive

in two more nails—this is entirely natural; thus has it ever been throughout the world—it will not be otherwise merely because we can argue subtly and speak flawless English. In such a case, whatever else one may do, there is no use in flying into a rage.

It is not that man cannot rise above natural law; but one cannot conduct daily business by relying upon that possibility. A relevant example comes to mind. I read the other day in a newspaper that the late Dr. Chandra had made provision to give a lakh of rupees to a Christian mission—but owing to some legal flaw, after his death, the mission lost its right to that money.

But Dr. Chandra's Hindu brother, despite the law's contrary ruling, recalling his brother's intention, made over this lakh of rupees to the mission of his own accord. He preserved the truth owed between brothers. Had he not done so—had he said, "Being a Hindu, why should I give money for the advancement of the Christian faith? What is mine by law, I shall not relinquish"—no one could have reproached him for it. For ordinarily, so long as one keeps within the law, society remains silent. But above the law too there is a higher righteousness, where society's claim has no force at all. There, whoever goes, goes by the strength of his own free-standing nobility of soul; the glory is in that very nobleness; by his measure, the ordinary cannot be gauged.

Were the English to say, "The rights universally claimed by a foreign conqueror over a conquered land, these we shall relinquish, for they are truly good only in speech"—were they to say, "The harsh measures of precaution which a small number of conquerors, from natural apprehension, ordinarily take against a conquered foreign people, these we shall not take"—were they to say, "Just as our Government is bound to give a full and open accounting to its own countrymen on all matters, so here too we shall acknowledge complete accountability; just as any error of government must there be openly corrected, so here too it must be corrected in the same manner; this country belongs to us in no part at all, it belongs wholly to its own people, and we have come merely, as it were, to keep watch, and shall labour on in this spirit of complete detachment"—then indeed, people like us, rolling in the dust before them, ought to say: "You are exceedingly noble; we are, by comparison with you, so unworthy, that so long as the dust of your feet falls upon this land, we shall count ourselves blessed. Therefore, watch over us in our

stead; we shall sleep; you labour our capital for us, and let its profit accumulate in our treasury; we shall eat our puffed rice while you keep watch, or you eat your puffed rice while we keep watch for you." But since the English are not so noble, it ill befits us to be excessively agitated on that account—rather we ought to be grateful. In making a far-reaching, settled arrangement, if one reckons in terms of ordinary humanity, then it comes to this—whatever one gets on that reckoning is good; whatever beyond that one may chance to obtain is a mere windfall, for which no claim can be pressed in any court; and what is got only by stealth, and that only occasionally, no one can rescue from misfortune.

One thing must be kept in mind: how very small we are in the Englishman's eyes. From the vast and endlessly shifting political stage of far-off Europe, the English govern us—their political relations with the French, the Germans, the Russians, the Italians, the Americans, and with the various colonists of various places, are intricate and complex; toward all of them, they must at every turn conduct themselves with great caution. We lie at the outermost edge of this vast political field; they need not concern themselves with our wishes or displeasures, and therefore their mind remains, in large measure, indifferent toward us—for this very reason the subject of India is so soporific to Parliament; the English pass over this land continually, like flowing river-water; here nothing of theirs accumulates, here their heart takes no deep root; they look toward their holidays and go through their labour perfunctorily; whatever amusement they enjoy, they enjoy with their own countrymen—the record of events here rests upon the Germans, acquaintance with our language comes through the depositions of witnesses, acquaintance with our literature comes through the list-reading of the Government Gazette's translators—in such circumstances, how very small we are in their eyes we forget out of self-love, and it is for this very reason that our sense of injury and astonishment, deemed by them mere exaggeration, sometimes provokes the authorities to anger, and sometimes they cannot suppress their laughter.

I do not say this by way of reproach against the English. I say that the matter stands thus, and that this is natural. And it is natural too that a being so vast should not possess sufficient power to note separately, to mark specially, even the most cruel pain, even the most catastrophic loss, of so small a creature. What is abundant to us seems trifling even to them. Over my language, over my literature, over the petty divisions of my Bengal, over my little municipality, over this my modest university—

we grow restless with fear and apprehension, crying aloud across the land, astonished—why, with all this outcry, do we get no result to our liking? We forget that the English are above us, not among us. Could we but see, where they truly are, we should see how very far we have fallen, how very small we appear to them.

It was because we appeared so small that Lord Curzon that day said, as though it were the simplest thing in the world, "Why can you not merge yourselves into the Imperial system and feel it as your glory?" Heaven forbid! What manner of treatment is this toward us! Why, it sounds for all the world like a declaration of love! Look—Australia, Canada, whom the English wish to bind within the Imperial embrace, have filled the very sky with the song of their overflowing love, standing at the windows of their bridal chamber, forgetting hunger and thirst, even willing to make their own bread dearer for the sake of it—and we are compared to them! If the master feels no shame at so monstrous an exaggeration, we surely feel the shame ourselves. We, oppressed in Australia, insulted in Natal, deprived on every side of authority even in our own land—and in such a plight, we are invited into the Imperial marriage-chamber for what purpose! Lord Curzon, sitting far, far above the bounds of our joys and sorrows, wonders—these creatures are so utterly insignificant, why then will they not consent to be dissolved entirely into the Imperial whole! Why do they fret so over this little scrap of independence, this little loss! It is as though, at a sacrifice to which friends and kin have been invited, a man should come with vermilion and garland in hand to summon with honour a goat-kid to the altar—and, seeing the kid's utter reluctance at this honourable treatment, should say to it: "What a wonder is this—you object to joining so noble a sacrifice!" Alas, that to give another's gift, and the joy of giving it oneself, are two such different things—this the sacrificer cannot for one moment comprehend. The kid has no right at all except the right to offer up its own life in the sacrifice. But this pain of the kid's is hard for the sacrificer to understand—the kid is,after all, so insignificant. The Imperial system will suppress rebellion in harmless Tibet; our right is to supply the expense for it. It will quell revolution in Somaliland; our right is to give up our lives for it. It will produce crops in a torrid colony; our right is to furnish cheap labour for it. Such is the rule by which great and small are joined together in sacrifice.

But there is no need to grow excited over this. When the accounts of the capable and the incapable are kept in a single ledger, it is natural that the entries of credit

and of debit should fall as they do; and one cannot cast blame upon what is natural—weeping over it is futile. One must acknowledge the nature of things and act accordingly. Consider: when we say to the English, "Rise above the ordinary nature of man—subordinate your national self-interest to the welfare of India," the English answer, "Very well, we shall hear your sermon later; for the present, my point to you is this: come down to the lowest rung of ordinary human nature where I stand, there is no use in rising above it—make your nation's interest your own self-interest—if you cannot give your life for your nation's progress, at least say something, do something, however small. Are we to do everything for your country, while you yourselves do nothing at all!" What answer is there to this? In truth, what are we giving, what are we doing! If, doing nothing else, we merely kept ourselves informed of our country's affairs, that too would be something—but even that, out of sheer indolence, we do not do. The English write our country's history, we merely memorise it by rote; the English uncover our philology, we learn it by heart; even to know what lies close beside our own home, we will not stir a step without our "Hunter" in hand. And beyond this, regarding our country's agriculture, our commerce, our geology, our ethnology, we are unwilling to gather anything at all through our own effort. Yet despite such utter want of interest in our own land, we do not hesitate to deliver to the foreigner the loftiest lectures on the discharge of duty toward our country. Such a sermon can never be of any use on any day whatsoever. For he who is doing the work bears the responsibility—he who does nothing, but merely talks, bears none; and between these two parties, there can never be a true exchange.

On one side there is abundant money; on the other, only a chequebook—in such a case, one cannot cash an empty cheque. In the manner of a beggar's petition, one may prevail by chance once or twice, but never regularly by way of a claim—and this, out of the gnawing hunger of it, sometimes provokes anger; one sometimes feels that one has been cheated and turned away in humiliation—but whether that humiliation, that failure, be loud or silent, there is no course but to swallow it whole, with a contrite heart, and digest it completely. Such things happen every single day. We hold vast assemblies, we write in the newspapers too; and again, what is hard indeed to digest, we digest entirely, without residue. What we

proclaim one day as utterly unbearable, by the next day requires no physician to be summoned for it.

I hope everyone will say to me: you speak an exceedingly old truth—that one's own work must be done by oneself, one's own shame must be redeemed by oneself, one's own wealth must be earned by oneself, one's own honour must be recovered by oneself—where is the novelty in this? I shall bear on my head the reproach of speaking old truths. I shall wear this stain, this absence of any new invention, as an ornament upon my person. But if anyone should say, "What new notion is this you have now taken it into your head to raise?"—then indeed I am in difficulty—for how one is suddenly to prove a simple truth is no easy matter to conceive. This indeed is the chief mark of an evil time: then the simple truth appears difficult, and the old truth appears strange. Indeed, hearing it, people grow angry and fall to abusing. In the darkness of night, upon the deserted sandbank of the Padma, one who has lost the path and mistaken water for land, north for south, knows well enough what is perfectly simple—yet in that darkness, how utterly reversed, how difficult it appears! The moment light comes, in that very instant, one's astonishment at one's own error knows no bound. Ours is now a night of darkness—if in this land someone should even revile as false the most self-evidently true statement, that too must be borne with compassion; we shall blame no one but our own evil star. Let us hope that one day, stumbling, we must learn; mistaking north for south, one cannot go on forever without at last turning back.

And yet I know full well that this is not the plight of all. We have many an eager young man who is prepared, not merely to spend words for his country, but to sacrifice himself for her. But what to do, where to go, what to give, to whom to give it—of these things he can find no direction anywhere. Sacrifice made in isolated fragments accomplishes only waste. Had some power to guide the country existed anywhere in visible form, then the minds of the thoughtful, the endeavour of the diligent, the gifts of the generous, would find one grand object—our education, our cultivation of literature, our practice of the arts, our various works of public welfare, would naturally find shelter in it, and would make of that unifying centre—of that thing called "country"—a matter magnificent and manifold.

I have not the least doubt in my mind that all the blows we suffer, again and again, from without, serve only to awaken this refuge of unity; that all our disappointed prayers serve only to turn us toward that same refuge of unity; that the helpless, joyless despondency of self-serving, deed-less criticism, which day by day spreads more and more through our land, exists only that we may seek out this refuge of unity, this centre of strength—not in order to secure some particular position, not in order to avert some particular grievance.

Once this power is established in the heart of the country, then our petitions to it will be proper; then whatever service we render to it can rightly be reckoned a part of real work. To it we shall have to give tribute, give time, give capacity. It will be the single field in which all that is grand, all that is noble, in our intellect, our spirit of sacrifice, our valour, our very nature, shall be awakened, drawn forth, and set to work; to it we shall give our wealth, and from it we shall receive wealth in return.

Were we, from this very foundation, to attempt the country's education, health, and commercial expansion, then we should not have, at every obstacle, at every fresh setback, to hurriedly gather two or four speakers and go rushing about from town-hall meeting to town-hall meeting to no purpose. This flaring up now and then, this crying out, and then falling silent again—it is becoming more and more ridiculous; it is no longer possible to preserve any dignity in this matter, either before ourselves or before others. There is but one way to escape this farce: to take up the burden of our own work ourselves.

Let no one suppose, however, that by this I mean I wish to sever all connection with the Government. That quarrelling, that talk of grievance, is fit only for equals, and becomes only the language of affection. I am saying something rather different. I am saying that it is proper for us to establish a decent, honourable relationship with the Government. In any decent relationship there exists a certain independence. A relationship that is wholly independent of my own will or reluctance is the relationship of a slave; such a bond is bound gradually to decay and one day to be severed altogether. But a relationship of free give-and-take grows, gradually, ever closer.

Many of us imagine, and even say, that were the Government to grant us everything we ask for, our joy and satisfaction would know no bound. This is wholly baseless. On one side, only asking; on the other, only giving—where is the end of

that? One cannot put out fire by pouring in ghee—scripture itself says as much—in such a relationship of giver and beggar, the more one receives, the more the claim upon the giver's generosity grows, and the measure of discontent mounts ever higher into the sky. Where what I receive depends not upon my own strength but upon the giver's magnanimity, there the situation is as unfortunate for me as it is inconvenient for the giver.

But where the relation is one of exchange, of gift and return-gift, there lies the good of both—there the measure of one's claim naturally becomes just, and there is a real possibility that all matters may be amicably settled. The sole means of bringing about such a decent condition in the country is to establish an independent power within society, upon the foundation of the country's own welfare. The relation of one authority to another authority is wholesome and enduring only when it is a source of joy and mutual respect. To establish a relationship with God, one need not reduce oneself to inert matter—one must, in some respect, become God oneself.

That was what I meant to say: that our country can receive from the English up to the very last farthing of what it has to give, if we can, up to the very last farthing, repay to our country what we owe her. In whatever measure we give, in that same measure will the bond of receiving grow firmer.

It might be objected that when we set out to work for our country, the dominant party will surely obstruct us. Where two parties exist, and the interests of the two are not identical, some obstruction is bound to occur—that cannot be otherwise. But it does not follow that we must therefore abandon every undertaking in despair. To one who truly wishes to work, obstruction to the very last is a very rare thing. Take, for instance, self-government. We have been beating our heads in lamentation, saying that Ripon gave us self-government, and that those who succeeded him are taking it away. But fie upon such weeping! That what one man can give, another man can take away—who does not know this! Does calling a thing self-government make it self-government in truth?

And yet the right of self-government lies close at our very door—no one has taken it, and no one ever can take it. The education, the health, the improvement of roads, of our own villages, our own localities—all this we can accomplish ourselves,

if only we will it, if only we unite. For this, there is no need at all to bind the Government's badge upon our breast. But we do not will it, we are not united. Then let self-government go to perdition. Then no one is a truer friend to us than rope and pitcher.

I have heard it said, by tradition, that a certain king of our country was once told, in a friendly manner, by a high official, "If you will petition the Government, I shall obtain for you a higher title." To this the spirited king replied: "By your grace, call me king, call me babu, call me whatever you please—but do not give me such a title as you may today, at your pleasure, grant, and tomorrow, at your pleasure, take away. My subjects know me as Maharaja-adhiraja; that title no one can ever deprive me of." Even so, may we too be able to say: "By your grace, O Government, there is no need to give us such self-government as can be given for as long, and taken away for as long, as it pleases—the self-government we already have, the right to work for our country's welfare which Providence has placed in our own hands, that alone let us pledge ourselves to, with an undeluded mind and firm resolve. Long live Ripon, and may Curzon too live long."

I say once more: we must take upon ourselves the burden of the country's education. The sceptic will say, granted we take up the burden of education, but who shall give employment? Employment too we must give ourselves. Without a great field of national labour under our own control, we shall remain forever weak; by no device shall we win release from this lifeless weakness. Whoever gives us employment will exercise authority over us—that cannot be otherwise; and it is likewise natural that whoever gains that authority will not, in the act of directing us, forget his own interest. Therefore, before all else, we must build up such a field of national labour, in which the educated of our national schools will be employed in teaching, in public works, in medicine, and in the various beneficent labours of the country. We complain that we cannot become men because we have no opportunity to learn work and to show our capacity for work. That such opportunity, provided by another's hand, can never be truly satisfying—of this we have no lack of proof.

I know many will say that this sounds exceedingly difficult. I too cannot deny it. The matter is indeed not easy—were it easy, it would not be worth attempting. If someone proposes to build a paper boat and sail across seven seas to carry on trade

in the pearls of seven kings' treasuries, such a scheme may sound alluring to some; but no one advises investing capital in that paper boat's commerce. To build a dam is difficult; to persuade a party to sit down together beside the river instead may be called constitutional agitation. That is easy work indeed, but it is not an easy means. We are given to the trick of accomplishing great tasks cheaply; but when that cheap method, time and again, breaks down into ruin, we find satisfaction in laying the blame upon others—that brings satisfaction, but it accomplishes nothing.

It is no principle of duty to make every burden light for ourselves while making it heavy for others. When we come to judge the conduct of the English toward us, we must reckon with every obstacle, every natural human weakness, and bring our expectations down as far as possible. But when we come to consider our own duty, we must proceed in precisely the opposite direction. We shall make no excuses for ourselves, we shall grant ourselves no pardon, we shall place no faith in the notion of debasing our own ideal for the sake of some passing convenience. It is for this reason that I say today: it is easy to fly into a rage against the English and plunge into momentarily exciting endeavours, but that easy path is not the path of true good. The impulse to answer back, to quarrel, corrupts us, turning us away from true duty, from true success. When men grow angry enough to go to law, they do not shrink even from their own ruin. If we, in like manner, seek only to inflame ourselves with the mere breath of heated words over such vexation, then the aim of gaining any real fruit is thrust far away, while the satisfaction of anger alone looms large. To keep our eyes truly and profoundly fixed upon the lasting welfare of the country, we must free ourselves from the grip of this petty impulse. To keep oneself in a state of anger and agitation destroys all sense of proportion—one magnifies small matters, and, seizing upon every trifle, one goes on destroying one's own dignity through disproportionate excess. Such restlessness only increases weakness—it cannot be called the exercise of strength; it is the lament of incapacity.

We must free ourselves from all such littleness, and establish the country's welfare upon love for the country itself—not upon the weakness of our nature, not upon hatred of the other, and not upon blind reliance upon the other either. This reliance

and this hatred may appear, on the surface, to be opposites of each other, but in truth they are but two different branches of the very same tree. Both spring from the same shameful root of incapacity and inertia. It is only because we have made the making of demands upon others our whole resource that we grow agitated with hatred at the failure of every single demand. This very agitation we count as patriotism. Whatever is our own weakness, we give it a grand name, and thereby not merely console ourselves—we take pride in it.

Consider this once: if a mother is relieved of the service of her children, and someone else takes up that office, the mother finds it unbearable. The reason is this: her natural, unfeigned love for her children is itself the very source of her service to them. The true mark of patriotism likewise is the eager effort to take the country's welfare-work into one's own hands. The cunning device of having the country's service performed by a foreigner's hand is no sign of true love; nor can we even acknowledge it as a sign of true wisdom, for such an endeavour can never, by any means, succeed.

But that true patriotism is not abundant in our country—this, at least, is not hidden from our own secret hearts. What use is there in pretending that what does not exist, does exist, and offering counsel or making arrangements on that false premise? The answer to this is: though our patriotism is sufficiently weak, it cannot be that it does not exist at all—for such a condition would be utterly unnatural. The sole means of nourishing this weak patriotism of ours into strength is to give ourselves the opportunity to serve the country by our own free will. It is through service that the cultivation of love proceeds. To nourish love of country, to create for ourselves an opportunity to serve the country, has become, for us, the most necessary thing of all. We must create a place where there will be no need for the vain endeavour of explaining, at great length and in mere words, what this thing called "country" really is—where, through the bond of service, the humble and the great of the country, the learned and the ignorant of the country, will all come together.

I am proposing the founding of a National Council, in order to gather the country's scattered strength into one place, in order to draw the sense of duty together into one place. I do not expect that this will happen in a single day—that no sooner is the proposal made than everyone, from every corner of the country, will gather

beneath the single banner of one society. To curb the pride of individual self-sufficiency, to subdue arrogant self-regard, to accept with sincerity the discipline of order—these are qualities that come only with work—these qualities grow through the very act of working; whereas endless reading of books and endless argument produce precisely the opposite effect. I do not expect that we shall be able to display these qualities from the very outset. But the attempt to become one, in one place, however small its beginning, must be made. I call upon such pure-hearted, strong-minded young men of our country as exist—those who, knowing the country's welfare-work to be well-nigh impossible, feel their enthusiasm redouble because of it, and who, even knowing the beginnings of that work to be exceedingly small, do not lose heart on that account—I call upon them to gather together around a single leader. If such assemblies are established in different parts of the country, and if they can accept, with full sincerity, the authority of a central council and of that council's leader, then one day that council may become the field of unity and the treasury of wealth for the whole country. To wait for some vast beginning, to expect some grand arrangement and pomp of ceremony, is merely to cheat duty. We must begin this very moment. If we cannot, as quickly as possible, encompass and bring under our control the whole of the country through a network of labour, then those whose energy is greater than ours, whose capacity is greater, will leave no place for us anywhere. Indeed, they will, before long, seize even our last remaining possession, the field of agriculture itself—of this we must take thought. Nowhere in the world does any place lie empty for long; whatever I do not use, another will put to use; if I cannot become master of myself, another will become my master; if I do not acquire strength, another will seize what is rightfully mine; if I merely cheat at the examination, then success will fall to another's lot instead—this is an especially inevitable law.

O youth of new Bengal, your misfortune is this: that you find no field of labour ready-made before you. But if you can regard this, with an unconquered spirit, as your own good fortune—if you can say, "I myself shall prepare my own field"—then indeed you shall be blessed. To bring order out of dispersal, to breathe the current of life into what is inert, to summon a generous humanity out of narrowness—this noble work of creation lies before you; be glad of it. Place your faith in your own strength, preserve your reverence for your own country, and do not lose your faith in righteousness. Today our authorities are resolved to draw a line across the very

heart of Bengal upon the map; tomorrow they may resolve to split Bengal's primary education into four separate parts—this is, without doubt, a matter for sorrow—but is mere despairing lamentation the whole outcome of this sorrow? Behind it, is there no work to be done, no strength of ours at all? Is weeping in the wilderness all that remains? Can the Government, merely by drawing a line upon a map, break Bengal into two fragments? And can we, the whole of Bengal, not keep it one? Can the Government, at its own pleasure, split the Bengali language into four separate parts? And can we, the whole of Bengal, not keep its thread of unity unbroken? This very apprehension—is it not itself a bitter reproach against ourselves? If some remedy is to be found, must we not devote our utmost endeavour to the remedying of this very reproach? That should be the meeting-place of all our efforts, the wellspring of all our zeal, the common treasury of all our worship and celebration—which, indeed, is utterly necessary to us. We must fix firmly in our minds the belief that, through the effort of even a few of us, the foundation of that great temple of unity can be laid. To work on, believing that what is difficult is not impossible—this is true manhood. Until now, we have known "working" only as pouring water into a leaking pitcher, and it is for this very reason that we have complained again and again—that in this country, work brings no success. In our scientific societies, we have merely repeated old matters in the English tongue, and yet wondered, astonished, why the people of the country show such indifference to our scientific society. A handful of educated men, meeting in English, have passed resolutions, and yet we grieve that no sense of political duty is awakening among the common people. We have counted the act of petitioning another as work, and glorified it as such—and then turn round and revile the other, saying, "I do so much work, why do I get no reward for it?" Let us, for once, truly harness true strength to true labour, let us truly adopt the true means with true devotion—and then, even should we fail to attain success, we may yet hold our heads high and say—

Even if, having striven, one does not succeed, therein lies no blame.

Accepting the crisis, not blinding ourselves to its difficulty, not deceiving ourselves with hope of imminent reward, who among you is prepared to set forth upon the arduous, unrewarded labour of this unfortunate country? It is you, brave young men, I now summon—not toward the palace gates, but toward the mine wherein lies buried the native strength of that India steeped in the austerities of ancient ages. But that mine lies in the very heart of our country—it lies within the silent

depths of the hearts of that common people whom we so scorn. Who will abandon the effort to win the favour of the powerful, and devote himself instead to the quest for the deepest treasure hidden in that lowest cavern?

There is a famous Sanskrit verse; with its meaning slightly altered in translation, I close this essay with it—

The enterprising lion among men—know him alone
as one whom Fortune favours!
That idle word which says another will grant the gift
is spoken only by the coward.
Forget the other—let manhood find its refuge
in your own strength alone!
Even if, having striven, success should still not come,
in that there is no blame.

AN ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS

Today the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat has convened this assembly in order to welcome the students of Bengal's universities. Upon me has fallen the charge of offering you the first words of greeting.

You may perhaps ask what connection exists between students and the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat. A connection there is; and to make that connection felt, and to draw it closer, is one purpose of this present gathering.

You all know that in the pathway of light one sees stretched across the sky, brilliance has gathered densely in certain places into the forms of stars, while in other portions it lies diffused, unconcentrated, as mere nebulous vapour—yet it is the whole, the concentrated and the diffused together, that constitutes that path of light.

In our Bengal, too, a luminous, learned pathway of light has been formed; the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat may be called one concentrated, star-bound portion of that path, while the body of students exists diffused about it on every side, like that nebulous vapour. Between this dense portion and this diffused portion there exists an organic kinship of one common nation; that kinship we must learn to feel consciously; and it is altogether needful that a channel of exchange be established between these two kindred parts.

The unity of which I speak today could not, fifty years ago, even have been uttered aloud. In those days, students intoxicated with English learning did not hesitate to mock the poverty of their mother tongue, and dismissed the starving literature of their own land without giving it so much as a single morsel of rice.

Even in the days of our boyhood, the line dividing the country's literary society from the country's educated society was still fairly distinct. Even then, the ambition to win renown through English composition and English oratory burned strongest of all in students' minds. Indeed, even those who deigned to cast a favourable eye upon Bengali literature could grant it that measure of indulgence only after first mounting the platform of English. It is for this reason that, in those days, we were not satisfied merely to know Madhusudan as Madhusudan, Hemchandra as Hemchandra, Bankim as Bankim—then, some would be known as the Milton of Bengal,others as the Byron of Bengal, others still as the Scott of Bengal. Indeed, to honour a Bengali actor, we were content only when we had called him the Garrick of Bengal—though we ourselves had no means of judging any resemblance to Garrick at all, since by the time Garrick had laid aside his actor's craft, our own country's dramatic performances and travelling theatrical troupes had not yet even been conceived.

Yet this second condition, compared with the first, gives us reason for hope. For that the far-off resemblance of a Bengali Byron or a Bengali Scott might, after all, be found worth acknowledging by the devotees of English letters, must be counted as a favourable sign of that age.

In our present, third condition, the fog of those English titles has begun to clear, and Bengali literature is striving to make itself known in its own true form, without recourse to comparison with anything else. In this, the country's true regard for our own literature is being expressed.

The reason for this is that Bengali literature is gradually coming to feel within itself the fire of an independence. This proves that our minds are being freed, little by little, from the immoderate tyranny of the English schoolmaster. There was a day when our educated men held every single word of an English text to be sacred scripture. This infatuation with things English had grown so dangerously extreme that, unable by any means to reconcile it with English custom, we sent away the ceremonial gift-basket for our son-in-law, and counted the smearing of vermilion

upon a friend's body in festive celebration as a permanent blemish upon our character—so great a proof of educated foolishness have we furnished.

I cannot say that every symptom of this malady has altogether vanished, but the signs of recovery have appeared. Nowadays, little by little, we have begun to search and verify matters ourselves, rather than begging at the door of the English printing-press; indeed, we now find courage even to protest against the written text itself.

This very sense of independence within ourselves—without which the true flowering of strength can never occur—once begun in any one direction, will gradually go on to reveal itself in every other direction as well. We find evidence of this everywhere—in religion, in action, in society.

A short while ago, we used to view all our country's scriptures and governance through the eyes of the Christian missionary—we had to judge every single subject of our country by discussing what mark, in what fashion, had fallen upon the touchstone of the missionary.

At first, in that judgment, nothing of our country's possessed any value at all. Then, after a time, a somewhat better sign appeared. We began saying to our Western teachers, "Whatever glorious things exist in your country, all these existed in our country too; we had railways and balloons in our country too—proof of it exists in the scriptures; and the sages knew that plants release oxygen in sunlight, and it is for this very reason that the plucking of flowers for worship has been prescribed for the early morning hours." We did not yet have the courage to say that glory might exist even without railways and balloons, and that there is a greater majesty in engaging men's minds, at every activity's very outset in the pure light of dawn, in the beautiful service of the divine, than in artificially extracting oxygen vapour by stealth.

That we have wholly abandoned this attitude even now, I would not claim. Even now we cannot entirely forget that whatever leaves a bright mark upon the missionary's touchstone may indeed be valuable, but gold is not the world's only valuable substance; there exist in the world precious things upon which stone leaves no mark whatsoever. Be that as it may, the bonds are loosening. Nowadays, little by little, we are gaining the courage to say that what is condemnable by the missionary's judgment, what is despicable by the ordinance of the West, has, from our own point of view, a great deal to be said in its favour.

We see this same attitude even in what we call "politics." What was, at first, humble supplication for favour has not, in this second stage, lost its begging-bowl—but its tone has changed entirely; its mendicancy has assumed, so far as it can, the form of haughty defiance. We take heart in regarding our modern agitations as resembling the political proceedings of the West.

In this third stage, we are attempting to rise to the step above this. We have begun saying that to beg for favour, whether with folded hands or with fierce, reddened eyes, is not so easy a means of gaining glory—that whatever little work we can do for our country with our own independent strength brings a double gain: one, the gain of the fruit itself; the other, that the doing of the work by ourselves is itself a gain, no less than the gain of the fruit—and it is with an eye upon that very glory that our teachers have told us: work without attachment to the fruit. The dishonour of begging is this: that even should one gain the fruit, one is deprived of that fulfilment which comes only from exerting one's own strength oneself.

Be that as it may, this much is evident: that in every direction we are feeling, deep within, a certain endeavour to experience the glory of our own independent strength—from literature to politics, nowhere is this discontinuous.

One consequence of this I observe to be this: that whereas English education had once created, in our country, a division between the ancient and the modern, the educated and the uneducated, the high and the low, the student and the householder, now the opposite process has begun—now, once again, we are

seeking our thread of unity and striving to draw close to one another. This very fragmentation of the middle age will, without doubt, make the ultimate union all the more genuine and complete.

It is by the pull of this very union that today the Bengali language and Bengali literature have made even the students of our English universities their own. From that very quarter which was once an impregnable fortress of the adversary, the willing servants of Bengal's victorious voice have now come forth to receive her blessing.

There was a day when we had no holiday at all from the English schoolhouse. We came home, and even there the schoolhouse followed close upon our heels. We greeted our friends in English, wrote letters to our fathers in English, spoke the words of our heart in English verse, summoned the people of our country to assembly with English oratory. Today, when we get some respite from that schoolhouse—not wholly, but now and again—where shall we find our joy in that season of respite?

Is it not within the inner chamber of the mother? The day's lesson is finished; then perhaps we rise up a Ranjitsinhji at cricket. And after that? After that, shall not the mother's own evening lamp, lit by her own hand, catch our eye as we look out from the window of the house? If it does catch our eye, shall we then, with contempt, dismiss it, saying, "That is only a clay lamp"? Does not the mother's glory lie behind that very clay lamp? If it is only a clay lamp, whose fault is that? What has prevented us from fashioning a golden lamp for the mother's chamber? Whatever it may be, whether clay or gold, when the day of joy comes, there is our festival; and when the darkness of sorrow deepens, one cannot stand weeping in the public street—then that home, and no other, is our only refuge.

Today, here, we return once more to that schoolhouse. What the Sahitya Parishat has summoned us to today lies far from the college classroom, beyond even the boundary of the cricket field; there, in our poor mother's house, her evening clay lamp is burning. There, the provisions are not lavish—but will its glory be proved

by lavish provision, when she has sat the whole day watching the road, waiting for you to come home to her, weary in body, to that very lamp? She knows, in this very instant, that you alone are her glory; and we know that you alone regard her as your glory—not some hall of royal splendour, gained by begging.

You have come but this moment from the examination hall; it is for this very reason that today is the fitting occasion to remind you of your home—it is for this very reason that the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat, on behalf of the voice of Bengal, calls upon you today.

It will not do to forget entirely the greatness of that country which lies beyond the college walls. A natural connection must be established between the education of the college and the country.

In other lands, that connection need not be forged by deliberate effort. There, the college is itself one organ of the country—the country's inward nature has itself shaped and built it, so that nowhere is there any line of severance between it and the country. Between our colleges and our country, no such seamless and beautiful union has been established.

As things stand, it is evident that education, coming in time entirely under the control of the authorities, will only widen this division further.

In such a state of affairs, our particular concern must be this: what must be done so that, alongside the education given in colleges administered by foreigners, the students may also be set to an independent course of learning, whereby their education may be made truly complete? Without this, it will be well-nigh impossible to bring education, by any means, beyond the confines of the printed page.

Wherever the subjects taught are being freshly worked out, through much discussion, much debate and counter-argument—wherever those who are discovering, creating, revealing, are themselves the ones teaching—there alone is education living education. There, it is not merely the subjects that are gained; along with them are gained the power of observation, the vigour of thought, the zeal of creation. In such a condition, the unbearable tyranny of book-learning does not exist; whatever is gained from the printed page need not become the sole and exclusive bond of confinement.

In our country, some particular thought, some particular effort, must be devoted to finding the means by which the mind may hold dominion over the book, rather than the book being made king over the mind. It is for this very task that I appeal to the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat. My humble request is that they extend, as far as possible, a field of independent learning for Bengali students—a field in which students, feeling even in some small measure the exercise of their own strength and the authority of their own intellect, may find their spirit quickened.

Whatever we are meant to know of Bengal's literature, history, philology, folklore, and the like, is all a matter for the research and discussion of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat. The eagerness to know these particulars of our country ought to have been natural to us—but the reason it is not so is this: that from childhood we have gone on reading the textbooks of English schools, composed for English children; and by this our own country has grown obscure to us, while the things of another's country have become far more familiar to us.

For this, no one can be blamed. Our own country's true account has not, to this day, been prepared, and this is why, though we dwell in our own land, that land remains, in our own understanding, the smallest and least significant of things.

One fault arising from this failure to bring our own country, in a primary and complete sense, under the dominion of our knowledge, is this: that not one of us can become truly fit to serve our own country. And another matter is this: that the foundation of learning can be laid only by going from the near to the far, from the

familiar to the unfamiliar. If our habit of learning fastens itself chiefly upon that which is not spread about us, that which is not present before us, then that learning will inevitably be weak. Only when we have learned to master, thoroughly and truly, that which is familiar, does the power to grasp what is remote, what is unfamiliar, come to birth.

Our foreign teachers often taunt us, saying, "All this while you have read so diligently in our schools, yet your power of original discovery has never been born—you have merely gathered a certain quantity of rote-learning."

If this reproach of theirs be true, then the chief reason for it is this: that we get no opportunity to learn by testing matter against word. Most of our education draws upon illustrations that lie outside the range of our own observation. We read history—but that history which has been built upon the very current of our own country's life, whose manifold signs, whose manifold memories, lie manifest before us in countless places both within our homes and without—that history we do not discuss, and it is for this very reason that no vivid conception of what history truly is can ever arise from within ourselves. We memorise philology and thereby secure high rank in examinations, but because we do not likewise observe how our own mother tongue, from age to age, from region to region, has preserved its own history manifest within its manifold transformations, the mystery of language never becomes truly clear to us. In no other country, it seems, does there exist so vast a diversity of condition in society and religion as in this one land of India alone. Were we to study that diversity, with careful inquiry and earnest attention, the science of society and religion would become as illuminated to us as it could never become merely by reading, from so remote a land, some book concerning religion and society.

When one's conception remains vague and feeble, one cannot hope for the power of original discovery. Indeed, whatever discoveries are then made take on an unreal, fantastic form. It is for this very reason that, though we learn history from books, we cannot in like manner truly master historical judgment; though we learn

science from books, we go on passing off unprecedented flights of fancy as science; in religion, in society, indeed even in literary criticism, we cannot maintain a sober sense of proportion.

When divorced from reality, our mind, be it heart or be it imagination, grows withered and distorted. Our patriotism is proof of this. This patriotism of ours has no connection with the actual welfare of our country's people. The people of our country are dying of disease, wasting away in poverty, ruined by illiteracy and scarcity, and yet those who exert not the least effort of their own toward remedying this imagine themselves to have gained something through all manner of incongruous imitation of foreign literature and history's bookish "Patriotism." It is for this very reason that, though this age has long since passed, this "Patriotism" has never been able to move us to any true sacrifice at all. In whatever country "Patriotism" is not unreal, is not founded on bookish imitation, there the people give up their lives for their country without hesitation; we cannot give even a trifling sum of money, cannot give our time, feel no eagerness to inquire earnestly into the true condition of our country. Yoshida Shōin was a celebrated patriot of Japan. In the early stage of his life, he tied up rice and puffed rice, and travelling the whole country on foot, spent his days in ceaseless wandering. Having thus come to know his country intimately, searched into every corner of it, he then took up the work of teaching students—and in the end he had to give his life for his country's cause. In this way alone can the meaning of "Patriotism" be understood. Only when patriotism is founded upon a nation's real knowledge and a nation's real work does it begin to bear fruit like a tree rooted firmly in the soil.

Therefore, if this be true—that knowledge, sentiment, and character alike, without connection with tangible reality, remain lifeless and fruitless—then it is imperative that we strive, as far as possible, to save the education of our students from that same fruitlessness.

Bengal is nearest to us—and it is Bengal's language, literature, history, and sociology that the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat has made the subject of its study. My

submission to the Parishat is this: let them summon the students into this work of study. This would strengthen the students' power of observation and reflection with respect to tangible things; and once the habit of knowing thoroughly all that lies about oneself, all that concerns one's own country, is formed, it can become the true foundation for knowing everything else besides. Moreover, the effort to know one's own country well is itself a part of the true cultivation of love for one's own country.

There is no district in Bengal from which students have not come together in Calcutta. If the Parishat can obtain their assistance in gathering the country's every particular, then the Sahitya Parishat will achieve its true purpose. Let me give one or two examples of the nature of this help, and of how far it is needed.

The composition of a grammar of the Bengali language is one of the principal tasks of the Sahitya Parishat. But this task is no easy one. To gather the materials for such a grammar is an arduous undertaking. The true, scientific grammar of Bengali can only be the comparative grammar of all the various dialects prevalent in the different regions of Bengal. If our students work together collectively, the gathering of materials from these diverse dialects will not prove difficult.

There is no district in Bengal where new religious sects are not, here and there, springing up among the common folk. Educated persons keep no track at all of these. They do not even consider that vast masses of the populace are moving in imperceptible ways, in soundless steps; because we disdainfully turn our gaze away from them, it does not follow that they remain fixed and still—the new forces of a new age are ceaselessly working transformation among them; unless we know by what path that transformation is proceeding, into what form it is passing, we cannot truly know our country. Nor do I say that merely knowing the country is the ultimate goal—wherever it may occur, there is a certain fulfilment simply in knowing well whatever action and reaction is at work among common humanity. There is an education in the very attempt to see living men directly, setting aside the book; this not only imparts knowledge—it develops such a power of knowing

as no classroom lesson could ever give. Should the students, under the direction of the Parishat, be able to gather and bring in accounts of the various religious sects existing among the lower orders of the people in their own respective districts, they will thereby gain a certain valuable lesson in giving heed to their fellow men with an attentive heart, and will, at the same time, be able to serve their country.

It is not that we do not read books of ethnology—but when we observe that, having read such books, we feel not the least curiosity to gain a complete acquaintance with the Hari, the Dom, the Kaibarta, the Bagdi dwelling at our very doorstep, we can then understand what a great superstition has grown up in our minds regarding the printed book—how very highly we esteem the book, and how trifling, by comparison, we deem that of which the book is but a reflection. But should we once, casting off this inertness, enter into that primal source of knowledge itself, our curiosity would then know no bound. Should our students once earnestly apply themselves to the full inquiry into the lives of all these neighbours of theirs, there is no doubt that in the very labour itself they would find their reward.

The subjects for such inquiry and collection are without limit. Our vow-observances differ from one part of Bengal to another. Local custom shows much variety according to place. Besides this, much that is worth knowing lies hidden within village rhymes, nursery rhymes, and popular songs. Indeed, it is with this very conviction—that no particular of the country's life is trivial to its own people—that the Sahitya Parishat has defined its own duty.

It is precisely because the Parishat has accepted my appeal to draw our students into its work as helpers that I have today taken upon myself the charge of inviting them to this assembly. As I set about that task, the memory of our own youth comes to my mind.

To speak of "our own youth" is not to claim so vast an antiquity as to imply any very remote period of time; yet I perceive between the days of that time and the days

of now such a change that that not-too-distant period seems, to my mind, almost an age apart. Whether I see this change through the fault of advancing years, or whether this change has truly come to pass, is a matter for reflection. It is a common thing that, once somewhat advanced in years, older people compare their own former times with the present and sit in judgment upon the present age—the reason being that their own age was a time for hoping, while the present age is, for them, a time for reckoning accounts. They forget that the youth of this present age too are beginning their lives in hope, and have not yet sat down, spectacles upon their eyes, to settle their accounts. Therefore, whether the difference I perceive between our own time and the present time is truly valid, I myself cannot be the sole judge—you too must weigh and judge it for yourselves.

I do not know for certain whether it be true or false, but it seems to me that, compared to the children of today, we were then far more childlike. Whether that was good or bad, there is something to be said on both sides—but there was one virtue in remaining childlike: that our hopes knew no bound; whatever we looked toward, gazing into the future, nothing seemed impossible or unattainable. In those days we held such assemblies, formed such societies, bound ourselves to such resolutions, that you, hearing of them today, would surely be unable to suppress your laughter—and I believe that in certain places in our literature, that picture of our own former days has been painted in colours tinged with comic humour.

But if I am to speak the whole truth, you will be astonished to learn this: that it is not the case that, in our own time, we boys were all of the same age—among us there was no lack of the mature-minded; nor can I say that their hopes and enthusiasm were in the least less than ours. That in those days the young and the old came together and abandoned, utterly and without reserve, all fear, all shame, all despair—this I cannot forget even today.

Compared with that day, we have without doubt made progress today in many matters, but the light of hope in our sky today seems somehow dimmer, and the provisions of joy in the traveller's hand seem somehow scanter.

The accounting for why this has come to pass is not a matter for the present age to render—we ourselves must give that account. The store of hope with which we began our journey, we have somewhere along the way squandered and scattered, and today sit thus impoverished.

Boundless hope and enthusiasm are the first provisions of our early years; at the outset of our journey along the path of endeavour, our divine mother-of-fate ties this into the corner of our garment and sends us forth with her blessing. But just as money is no food in itself, and must be exchanged before it can be eaten, so mere hope and enthusiasm alone do not fulfil us—we must put them to particular labour before we can gain any fruit from them. Forgetting this, we went on trying, all along, to fill our stomachs with that hope and enthusiasm alone.

Infants, even while lying down, go on kicking their arms and legs—that bodily movement of theirs has no object at all. In its early stage, such undirected outpouring of energy has a certain meaning—but if that same aimless flailing of limbs does not gradually prepare the child for purposeful effort, then it must be reckoned a malady.

In our own early years, our zeal was, at first, scattered and let loose wildly in every direction merely for its own delight—at that time, that was not strange, nor was it a matter for mockery. But gradually, as the days passed, and we went on merely reading and reading, exercising our limbs but never truly walking, imagining the mere convulsive throwing about of the body to be the means of advancing—then there remained no more cause for delight, and what was necessary at one time became, for another time, a matter of grave concern.

In our early years, words such as Bharat-Mata, Bharat-Lakshmi, and the like, taking on vast dimensions, overwhelmed our imagination. But where the Mother was actually to be found manifest, we never clearly thought; let Lakshmi remain far

off—we never even set eyes upon her owl. We had read Byron's poetry, discussed the life of Garibaldi, and had utterly drowned ourselves in the intoxicating enjoyment of "Patriotism's" sentimental raptures.

Just as, for the drunkard, wine becomes dearer than food itself, so for us the intoxication of patriotism had itself become greater than the country itself. Forgetting the very language of that country we claimed to see before us, insulting its history, keeping its joys and sorrows at a vast remove from our own daily lives, we went on being "patriotic." Without the least real attachment to our country, we regarded the foreign king's court as the sole field of action for patriotism. In such a state, by such self-deception, to hope that we would gain fruit, gain joy, keep our enthusiasm ever burning—this is to attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the Creator of the universe himself.

However grand an idea may be, to grasp it one must first take hold of some fixed and bounded spot. Let it be humble, let it be poor—one must not scorn it. The only means of bringing the distant near is to go, from what is near, toward that distance. To meditate that Bharat-Mata sits upon some inaccessible Himalayan peak, playing her lute forever in a mournful strain, is mere intoxicated fancy—but to see that Bharat-Mata, in our very own village, beside some malaria-infested pond overrun with duckweed, cradling in her lap a child wasted with spleen-disease, gazing with despairing eyes toward her own empty granary for the sake of that child's future—this alone is to see truly. That Bharat-Mata who wanders in the hermitage-groves of Vyasa, Vasishtha, and Vishvamitra, watering the sacred trees at their roots, may be honoured with folded hands alone, and that is sufficient; but that Bharat-Mata, threadbare beside our very homes, who cooks upon half rations in another's kitchen so that she may educate her son in an English school and set him securely upon the miserable path of clerkship—her, we cannot serve with mere obeisance alone.

Be that as it may, nothing came of it all. We set forth like conquerors, we stood like beggars at others' doors, and at last, settling down into domesticity, we sat upon

our verandas and opened our savings-bank passbooks. For that Bharat-Mata, that Bharat-Lakshmi,composed only of literature's rainbow-vapour, established only within the mirage of imitating others—of her our own actual domestic circumstances were far more tangible, our own hungry stomachs far more clearly defined—and however heart-rending Bharat-Mata's tears might sound in the raga of Jhinjhit-Khambaj, it has been tested and proven that complete consolation is to be found in that gold-jingling, sweet monthly salary one receives in a deputy-collectorship. In this way, when a man begins his days by expanding himself grandly, and then finds no tangible object upon which to spend that accumulated sentiment, he ends his days, self-absorbed and selfish, in futility. When a man is once ready to give up all his wealth, all his very life, at a single stroke, and yet can determine no object for his giving, but merely gratifies himself with the luxurious enjoyment of resolve and fantasy—such a man may one day grow so hard of heart that, should he see his starving country from a great distance, he bars his door for fear that, if he changes his money, a few coins might slip out of his pocket. The reason for this is that mere sentiment, however grand, must in the end be defeated before the smallest tangible thing.

It was for this very reason I was saying: only when we grant the crown of the tangible, the weight of reality, to that which we have gained merely from reading books, which we have made the vehicle of emotional indulgence or the satisfaction of pride, and into whose sentimental languor we have sunk, gradually descending into lethargy—only then shall we be saved. It will not do merely to imagine grand things, merely to beg for grand gifts, merely to speak grand words with a small mouth—we must begin some utterly small task right beside our own door. It will not do to go weep in the palaces of the West—we must go uproot the thorns in the field of our own country. In this our strength will find its true exercise—and in the mere exercise of that strength lies freedom, and in freedom alone lies joy.

I have no unrestricted right of entry into your youth today; what your hopes, your aspirations, your ideals truly are, it is impossible for me to feel clearly today. But even the memory of our own fresh adolescence lies still concealed, like a spark of fire beneath ash, beneath our own greying hair—and by the strength of that

memory I know for certain that when the melody of a lofty aspiration sounds upon the strings of the heart, those fine, those keen, those sun-woven bright chords of your inmost being have not yet, through disuse, gone to rust—that natural and profound impulse which exists in the human mind toward unhesitating self-surrender to a noble purpose has not, in your hearts, yet been repeatedly checked by petty obstacles and rendered inert. I know that when your country is insulted, your hearts blaze up like fire struck by a blow; that the narrowness of your own trade, the pursuit of your own self-interest, has not swallowed up your whole mind; that the thought of how the country's want, the country's dishonour, might be removed, surely assails, now and then, the sleepless watches of your night and the quiet leisure hours of your day; I know that when the example of those great men, renowned in history, who sacrificed themselves for their country's good, for the good of the people, and who, defeating death, putting self-interest to shame, made suffering and sorrow themselves radiant with immortal glory—when their example summons you, you do not, even today, reject it with the scorn of the worldly-wise. That unblemished flower, that whole and unbroken virtue, of all the hopes and aspirations of your young hearts, I summon today, in the name of your country's community of letters—not toward the path of enjoyment, not toward the path of begging, but toward the path of labour. The gateway into this workshop is exceedingly small; it does not pierce the sky like the lion-gate of a royal palace. But the glory of it is this: that to enter here one need not suffer the indignity of a gatekeeper's permission—one comes here obeying the command of God alone; to enter here one must bow one's head, it is true, but only before one's own lofty ideal, only before one's country, only before that beneficent Providence who exalts the one who bows. To this day, none who have been summoned have been left wholly disappointed; when the country went forth to beg, sounding the Western bugle, you did not lag behind—you set forth upon that royal road which the ancients had laid down just this side of the cremation ground, and counted yourselves fulfilled by that journey; and now, when the Sahitya Parishat calls you, its language is the mother tongue, and its work is the work of the mother's own inner chamber—shall it, for that very reason, fail? Shall that call, which is "for feast and for sorrow alike," yet, precisely because it does not lead "to the royal court but to the cremation ground," fail to kindle your enthusiasm? In the Sahitya Parishat, we have set ourselves to the task of knowing our country—in the country's poetry, its songs, its rhymes, in the ruined remnants of ancient temples, in the worm-eaten

pages of decaying manuscripts, in village festivals, in vow-tales, in the rural tillage of the fields, wherever the Parishat has set itself to seek out the motherland—there, no foreigner ever casts a glance of wonder; from there no trumpet of fame carried by newspapers proclaims victory across the seas; there lies no temptation for you at all—but if among you there be any who can hold the mother's silent blessing dearer than the leavings of a queen's feast, then come and stand beside these silent attendants who serve within the mother's own quiet inner chamber, and, day after day, without wage, without reward, in labour devoid of fame, make your love of country fruitful. Then, at least, you will understand this much: that where there is strength, there is work to be done; where there is love, there is no lack of occasion for service; that for this, one need not wait upon the passing of some Act of Government, and that it is not at all necessary to sit idle before a barred door, day and night, in expectation of some begged-for privilege.

I fear I have not quite kept my due measure of proportion regarding today's subject. The matter is simply this: cultivate the grammar of your native tongue, compile its dictionary, gather from the villages the inner particulars of your country. To construct so long an introduction, invoking such lofty sentiments merely to broach so modest a proposal, has perhaps seemed somewhat disproportionate. I admit that it has been so; but that such disproportion has become necessary in our country, by the very drift of the age, is itself the mark of our misfortune. If some mother's case be such that, in order to determine her duty toward her child, she cannot find her bearings by reading the science, philosophy, and scripture of every land, then one must labour hard to make her understand this exceedingly simple truth—first, see where your child is, what he is doing,whether he has fallen into a well or is swallowing pins, whether he is hungry or feeling the cold.

Such things ordinarily need not be said at all; but if, by some unhappy necessity, they must be said in some particular case, then they must be said even at the risk of seeming excessive. If, in the present age, it were said to our country, "Give lectures for your country, hold assemblies, engage in debate," then all could understand this most readily; but if it were said, "Know your country, and thereafter, with your own hands, serve your country as far as you are able," then, I

have observed, people find it unusually difficult to grasp the meaning. In such circumstances, if in speaking two or three simple words about our duty toward our country I have expended an extraordinary quantity of speech, then I must ask your indulgence. Indeed, if a thick fog lies over the morning, there is no use in growing impatient and giving up, nor is there any need to feel despair—the sun will surely pierce that fog, and the moment it does, all will become clear. Today I shall not, in my impatience, wish for more—with unwavering hope, with joy, I shall say only this: that here and there, amid the dense fog, that very difference is beginning to show itself—the rays of the sun, like a keen, sharp sword, have already pierced our veil of vision in three or four places—there is no more fear now; our path of journeying, right before our very door, will very soon be revealed in its full clarity—then we need no longer sit at home debating endlessly, gathering ten opinions from ten different persons on every point of the compass—then each, according to his own strength, choosing his own path, will come forth out of the debating-hall, out of the confining chamber of the book—then no task close at hand will seem too remote, and no truly necessary task will be scorned as too small. I hold this firm faith in my heart, that this auspicious hour will come—and it is for this reason that even should the Parishat's appeal today find no place in your hearts, even should you think it no great matter to know the affairs of your own Bengal's home—still I shall not be aggrieved, but shall instead give assurance to my own motherland, who has all this while been watching, with unblinking eyes, for the homecoming of her children, and say to her: Mother, the time draws near, the school holidays have come, the assembly has broken up—even now the footsteps of your hungry children can be heard approaching your courtyard gate. Now sound your conch-shell, light your lamp, and stand ready upon your outstretched cool mat, prepared to crown the reunion of all your children, both great and small, with your tear-choked benediction.

THE UNIVERSITY BILL

For a long while now, the provisions of the University Bill have been examined and discussed at great length from every angle; to repeat all that here would only weary the reader. I wish to say only a word or two, in general terms.

Everyone knows that were there money, were there authority, were every circumstance favourable, then the arrangement could be brought to its utmost perfection. But one must look to actual circumstances and curb excessive expectation. Lord Curzon has rightly said that the ideal of the Western university is a most excellent one—but Lord Curzon, that friend of India, has made no arrangement at all to give us the whole of the West's excellence; why then should only this one particular "excellence" alone be thought fitting for us?

Whatever good each may achieve according to his own capacity is, for him, the very best good—better than that cannot be; it is futile to covet another's good fortune.

Even the universities of the West did not fall ready-made from the sky, nor spring into full and perfect maturity in a single night by the decree of some arbitrary ruler's law. They have their own history. They have grown, quite naturally, in keeping with the condition and capacity of their country. To this it might be objected that our university was, from its very founding, an imported imitation of the foreign—that the argument from natural growth cannot apply to it at all.

That is true enough. I cannot claim that the university of India has become blended with the nature of this country, has become wholly one body with our society—even now it remains something external to us.

But we are gradually bringing it under our own control—the colleges administered by our own countrymen are themselves the proof of this.

To see what we have gained from the Englishman, it will not do merely to see what exists in the country—we must see what lies in the hands of the country's own people.

We see much in the way of railways and telegraphs, but these are not ours; commerce and trade are not inconsiderable either, but of these too our share is but trifling. The machinery of state administration is intricate and far-reaching, but true authority over it, we may say, we possess not at all; we perform merely the labour of hired hands within it, and even that function shows signs of being ever more narrowly restricted.

Whatever is truly ours, even should it be somewhat inferior, even should it contain its flaws, even should it not entirely meet with the approval of the great custodians of the treasury—that alone we shall count as our true gain.

Just as learning that is confined to books, whose application is unknown, is barren, so too is a system of education that lies beyond our own control, for us, very nearly as fruitless. The education of the country was, until now, passing into the hands of the country's own people; that, indeed, is the true fruit of education. Should even this fall entirely into the hands of the Government, then even a most excellent university would, for us, be but a mark of poverty.

To make learning excessively costly in our country can by no means be justified. Our society had kept learning easily accessible—education, throughout every stratum of society high and low, flowed by many natural and simple channels. All these natural channels have, through the very consequence of English education, been gradually closed off—indeed, throughout the country, the reading of the

Ramayana and Mahabharata, the recitation of Kathakata, the performance of Yatra, are, day by day, on the verge of disappearing altogether. In such circumstances, if English education itself is now to be made a rare and scarce commodity, it is as though, having climbed the tree, one now pulls away the ladder.

Every single limb and joint of Western civilisation is the child of abundant wealth. From amusement to warfare, everything is a matter of money. In this, money has grown into a vast and formidable power, and the worship of money has come to eclipse every other form of worship.

This very difficulty, this scarcity, this intricacy, is the chief weakness of European civilisation. To thrash about excessively while swimming is proof only of clumsiness; when, in any civilisation, one observes an utter excess of effort expended upon every single matter, one must understand that a good part of whatever strength it displays outwardly is, at every instant, being squandered. Were a proper accounting kept of the vast quantity of materials and expenditure involved, it would be seen that the wages scarcely justify the labour. In nature's ledger, the account of principal and interest goes on accumulating; that the collector's bailiff does not come knocking now and then is not entirely true either—but that is not a matter we need concern ourselves with.Our own concern is this: that if, in our country, justice becomes costly, food becomes costly, and education too becomes costly, then the terrible divide between rich and poor will grow immense indeed in our land. In the West, poverty is not merely a want of wealth—it is a want of manhood itself; for there, every single attribute of human dignity is sold at a price. In our country, manhood existed even among the poor, because in our society, joy, health, education, amusement, and pleasure were all shared and distributed among all alike. The school that was set up in the courtyard of the wealthy gave education, without fee, to the children of the poor; the festival held in the assembly hall of the king was open, without invitation, to the poor subject as well. The poor plucked flowers daily for worship from the garden of the rich, and no one called in the police against him; the prosperous man did not dig moats and ponds and set watchmen all about to guard them. In this, the poor man's self-respect was preserved; the wealth of the rich carried a natural claim upon it for the common

good—and it is for this reason that, whatever his condition, the poor man was never reduced to a beast of burden—a fact that those who parrot fine phrases about the high privileges of humanity, above distinctions of race, never trouble themselves to consider carefully.

The English Viceroy nowadays says: what need has one who possesses neither money nor power to be excessively covetous of education? This sentiment strikes our ears as exceedingly foreign, exceedingly harsh, I confess.

But everything must be endured. That being so, it will not do to sit idle merely lamenting.

We must gird our loins for whatever we ourselves are capable of doing. The arrangement for education in our country was, in former times, an arrangement of society—it did not depend upon the king, nor upon outside assistance; society preserved it, and it preserved society.

Now that education has become a mere aid to obtaining employment under government, whereas formerly education served the welfare of society, there no longer remains any mutual bond of assistance between society and learning. Thus, after all this time, the pursuit of education in India has become dependent upon the king's favour.

In such circumstances, should the king think that education must be arranged solely to suit his own political policy, that history must be composed poured into the mould of loyalty to the crown, that scientific education must be curtailed by whatever devices, that every kind of self-respect among Indian students must be narrowed down—then he cannot be blamed for it. Work is done at the master's pleasure—we shall enjoy the fruit of that labour, but by what right shall we hope to exercise authority over that same labour?

Besides this, learning is not the sort of thing manufactured in a factory. Unless it is given from within the heart, there is no way to bestow it at all. The Viceroy has done nothing but boast endlessly of the ideal of Oxford and Cambridge, forgetting that there, no gulf exists between student and teacher, and hence the exchange of learning there is natural. There, the teacher is eager to impart knowledge, and the students are ready to receive it—between the two there lies no distance of unfamiliarity, no thorny wall of disrespect; and so, there, what is in the mind reaches the mind. A man like Pedler is our country's professor, the head of our education department—what can he give us, and what indeed can we take from him! Where heart touches not heart, where plain opposition and hostility exist, there, should some relationship of gift and counter-gift be forcibly established through some cruel jest of fate, from that relationship one can expect nothing but futility—indeed, worse than futility.

For this very reason has it become especially necessary that we ourselves take charge of the arrangement of our own education. In this, I know full well, no vast stone replica of Oxford or Cambridge will be established in our temple of learning; its furnishings will be suited to poverty; even in the eyes of the wealthy, its many deficiencies will be plainly visible—but the awakened Goddess of Learning will sit enthroned upon a lotus-seat of reverence; she will, like a true mother, dispense the nectar of knowledge to her children; she will not, like the proud wife of some merchant, stand at a lofty casement dismissing beggars from afar.

One monstrous humiliation attending the receiving of charity devoid of any heartfelt affection is this: the proud giver keeps a most meticulous account of every expenditure, and thereafter taunts one twice daily, saying, "I gave so much, I gave so much more—and yet what came of it?" A mother, giving suck to her child, keeps no such account at all, and yet the child grows sturdy and strong—whereas a loveless wet-nurse, buying food from the market, stuffs it into the crying mouth, and thereafter goes on endlessly grumbling, "I feed him so much, and yet the child grows only more and more like a stick!"

Our English authorities have adopted just such a tone. Pedler said the other day: "We have made such vast provision for the study of science, granted such favourable concessions, spent such sums upon scholarships—and yet the students have given no evidence whatsoever of independent thought!"

Those who live upon another's favour must listen to such words as these, and yet we have no mouth to answer with: "The whole arrangement lies in your hands alone, and if that arrangement has not yielded sufficient fruit, the whole fault of it is ours alone!" On this side, in the account-book, the sum of money is displayed in great primer-type, as though so vast a sum, spent upon so utterly worthless a set of incompetents, were unparalleled in all the world in any accounting of generosity; and thus the moral of it runs: "O ye incapable, O ye good-for-nothing, be grateful, be loyal to the crown, and do not turn your cheeks pale with age contributing to the Victoria Memorial!"

How much learning is gained by all this, I do not know, but self-respect certainly is not. Without self-respect, no race can attain any true success whatsoever; one may serve to draw water and cut wood in another's house, but one cannot thereby preserve the calling proper to the twice-born—that is, the duty of the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, or the Vaishya.

One thing we must always bear in mind: that the reproach cast upon us is wholly without foundation. Nor will we grant that those who cast this reproach do not themselves know it to be baseless. For we have observed that they live in constant dread lest their own words be disproved.

We must bear this in mind: that Western civilisation is, in truth, neither so arduous nor so rare a thing. Independent Japan has, within these past fifty years alone, seized and acquired this very civilisation and set herself to instructing her own teachers in it. This civilisation is, in large measure, a matter of schooling; it depends

chiefly upon examination, memorisation, and practice. Had we the same complete opportunity and favourable circumstance as Japan, we of the Pedler persuasion could have completed this same course of school learning long, long before Pedler himself ever arrived among us. Eastern civilisation, by contrast, is a matter of the spirit; its path is as forbiddingly narrow as the edge of a razor; it is no mere school lesson—it is the discipline of a lifetime.

We must bear this in mind: that all this while, many a foreign professor has tinkered a great deal with all manner of contrivances in the examination halls of our colleges, and not one of them has been able to win renown by demonstrating independent thought. Among Bengalis themselves, Jagadish and Prafulla Chandra, having gained their opportunity, have shown the fruit of that very opportunity. These are worth remembering not merely for argument's sake against others, but for our own encouragement and self-respect. Let not another's words breed distrust of ourselves.

That which would truly awaken in us a genuine sense of self-respect, the foreigner will not willingly grant—and for this we ought to feel no resentment on that account. To hope for what cannot naturally be expected in a given quarter is mere folly—and to go on, again and again, in disappointed longing, rushing back toward that very same quarter, for that there is no word adequate in any language. In this matter, our sole duty is to become self-reliant; to free such gifted and thoughtful men as Dr. Jagadish Bose, who despite adversity have held their heads high in our country, and to give into their hands the free scope to shape the children of our land into true men; to rescue learning from the grip of contempt, disrespect, and neglect, and re-enthrone the goddess Saraswati in her rightful glory; to make the pursuit of knowledge a matter belonging to the country itself; to bind it intimately to our own strength, our own striving, our own nature, and to nurture it according to the law of its own natural growth; and, without being deterred by its outward poverty, its present frailty, to give it, with hope and with joy, all the love of our hearts and all the strength of our lives, that it may become vigorous and fruitful in time.

In the present circumstance, this alone is our sole subject of concern, our sole duty. If this be called a vain hope, is it then the only reasonable method of fulfilling our expectations to sit, hands folded, before another's barred gate? Should we wait, gazing with parched eyes into the empty midday sky,for the day when a Conservative government gives way to a Liberal one—is that the sole wise course left to the weak of mind and the unfortunate of fate?

CIRCUMSTANCE AND REMEDY

Today Bengal suffers from no want of agitation; the burden of stirring men's hearts need fall to no one's lot. Nor do I think that there is any particular need of counsel. When in the season of spring the mango-blossoms fall night after night in the storms, those blossoms become nothing but earth, and there remains no possibility that a tree should spring from them. So too it has been observed that in the world the blossoms of counsel fall in abundance, yet in most instances no shoot springs forth from them—the whole becomes mere dust.

Yet this much is certain: when the blossoms begin to fall, one must understand that the time of fruit-bearing is not far distant. In our country too, it has for some time been said that the redress of the nation's want is possible only through the exertion of the nation's own people; that the people of the country are themselves the ultimate refuge of the country, and by no means the foreign benefactor; and so on. That these blossoms had begun to fall from many mouths was doubtless owing to the soil then present; but they were certainly enriching the ground, and were also the herald of a season of fruition now approaching.

At last today Providence, by fierce heat, has of itself ripened a lesson to fullness. What the country did not yesterday consider worthy of a hearing, today it is accepting, with the utmost ease, as though it were an eternal truth. That we ourselves must become one—not in order to become suppliants at another's door, but in order to do our own work—this truth we seem today, in a single day, to feel most readily; there is no possibility of disregarding the message of Providence.

Therefore agitation and exhortation have today become unnecessary from my lips—for He who guides history by unerring gesture has now made His fiery, pointing finger visible before the eyes of the whole nation.

Now I cannot allow this time to be wasted in vain. By some strange chance, if damp wood, after much smoking, at last catches fire, then the cooking must be set going before it burns to ashes; merely to go on poking at an empty, fireless hearth may give amusement, but it brings the hour of turning to ash nearer still, while the hope of a meal recedes ever further. When the proposal of Partition has aroused the thoughts of the whole country together, then, without losing ourselves merely in momentary agitation, we must think out clearly certain fundamental matters.

The first point is this: that regarding the welfare of our own country, we have been hoping from others what we do not hope from ourselves. That such a state should end in disappointment is only natural, and indeed salutary. We have received blows enough to disappoint us again and again, yet we did not awaken. This time, by God's grace, we have received yet another blow; whether we have awakened, the proof will be seen hereafter.

"Grant us honour, grant us strength, grant us equal rights with yourselves"—such were the claims we laid before the foreign ruler without hesitation; at the root of this lay a certain belief in our minds. We had read our books and firmly concluded that the principle of equality—that all mankind possesses equal rights—was the principle of our rulers' race.

But the principle of equality holds good only where equality exists. Where I too have strength, there your strength observes the principle of equality with mine. We see the charming equality that Europeans practise toward Europeans; to be delighted at the sight of it is merely the greed of the weak. If the strong practise equality toward the weak only as an indulgence, can that indulgence in any way be to the credit of the weak? Can that indulgence be honourable to the weak? Therefore, before soliciting equality, it is the duty of every man first to strive for equality. To do otherwise is cowardice.

This we have clearly seen: that nowhere in their history have these people granted a place of free intercourse beside themselves to those nations which, dwelling alongside the English, are wholly distinct in race, religion, and custom. Indeed, there is ample proof that such nations have been and are being effaced in collision with them. Consider once more—when the kings of India possessed sovereign power, what generous right of dwelling in their realm they gave to unfamiliar peoples from abroad—the proof of this is the Parsis. These people, observing one or two of the Hindus' prohibitions such as against cow-slaughter, keeping their own religion and society intact, sacrificing not a particle of their own distinctness, have gone on gaining ever greater prosperity as guests and neighbours of the Hindus, and have never suffered oppression as a people defeated by king or society. If one compares with this the conduct of English colonies toward their subject peoples, one will find occasion to consider the difference between the equality-doctrines of the East and of the West.

Recently a meeting of British colonists was held in South Africa; many will have read the account of it in the Statesman. They resolved unanimously that they would give no shelter whatsoever to Asiatics. Houses shall not be rented to them for business or residence; and if anyone does rent to them, particular displeasure shall be expressed toward him. Houses now rented to Asiatics shall be taken back once the term expires. Efforts shall be made to see that retail traders and wholesale dealers cease business with any house that in any way assists Asiatics. In order that these rules be observed, and that the members neither buy anything from nor render any assistance to Asiatic shopkeepers or merchants, a Vigilance Association—a band of watchmen—is to be formed. During the meeting's proceedings, a member asked whether, in any town in England, it would be possible to herd Asiatic traders into a slum quarter as had been done in their city. To this one man replied: No—there they would be lynched. Among the listeners, one said: Here too it would be better to lynch the coolies.

At these signs, now becoming visible, of Europe's disposition toward Asia, let us not become excited like fools. These are matters to be judged calmly. What is naturally occurring, what is truly a fact, there is no use in raging over. But if we must dwell

alongside it, then we cannot proceed if we misunderstand the real situation. It is plain to see that Europe does not merely regard Asia as separate—it knows it as contemptible.

In this respect there is a certain difference between Europe and ourselves. Even that which we regard as contemptible—we do not deny it the glory that belongs to it within its own circle. It is free within its own community; its religion, its customs, its system of law, have their own distinct validity within that community; my circle is to me exactly what its circle is to it—this we never forget. For this reason, even those nations we despise as barbarous, we do not, out of pride in our own superiority, attempt to obliterate. It is for this reason that even in the midst of our own society, the Hadi, the Domb, the Chandal, preserving their own place, have endured forever.

We know beasts to be lowly creatures, yet still we say: let us exist, and let them too exist; we say that though the taking of life for food is a natural impulse—"this is the way of creatures, but abstention brings the greater fruit"—that is one impulse, but abstinence is the better path. Europe says: God has granted us the right to devour the beast. Europe's pride of superiority does not merely despise the lowly—when it comes to destroying them, it does not hesitate even to enlist God on its own side.

Europe's superiority knows self-assertion and self-preservation as the supreme duty. If protecting another happens to fit exactly with its own interest, then only does it become possible for the other to survive; wherever there is even the slightest failure of fit, there is no consideration of mercy or compassion. Of the one or two proofs of this that lie ready to hand, I mention the following.

The Bengali who once could build such ships that the Englishman felt envy at the sight of them—today the Bengali's son does not know this even in dream. How the English, by particular effort, wiped out this art of shipbuilding from Bengal, all may learn by reading the book Deshér Kathā by the esteemed Sakharam Ganesh

Deuskar. To render a nation permanently crippled in any respect whatsoever—this equality-fraternity-liberty-professing power has felt no scruple in doing.

The English are today forcibly disarming the whole of India, yet they have not once, in their inmost hearts, felt the cruelty of this. India is not a small country, but a subcontinent in itself. To render all the inhabitants of this vast land, generation after generation, forever unaccustomed to bearing arms, incapable of self-defence—what monstrous injustice it is to reduce to helpless subjection, before some petty ferocious beast, a people who were once a race of warriors knowing no fear of death—this thought causes them not the slightest pain. Here the appeal to religion is utterly futile—for these people know as their supreme religion the expansion and secure preservation of the greatness of the Anglo-Saxon race in the world; and therefore, if the people of India must, by giving up arms, become forever lifeless, helpless, and devoid of manhood upon this earth, they feel no pity whatsoever on that account.

The strength which the Anglo-Saxon worships above all else, he is daily robbing India of, making this country ever more contemptible in his own eyes, and despising us as cowards—yet let him think once: that in giving birth to this cowardice, their own collective cowardice stands behind it.

Thus it has long been seen that if the smallest obstacle in the path of rendering the Anglo-Saxon's majesty entirely unopposed happens to be, for our country, even the most precious of possessions, these people make no scruple of trampling it down to level ground. This truth has gradually become clear even to us within ourselves—which is why today our hearts tremble at every movement of the government, and the more assurances they give in words, the more our suspicion grows.

But the strange thing on our part is that there is no end to our suspicion, nor any limit to our reliance on others. We shall neither believe nor cease to petition. If one asks why we thus waste time in this way, the answer will be: if one party shows no

mercy, perhaps another party's mercy may come. If favour is not obtained in the morning, then, waiting long enough, favour may perhaps be obtained by evening. Our king, after all, is not a single person—and so, though we may be driven away a thousand times over, our hope simply refuses to die; such is our predicament.

The point is well taken. We do not have a single king. In the history of the world, a strange event has befallen the fate of India. A foreign nation rules over us—not a foreign king. We have to bear the sovereignty of an entire distant nation. Is this state of things so favourable for the practice of mendicancy? There is a proverb that says: even the mother of one's portion does not give the Ganges water—does the ward of many guardians get the fish's head and the cream of the milk?

A certain power of disbelief is absolutely necessary for man. This is not merely a negative quality; it is an active function. To preserve one's manhood, one must keep this power of disbelief propped up by one's own strength. He who pursues science must, by the force of disbelief, drive away many popular notions, many unfounded prevailing beliefs, otherwise his science comes to nothing. He who wishes to work must keep his field of work free of thorns by the harrow of disbelief. This disbelief is not born of contempt or envy toward others; it is born of respect for one's own intellect, for one's own dedication to duty.

How powerfully, with what vigilant caution, disbelief in English policy operates in our country, and how ruthlessly that disbelief works toward its own ends, I have said before. Looking not at high statesmanship but at ordinary politics, one cannot blame the English for this rigid, unyielding disbelief. What strength, what majesty lies in unity, the English know better than we do ourselves. The English know that in the feeling of unity there is not merely a strength, but such a joy that in the passion of that feeling men, making light of all suffering and loss, engage in accomplishing the impossible. The English know better than we do what inspiration the awakening of the sense of power gives to man. Having gained and been able to preserve a higher right, one does not remain content there—the whole of one's nature strains forward toward the attainment of a still higher right. That we have

no strength, that we cannot—this delusion is the most terrible of all delusions. He who has never had the right to exercise power does not know the taste of his own strength; he is his own worst enemy. He knows that he is powerless, and this very knowledge is the cause of his dreadful weakness. In such a state, it requires no great mental effort to understand that the English will feel no political pleasure in our union, nor any eagerness to strengthen, ever more, our sense of power by placing higher rights in our hands. If the political petitioning-assemblies established in our country had begged in the manner of true mendicants, perhaps their petitions would occasionally have been granted—but they beg with a roar, they beg gathering people of country and abroad together, they try to make of mendicancy itself a form of strength; and therefore the English ruler dares not indulge this strength. To fulfil this prayer would be to pamper the arrogance of this strength—and so English policy, with ostentatious pomp, displays neglect toward it, wishing to keep its pride humbled. In such circumstances, these political assemblies cannot gain the strength of accomplishment; the strength of coming together they receive for a moment, but they do not receive the vigour to direct that strength toward any true fulfilment. Thus a strength engaged in fruitless effort remains crippled, like Aruṇa born prematurely from the egg—it merely remains yoked to the chariot as an ornament, having no impulse of its own to fly.

But the strange thing is that while the policy of disbelief is exceedingly firm on the king's side in the politics of India, on our side it is utterly feeble. We express disbelief in the same breath, yet we do not sever the bonds of belief. This is what is called Oriental—herein lies our difference from the peoples of the West. Europe knows how to disbelieve in word and deed alike—but that hard strength of keeping full disbelief awake, we do not possess; we wish to forget and become carefree, we are content the moment we can somehow believe. We are forever ready to preserve even what is unnecessary, to accept even what is unworthy of trust, to be subdued even by what is adverse.

Whatever Europe has gained, it has gained through opposition; whatever we possess is the wealth of belief. Now it has become difficult for a nation devoted to

opposition and a nation devoted to belief to come to terms with one another. The naturally trustful man is never truly respected.

Be that as it may, whatever our behaviour may reveal owing to our eternal nature, this much has taken hold of our minds: that the English king is by nature no friend to our unity, no favourer of our gaining strength. That is why we have imagined the University reforms, the Partition of Bengal, and other such government measures as a design to curtail our strength.

Such a state of suspicion ought naturally to have a certain outcome—turning all our efforts for our country's welfare back upon ourselves. This alone is the gain to be found within our disbelief. If we keep bound all our expectations at another's door, it is not merely that we fail to obtain results—the very majesty of our God-given self-power is destroyed forever. This above all we must bear specially in mind. "The English will not fulfil our prayer, therefore we shall not go to them"—this piece of cleverness is shameful. In truth, this is what we must remember: in most cases, it is the very fulfilment of our prayer that is our loss. Whatever fruit we gain by our own effort, in that we gain fruit, we gain strength too, we gain gold, and with it we gain also the philosopher's stone. If it is only because another's door is shut that we must desist from mendicancy—if it is not from a sense of manhood, from humanity, from respect for ourselves, for the inner man within us—then I place no reliance whatsoever upon this aversion to begging.

In truth, to grow suddenly and intensely attentive to one's own country out of anger at the English is rather like going in a huff to one's father's house in resentment against one's husband. That impulse takes no long time to subside, and one must return, with redoubled eagerness, to that very in-laws' house. If the duties toward our country that we have today resolved upon rest upon love of country itself, then alone will they have glory and permanence; if they depend upon anger toward the English, then it is very hard to place trust in them. If the doctor has been visiting excessively, and, angered at him, one tries to improve one's health, there is no harm in that; but only if one undertakes this out of tenderness

for the body itself is there a possibility that the task will be truly accomplished, and that enthusiasm will be preserved permanently.

That is why we have imagined the government's arrangements—the University reforms, the Partition of Bengal, and the rest—as a design to curtail our strength.

The natural course of such a doubtful state ought to be this: to turn all our efforts beneficial to the country back toward ourselves. This alone is the point of our gain within our disbelief. If we bind all our expectation at another's door, not only do we fail to obtain results, but thereby the majesty of our God-given self-power is destroyed forever. This is what we must bear specially in mind. It would be shameful to think: "the English will not fulfil our prayer, therefore we shall not go to them." In truth we must remember that in most cases, it is precisely the fulfilment of the prayer that is our loss. Whatever fruit we gain by our own effort—in that we gain fruit, we gain strength, we gain gold, and with it the philosopher's stone as well. If it is merely because another's door has closed that we must give up mendicancy—if it is not out of a sense of manhood and humanity, out of respect for ourselves and for the inner man within—then I place no trust in this aversion to begging.

Then again, just as when a clock's mechanism, being obstructed by some sudden hindrance, is given one shake, and after that it continues moving of its own accord without needing a second jolt—so too, perhaps, our sense of duty toward our country had been waiting, in our society, for one great shaking; perhaps our innate love for our own country will, after this shaking, continue to move easily for some time by its own inner strength. Therefore we must also be vigilant that this shaking should strike our minds properly and thoroughly. If, with the aid of this timely agitation, our daily vital functioning is aroused, then this is not an opportunity to let slip.

Now the point is this: in our country, on the occasion of grief at the Partition, we have resolved to buy country-made goods as far as possible instead of foreign ones—this resolve must be established calmly, deeply, upon a permanent foundation. If I feel joy regarding this present undertaking of ours, it is not because it will harm the English, nor is it entirely because our own country's traders will profit thereby—all these gains and losses depend on various external circumstances, which it is beyond my power to examine in fine detail. I am looking at the aspect of our inner gain. I see that if we, with genuine effort, apply ourselves to using country-made goods; if, when compelled to forgo the use of what is not country-made, we feel the pinch of it; if the movement toward using country goods must to some extent be deprived of comfort and display; if for that we are prepared now and then to endure the ridicule and censure of our own circle—then our country will be able to take possession of our hearts. On this occasion our minds will remain constantly turned toward our own country. Through renunciation, through the acceptance of suffering, we shall make our country truly our own. Our comfort, our luxury, our self-indulgent satisfaction, were carrying us daily further from our country, rendering us daily more helpless to serve the cause of the people's welfare—today if we all together, in our daily conduct, look toward our country and give up somewhat the display of wealth and the habit of comfort, then, through the unity of that renunciation, drawing nearer to one another, we shall be able to make our country strong. This is the true fulfilment of using country-made goods—this is worship of the country, this is self-dedication before a great resolve.

Surely our hearts have long been waiting for self-dedication through some such labour, hardship, and sacrifice—we have certainly not found satisfaction merely in convening meetings, making speeches, and submitting petitions. Never even in delusion have we thought that our life is being fulfilled through this. Through this we have not been able to realize any strength of our own; it has not been able to draw out, with irresistible force, our hearts, the eagerness of our worship, the restlessness of our self-surrender heedless of pleasure and pain, unconcerned with calculations of result. Whether in the nature of each of us individually or in the nature of our nation, expectation dwells in the innermost recess of the heart, waiting to offer itself up entirely, outwardly, in response to some great call—there, whether our sight falls upon it or not, its inextinguishable lamp burns nonetheless.

When, through some great attraction, we can abandon the hollow of our own comfort, our own self-interest, and offer ourselves powerfully, as it were, beyond ourselves—then we have no fear, no hesitation; then alone can we realize the strange strength lying within us—we no longer feel ourselves poor and weak. To realize thus directly the strength within oneself, and, through the union of that strength with the vast strength without, is the sole fulfilment of both our individual life and our national existence.

I know for certain that we are all waiting for this vast fulfilment. It is for want of it that our whole country lies overwhelmed with despondency and burdened with lassitude. It is for want of it that our ingrained weaknesses do not depart, that the discord among ourselves does not vanish, that the fickleness of our self-conceit is by no means removed. It is for want of it that we are unwilling to bear suffering, to give up luxury, to accept loss. It is for want of it that we cling to life with the desperate eagerness of a fear-stricken child clutching its nurse, unable to embrace death with silent heroism. He who is the deity of our country, who binds us in one thread with our forefathers, who is opening the path for our striving to attain fulfilment in our children, who beneath this sun-lit blue sky has, age after age, gathered all together and awakened all our hearts in one particular way by one particular message, who has kept displayed before our eyes, generation after generation, the particular form of our familiar, shadow-and-light-dappled forest, plain, and cornfield, whose sacred rivers flow to the very doors of our homes as His footwashing water, who without distinction of race invites Hindu, Musalman, and Christian to one great sacrifice and, seating them side by side, serves with His own hand the plate of food to each—that indwelling deity of our country, that eternal Lord of ours, we have not yet been able easily to perceive directly. If, by some sudden event, by the storm of some great passion, the veil should for once be lifted a little, then we shall suddenly see, within this god-inhabited land, that none of us is separate, none of us is disconnected—we shall see that He who, from age to age, has kept us gathered together, amid one wealth, one joy and sorrow, one vast Nature, within this ocean-washed, Himalaya-crowned, generous land, is making us ever one; that the deity of this country is unconquerable, that none has ever subjugated Him, that He is not a student of an English school, He is not a subject of the English king, that our manifold degradations have not been able even to touch

Him, that He is mighty, He is eternally awake—when we can see this unfettered, self-evident form of His, then in the fullness of joy we shall worship without effort, we shall renounce, we shall surrender ourselves; no exhortation will be needed then. Then we shall not shrink from difficult paths, then we shall mock the notion that another's favour is the ultimate resource for national advancement, and shall be able, with our whole heart, to despise the gleanings of quick gain bought at the price of humiliation.

Today, a single sudden event, striking all Bengalis with one and the same pain, has given us, it seems, even if only for a moment, a glimpse of this indwelling deity of our country. That is why those who never used to think are thinking, those who used to mock have fallen silent, those who never knew how to look toward any great resolve and accept any kind of sacrifice now seem eager to endure some inconvenience, and those who used to rush eagerly to another's door at every pretext are now seeking their own strength, albeit with some hesitation.

Consider once, carefully, this strange phenomenon. Previously, wounded by some unpleasant act of the government, or by some unwelcome law, we have many times raised many devices, much clamour, called many meetings; but our hearts gained no strength, we ourselves did not fully believe in our own effort—and so, even with a thousand exaggerations, we could not draw the king's attention, could not remove the country's indifference. Today, though the impending Partition has become a cause of the deepest grief to the Bengali, this grief has not overwhelmed us with helpless despondency. In truth, we feel a certain joy in the midst of this sorrow. The reason for the joy is that in this sorrow we are experiencing ourselves—we are not wandering about seeking another. The reason for the joy is that we have caught a glimpse that we have a certain strength of our own—by the influence of that strength we have today gained the supreme right to sacrifice, to endure suffering. Today even our boys are saying: give up foreign attire, give up foreign luxury—hearing this, even the elders are not rebuking them, even the wise are not mocking them; whence have we gained the strength to say this without hesitation, and to hear it uttered in silence? Whether in joy or in sorrow, in prosperity or in adversity, when true union of heart with heart is achieved, He whose advent cannot

remain concealed even for a moment gives us this strength in the day of calamity, gives us this joy in the day of sorrow. If, by the light of the lightning flashing tonight in this storm, we had been looking only at the faces of the secretaries in the government palace, then this generous impulse within our hearts would never have existed at all. In this light we are seeing the deity of our own temple, the invisible presiding spirit of our unity—that is why our enthusiasm has become so alive today. Not in the day of prosperity, but in the day of crisis, has Bengal gained this life within her own heart. From this we must understand that the power of God does not work only through the path of what seems feasible; from this we must understand that even the weak has strength, even the poor has wealth, and that He who can turn misfortune itself into fortune, that ever-wakeful Being, waits in silence only for our awakening. His command is not this: that since the government is drawing an artificial line through the middle of your map, you should go about beseeching them, weeping and wailing, boycotting foreign goods, sending telegrams and emissaries to England, in order to have that line erased by their favour. His command is this: that whatever lines any king may draw through the midst of Bengal, you must remain one—not by force of petition, but by your own strength must you remain one, by your own love must you remain one. Partition may occur through the agency of the king, or it may not—do not be excessively sorrowful or excessively elated over this; rejoice rather in this, that you are today feeling one and the same aspiration, and find your fulfilment in this, that from the desire to satisfy that aspiration one and the same impulse has been born in the minds of all.

Therefore, we must not now let this happy opportunity be destroyed merely by enjoying, for some days, an agitation of the heart. We must restrain ourselves, discipline ourselves, and make this emotion permanent. If, with the help of this occasional movement, our daily vital activity is roused and kept awake, then this opportunity is not one to be discarded.

Now the point is this: in our country, out of grief at the Partition, we have resolved, as far as possible, to stop buying foreign goods and to buy country-made goods instead—this resolve must be founded calmly, deeply, upon a permanent good. If I

feel joy regarding our present endeavour, the reason is not that it will harm the English; nor is it entirely that our own country's traders will thereby profit—these gains and losses depend on many external circumstances, and it is not within my power to weigh them minutely. I am looking at the aspect of our inner gain. I see that if we, with sincere effort, apply ourselves to using country goods; if, when we must abstain from using what is foreign, we continue to feel the pinch of it; if the movement of using country goods must, to some degree, be deprived of comfort and display; if for that we remain ready, now and again, to bear the mockery and censure of our own circle—then our own country will be able to possess our hearts. On this occasion our minds will remain constantly turned toward our country. Through renunciation, through the acceptance of suffering, we shall make our own country truly ours. Our comfort, our luxury, our self-indulgent satisfaction, were daily carrying us further from our country, daily rendering us helpless for the vow of serving the people's good—today, if we all together look toward our country in our daily conduct of life, and can give up somewhat of the ostentation of wealth and the habits of comfort, then, through the unity of that renunciation, drawing nearer to one another, we shall be able to strengthen our country. This is the true fulfilment of using country-made goods—it is worship of the country, it is self-dedication before a great resolve.

Certainly through some such labour, hardship, and renunciation, self-dedication, our hearts must be waiting—merely by convening meetings, making speeches, and submitting petitions we have surely gained no satisfaction. Never even in delusion have we thought that our life was being fulfilled through this. Through this we have not been able to realize a strength of our own; this has not been able to draw out, with irresistible force, our hearts, the eagerness of our worship, the restlessness of self-giving unconcerned with joy or sorrow, unconcerned with judgement of consequence. Whether in the nature of each of us as individuals or in the nature of the nation, an expectation of complete outward self-offering in response to some great call surely dwells in the innermost heart—there, whether our gaze falls or not, its inextinguishable lamp burns on regardless. When by some great attraction we can abandon the hollow of our comfort and self-interest and give ourselves powerfully as it were beyond ourselves, then we have no fear, no hesitation; only then do we realize the strange power lying within us—we no longer feel ourselves

poor and weak. Thus to realize directly the strength within oneself, and, through the linking of that strength, the vast strength lying outside—this is the sole fulfilment of our individual life and of our national existence.

I know for certain that for this vast fulfilment we are all waiting. It is for want of it that our entire country has been left overwhelmed by despondency and burdened by lassitude. It is for want of it that our ingrained weakness does not depart, that discord among us does not vanish, that the fickleness of our vanity is by no means removed. It is for want of it that we are unwilling to bear suffering, forgo luxury, accept loss. It is for want of it that, like a fear-stricken child clinging to its nurse, we hold desperately to mere life, unable to embrace death with silent heroism.

TAKING A VOW

Read by a certain lady at a meeting of a Women's Society

I rise today in this assembly of women with no pretension of delivering a lesson, nor with any claim to say anything new.

It is precisely because my words are not new, precisely because there is no need to instruct anyone, that I stand before you today, having set aside all hesitation.

That very thought which today lies awakened everywhere in the heart of the country—it is in order to make it clearly manifest before the assembly of women that we have undertaken this effort of ours today.

A particular hour has recently arrived in our country, and this we all feel. Within a short time our country has received blow upon blow. We have suddenly understood that we must change the direction of our journey.

If, at the time when this nationwide affliction of blows has come upon us, at the time when the hearts of all of us have become somewhat agitated, we neglect this hour, then we shall be disregarding the summons of Providence.

Shall we call this a calamity? This gathering of dense clouds on every horizon bringing on the darkness of the rainy season, this flash of lightning and roll of thunder startling our hearts, this deluge of rain that has set the earth afloat—it is those who seize the opportunity presented by this very calamity who will provide the world's food. Even now the farmer must gird his loins, plough on shoulder. If this brief season is allowed to pass unused, then the whole year brings only famine and lamentation.

In our country too, God has of late sent, in the guise of calamity, an opportunity which we shall not let go to waste—that is why we have today striven to make even our humble strength as active as possible. That single agitation of grief which has made all our hearts restless—today we must question that very messenger of sorrow sent by Providence, learn his command, and determine our duty.

The days when we could keep ourselves lulled in forgetfulness are no longer ours. Through great sorrow we have had to understand today that we ourselves, and none other, are our own support. Those who do not easily understand this simple truth are taught it by humiliation, are taught it by despair. So today, driven to it by necessity, we have had to understand: "Seek not, seek not." Today, standing in imminent danger of severance, Bengal has clearly understood this: that where there is discord of interest, where there is absence of trust, where there is nothing left of strength or resource but the empty bowl of begging, there the hope of gaining fruit is not merely futile—it is the very culmination of humiliation.

Perhaps one day this blow too will become bearable—what we have learned through humiliation, we may perhaps again forget, and again prepare ourselves for graver humiliation still. This is the very misfortune of the weak and unwary—sorrow gives them only sorrow, not instruction. Today, anxious at that very fear, while there is yet time, we have gathered together to accept the gift of this hour of adversity.

Where we ourselves stand, wherein lies our strength, and in which direction lie our dishonour and our adversity—if today, by divine grace, we have come to some understanding of this, then it will not do merely to leave that understanding as a faint notion. For if we keep it only in our minds, gradually it will become a mere matter of words, and at last one day it will be forgotten and vanish. We must engrave it upon our hearts forever, and set it to work in action. We cannot possibly afford to forget it—for if we do, we shall perish.

We must set it to work. But we are women—our field of action is not, like man's, extended abroad. I do not know what work our menfolk are prepared to undertake in this evil hour. I do not know whether even now they can say with true sincerity of heart:

"Deceived by hope's illusion, alas, what fruit have I gained—

This thought alone remains in my mind!"

He who, lifeless, seeks the easy path only in order to keep himself deluded, needs but little deception to be deceived. Perhaps he still thinks that if the beggar must be driven from this royal door, then the beggar's bowl must be slung over the shoulder and carried across the sea. Whether on this shore of the ocean or on that, the destitute wretch, having no other refuge, has taken shelter at that very same feet.

But this condition does not apply to all among our men—an earthquake has occurred in the field of their long-cherished beliefs, their devotion has been shaken, their hopes have cracked and split open at every arch—now they are thinking that it is safer to take refuge even in one's own poor and humble cottage. So now, throughout the whole country, a heart-piercing call has arisen for relying upon one's own strength.

I do not know how the men will respond, each in his own way, to this call—but has this call not entered our own inner apartments as well? Are we not daughters of our motherland? Is the country's dishonour not our dishonour? Can the country's sorrow not pierce the very stone walls of our homes?

Sisters, some of you may perhaps ask: we are women, what can we do—to shed tears in silence on the day of sorrow is our only resource.

This I cannot accept. Look at what we are indeed doing. We buy our saris from England for our own wearing, Hamilton supplies ornaments for many of us, our household furnishings come from foreign shops, we are surrounded, waking and sleeping, by things foreign. All this while we have been snatching the food from our mother's mouth, stripping off her ornaments, and offering heaps upon heaps of tribute night after night at the feet of the deity of foreign lands.

We shall not go to fight, nor shall we return to begging—but can we not at least say: no more! We shall no longer, in exchange for our fondness for foreign fashions, give away the very morsel of food from the starving mouth of our humiliated motherland onto the plate of the foreigner. Whether good or bad, we shall wear our country's cloth, we shall use our country's goods.

Sisters, do not invoke the plea of aesthetic taste. The sense of beauty is an excellent thing, but there is something higher still than that. I shall not admit that our sense of beauty will be injured by country-made goods. But even if, through education and habit, that impression should arise, I say this: today is not the day to make the sense of beauty supreme above all else—when a child lies long upon a sickbed, the mother does not hesitate to sell her Benares sari to provide for his treatment; where, then, is there room for the claims of aesthetic taste?

I know many will tell me that it is easier said than done. Our habits, our prejudices, our craving for comfort, our sense of beauty—it is no small matter to push these aside and shake them loose.

Certainly it is not easy. It is easier, for a single day, to sign one's name in a subscription-book. But great deeds are never accomplished easily. When the hour arrives, the conch-shell of duty sounds forth, and then whatever is hard must be accepted precisely because it is hard. In truth, therein lies the joy—joy precisely because it is not easy, happiness precisely because it is difficult of attainment.

We have read in history that in time of war, Rajput women gave up their ornaments, the hair of their heads; they did not then think of convenience or of aesthetic display. From this we learn that in this world, if woman has not gone to war, she has practised renunciation; when the hour came, she did not hesitate to give up even her life, let alone her ornaments. The heroism of renunciation is in no way inferior to the heroism of action. When I reflect on this, a certain pride is born in my heart, that in this vast, diversely-powered universe, woman has had no cause for shame; woman has not merely enchanted by beauty—she has shown her strength through renunciation.

Today our Bengal lies wounded by the merciless blow of imperial power; today is the day of renunciation for the women of Bengal. Today we shall take a vow. Today we shall fear no hardship, we shall disregard ridicule; today we shall not go about indulging our fancy for finery while our suffering mother lies upon her bed of sickness.

To protect the things of our own country—this too is a particular task belonging to woman. We know how to love. Love does not go running about, dazzled by novelty's glamour, in every direction. What is our own—be it fair or be it plain—finds no disrespect at the hands of woman; it is thus that the household is preserved.

Consider once: today the literature of Bengal is able to raise its head, unabashed and vigorous; there was a day when it knew no bounds of contempt in the eyes of the educated male society. In those days men would buy Bengali books and, with an air of shame, offer the excuse: we shall not read this ourselves, the women in the inner apartments will read it. Very well then—we ourselves have borne the burden of that shame of theirs, but we have not abandoned the books. Today, at least, that day of shame has passed. In whose lap, within those inner apartments, the children of Bengal—dark or fair alike—have grown to manhood cherished with the utmost tenderness, in that very lap within those same inner apartments has

Bengali literature also spent its neglected childhood, never suffering want of food or clothing.

Consider once: where the Bengali man, wearing foreign clothes, was proclaiming himself everywhere with utter unconcern, there his wife and daughters were unable to adopt foreign dress. That woman should go about dressed in some grotesque foreign costume is so utterly incongruous with our feminine nature that even the man who had sold himself, head to foot, to the infatuation of foreign fashion, protected his own wife and daughters from this deep disgrace.

This power of preservation, being the innermost strength of woman herself, is the reason why the country's native character remains preserved within the woman's maternal lap. In the flood-tide of novelty, many things belonging to the country, which have been swept away from the world of men, have even to this day taken refuge in the secluded chambers of the inner apartments. When one day this flood's ravages have subsided, they will surely be sought after, and the country will be grateful to those tender, preservation-skilled women.

Therefore, if today, setting aside all other considerations, we protect with unshaken fidelity the country's crafts, the country's produce, then in that alone shall we be fulfilling the duty of woman.

I fear that some among us too may say, with a contemptuous sneer: as if the moment a handful of you resolve to use country-made goods, Manchester is instantly going to go bankrupt, and Liverpool will sit down and starve to death!

I know that argument. Let the mills of Manchester go on wheezing forever; let the engines of Liverpool never be extinguished like Ravana's funeral pyre. If many of us today are eager to use country goods instead of foreign ones, it is not because we wish to bankrupt England. In truth, this our effort is merely an effort to give

outward, embodied form to the sentiment within our minds. We, not easily perhaps, but at least through repeated blows and humiliations, have grown eager to know ourselves as particularly our own against the other—and that very eagerness must be expressed in deed and word alike—otherwise within two days it will be forgotten and rendered futile. We need both a mantra and an emblem. We shall embrace our country within, and bear the emblem of our country without.

The natural difference and opposition between us and the foreign imperial power has become, day by day, ever more clearly manifest. Who now can keep it hidden? The king could not, nor could we. This opposition is indeed sent by God. Without this opposition we could never have gained ourselves powerfully, truly. As long as we, in hope of receiving favours, gazed with complete dependency upon the face of these foreigners, so long were we losing ourselves ever more completely. Today we feel pain from the blow of opposition, we suffer inconvenience—all this is true, but we have come to stand upon the path of realizing ourselves in a particular way. As long as this gain is not complete, so long will this opposition not cease; as long as we have not discovered our own strength, so long will our conflict with the power of others continue.

I have a fear in my mind that some even among ourselves will say, with contemptuous mockery, that if a few of you merely vow to use country goods, Manchester will instantly go bankrupt and Liverpool will sit down starving!

I know that objection. Let the mills of Manchester wheeze forever; let the fires of the Liverpool engines not be extinguished like Ravana's pyre. The reason many of us today are eager to use country goods instead of foreign is not that we wish to render England bankrupt. In truth, this our very effort is only an effort to give outward embodied form to the sentiment within our minds. Not easily, perhaps, but at least through repeated blows and humiliation, we have grown eager to recognize ourselves as distinctly our own against the other—and this very eagerness must be expressed in word and deed together, else within two days it

shall be forgotten and rendered vain. We require both a mantra and an emblem. We shall welcome our country within, and bear the mark of our country without.

He who has not found his own strength, who must helplessly follow behind another—may God grant that he never enjoy comfort, may he never feel pride. May humiliation and contempt continually remind him that he has no strength of his own—shame upon him! That we are being humiliated proves this: that God has not yet abandoned us. But let us delay no longer. May we make ourselves fit for this purpose of God. May we not, in imitation of others, take pride in comfort or in goods bought in another's market. If we suffer some hardship by giving up foreign furnishings, that very hardship will not let us forget our mantra. That mantra is this:

Sarvaṃ parabaśaṃ duḥkhaṃ sarvamātmabaśaṃ sukham.

Whatever is dependent on another is sorrow; whatever is dependent on oneself is joy.

The women of our country have long observed austere vows, praying for the recovery of kinsfolk. That austerity of women, I do not believe, has ever been in vain in the life of the Bengali. Today, if we women of the country take such a vow for our country, if with firm resolve we renounce the luxury of foreign things, then this penance of ours shall bring welfare to the country—then in this vow of ours we shall gain merit, and our menfolk shall gain strength.

THE NATIVE STATES

Everyone knows that climate and natural conditions differ from country to country. Work cannot proceed without recognizing this difference. Those who dwell amid canals become fishermen; those who live on the shore of the sea take up trade with foreign lands; those who dwell on level, fertile ground make agriculture their livelihood. If one were to tell the Arab dwelling in a desert-like land, quoting the history of other peoples, that progress cannot be achieved without the help of agriculture, that counsel would be futile; and if one sat down to prove to the inhabitant of land suited for cultivation that courage and heroism can only be cultivated through hunting and animal husbandry, and are ruined by agriculture, such fruitless agitation would only cause harm.

In truth, different peoples and different classes attain excellence by following different paths, and this is the sole means of the all-round progress of mankind entire. If we, seeing that Europe, endowed with certain natural advantages, has attained a particular kind of progress, become eager for exactly that same kind of progress, then we shall render both ourselves futile and deprive universal humanity. For, according to our country's particular nature, the excellence of manhood which we are capable of attaining—if we destroy that by vain effort at imitating others, we destroy a thing which mankind can obtain from no other source. Consequently, universal humanity becomes the poorer by that much. To treat farmland as though it were a mine, and mining land as though it were a field for cultivation, is to cheat human civilization.

For whatever reason, there exist certain grave differences between Europe and India. To remove that difference by excessive imitation is not merely impossible—were it to be done, it would harm universal humanity.

When we read the history of foreign lands, or see with our own eyes the might of foreign powers, a sense of self-reproach is born in us—then every point of

difference we notice between ourselves and the foreigner seems to us the cause of our own ruin. When the immature son of some professor goes to see a circus, it may occur to him that if he learns to stand and leap about upon a horse's back like that, and receives the applause of the crowd, only then will his life be fulfilled. His father's quiet work will seem to him utterly lifeless and meaningless.

There may indeed be particular grounds for reproaching the father. If the circus performer has, through unremitting practice and diligence, attained excellence in his own profession, and if, for want of such energy and endeavour, the professor has failed to achieve excellence in his own work, then indeed he may be put to shame.

If we must feel shame at perceiving the difference between Europe and India, then we must properly examine the cause of that shame, otherwise the true root of the shame will never be uprooted. If we say that England has a Parliament, England has joint-stock enterprises, that in England nearly every individual has some share, however small, in governing the state, and that therefore they are great, while, since we lack these things, we are small—then we have not stated the fundamental point. If, by the grace of some sportive deity, we should for a few days become the outward possessors of English greatness, like the fool Abu Hassan—if trading-vessels should appear at our ports, if the gabled roofs of Parliament-houses should pierce the sky—then how heart-rending would be the weeping with which the farce of the first act would end in the fifth! Let us never for a moment think that Parliament makes men—in truth, it is men who make Parliaments. The clay is everywhere the same; with that same clay one man shapes a Shiva, another a monkey; if anything is to be changed, it is not the clay that must change—it is the education and discipline, the effort and thought, of the one who shapes it, that must be changed.

I have noticed a Sanskrit motto inscribed upon the royal emblem of this kingdom of Tripura—"Kila viduḥ vīratāṃ sāramekaṃ"—know heroism alone to be the essence. This statement is entirely true. Parliament is not the essence, the trading-

vessel is not the essence—heroism alone is the essence. This heroism manifests in various forms according to time, place, and circumstance—some are heroes in arms, some heroes in learning, some heroes in renunciation, some heroes in enjoyment, some heroes in religion, some heroes in action. There are several reasons why we cannot presently bring our Indian genius to full excellence, but the foremost cause is the want of heroism. If, owing to the poverty of this heroism, we are failing even our own nature, by what strength shall we succeed through imitation of the foreign?

In our mango orchards today mangoes do not fruit well, while in England's apple orchards apples grow abundantly. Shall we therefore think that only by cutting down our mango trees and planting apple trees shall we gain the fruit we desire? We must understand this for certain: the reason the apple tree bears such fruit is that at its root, in its soil, there is nourishment—the nourishment of our mango-orchard soil has long since been exhausted. That we do not get apples is not our fundamental misfortune; that there is no nourishment in the soil—that is the true cause for lament. Had that nourishment existed in sufficient measure, the apple might not have fruited, but the mango would have fruited abundantly, and then, in the success of the mango, we would never have thought to lament the want of apples. Then we could easily have sold our country's mangoes and bought England's apples in the market, without having to carry in our minds the desperate hope of becoming wealthy in a single night through another's favour, bowl of beggary in hand.

The real point is: we must put nourishment into our country's soil. That nourishment is nothing else but this—"Kila viduḥ vīratāṃ sāramekaṃ"—know heroism alone to be the one true nourishment. The sages have said: nāyamātmā balahīnena labhyaḥ—this Self is not to be attained by one devoid of strength. Setting aside the question of the Universal Self, the Supreme Self—he who is weak does not attain his own self; he who has not fully realized his own self can attain nothing else whatsoever. The path by which Europe is attaining its own self is not before us; but the price by which it is attaining it is essential for us too—that price is strength, that is heroism. Europe, through the particular action and in the

particular condition by which it is realizing the self, we shall not realize the self through that same action and condition—before us lies another path, around us another environment, our past history is different, the original store of our strength lies elsewhere—but that same heroism we too must have, so that we may use the path, make the environment favourable, bring the past history to fruition in the present, and, discovering and unlocking the hidden treasury of our strength, become its rightful possessor. "This Self is not attained by one devoid of strength"—the Self indeed exists, but for want of strength we cannot attain it. We have no strength for renunciation, no courage to suffer, no steadfastness to pursue our goal; the feebleness of stunted resolve, the self-deception of a shrunken strength, the timidity of pleasure-seeking, the fear of public opinion, the dread of what others will say—these keep us, moment by moment, far from true self-recognition, true self-attainment, true self-establishment. That is why, like beggars, we envy the greatness of others, and think that if only our external circumstances could somehow, by chance, become like theirs, then all our want, all our shame, might disappear.

If we read the history of foreign lands carefully, we shall see how various are the forms of greatness—the greatness of Greece and the greatness of Rome are not of the same kind—Greece is great in learning and science, Rome great in action and in law. When Rome, bearing its conquering banner, came into contact with Greece, though victorious over Greece in physical might and practical governance, it was defeated by Greece in learning and intellect, and took to imitating Greece's arts and literature and science; yet even so it remained Rome, it did not become Greece—it succeeded in its own nature, not through imitation—it became the world's model in the work of building civil society, not in literature, science, and the arts.

From this we must understand that there is not, in this world, a single form and a single method of excellence. The model of European power that today rises, sky-piercing, before our very eyes, is not the only form progress can take—progress can take an entirely different form altogether. If we infuse life and strength into the model of Indian excellence that we have witnessed, we need not feel ashamed

before the world. There was a day when India, through knowledge, through religion, conquered China, Japan, Burma, Siam, Tibet, and Mongolia—most of the Asian continent. Today Europe has set about conquering the world through arms and through commerce. Let us not, having studied in schools, think this modern European method to be the sole cause for pride.

But it is not the English arm alone—the English schoolroom has attacked us on every side, at home and abroad, in body and mind, in custom and thought. The foreign influences with which they afflict us are, at least for a while, obliterating the very path of our self-knowledge. Without that self-knowledge, we can never attain self-improvement.

Now is the time to speak of what true purpose is served by India's native states. People at home and abroad say that the native states of India are falling behind. That falling behind on the path of the world's progress is not good, all will admit; but not all means of advancing forward are equally beneficial. To advance by one's own strength is the only true advancing—even if it means advancing at a slower pace, that is good. There is no glory in advancing while riding upon another's shoulders or lap—for the true gain lies in gaining the strength to walk, not merely in the fact of advancing. How much genuine achievement is there in whatever progress we have been able to make under British rule! However good the administrative system there may be, it is not, after all, truly ours. Man advances on the path to perfection only through error and loss. But the British Empire has not the patience to let us make mistakes. Therefore they can give us alms, but they cannot give us education. They can give us the advantage of what belongs to them, but they cannot give us ownership of it. Suppose the earlier commissioners of the Calcutta Municipality were unable to show sufficient competence in municipal work, and the authorities, growing impatient at that fault, deprived them of their independence. It may be that the municipal work of Calcutta now runs better than before, but such improved running cannot be called the best of all. Even running worse than this, by our own strength, would be better for us than this. We are poor and incapable in many respects; if, because our country's university education is not comparable to the wealthy and learned universities of England, the king curtails

the authority of the country's own people in the field of education and, by his own force, sets up mock replicas of Cambridge and Oxford, what advantage have we gained thereby—if we can build up, by our own effort, a school worthy of the poor, that is our own true possession. To consider as good that good which is not within our own control is a grave danger for man. Not long ago, a certain Bengali Deputy Magistrate was expressing utter contempt for native state administration—then it was plainly evident that he thought all the good order of British rule was somehow his own; that he was merely a bearer of burdens, that he was not the master, but merely a small cog in the machine—if he had remembered this, he could not have expressed such arrogant contempt for native state administration. That what we receive under British rule is not ours—this truth has been hard for us to grasp properly, and that is precisely why we keep begging the king for ever-newer rights, forgetting that receiving a right and being fit to exercise it are not the same thing.

Even amid the errors and slow progress of the native states, our consolation lies in this: that whatever gain exists there is in truth our own gain. It is not the gain of riding upon another's shoulder, but the gain of walking upon one's own feet. It is for this reason that I cannot help but keep an eager eye fixed upon this small kingdom of Tripura in our land of Bengal. It is for this reason that whatever defects and obstacles I see in the administration here, I regard as the misfortune of all Bengal. It is for this reason that if I find any incompleteness or lack of order in the governance here, I have no eagerness to discuss it with pride—my head hangs in shame instead. For this reason, if I learn that mean self-interest, for the sake of some small personal gain, some petty present convenience, does not hesitate to loosen the very foundation of the temple of royal glory, I cannot remain content to regard that offence merely as a trivial event in a small kingdom. If we do not truly recognize the shame of this native state as our own shame, and its glory as our own glory, then we have misunderstood our country.

I have said before that only by strengthening the Indian nature through heroism can we hope for true excellence. The British Empire, even if it wished, cannot help us in this respect. They know only their own greatness as the sole greatness—and for that reason, even with good intention, the education they are giving us teaches

us to despise our own country. Among us, those who are famous as "patriots" are often foremost among these despisers. And it is precisely those who despise India in their hearts who are most eager to turn India into England—fortunately, this impossible hope of theirs can never succeed.

Whether or not our native states remain backward, it is here, precisely here, that we wish to see the true form of our own country. May the plague of distorted imitation never gain entry here—this is our one earnest hope. The British Empire wants our progress, but that progress must be progress in the British manner. In such a case, it is like applying the growth-method of the water-lily to a land-lotus. But in the native states, may the country determine, through the unbroken discipline of its own nature, the means of its own advancement—this is our aspiration.

The reason for this is not that Indian civilization is the highest of all civilizations. It would be presumptuous to doubt that the wealth European civilization is giving to mankind is of immense value.

Therefore, it is not my contention that European civilization must be rejected as inferior—it is precisely because that would be unnatural for us, impossible for us, that we must turn our minds toward our own indigenous ideal—I have no inclination to dispute by comparing the two ideals, but this much must be said: that both ideals are essential for mankind.

The other day a certain gentleman here asked me whether it was a good thing that the Government had sold off the foreign paintings from the gallery of the Art School.

I answered that it was indeed good. The reason is not that foreign painting is not excellent material. But that art cannot be acquired so cheaply. Where in our

country shall we find a true model of that art? If, having heard two thumris and a "hilimili paniya," some Englishman fresh from England wished to acquire Indian musical art, it would be a friend's duty to dissuade him. With a few cheap trinkets from the foreign market, and along with them one or two good pictures placed before our eyes, how are we to gain a true model of pictorial art? Nor do we have, in our country, any proper means of judging just how inferior what little we thus learn actually is. Where there exists no complete grasp of a thing, but only a scattering of disconnected examples, there any attempt to gain acquaintance with that thing is folly. This incomplete education destroys our very power of vision—we cannot properly learn the excellence of another's country, and we lose even the capacity to see the excellence of our own.

We have enrolled in art schools, but we do not even know what the true ideal of art in our own country is. Had we gained acquaintance with it through education, we would have had the opportunity to gain a real strength. For this ideal we might have seen embodied, as a complete and living whole, in the country's plates, pitchers, bowls, baskets, embroidered cloths, temples, monasteries, garments, ornaments, textiles, in the very foundations of houses—in countless limbs and members; upon this we could have applied our concentrated attention; having gained this ancestral wealth, we could have put it to use in our own creative work.

For this reason, it is well that in the present state of our education, the infatuation with foreign pictures should be forcibly broken. Otherwise the mind will not turn to see what exists in our own country—out of sheer contemptuous blindness we lose the very treasure lying in our own household chest.

We have seen that a renowned Japanese art connoisseur was struck with wonder and delight upon seeing a few worm-eaten paintings from this country—he took one painting away with him; many connoisseurs in Japan wished to pay him a great price to buy it, but he would not sell.

We have also seen that many connoisseurs of Europe, searching through our obscure shops and markets, are collecting old, tattered paper pictures as though they were treasures of immense value. Seeing such pictures, our art-school students turn up their noses in disdain. What is the reason for this? The reason is this: he who has truly learned the art of painting can properly perceive the beauty even of pictures in an unfamiliar foreign style—an artistic vision is born in him. But those who merely learn by copying can see nothing beyond the copy.

Had we learned to see our own country's art comprehensively and truly, then that artistic vision, that artistic knowledge born of it, would have thrown open before us every gate of the divine mansion of artistic beauty. But through the utterly incomplete education in foreign art, we think we have gained what we have not gained at all, and, taking pride in what remains, in truth, in another's treasury, we grow arrogant, considering it our own possession.

The famous French traveller writing under the pseudonym "Pierre Loti," who came to travel in India, was disheartened at seeing the litter of foreign furniture in our country's royal palaces. He understood that our country's great kings, decking their rooms with the most vulgar wares of foreign furniture-shops, take pride in it purely out of ignorance and lack of education. In truth, European art is a living thing—there artists are daily creating new styles, there exists a traditional history, passed down over time, of diverse artistic methods, and the connoisseurs there know the particular relevance of each to its particular time, place, and circumstance—while we, knowing nothing of this, merely take our purse of money and, through some ignorant shopkeeper's assistance, blindly heap up a random assortment of goods within our homes—we have no capacity to judge among them.

If Lord Curzon could forcibly shut down this furniture trade, then, driven by necessity, we would be compelled to preserve the dignity of our own indigenous goods. Then the habit of buying things merely with money would cease, and the cultivation of taste would begin instead. Then, entering a wealthy man's house, we would gain acquaintance not with the shop, but with the householder's own artistic

knowledge. This would be, for us, true education, a matter of true gain. In such a case, within and without, in our architecture and sculpture, in the very foundations of our houses, in our marketplaces of goods, we would come to realize our own country.

Unfortunately, the common people of every country are uneducated. Ordinary Englishmen have no artistic knowledge—hence they are blind, conditioned by their own native customs. They expect nothing from us but imitation of themselves. Only when they see, in our drawing-rooms, the goods of their own shops, do they feel at ease—only then do they think that we have become civilized, fashioned according to their own order. According to their uneducated taste, our country's ancient artistic beauty is giving way to cheap and vulgar imitation. This country's artisans, out of greed for foreign money, have taken to producing bizarre imitations of foreign styles until they have quite lost their proper artistic vision.

As in art, so in every other matter. We are coming to understand the foreign method as the sole method. Not merely into our external possessions, but into our very minds, even into our hearts, the poison-seed of imitation is entering. There can be no greater peril for a country than this.

It is toward the native states alone that we look for deliverance from this great peril. We do not say that we shall refuse to accept foreign goods. We must accept them, but let us accept them in an indigenous vessel. We shall not cut off our own hand in order to buy another's weapon; like Ekalavya, we shall not offer the thumb of our right hand as guru-dakshina for archery skill. We must remember this: to transgress one's own nature is to become weak. The tiger's flesh is doubtless nourishing food, but the elephant, coveting it, would certainly die. Let us not, out of greed, commit violence against our own nature. In our religion, in our conduct, in our thought and demeanor, we are doing precisely this every day, and that is why our problems grow ever more complicated—we are merely becoming ineffective and burdened. In truth, complexity is not our country's dharma. Simplicity of implements, simplicity of the manner of life, is our country's own—

herein lies our strength, our life, our genius. If we do not sweep away, in one stroke, the abundant clutter of the foreign factory from our ancestral courtyard-shrines, we shall die on both counts—that is, neither will the foreign factory succeed here, nor will the courtyard-shrine remain fit for habitation.

Unfortunately, this dust-laden air of the factory-house has entered into the machinery of our native state administration—rendering the simple needlessly complex, exiling the dwelling-place and making it stand outside like a stranger. Those who have been reared at the hand of the Englishman cannot even conceive that if one must take the Englishman's goods, one must make them one's own, or else harm inevitably results—and the sole way of making them one's own is to transform them according to one's own nature, not to leave them exactly as they are. If food remains merely food and nothing more, far from nourishing, it causes disease instead. Only when foreign goods are digested by our Indian nature, giving up their alien form and becoming one with our own body, can they become a matter of gain to us—as long as their crude foreignness remains unaltered, they are no gain at all. The adopted sons of foreign Saraswati cannot understand this in any way whatsoever. Their gaze is not on the goal of nourishment; they consider mere accumulation as the ultimate aim. That is why our native states too are needlessly crippling their own strength in the excessive, unnecessary tangle of foreign administrative procedure. If we could accept the foreign burden with ease, if we did not have to see it as a burden at all, if the state, instead of trying at every moment to become a mere office, had not turned into a clockwork mechanism; if that which was connected to the artery of a living heart had not been joined instead to the pipe of a machine, then there would be nothing to object to. Our country's state is not a vast bureaucratic factory run by clerks, not a faultless, unfeeling engine—its manifold bonds of connection are not iron rods, but heart-fibres—the Goddess of royal fortune, moment by moment, infuses sap into the dryness of its labour, softens the hard, adorns the trivial with beauty, illumines the transactions of debt and credit with the radiance of benevolence, and forgives errors and faults with the tears of mercy. It is our misfortune that our native states are being poured into the mould of foreign offices and turned into machines—it is in these very places that we wish still to gain the living, tender, maternal touch of the milk-laden, gentle bosom of our motherland—this is our aspiration. May our Mother not

remain confined here too within merely printed envelopes—may the country's language, the country's literature, the country's art, the country's taste, the country's radiance, find refuge here in the maternal lap, and may the strength of the country be able to reveal itself, as easily and as beautifully as the cloud-free full moon reveals herself.