

called Brahman. But he found these beams enveloped in the mist of Avidya. He set himself to teach men how to remove this ignorance, how to be free from all impurities in heart and in spirit. Like Western men of science, with materialistic opinions, he too had at first doubts about the wisdom of God. Seeing misery on all sides, seeing the red claws of nature, seeing that all creatures are engaged in devouring each other, his mind was in despair. But these doubts and this despair were soon dispelled by the teaching of the Master. He soon understood that misery is an agency for the purification and evolution of the soul, that nature is for the education of the soul and the soul is infinitely more powerful than nature. He learnt that through struggle for existence and through the will to conquer nature the soul of man gradually evolves. Nature tries at every step to limit man, to crush even the very life out of him, while the man puts forth his best exertion to escape from its all-devouring laws. This exertion on both sides, of the one to destroy and of the other not to be destroyed, sharpens the faculties and evolves a lower being into a higher being. Primitive man crossed a river with the help of a log of wood; from the log evolved the canoe; from the canoe the boat, and from the boat the mighty steamship of the present day, which goes from one end of the earth to the other, regardless of tide and tempest, and in defiance of mountain-high waves. The primitive cart has given place to the locomotive of to-day, which in a few hours travels over a distance which formerly took more than a month. A message, which was formerly almost impossible to send from one part of the world to the other, now reaches its destination in the wink of an eye. Thus the exertion to live, to avoid pain and discomfort, to seek pleasure, is the force by which primitive man has been evolved into modern man. But the conquest of the external nature only, cannot satisfy the soul of man for all time. Man as he grows is confronted with another world—the internal. He has to pause to know the truth by which he may be the master of himself and attain peace. That truth has for long been taught but never fully recognised and not often consciously practised,—the truth that self-sacrifice is the means to evolve man into a divine being.

All creatures, unconsciously or consciously, are working towards this end. The whole world is guided by the law of self-sacrifice,—from the lowest form of life to the Lord Jesus who consciously allowed himself to be crucified for the sake of humanity. The more conscious the sacrifice, the brighter shines the divinity in man. But I fear to go further into the subject, for the more I go, perhaps the deeper will I be dragged into perplexing questions of subtle metaphysics, from which I may not have the time to

extricate myself. Suffice it to say that Swami Vivekananda preached with the greatest emphasis the doctrine that service to our fellow-creatures, without distinction of creed, colour or caste, is service to God. His teachings have borne fruit, as the very existence of this institution shows. Centres of service are springing up here, there and in many places, and our young men are now fired with a new spirit of work, the work of alleviating the misery of others. The workers of this Institution go about picking up from roadsides unfortunate beings stricken down by illness. Some of them are found to suffer from the most loathsome diseases. Yet the noble workers of this Institution nurse them with the utmost care, and handle the most repugnant cases without the least feeling of disgust and without the least fear of infection and death. All honour to them. Indeed, the Swami Vivekananda has breathed a new life into the dry bones of India.

Compared with Swami Vivekananda, I am a mere worm grovelling upon earth, while the souls of men like him soar in the exalted spheres above, immersed in the spirit of God. Men like me can only *strive* to do their duty. But if we wish we can all do some good, however little it may be. The field for work is vast, but workers are few. Millions of our countrymen are steeped in ignorance. Millions live in the midst of misery from the day of their birth to the day of their death and thousands die of preventable diseases. No charity could be greater than that of labouring for the rescue of the millions of unfortunate beings. No work could be nobler than the work of illumining with the light of knowledge the mind of the ignorant masses. Let us therefore try to do some good deed, every day of our life, remembering that service rendered to our fellow-creatures, is the highest worship rendered to God.

TO THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

O Prophet Teacher, Inspirer of our time;
 Arising like the Sages of the olden days,
 Renewing the Spirit of our Vedic Lays
 Thou standest forth, amongst us, all sublime.
 Vivekanand', a Sankaracharya thou,
 Another Seer of Upanishadic Lore,
 Thou hast made the whole wide world to bow
 Unto Ind's Ancient Wisdom, and e'en more,
 For in thy footsteps arise anew and grand
 The glories of our Dharma and our Land.
 Shiva and Sheva alike thou preached;
 Because of thee we again have reached
 Towards our ancient greatnesses,
 Our spiritual blessedness.

A Disciple.