

In Either Case

THERE are two movements of humanity, upward and downward, and both are irresistible. It may seem for a moment that the downward movement is arrested and an upward lift may for a while rejoice the hearts that are attached to a cause forsaken by God and Destiny. The majestic or impetuous rise of a religion, an idea, a nation may for a fleeting period be held back by main force and with a fierce and infinite labour the wheel may be driven back for the space of an inch or even two. But God cannot be deceived and God cannot be conquered by violence. Where He is the Charioteer, victory is certain and if He wheels back, it is only to leave ground which is no longer advantageous to Him and shift the conflict to terrain fixed beforehand for the victory. Often He forces His adversaries to drive Him from ground conquered and occupied in order that they may exhaust their strength on a position never meant to be permanently held and by their very triumph prepare a more decisive overthrow.

Minute minds fix themselves on details and say, "Here we have failed, there we have prevailed"; and if the record of defeats seems to be long and ill-balanced by doubtful successes, they grow discouraged and apprehend the ruin of their cause. So men deceive themselves as to the trend of events by not keeping their eyes open to the great stream of inevitable tendency which prevails over all backwashes and petty currents. And where defeat is predestined for a season, their want of faith leads to the very calamity which they apprehended. The eye of Faith is not one with the eye of Knowledge; — Faith divines in the large what Knowledge sees distinctly and clearly; but in the main thing Faith and Knowledge are one and the wisdom of the Lover is justified and supported by the wisdom of the Seer. Faith fights for God, while Knowledge is waiting for fulfilment,

and so long as the latter is withheld, the former is necessary. For without indomitable Faith or inspired Wisdom no great cause can conquer.

We must look therefore to the great tendency of things and interpret in their light the minute events that are passing at the moment. Is the main tendency of things upward or downward? If it is downward, even then we must strive, for the man who abandons a cause which is right because it is denied success, is despicable, and he inflicts a wound on mankind in the present and the future. Great causes which are fought out boldly to the end are made sacred by courage and suffering and their resurrection and final victory is inevitable. Only those which are supported by cowards and meanly abandoned, are erased from the books of the future. The mediaeval movement of civic liberty in France and Italy failed and gave place to Teutonic despotism, but it revived with a hundredfold force in the French Revolution and it was the impetuous rush earthwards of the souls that had fought for it hundreds of years before that shattered to pieces the once victorious feudal system. But if, as we are assured, the movement is upward, then we may persist in absolute confidence, sure that reverses in details are only meant to prepare and point the true way to victory.

Persistence does not imply persistence in methods that have proved to be infructuous or from which, though temporarily fruitful, God has withdrawn His sanction. We must remember that we are a nation not yet trained in the vaster movements of modern politics. Not only our rank and file, but our captains and our strategists need the training of events, the wisdom of experience to make them perfect. Fire, impetuosity, self-sacrifice, intellectual vigour, subtlety, wealth of ideas, fertility of resource to meet unexpected happenings, these have been given to us in abundance. But the perfect experience of the veteran in great battles, the acute political intelligence which comes of long familiarity with the handling of high affairs and national destinies, these are yet in us immature and in a state of pupillage. But God Himself is our master and teacher, for He would give to His chosen nation a faultless training and a perfect capacity.

Only we must be ready to acknowledge our mistakes, to change our path, to learn. Then only shall we victoriously surmount all obstacles and move steadily, impetuously, but without stumbling or swerving, to our goal.

Moreover, we have weaknesses that are still rampant and uncorrected in our midst. It is our first duty to purge these out of our hearts with a merciless surgery. If the intellectual equipment is deficient, the spiritual equipment is also far from perfect. Our leaders and our followers both require a deeper sadhana, a more direct communion with the Divine Guru and Captain of our movement, an inward uplifting, a grander and more impetuous force behind thought and deed. It has been driven home to us by experience after experience, that not in the strength of a raw unmoralised European enthusiasm shall we conquer. Indians, it is the spirituality of India, the sadhana of India, *tapasya*, *jnanam*, *shakti* that must make us free and great. And these great things of the East are ill-rendered by their inferior English equivalents, discipline, philosophy, strength. *Tapasya* is more than discipline; it is the materialisation in ourselves by spiritual means of the divine energy creative, preservative and destructive. *Jnanam* is more than philosophy, it is the inspired and direct knowledge which comes of what our ancients called *drishti*, spiritual sight. *Shakti* is more than strength, it is the universal energy which moves the stars, made individual. It is the East that must conquer in India's uprising. It is the Yogin who must stand behind the political leader or manifest within him; Ramdas must be born in one body with Shivaji, Mazzini mingle with Cavour. The divorce of intellect and spirit, strength and purity may help a European revolution, but by a European strength we shall not conquer.

The movements of the last century failed because they were too purely intellectual and had not an enlightened heart behind them. Nationalism has striven to supply the deficiency; it has poured the inspirations of the heart into a swifter and more discerning intellectual activity. But Nationalism also has been defective; it has been Indian in sentiment and aspiration, European in practice and actuality. It has helped itself with the intellect, rejoicing in its own lightness, clearness, accuracy, shrewd insight,

but it has not been sufficiently supported by inspired wisdom. It has attached itself to imaginations and idealisms, but has not learned to discern the deeper Truth and study the will of God. It has been driven by ardent and vehement emotions, but was defective in clear will-power and the pure energy that is greater and more impetuous than any passionate feeling. Either Nationalism will purify itself, learn a more sacred truth and command a diviner impulse, or it will have to abandon utterly its old body and get itself a new. The pressure of events seems to be pointing in the latter direction. But in either case defeat cannot be the end, victory must be the end.

In all the events of the last year and a half the voice of the divine Teacher can be heard crying to us, "Abandon that you may possess; do my will and know yourselves, purify yourselves, cease to follow your fancies." He that has ears, let him hear. Knowledge will not come without self-communion, without light from within, not even the knowledge of the practical steps that can lead to success. Every step that is taken in the light of a lower wisdom will fail until the truth is driven home.

The work that was begun at Dakshineswar is far from finished, it is not even understood. That which Vivekananda received and strove to develop, has not yet materialised. The truth of the future that Bijoy Goswami hid within himself, has not yet been revealed utterly to his disciples. A less discreet revelation prepares, a more concrete force manifests, but where it comes, when it comes, none knoweth.

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