

## The Revival of Industry in India

**G**ENTLEMEN, — IF I hesitated to accept your invitation to preside at the opening of this Exhibition, the importance of the occasion must be my excuse. You called me to step into the breach, to face publicly the most tremendous question of our times and to give you my solution of a problem on which no two people agree, except that it is urgent.

But I do not think that we realise how urgent it is. Famine, increasing poverty, widespread disease, all these bring home to us the fact that there is some radical weakness in our system and that something must be done to remedy it. But there is another and a larger aspect of the matter and that is that this economic problem is our last ordeal as a people. It is our last chance. Fail there and what can the future bring us? We can only grow poorer and weaker, more dependent on foreign help; we must watch our industrial freedom fall into extinction and drag out a miserable existence as the hewers of wood and drawers of water to any foreign power which happens to be our master. Solve that problem and you have a great future before you, the future of a great people, worthy of your ancestors and of your old position among the nations.

Two years ago I stood looking at the wonders of that great Exhibition at Paris which summed up in so striking a manner the progress of a century in civilisation, industry and commerce. If I were asked what struck me most in that noble and artistic effort of a great nation, I should answer: the magnificent proportions and excellent management of the undertaking, so vast in conception and admirable in execution; the efficiency of the orderly and illuminating arrangement and careful accuracy of detail; and after that, the extraordinary ingenuity displayed in the educational section in methods and appliances; and not only the ingenuity but the thoroughness of these methods, especially