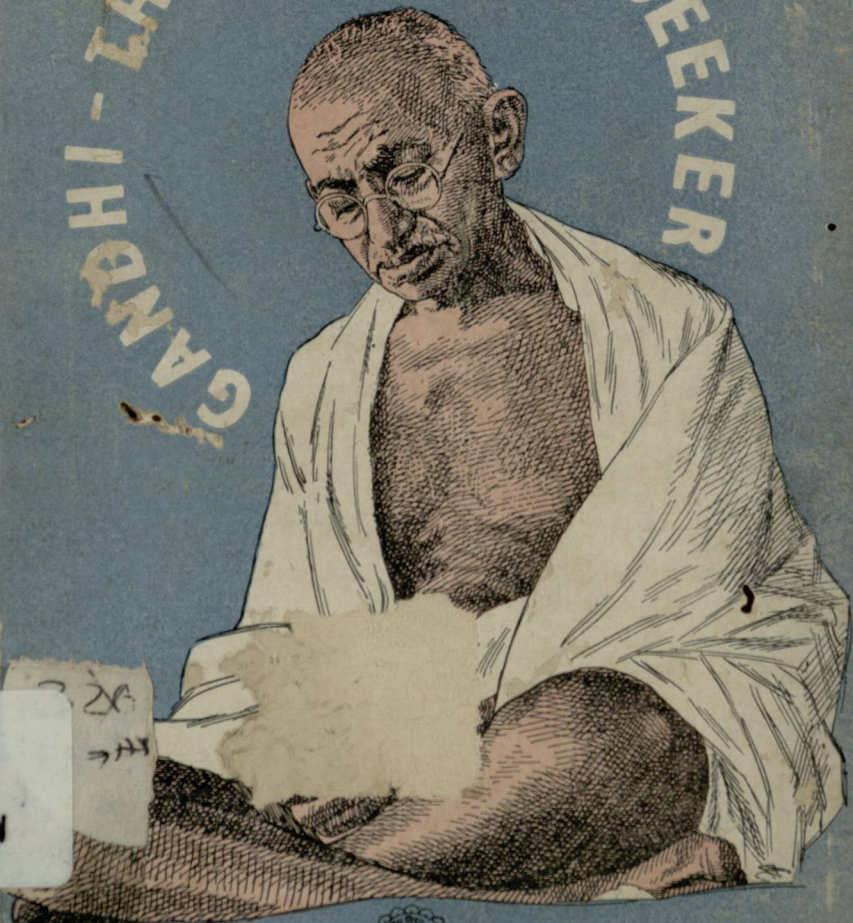


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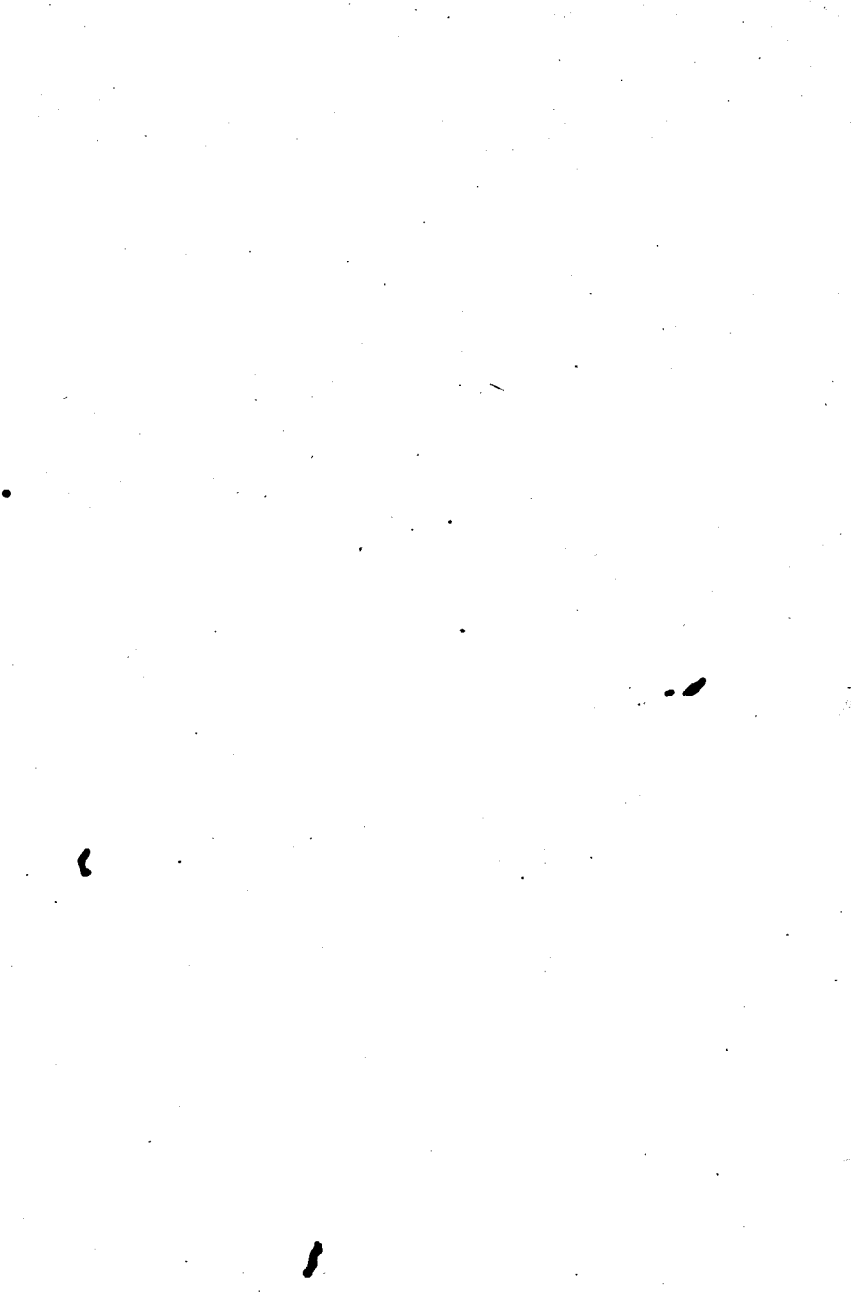
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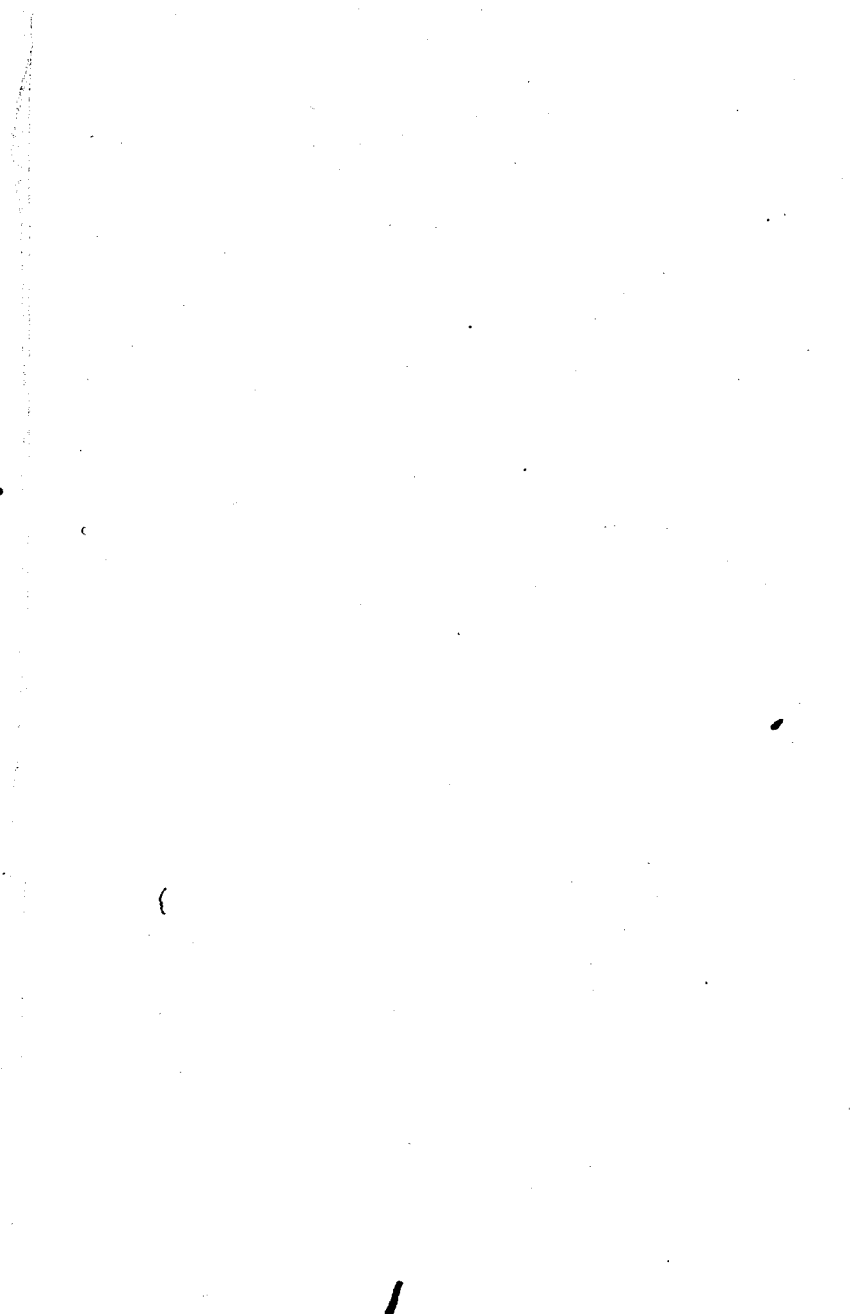


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GANDHI

THE SPIRITUAL SEEKER

By
R. R. DIWAKAR



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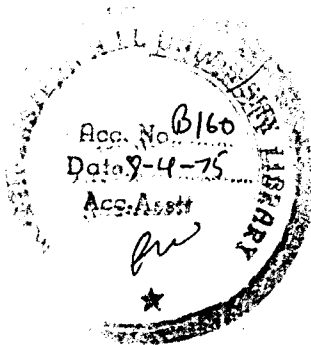
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AUTHOR'S NOTE

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is presenting to the reader my talks on Gandhiji at different places. They naturally cover various aspects of his thought and philosophy including those on his spiritual aspiration, Sadhana, and spiritual attainment. I suggested to the Bhavan that the talks may go under the common title 'Gandhi, the Spiritual Seeker'. It is well known that Gandhiji was basically a seeker after truth. He went about it in a scientific spirit. Whatever he thought or did, his one aim was to realise the Truth and live in it. Truth was God for him.

The talks on Gandhiji's Spirituality were delivered at Trivandrum in the Kerala University (11th and 12th of November 1963). Those on the Creative Thought of Gandhiji were given at Varanasi in the Banaras Hindu University (7th and 8th of August 1963). Talks on Gandhiji's Work for the uplift of Women were organised by the Municipal Borough at Baroda and were delivered at the Town Hall (5th and 6th of October 1963).

I, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Bhavan, am grateful to the Kerala and Banaras Hindu Universities as well as to the Municipal Borough of Baroda for allowing the talks to be published by the Bhavan in book form.

R. R. DIWAKAR

BANGALORE

28th January 1964

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1

Gandhi, the Spiritual Seeker

I

GANDHIJI'S SPIRITUAL ASPIRATIONS

Within a few hours of the passing away of the Mahatma on 30th January 1948, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while addressing the vast multitude which had gathered in Birla House in Delhi that evening, said that a light had gone out of our lives and yet that light would shine for a thousand years. On the morrow, while walking about in the premises of the same house, waiting for the mortal remains of the Father of the Nation to be taken out to the banks of the Jamuna, Sardar Patel remarked, "in what better and nobler way could he have died to crown the great saintly life he led!"

Both these utterances have proved prophetic. There is no doubt now that the light of Gandhiji's life would shine for hundreds of years and illumine the path of humanity like that of the Buddha, Mahavir and Christ. There is also no doubt that the martyr's death he died has immortalised him. Seen in the perspective of the history of human values, his fragile body perished, but his indomitable spirit belongs for ever to humanity. It would now feed for ages the flame of the religion of "Truth through Non-Violence".

The Creative Thought of Gandhiji

I

INDIA, CONTINUOUS, VITAL AND CREATIVE

Even a casual glance at Indian history reveals that at least for the last three thousand years it has been continuous and vital. In spite of the ups and downs and various critical vicissitudes, in spite of foreign invasions and internecine feuds, in spite of vast social and economic changes, India has maintained its identity as a living nation. When we peep into prehistory, say for about two or three thousand years beyond, the seeds of the basic thought and culture of India are seen sprouting and growing through the Vedic and Vedantic literature that was taking shape. It is the vision and the inspired spiritual teachings of the Vedic Rishis which ultimately gave character and individuality to the culture of India. It is only spiritual foundations built on the bedrock of inner experience, and rational conviction built on empirical knowledge, which can be the broadest and the most comprehensive bases for any enduring and evolving human culture and civilization. India's culture has been fortunate in having such firm foundations. That is in fact the secret of the continuity, the vitality and the creativity of Indian culture. That is also the reason why cultural unity has persisted sub-

Gandhiji's Work for the Uplift of Women

The uplift of women is a subject which usually sails under the more general and wider heading of social reform. That is why Gandhiji, who among so many other things also worked for the progress of woman-kind, is called a great social reformer. Of course, this designation of his also covers his work for the tribals, the untouchables and for all backward classes and peoples. But to look upon Gandhiji as we look upon other social reformers or to assess him as predominantly a social reformer would be a mistake. We shall then be missing the profundity of thought, the depth of perception, and the clarity of vision he brought to bear on the subject of women and their advance. His concern for the fair sex arose not merely out of compassion for their plight or out of chivalry, or out of a patronising attitude towards those who suffer. It was a part of his total and integral view of life. It was there due to his perception of the deeper purpose for the fulfilment of which consciously or unconsciously man and woman together were constantly striving. It was there because of his experience of the harmony which would reign in all homes if man and woman adjusted with each other. And finally it was inspired by the vision of the ecstatic beatitude which

