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of Life.



VII. How Should We Shape Our Course of Life.

*"May we be lords of
rich delightful possessions
with noble heroic progeny"*

RIG VEDA.

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ATMA.

How should we shape our Course of Life?

“A man should think on wealth in all just upright ways, and strive to win it by adoration ever on the path of Law and Order; but should never think of acquiring it by unjust unlawful means. He must counsel himself with his own mental insight, and his deeds must accord with his conscience. Thus he should ever grasp still nobler vigour with his spirit” (X, 31,2) “Impart active wisdom to us, O Glorious Lord, as does a Sire to his sons; teach and guide us in this our course of life so that we may attain to Thy Light in this very life” (VII, 32, 26) “Longing and yearning for Thee and depending wholly on Thee, O Glorious One, close to Thy friendship do we cling. Lead us beyond all evil and suffering along the path of Thy Holy Law” (Rig Veda, X,133,6)

What should be the practical course of our life ; what are we to seek and what to avoid ; what are we to do and what not to do ; how are we to use our short span of life to secure the greatest amount of

happiness not only for ourselves but also for others ; how are we to train ourselves to work for the greatest happiness of the greatest number ; and finally how are we to attain to divine light in this very life, and make it possible for others to attain to the same ? These questions are before man, ever since he appeared on our globe, in some form or other. But the answers proposed have been very various and quite bewildering. And who can decide where doctors differ ? Many are the doctors who have come out with their special prescriptions for the ills of life. And to add to our difficulties it very often becomes not an easy task to understand these doctors and make out the prescriptions they have offered for the benefit of mankind. Let us take a few instances to make our point clear. Tukarama, the Mahratta saint, says at one place : "Where compassion forgiveness and calmness are, there is God" This is truly a very noble teaching ; but we must note that if these virtues are not guided by truth, justice and prudence, then they are apt to mislead us by encouraging idleness and villainy which are ever ready to dupe simple people. The same is the case with love and other similar gentle virtues, for false love is as bad as cruelty ; so we say that love must be of the right sort tempered with discretion and justice. So when the Buddha, Jesus and Nanak preached the value of love, we must take it to mean the right sort

of love and not blind false love which is even worse than hatred. Even great scholars are misled in interpreting such saints. We have given an example of this in chapter III of Part I of our "Vedic Teachings and Ideals". There we had to show how Dr. Bhandarkar misinterpreted both Tukarama and the Veda when such great scholars find it difficult to understand the spirit of saints and scriptures, how much harder it is for ordinary folk to get at the true meaning of these same. Thus we see how great and many are the difficulties in our task of deciding upon the right course of practical life. Even supposing that we have overcome these hardships and found out the right principles of conduct, another most difficult task awaits us in the shape of adjusting or harmonising our practical conduct with these same principles. For hard as it is to arrive at the right decision and judgment, if we have not the moral courage to carry it out, then all our labour will be lost. But even here our helplessness does not end; for with the possession of both right judgment and moral courage, if we have neither the authority nor the means to enforce it, then too our efforts will bear no fruit. So frail is human nature. Is there no hope then? Cannot man shake off this helplessness? Before we proceed to answer these questions let us see exactly where human frailty lies, in what respect human nature is weak; for if we can find this out then it will suggest the remedies we want

for removing our weakness as far as possible. Wherein then does our weakness lie ; what are the points of our helplessness ? Let us give them in their due order :— (1) Ignorance of the true Principles and Rules of conduct, (2) Lack of moral courage to act up to those principles even when they are known, and (3) Lack of power, authority, influence and such other means of enforcing and putting into practice the right principles of conduct. The third point includes lack of earnestness, sincerity, lofty aspiration, noble endeavour, perseverance, right resolve, and the like. These suggest clearly what we require in shaping our course of life. It is very interesting to note here that these three points point to the harmonious development of all the faculties of man, physical, mental, moral, spiritual and social. Also what is called the Eight-Fold Path by the Bhuddha and his followers, namely, Right Knowledge, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Action, Right endeavour, Right livelihood, &c., comes under these same three points we have stated above, as they are comprehensive enough to cover Buddha's Path.

Now let us turn to the first mantra quoted above. Its meaning is very simple yet deep. It teaches us to think on and strive to acquire wealth by all just and lawful means possible ; next it tells us ever to counsel ourselves with our own mental insight and

conscience so that we may not go astray from the Lawful Path but always keep within its limit; thirdly and lastly the mantra advises us to be ever ready to grasp higher and nobler spiritual vigour and blessedness. Here we have a perfect scheme of life stated in simple yet most significant terms. We are in fact told how to shape our course of life in this world of perplexities and disappointments and sorrows so that we may always be able to steer clear of ruinous rocks, shallows and eddies in our earthly voyage. The mantra does not refer to God but still takes man from earthly to heavenly association, from secularity to spirituality.

The very first idea the mantra places before us is that of wealth, the second of Path of Law, the third of humble Adoration, the fourth of deep mental Insight, the fifth of conscientious Work, the sixth of nobler and greater Spiritual vigour. These six ideas are so comprehensive as to embrace the whole field of human endeavour ; physical, mental, moral, spiritual and social, both secular as well as heavenly. In a few simple words the mantra gives us the chief principles which ought to guide our activities throughout our life-pilgrimage. We take them one by one

I. *Acquisition of Wealth*:— Here we must note that the word Wealth re-presents all the physical necessities of life including even bodily strength

health, &c. None will dispute that acquisition of wealth is the first of those requirements which go to make our life happy. Kalidasa, the great classical poet of India, has well put it: "Sariram adyam khalu dharma-sadhanam" which means, our body is the first and foremost means of acquiring religious merit or spirituality. In Sanskrit, the word *sarira* means that which gives shelter to organic, super-organic and super-physical things such as the mind and spirit. And wealth means all that physical material which is essential to the building up of a strong and vigorous body which is itself the mould basis and shelter of super-physical objects. Thus we see how the acquisition of wealth gains in importance as the first step towards "grasping higher and nobler spiritual vigour" of which the mantra speaks as the last and highest aim we should have in this life. So wealth is to be but the means to that end; and so long as we look upon it in this light and use it for that noble end, wealth is quite desirable. But if we disregard this principle and look upon wealth as the end in itself, making the acquisition of wealth the one supreme aim of our life, then surely we go wrong and commit a ruinous mistake, a suicidal blunder. To guard against this pit-fall the mantra adds the remaining clauses which we shall have to consider in their proper places. Unless man be constantly on his guard he is apt to go wrong and so the mantra adds the

qualifying clauses commanding him to remain within the sphere of law, order, conscience and humble adoration of God. Wealth we must have only to use it for the highest end.

“The Veda, you say, tells us to acquire wealth; but our great saints such as Tukarama Kabira and Nanaka as well as Jesus and Buddha have all along preached the great value of poverty: to give up, in fact, wealth and the world; to whom should we give our allegiance and whom are we to follow?” Let us try to understand the saints as well as the Veda, especially when the former prefer poverty and the latter wealth, progeny, fame and glory. Says Tukarama: “Women and wealth are deceitful, give up these and then you will be happy, for, even great, very great men have been cheated by them; these two have been the cause of all misery. I do not want wealth, honour, progeny, learning or long life; nor am I mad after Mukti, final liberation; but I pray for one thing and that is, may I die with God’s name on my lips. As regards ignorant people, their devotion consists in desiring and praying for wealth, their worship in thinking of sensual pleasure, their action in longing for the fruit thereof, and their knowledge in meditating on luxuries; how can such persons get to God? Even if you become a millionaire, not a piece of rag will go with you.” But he does also say

“After acquiring wealth by the best of means and being ever unattached to it, spend it for the best of purposes, ever do good to others, never speak ill of others, look upon another’s woman as thy mother or sister, take the vow of non-violence and injure none, be calm and contented and thus magnify the good name of your ancestors, and honour elders—this is in short the house-holders’ duty which will lead them to bliss. Do not fast nor go to the woods (do not renounce the world), but always think of God in weal or woe, neither be lost in enjoyment nor in renunciation, but be like the child in the lap of thy Mother (God) fearless and joyous—no more advice is needed” From these Tukarama’s words it is clear that the too teaches the Vedic Ideal of acquiring wealth and utilising it for the best of purposes; and what sane man will not teach it? We must teach, preach and practise just those things which, when performed by the generality of men, will be conducive to the well-being of all. Why is it said that to be truthful and honest and just is the best course to follow? Just because such a course, if followed by men in general, will do good to all. Similarly not to despise wealth but to acquire it in the right way is the best course to follow as it is the first step towards advancing common weal. Suppose all or most men took into their head to turn recluses, give up the world and despise wealth, then what would happen? Most of these hermits

will have to live upon the labour of a few worldly folk, and the condition of man would be far more horrible than it is now. So the hermit-ideal of despising wealth and of giving up the world is not the best one for man to follow, and hence man must follow the Vedic Ideal which is meant for the generality of men as it alone can make man happy if followed in the right spirit. Our first duty then is to look to improve our physical equipment and efficiency.

“Why then have saints all along preached and preferred poverty? To this we answer: Real saints cannot preach what is evil and absurd and subversive of all that is noble. What they have condemned is not wealth but its abuse; and we have already shown how they really teach the Vedic Ideal. They were sorely pained to see people abuse wealth and their most tender heart burst forth into exclamations like:—“The people are sinking into the ocean of misery, and I cannot see them sink thus, O Lord” as Tuka Rama exclaimed. When these holy men told men to give up wealth and women, they meant that excessive attachment to these things must be given up.

If we read carefully the two different sorts of quotations given above from Tuka Rama, we shall find that the sole aim of that saint was to wean men from

their attachment to perishable things and to persuade them to fix their heart on the Imperishable. He clearly asks "Why do ye run after perishable things and lose thus the Imperishable? I greatly wonder how these people have lost their sense" We see from this that Tukarama aims at the Vedic Ideal which teaches men to look upon the world and its wealth as but a stepping stone to reach God. When the saint says that wealth and women are deceitful, he merely warns men not to look upon them as everlasting things and thus be deceived by them but to regard them as but fleeting and evanescent. In interpreting these saints as well as the Vedas, we must not be led by the letter but by the sense and spirit thereof. It is not wealth or women or the world that deceives us but it is our ignorance of the true nature of these things that misleads us. Hence in the first mantra quoted above, the injunction to acquire wealth is followed by clauses which tell us to follow certain regulations and principles so that we may always be on the right track. In our previous books and pamphlets, we have had to show how evil is subjective and not objective, how it springs from us and not from something and somewhere outside us. If we know how to use wealth for the best of purposes, it will be good for us as well as for others; but if we do not know that, then it will not do us good. So, really speaking, we should not blame either wealth or

women or the world but either our ignorance or our folly or perversity. Takarama too did not really blame the world and its wealth or women but our ignorance and folly. Because he distinctly says: "The devotion of ignorant people consists in desiring wealth, &c. "This does not mean that men should not at all desire wealth, nor does it mean that all persons who desire wealth are ignorant, but it really means that ignorant and foolish people make acquisition of wealth their sole end and aim of life, as they know nothing better and higher than wealth. So the saint really blames folly and ignorance of men. Just as although the Sun appears to us to move round the Earth really the Earth moves round its own axis, so although the letter appears to condemn the world and its wealth, the sense really condemns folly and ignorance of man. Even in common language, people use figures of speech such as the metaphor, transferred epithet and the like. "A sweet sight; my hand writes; he thought in his heart; this spirit broke"—these are common examples; but song and poetry are full of these figures of speech; and Tuka Rama sang his 'abhangas' which are poetical.

Thus we find that the world and its wealth are all good things if we do but use them in the right way. Not only is this a fact but also we have the

complementary fact that the world and its wealth are things that are absolutely necessary for not only our worldly well being but also for higher spiritual advancement. The sage Patanjali says in his Yoga Darshana "Bhoga Apavargaartham drishyam" which means, the world is meant for both enjoyment and Moksha, or final liberation. Bhoga means enjoyment, Apavarga means Moksha, and Drishyam means that which is seen, the visible palpable world. The sage does but re-echo what the Veda teaches. Those readers who have gone through our previous books and pamphlets will remember how the world is regarded by the Veda as the Love-gift from God to His creatures for their benefit. The world and its wealth are not things to be thrown off and away as we like—in fact we cannot cast them off—but are most valuable for the chastening, disciplining, purifying, invigorating, inspiring as well as ennobling of our lives so that we may at last reach our goal, the Divine Presence.

‘But the world and its wealth is all *maya*, illusion, and hence the Saints have all taught men to turn away from it to God, the only Reality. The world is a vast mirage, a bubble, a dream, a non-entity, a nothing, which to-day appears to be but to-morrow vanishes leaving not a rack behind it hence it is but proper that holy men have all along

taught men to give up the world and its lures and to turn to God, the One Sole Real Being, and the only Bestower of bliss." Let us examine this creed but briefly. When it is held that God is the only Reality and nothing besides exists, all else being 'maya' illusion, we are forced to ask: who or what are we, and who or what are the saints? We and the saints must, according to the maya-creed, be either maya or God or nothing. If we and the saints are but nothing but maya, or illusion, then we and the saints cannot be trusted or be responsible to God for our thoughts, words or deeds, all these being illusive. But if we and the saints are neither nothing nor maya, then we are God which we are not; so this creed reduces itself to absurdity. The world and its wealth are therefore not maya, illusive, but are the love-gift from God to His creatures. The world is subject to Law (Rita) which is immutable and eternal, which shows and proves that the world is not maya but real. We see the reign of regular order and unchangeable law in all the activities of Nature which is directed by God and ruled and presided over by Him. Were the world mere maya, illusive, a dream, a mere nothing, a mere void and vanity, then all order, all law, all Dharma, all experience, all idea of God's rule—nay, all our idea of God Himself would be maya or illusion. Nay, further, according to the maya-creed, God Himself would be maya and vanish into nothing.

So, this creed proves itself suicidal, cutting at its own root. Hence the Vedic teaching is true.

“The world is ever-changing, hence we say it is maya, illusive, deceitful, unreliable, and therefore worthy to be given up by wise men”. Well, who are these wise men; are they also subject to change or are they not? If everything changeable, is maya, then if your wise men are changeable they are also illusive, deceptive. And if you say they are unchangeable then they are not men, for men do change all over the world. No doubt the world is ever changing, but the changes it undergoes are regular orderly and subject to immutable laws hence we say the world is not illusive or deceptive but real and reliable. And wise men are those who humbly do strive to study and then obey these same divine laws of Nature with a resolute will, noble purpose and valiant effort and devout heart. Those idle persons who do turn saints and sadhus and hermits by hundreds and live sinfully upon the hard labour of others are condemned by Tuka Rama himself, and who will not condemn such cheats? Thus we see that the right course to follow ...is to live in the world and do our duty as dictated by our conscience never straying from the path of holy law.

The world is ever changing according to fixed laws, and so by studying these laws, facts and principles

of Nature and then shaping our life and conduct in harmony with them we can attain to divine light, companionship and bliss. This idea is finely developed in the succeeding paras of the mantra as we shall presently see. We take here the second idea ; that of the Path of Law,

II. The first idea which the mantra placed before us, we have seen, is regarding the acquisition of wealth, and we know why it was placed first. According to the commonly received notions of Post-Buddhistic period, Dharma, Law, is placed first, and the second place is given to wealth. This, in a sense, is quite right as during the first period of life known as Brahmacharya Ashram, Dharma was to be studied first, in ancient India ; and wealth was to be acquired in the second period of life known as Grihastha Ashrama. But if we take wealth not in the sense of money alone but in a wider sense embracing the whole field of physical equipment, then wealth will have to be given the first place as it forms the very basis, as it were, of all other equipment such as mental, moral, spiritual and social. The first thing we require to begin independent life-career in this world, then, is wealth or physical equipment ; and the next consideration for us is to see and be constantly on our guard that our acquisition of wealth is in perfect conformity with holy divine Law, In other words

the Path of Law must ever be uppermost in our mind when we think and strive to acquire wealth. These two ideas of *Dhana* (wealth) and of *Dharma* (law) are the most prominent concepts we meet with in the Vedas. Even the most superficial student of the Veda will have to admit that he meets with these two ideas of *wealth* and *law* almost at every step as he goes through that earliest Scripture of mankind. And the beauty of it all is that these two ideas go together, as in the mantra we have begun this paper with. The Vedic Rishi does incessantly and unweariedly pray for ample abundant riches wealth and glorious blessed possessions; and he does this as much unweariedly as he looks forward to the fulfilment of divine law in all his thoughts, aspirations, words, strivings and activities. *Rayas* and *Ritam* riches and righteousness (or law), ever go together in the Rishi's mind, as they are closely interwoven with his entire being and becoming. Riches he does desire but never without righteousness, because he is fully aware of the fact that without them he cannot advance even a step forward in the spiritual journey he has undertaken to reach his divine goal through the stormy ocean of life. The Rishi, *Rayas* and *Ritam* (the sage, riches, and righteousness or law)—these are the three R's reader or student of the Veda has to master and understand fully before he can enter into the spirit of that primeval Revelation

given to mankind. Such is the close connection between the Vedic concepts of wealth and law.

Not knowing this intimate relation between Ritam and Rayas of the Veda, many a Vedic scholar has gone astray in modern times and called the Veda quite an unspiritual secular work. If secularity means a full participation and enjoyment of the joys of this world, and if spirituality means a thorough companionship of God ; if worldliness means devotion to the affairs of this world, and if godliness means devotion to God ; if the one consists in our mind being filled with the idea of duty and responsibility we have towards our fellow-beings, and if the other is made up of our heart, soul and consciousness being completely saturated with the idea of God's all-in-allness and all-pervasiveness ; then the Vedic Rishis did both practise and teach a well-balanced harmonious combination of both secularity and spirituality. The Veda teaches us to strive and secure all kinds of wealth, physical, mental, moral and spiritual, in their proper proportion, as it requires us to develop duly every one of our faculties so that we may attain to our fullest stature and perfect humanity. The Vedic Teaching is not one-sided and narrow but all-sided and all-comprehensive. Modern critics of the Veda have failed to understand this characteristic of that hoary Scripture. They say that the Veda is full of

prayers for sons, wealth, health, strength, length of life, fame, valour, glory and the like "worldly goods," and so in their view the Veda is "worldly". But they forget that these very things which they think to be worldly are necessary for a full and complete manhood forming the basis of a perfect spiritual life. The idea that the spiritual is opposed to the secular is un-Vedic and untrue. The true secular is the basis of the truly spiritual because the latter cannot be secured without the aid of the former. Or rather, the truly spiritual is a mere continuation of the truly secular, or, we may say, an improvement and advancement of the same. To obtain the best results the truly secular and the truly spiritual must be intimately interwoven with our very being and becoming as it was in the case of the Vedic Rishis. To separate the one from the other and then to oppose them one against the other betrays but an effete condition of the human mind. At any rate, it bespeaks an unnatural abnormal state of mind to oppose the worldly against the spiritual; for none but a diseased worldling will find morality and spirituality most difficult to practise and attain to. A perfect sound and healthy physical condition does ensure good morals gliding easily into noble spirituality. And on the other hand, a rotten state of society will always reveal woeful physical conditions in which the wretched people live. Thus we see how

the physical or the secular and the moral or the spiritual conditions act and react upon each other in such an intricate way as to baffle all our efforts at separating them.

Now we give here some Veda mantras that teach us the value of Law and Order :—“ True, guardian of the Law, Thy faithful worshipper wins ample light and dwells in peace, whom, Thou as, the Supreme Lord and Friend of all guardest by banishing his trouble. O God ” (vi, 3. 1.) “ Friend art Thou of the lofty law. Controller of many a blessing. Thou art the bestower of wealth ; from Thee spring all our blessings as branches from a tree ; give us such things as bring high fame and hero-children ; grant us seed and offspring full of vigour : may brave sons, Auspicious God, gladden us a hundred years ” (vi, 13). “ For full perfection and weal bring the immortal Gods who strengthen holy law ; let not our household gear be found defective ” (vi, 15). “ Free from all blame, without reproach, uninjured, let us invoke Him who with steadfast laws gives wealth and fair precious things to us, and in whom unite all paths that lead to riches, like rivers that commingle with the ocean ; grant us glory, the mightiest might, strong and most potent force, all splendid vigorous manly powers that they may make us joyful ; from every side may Thine heroic strength

come to us, giving us the glory of the realm of splendour; with most heroic aid from Thee, like heroes may we win wealth by deeds of glory; Thou, King, art Lord of earthly and heavenly treasure: give us riches, vast, sublime, and lasting——through these Thy friendships, O God invoked of many, may we be victors over every oppressor and be happy, helped by Thee, with ample riches" (vi, 19) "Filled full of fatness, compassing all things that be, wide, spacious, dropping meath, beautiful in their form, the earth and heaven stand parted each from each by Varuna's (the Supreme God's) decree, unwasting and rich in germ and seed. The eternal Pair, with full streams, rich in milk, in their pure rule pour fatness for the pious man. Ye who are the Regents of this world, O Earth and Heaven, pour into us the genial flow that prospers men. Whoso leads a righteous life succeeds, and, spreading by Law, in his seed, is born again; from the earth and heaven flow things diverse in form but ruled alike". (vi, 70) "Guard us from evil, Pushan (Vivifier), guards us strengtheners of Law: let not the evil-wisher master us" (vi. 75, 10) "Give riches borne on cars, with many a brave son, all-satisfying, and the guard of mighty Order. Give us a lasting home that we may disperse godless bands that oppose us and meet with men to whom the Gods are gracious. Rudra (the Mighty) by day, Rudra at night we honour with our songs, the

Universe's Father, Great and Lofty, Blissfull, Undecaying" (vi, 47), "Savitar, God, whose Law is constant, is the root of wealth, gatherer up of treasures, and looks with His might on every form and figure" (x, 139, 3) "I laud Thee Lord of all blessings with my song, bring hitherward the Devas whose Laws we love most to show us grace and thus bless us" (x, 150, 3) "Yea, the first followers of Law pure holy strengtheners of Law, the Fathers were" (x, 154. 4) "Bless us now with wealth, choice and excellent, for Thou art He who dealeth wealth. Further me in obeying Eternal Law, the Law of Gods, as we mortals acknowledge it" (x, 35, 7, 8) "None harms the mortal man who honours and obeys divine laws; he makes his house endure, gathers plenteous wealth who pays obedience to divine will; born in his sons anew he spreads as Law commands and prospers every way unharmed; even without strife he gains riches and goes his way on pleasant paths whom the Gods protect; so we claim of them wide protection, as a son; may we obtain that which shall bring us far greater bliss" (viii 27, 15, 16, 17, 22) "Thornless, easy, is the path for him who obeys the Law".

Here we see how much the Vedic Rishis respected divine law, in what high honour they held it. They regarded sin, sorrow and misery as the outcome of disobeying it. Laws are physical,

mental, moral, spiritual and social, and any one who breaks them will have to suffer for his ill-deed whether he does it knowingly or unknowingly. Hence it is our bounden duty to first acquaint ourselves with these same laws and then to shape our conduct in accordance with them. This appears to be simple enough at first sight but it is not so, because human nature is frail and weak in many points, physically, mentally, morally and spiritually. Therefore in the opening mantra we have the third idea: namely, of humble Adoration, from which we can derive most valuable help in getting over the many difficulties that arise from our weakness, as we shall see presently when we come to take up that point.

From the quotations given above from the Veda we have to notice one more point of great importance, which we have discussed already. In the Veda, *Rayas* and *Ritam*, i. e., riches and righteousness (or *Dhana* and *Dharma*) go together. The idea of wealth and the idea of law are breathed forth in the same breath by the *Rishi*. Lawful, splendid, glorious, righteous, blameless, irreproachable, vast, excellent, invigorating and blessed wealth, riches and possessions, earthly as well as heavenly,—for such lasting blessings the *Rishis* do ever pray. This is just what man should aspire to and strive for in this life. Fullness and perfection, not narrow one-sidedness, must

be our aim as far as it is possible for man. Harmonious all-round development of all the faculties of man must we strive to secure in this life. So broad and comprehensive is the sublime Vedic Ideal the mantras place before us.

Before passing on to the discussion of the third idea, namely, that of humble Adoration, we have to dispose of a question relating to the second and the first. It is this : " Seek ye first the Spiritual, and then all other things will be added to it " these words are put in the mouth of Jesus ; we have substituted the word spiritual in the place of the phrase : kingdom of heaven. In Mundakopanishad we find a similar idea expressed in different words : " By knowing what can we know all this ? " The answer given is : " The knowers of Brahma say that there are two sciences to be known, the higher and the lower, the latter is four Vedas and the six Angas ; the former is that by which the Imperishable is obtained ". This means that to reach God we have to study the Vedas first (this book-knowledge being the lower) and then strive practically to reach God by putting into practice the principles learnt from the Vedas. The higher science refers to the knowledge gained by leading practical life according to the precepts of the Veda. In ancient times in India people went to a guru or lived with their own father and studied the

Veda. The knowledge gained thus was not full and perfect and therefore this imperfect knowledge gained during the bachelor (Brahmacharya) state is fitly called lower. When however the student in after-life carries into practice the Vedic precepts, and gains a full and perfect knowledge, this is fitly called higher. The Upanishad thus tells us that we can reach God and know all things if we study the Veda and live a life according to its teachings and ideals. This is perfectly sane and rational, as well as natural. By knowing God, of course, we can know all; but to know God we have to proceed steadily step by step from the lower book-knowledge or word-knowledge to the higher practical life knowledge about Nature, Soul and God. In Rig Veda I, 50, 10, we have the experience of Rishis who have attained to Divine Light, step by step, after securing knowledge (light) of Nature and Soul:—"Gaining the higher knowledge of the Soul after the knowledge of physical Nature, we have secured the highest knowledge of God the Supreme Being " Here in this mantra three grades or stages of knowledge, lower, higher and highest, are spoken of referring to inorganic or physical, organic or psychic, and superorganic or spiritual planes. The first is called *Ut*, high, the second is called *Uttara*, higher, and the third is called *Uttama*, highest, in the mantra. These three stages of knowledge we have to reach or attain to if we want to

know of God and reach Him. *Ut* (high) is the physical Nature, and we have to study it before we can study *Uttara* (higher) or organic or psychic Nature about life and mind. And unless we study and know about these two we cannot aspire to gain the knowledge of *Uttama* (the highest or supreme God.)

Now we think we are in a position to explain the sentence which is ascribed to Jesus and which is misunderstood generally, namely, 'Seek ye the Kingdom of God first and all other things will be added'. This sentence does not mean that we should not seek for other things first, because, as we have just shown, we cannot proceed to seek the kingdom of God if we have not the 'other' things already. Kingdom of God means obedience to Divine laws, physical and spiritual; and if we want to obey these laws we must be already in the possession of those "other" things and their knowledge; so we cannot seek first the kingdom of God if we lack the 'other' things. Thus the real meaning of that sentence is and must surely be: Be ever ready to study Divine Laws, physical, mental, moral, spiritual and social, as also to obey them; and make this your ideal rule of life as well as the practical rule of your conduct; then you can get all blessed things you desire. So the injunction: seek ye first the kingdom of God simply means give the first and foremost place to Divine Rule and

Laws in your mind and heart, life and conduct. This is exactly and precisely what the Vedas teach, as we have shown already. If, however, in the opinion of some, Jesus held no such distinctly Vedic Ideal, then we ask what was his ideal and how did it differ from that of the Veda? "Jesus always distinguished between the kingdom of God and earthly kingdoms" Well, who does not do that? The Veda does not identify the two but marks off divine laws and divine rule and government from man-made laws and human rule, the one being declared as quite perfect, just, righteous and holy and the other often oppressive unjust and cruel. We give here only one mantra out of many: "Lord of splendour, be kind to us as we approach Thee in spirit, good as a Friend to friend and gracious as Father and Mother to children; the races of mankind are great oppressors: burn up all malignity that strives against us" (iii, 18, 1). The heart of every pious man has always cried out to God against inhuman oppression perpetrated by human agency; Jesus too cried out in agonising terms against it. Swami Dayananda too did the same. They have advocated certain measures also to be adopted by man against all this evil. Swami Dayananda, with the Ancient Rishis, has told us to study and follow the Vedas which contain the Divine Law or Eternal Dharma revealed to man to guide his footsteps through the bewildering maze of life. And

when Jesus said ' seek ye first the kingdom of God ' he too, we are sure, told men to study and follow Divine Law or Eternal Dharma, as we have shown above. He did not mean "give up the world" as some think he did. Supposing that he did mean that, then his teaching to give up the world must have been meant for a few and not for the whole of mankind.

Thus we see that the Vedic Teaching : Seek all blessed wealth, but never go against Divine Law, is of universal application as it can be accepted by all men ; it is very broad and comprehensive, it makes neither insidious nor invidious vicious distinction between this world and the next. It can be said to the eternal glory of the Veda that that primeval holy Scripture of mankind does nowhere teach us to give up this world, but always to use it well to reach God,

III. Humble Adoration of God—Now we come to the third great idea revealed by the mantra, namely, Devout and humble Adoration of God. The first injunction the mantra gave us was to seek and acquire all blessed wealth; but in seeking for and getting it men may go wrong ; so the second commandment is to study and obey Divine Law. These two commandments, it would seem, are sufficient to guide man in his life-career ; for many among us would ask :

is it not sufficient for man to acquire lawful wealth and enjoy it ; what more does he want to be happy ? In anticipation of these questions, as it were, the mantra asserts :—‘ No doubt lawful acquisition and enjoyment of wealth is necessary and goes a long way towards making man happy in this world, but there are other things which are as much necessary as those two to make man fully happy and blessed. Humble adoration of God is one of those things that are absolutely needed to make our happiness enduring.

Let us see why it is indispensable. We have seen some people, and we dare say the reader may have seen such also, very quiet and harmless, very gentle and docile, neither wholly ‘ worldly ’ nor very much ‘ other-worldly ’ who would as much abstain from hurting others as refrain from inflicting pain upon themselves, very nice and pleasant sort of people to be sure on the whole. But—and we have closely watched their career—with all these soft and gentle virtues, we are sorry to note, they were not as much happy as they should have been with a little more of genuine warmth of devotion to the nobler aspects of human life such as spring from an enthusiastic love of truth, justice and freedom, and, above all, of God. In short a study of their life left a lasting impression on our mind that mere lawful acquisition and enjoyment

of wealth is not enough to make man happy and blessed. And this is not the only reason why humble adoration of God is indispensable for human happiness; there are other reasons and other considerations also. One of them is this: We see often how people, otherwise blameless in their lives as possessing lawfully acquired wealth, do yet fall an easy prey to pride and even arrogance which hinder their further spiritual progress thus diminishing a large part of the unalloyed bliss which would have fallen to their lot had they been humble devotees of God. Humble adoration of God imparts indescribable bliss to man.

But this humble adoration is in itself a great blessing which man has to acquire by constant practice and ardent effort. Nothing can be secured in this world without conscious effort. Now the two words 'humble adoration' stand in the original for a single word *NAMAS* carrying two-fold sense of humble Adoration. The reason probably is that these two ideas go together. We cannot adore God without at the same time feeling ourselves humble before Him who is the boundless Ocean of all blessed qualities, riches and possessions. When we know ourselves to be but a mere atom, now floating and now swimming, in this vast limitless Ocean of light life love, of beauty bounty benignity, of grace greatness glory, of

might mercy majesty, then we cannot but bend down our head in a humble spirit of adoration to the Supreme Being to whom the Veda prays thus : " Fill us full of that heavenly wealth which Thou deemest worthy to be desired by us, for we know Thee to be the boundless ocean of munificence, O Glorious One " (v, 39, 2) " Stay with me and forsake me not, O Lord of all wealth, I worship Thee with all my heart. With sweetest song I grasp Thy garment's hem, as a son grasps his father's, O mighty Lord " " O Lord impart strength to our bodies, strength to our cattle, strength to our seed and progeny that they may live ; for Thou art He who giveth strength " " With various aids ever come to us, Lord, with best aids speed us " (iii, 53, 2, 18, 21) " To Him Adorable, Mighty, this holy hymn, unceasing, they have offered ; may the Lord hear us with heavenly splendours ; hear us Eternal One with heavenly lustre. Soft be our path and smooth for ever, well-provisioned ; with pleasant meath the herbs besprinkle ; safe and enduring be my bliss, O Lord, in Thy friendship ; may I attain the seat of blessed foodful riches. Accept our worship and offering, beam Thou strength upon us ; combine Thou for our good all kinds of glory, lighting us every day with loving kindness ; (iii, 54, 1, 21, 22) " Look out for us O Lord, as our Leader and guide us on to gain yet more blessed treasure. Excellent Guardian, bear us well through peril and lead us on

to weal with careful guidance. Lead us to ample room, to happiness, to security and to light and joy, O Thou who knowest. High are Thine arms, Mighty Lord, may we betake us to their lofty shelter. Be gracious, Lord, let my days be lengthened; sharpen my faculties as a blade of iron, whatever words I speak loving Thee and depending on Thee alone accept them lovingly, and be ever with me with Thy divine protection. I call on the Mighty Lord the Rescuer and gracious Helper may He the Liberal prosper and bless us. May helpful Lord our good Protector, the Lord of treasures of all description, favour us with His succour, baffle our foes, give us rest and safety and may we be the lords of hero-vigour. May we enjoy the grace of Him the Holy, yea, may we dwell in His auspicious favour; may the helpful Lord as our good Preserver drive from us even from afar all danger and hostility. Who lauds satisfies and pays Him worship? Even the strong find Him mighty; as when one moves his feet alternate, He, with power, makes the last foremost and the first follow. Famed is the Hero as each strong man's Tamer, ever advancing one and then another; King of both worlds, taming the high and haughty He protects the people that worship and obey Him" (vi, 47, 7, 8, 10-13, 15, 16) "Through all our days may we be healthy-minded and live a healthy life; may the Treasure-Lord of treasures grant this

with His succour" (vi, 52, 5) "Mighty is homage, humble adoration, hence do I resort to homage in every way; homage holds in place the earth and the heavens. Homage to Gods, homage holds them together; I banish by homage all sin committed. "Ye Furtherers of Law, Eternal and Divine, Pure in your spirit, Infallible, Dwellers in the Home of Order and Law,—to You all Heroes, Mighty and Far-seeing, I bow me down, O Holy Ones, with humble homage and adoration" (vi, 51, 8, 9) "We crave of God, the Adorable Source and Spring of all, that highest all-yielding all-supporting conquering gift of treasure much to be enjoyed which we would gladly win. His supremacy, most glorious and beloved of all, none can diminish in aught. For He does give to His worshipper blessed riches, of which we strive to get our wondrous Share. Grant us now excellent prosperity with progeny. Put far away from us all evil and give us only that which is good. May we obtain all lovely things by God's favour and yet become and remain sinless in the sight of the Eternal Lord for our everlasting weal. We adore with hymns the Lord and protector of the good, the All-God, the Supreme Lord whose decrees are true. He who evolves all beings and invests them all with glory, Him we adore" (v, 82). These mantras tell us something of God.

We cannot admire, much less adore, God unless we

know His glorious powers and sublime attributes; so a good deal of such knowledge is quite necessary before we can have faith in His grace and help which engenders in us a deep sense of humble admiration and adoration. Knowledge engenders faith and admiration from which springs up spontaneously a deep feeling of adoration sincere and humble: this is the genesis of Adoration. Of it we shall have to treat in the next section.

But how is one to adore and worship God? To answer this question we must know that Adoration is four-fold: in spirit, in thought, in words, in works. Adoration in spirit is the first and chief of them all as the other three are mere expressions of it internal and external. Adoration in thought is the internal, and adoration in words and works is the external expression of adoration in spirit. So really speaking adoration and worship comes of or springs from spirit, thence passing through thought word and works towards the object of worship. But what is Worship or Adoration itself? This question is to be answered. Adoration is that feeling of our own humbleness and littleness and inferiority evoked in us when we are conscious of a vastly superior Power above us, which feeling is accompanied by a deep sense of awe love devotion and reverence all mingled together. "If this is adoration, then better let us have none of it;

it is so degrading, you see. Give us some elevating idea in its place” You want an elevating idea in the place of the degrading idea conveyed by the words worship and adoration, do you? Then do please tell us what an ‘elevating’ idea is, and what a ‘degrading’ one. An elevating idea takes us from a low position to a high one, while a degrading idea lowers us from a high position. Epictatus says at the very beginning of his discourses: Wouldst thou be good, then first think that thou art not good. The beginning of philosophy is the consciousness of one’s own feebleness and incapacity in respect of necessary things. “This does not mean that we should always be thinking of our badness or evil nature, but it simply tells us that to be conscious of our short comings is the first step towards our elevation, as it may tend to urge us to rise or at least to strive to rise from our low condition to higher position, In this sense worship and adoration of God affords us the best opportunity of introspection, of knowing just what we are, how we are and why we are thus feeble—this is the first use and value. The second use and value of worship of God consists in the fact that it places before our earnest self the highest Ideal, that of Divine Perfection, so that we may ever contemplating it strive to raise ourselves in every way possible, by the force of sincere devotion to God. Saint Tukarama says in one of his abhangas “I, weak and frail, have become

strong by resorting to Him". So contemplation of Divine Perfection, which forms the essence of worship and adoration of God, is the most valuable and elevating means at our disposal, if we want to cast off human weakness. Far from being degrading, it is the most ennobling.

"Man becomes what he constantly thinks himself to be; hence it is not at all advisable for him to think that he is weak, wicked, evil and sinful, but to consider himself to be strong good and sinless. For if he believes himself to be weak and sinful then he will become so, on the other hand if he believes himself to be strong and good he will become and remain strong and good. Therefore we said above that the consciousness of our feebleness is a degrading idea. The Upanishads tell us to meditate: Aham Brahma Asmi, "I am Brahma the Supreme. This is quite elevating and ennobling an idea for man to meditate upon". It is quite true that the mind exercises a great influence for good or evil upon a man's condition; but it is also quite true that before we start upon any adventure or before we begin to undertake some difficult task, we should have or form a correct estimate of our abilities; otherwise we may utterly fail in our object. It is common experience that men very often rush into a business without having the slightest notion of their qualifications and needs; the result is failure

and misery. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that we should first study our own nature and needs, should exercise introspection constantly and proceed carefully on our path marching steadily to our goal in this life. This is the right course for us to follow.

Mind-culture is a very valuable thing and we shall come to it in the next section. Here we have to note the equally great value of work and activity, by the side of meditation. For this purpose let us take a concrete example. Suppose we desire to go to Benares, and instead of preparing for our journey we shut ourselves in a room and meditate: I am Brahma the Supreme and the Mighty, I can not only go to Benares but to any place I like; lo, here I have already reached Benares. We think we cannot reach Benares by mere meditation alone saying; I am Brahma, I am Brahma. Far be it from us to ridicule meditation and contemplation which we hold in the highest regard as far as they go; for they have got their own use and value. But we wanted to show clearly how they can be misused, by giving a very common example. Man is endowed with action-organs just as well as with mind which can be used as a contemplative organ also. If we want to be 'whole perfect' men then we should bring into daily exercise all of these organs, mind as well as the other action-organs; thus alone we can develop ourselves

harmoniously. Thus then we see that to adore and worship God mere contemplation of Divine Perfection is not enough: the bare repetition of the formula 'Aham Brahma Asmi' I am Brahma, I am Brahma, will not make us divine. Our actions must also be godly. What is the use of saying "Rama Rama" while our actions are those of a Ravana; or what is the use of saying, 'God God' if we all the while act the devil? It is written about RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHANSA that he lived just like Hanuman and acted like him for days together when he wanted to be a great Bhakta or devotee of RAMA; and that he lived within the zenana among the women wearing sarees and acting just like women for many days when he wanted to do away with all notions of the sex-differences. From all this we learn that both contemplation of Divine virtues and practising them are necessary to adore God.

IV. Dëep Mental Insight—Without this we cannot properly shape our course of life. If, in the first section, we were told to secure full physical equipment, here we are advised to possess full mental equipment mind-culture or intellectual insight. Between these came obedience to Divine Law and Order, and humble Adoration of God. The relation between each of these and the next following is: The Acquisition of wealth and all physical necessities must be made

strictly according to Divine Law and Humble Adoration of God ; but all these three are impossible if we are not intellectually equipped fully ; hence the importance of this fourth Section.

If it is of such great importance that without it the other three become impossible then why was it not given the first place ? To this we answer : These Four to which we give for the sake of brevity the names, physical, moral, devotional and intellectual, are all of them of great value each in its own way. They are so closely inter-related among themselves that in the absence of any one of them the other three become impossible. Hence any place may be given to them. But the order and place assigned to them in the mantra can be justified in another way. Matter and Mind, the Physical and the Intellectual, are the two things that are most impressive, as their workings and effects are most palpable being mostly in evidence. Therefore these two are given the first and the last place, and the moral and devotional are placed between them. Viewed in this light the order and place assigned to the four in the mantra is very beautiful. It is but quite befitting that the moral and the devotional should be protected by the physical on the one hand and by the intellectual on the other, just as the lungs and the heart are protected by the ribs on the one hand and by the back-bone on the

other within the body of man.

Let us now turn to the meaning of the phrase which forms the heading of this section and which seems to be very easy and simple to understand, at first sight. Deep mental insight means not merely deep knowledge but also what is known as the most valuable virtue of tact, prudence or wisdom. Wide and deep knowledge is quite necessary but with it there must be wisdom also to make use of that wide range of knowledge. The second mantra placed at the opening of this paper contains a very beautiful prayer to God for granting practical wisdom: "Impart active wisdom to us, O Glorious Lord, as does a Sire to his sons; teach and guide us in this our course of life so that we may attain to Thy Divine Light in this very life of ours". What a heavenly prayer! The general notion is that Solomon in ancient Judia, Solon and Socrates in Ancient Greece were the wisest persons of ancient World just because they valued wisdom most of all, but long before they were born, the Vedic Rishis prayed for active wisdom and prized it most. And see what a fine simile the Rishis use: "As a Sire to his sons, so do impart active wisdom to us". Again mark well why they pray for wisdom and guidance from God: "So that we may attain to Thy Divine Light in this very life of ours". Here Divine Light means highest spiritual

knowledge and joy. The Rishis pray for active wisdom and guidance from God in order to attain to His Light, *i. e.*, full spiritual knowledge and bliss divine. "That is a very selfish end after all, or at least looks like that" will exclaim some of our readers. Yes, it looks like very selfish if we do not fully understand the meaning of Divine Light or highest spiritual knowledge and joy. One who has attained to Divine Light can never be selfish, or if he be selfish he cannot attain to divine light. We have to leave behind all touch and tinge of selfishness, narrow-mindedness and meanness if we desire to attain to divine light. We give here another prayer: "Give unto us a good and sound, healthy and happy mind, give us great energy and high mental power and activity" (x; 25, 1). Here too the Rishis pray for sound mental culture which is indispensable for success in everyone of the many walks of life. The great ancient Law-giver **Manu** says justly: "Water purifies the body, mind is purified by truth, knowledge purifies the reasoning faculty, and the human spirit is elevated by learning and discipline". Truly so. Mental culture, therefore, is secured by means of truth and wisdom, knowledge and tact, learning, reasoning and discretion or prudence. For this purpose we should be ever ready to study Nature—inorganic, organic and super-organic as represented to us by the physical, mental, moral, spiritual and social phenomena inside as well as

outside us. We thus see how vast the field of mind-culture is. Our mind is not a thing to be trifled with ; for upon its proper training depend all our best hopes and aspirations.

Hence in the Veda the greatest importance is given to knowledge, wisdom and mind-culture ; nay, the very word Veda means knowledge, wit or wisdom as imparted or revealed by God to the Rishis as the Vedas themselves assert : “ The Vedic hymns rest upon the Imperishable Supreme Being on whom all the Gods depend ; he who does not know this fact, what will he do with them ? but those alone who know it can be fully blessed ” (i, 164, 39). “ At first in the very beginning the Vedic Prayers were uttered ; the All-Wise, All-Loving Lord disclosed bright flashes of wisdom from the highest place—disclosed His deepest dearest revelations, womb of the non-existent (potentiality) and the existent (actuality)” (A. V. iv, 1, 1). “ Forth from the Full flows the Full, the Full pervades the Full ; may we know the Fountain from which the Full flows. I know the string on which all these creatures are strung, I know the thread’s Thread, thus I know the Mighty Brahman. Men versed in sacred lore of the Vedas know that Living Supreme Self that abides in the nine-portalled lotus flower (the human body) enclosed with triple bands. Desireless, firm, wise, self-existent,

immortal, full of joy, blissful with the essence, and lacking nothing, is the Supreme Soul ; he who knows Him as such, wise, courageous, youthful and undecaying, becomes free from the fear of death ” (A. V, x, 8). These mantras affirm the great value of Knowledge.

Knowledge is the back-ground as it were of all else. Mental culture is at the bottom of all other culture whether physical, moral, spiritual or social. From the least of things to the greatest, if we want to secure them, we have to resort to knowledge and wisdom. Without proper knowledge we should neither trust or believe nor act or work. Without proper knowledge we cannot get what we desire or aspire to, neither can we become what we desire to be or what we ought to be. In short without knowledge man cannot love and desire, trust and act, rise and prosper, or be free, fearless, strong, good, just, happy and blessed. The reader will find more in our book : “ Vedic Teachings and Ideals, Part II, ch. vi, entitled *Janana Yoga*, the Path of Knowledge, where we have treated the subject more fully.

The Mind or Intellectual Faculty in man is called *Antah-Karana*, internal organ, in Indian Philosophy ; it is described to be both passive or receptive and active. It is held to manifest itself in four ways : as

Ahankara, consciousness ; as **Chitta**, will and memory ; as **Buddhi**, reason ; and as **Manas**, thinking or ideating faculty. These rendered into English are the same as consciousness, feeling, perception, will, memory, thinking, reasoning, judging, &c So mental culture will mean and include the training of all these different phases of the same Internal Sense and Action Organ known as **Antah-Karana**, Intellectual Faculty. Deep mental Insight can be secured by fully training this same **Antah-Karana** or mental faculty of ours. Our feelings and emotions must be refined, our desires and will must be ennobled and well-directed, our thoughts and aspirations must be elevated, our memory must be strengthened, our reason must be sharpened, our perceptions must be quickened, our ideas well formed and accurate, and our ideals well-chosen and lofty. In this way can broad and deep mental insight be secured by carefully training our **Antah-Karana**.

We now give a few mantras from the Veda relating to mind-culture :—“ The Most Exalted (**Varuna**) inspires the holy Vedic Texts (mantras, prayers) ; so we adore, pray and approach that Knower and Finder of the Path of **Dharma**, our Guide, for inspiration. He reveals through the heart true knowledge, auspicious thoughts and profound wisdom. May this true knowledge of the Law arise anew in our hearts ” (i, 105, 15.). “ The thought which has been given to me,

as well as the active wisdom, cause the same to grow and swell like a milch-cow with milk, and accept my humble prayers". "The desires, thoughts and will within my heart exert their full power: they yearn and long with love, and fly to all the regions round. None other Comforter is found save only these: my longings and my hopes are fixed upon the Gods, the Manifestation of Divine Glory" (x, 64, 12, 2). "Singing hymns ever with godly God-devoted hearts we invoke the Gods for grace, help and strength" (viii, 27, 13). "Assemble together and meet one another peacefully, speak together and discuss freely, so that your minds may be fully enlightened; thus equipped thoroughly well discharge nobly your sacred duty to one and all, just as the sages of old were devoted to God, to His work (the world), and to His purpose (man's duty), unitedly, wisely and fervently". "Let the people hold and take common counsel, meeting in a common assembly; common be their mind, unanimous, so be their thought united. A common purpose do I lay before you, offering common worship. One and the same be your resolve, and be your hearts of one accord; united be the mind and thoughts of you all, so that all may live together happily without discord" (x, 191, 2, 3, 4). "May we attain the excellent Glory of the Supreme Lord, so that He may direct our thoughts as well as our activities". "Let us adore the supremacy of that Divine Being who

illuminates all, from whom all proceed, and who governs all; may He direct our minds aright in our progress towards Him". With full understanding of Him we earnestly crave our share of weal. Urged by the impulse of their thoughts men worship the Lord with hymns and holy rites" (iii, 62, 10-12) "Give us agreement with our own, with strangers give us unity and concord, and join us all in sympathy and love. Let us not fight against the Divine Spirit that inspires concord. Around us rise no din of frequent slaughter" (A. V. vii, 52) "The wise sage who knows Thee thus shall have the Devas in his control (can control Nature's phenomena to reach" "I know this Great Being, the Mighty Soul, whose light the Sun reflects, beyond the reach of darkness and ignorance. By knowing Him alone one can leave death far behind: there is no other path but this one alone to reach the goal" (Y. V. xxxi, 21, 18) "He who knows these manifestations of the glory of God rightly shall become the father's father (attain to the highest knowledge, truth, wisdom—Y. V. xxxii, 9 "May blissful thoughts and auspicious powers come to us from every side, never suppressed, un hindered, and ever rising victoriously; so that Gods may ever be with us for our prosperity, our Guardians day by day unceasing in their care" (R. V. i, 89, 1) "Now I saw Him whom all may see, high above all phenomena" (R. V. i, 25, 18) "The wise has entered into me the simple"

(i, 164, 21) From these mantras we see that we must be earnest and sincere and humble to gain true knowledge and wisdom and deep insight to lead us to Divinity.

V. Conscientious Work—After knowledge must come work, for the use and fruit of knowledge lies in work and action, especially in the service of our fellow-creatures. What is the use of knowledge at all if we do not make use of it in elevating the condition of our fellow-beings and ourselves? So knowledge is to be made use of in bettering our own as well as other creatures' condition; and when it is thus utilised it is called wisdom, tact, prudence or discretion. We saw that to gain knowledge we have to strive, act and work; here we see that after gaining it too we have to work and utilise it. To act and work, knowledge is needed as much as to know and study work is needed. This shows that activity and knowledge are both interwoven with our very nature being and becoming. Knowledge and work are as it were the warp and the woof of the web of our life; they are complementary to each other each aiding the other. This is proved to be the fact by a study of our physical and mental organs, We possess five organs of perception and five more of action, called in Sanskrit '*pancha jnana indriyas*' and '*pancha karma indriyas*'. The mind however is both an action-organ as well as

a sense organ, it being both active and passive. In the last section, the value of knowledge and wisdom was dwelt upon, here the importance of conscientious work must be set down. Our mantra does lay stress upon, we must remember, not merely work but upon conscientious work, *i. e.*, work done in an honest earnest spirit of fulfilling our duty as dictated by our reason and conscience trained and developed by a proper study of Nature and the Veda. The Vedic injunction is: "*Uta svena kratuna samvadeta*" which means, man should ever try to bring his actions in full agreement with his conscience after constant weighings of his deeds, words and thoughts. All of us know how much necessary it is for us, to keep constant watch over our actions, speech and ideas if we want to walk along the path of righteousness; but this knowledge very often does come to us rather too late after bitter experience and dire sufferings in this world. So to avoid all this misery which in most cases is not inevitable but preventible, the mantra advises us to mount guard over ourselves and keep a strict and rigid watch over our doings, desires and endeavours ever and always. We live in a world where the utmost care is not only expected of us but actually exacted from us, a world in which every step we take, every deed we do, every word we utter, every thought we think, every desire we cherish, must be begun with the utmost care on our part. Nature

wants, expects and requires us to be ever alert, watchful and circumspect, she teaches us to be ever on our guard. And what do the Vedas teach? "Ever hold communion with your conscience and see and watch and be on your guard always to bring your acts, words and thoughts in full conformity with it." (*Uta svena kratuna samvadeta*). What a noble teaching and commandment the Vedas lay down! Before we begin to do a work we must consider whether it is good, just and right so that we may not be misguided in undertaking it, or we may not have to repent and suffer for it afterwards. Every human being possesses the elementary notions of what is right just and good and what is not; and that by means of which he is enabled to discriminate right from wrong, the inner monitor, is called conscience. And just as a good farmer will not allow wheat to be choked by weeds or tares, so a good man will not allow his conscience to be choked by unlawful unjust considerations and mean purposes. The best way to secure this result, so worthy and so noble is to hold constant communion with our conscience, in fact the way of searching introspection in which we sit in judgment over ourselves daily and hourly. To work steadily using constantly both introspection and circumspection, does the Veda advise us in these few-words which place before man four of the most valuable ideas, namely of the constant application of

conscience, introspection and circumspection to work. Men suffer because they do not utilise these ennobling ideas.

“The chief purpose of gaining knowledge and wisdom is to put an end to all sort of trouble and work, and not as you hold to labour and work. Wisdom must really do away the necessity of work, because work and wisdom are antagonistic in our opinion”. There is a school of philosophers who maintain thus a sort of deadly opposition between the two ideas of work and wisdom. “We cannot call it wisdom which leaves us the necessity to work” say they. Shankaracharya, the great philosopher of post-Buddhist India, exclaims : “Do you not see the great mountain like unshakable autogonism and opposition that exists between knowledge and action?” In fact these philosophers contend that a man of knowledge has no need to work, that knowledge lifts him above the need to act and work and labour and endeavour, that wisdom is an end in itself and not at all a means to secure something else. But we have just shown how the name wisdom is given to knowledge when it is used for some good purpose in doing good to humanity. If we look at the life and works of Shankaracharya himself, his very life and labour contradict his philosophy. What a holy, selfless, noble, active, energetic, laborious life he led ! Was he unwise in labour-

ing for the good of the mankind? His life condemns his philosophy, and his philosophy condemns his life. But we do not condemn his noble life, and hence we have to condemn his philosophy which teaches that a wise man need not work at all. The notion that wise men need not work and that wisdom lifts man above the need to work or that wisdom consists in doing away with the necessity of working is founded on a fallacy. Some lazy and cunning people manage to live upon the labour of others, and this is looked upon as wisdom, but it is both sin and folly as it is quite unjust as well as disastrous in the end. Life is exercise, exercise is work, and work is enjoyment; so, to fully enjoy the blessings of life, we have to bring into due exercise all our faculties harmoniously and all our organs fully. If we allow any of our faculties or organs to be idle, if we do not exercise them duly, then they will rust and turn into dust and decay, so that our enjoyment of life will be proportionately diminished and our life will be cut short or rendered useless and barren. Thus does Nature punish us for breaking her just laws. When cunning people dupe others and seem to score some sort of "success," it is but at the double cost of ruining themselves as well as others. It cannot be called wisdom but folly of the worst kind. Not to work is to ruin and kill oneself and injure others: it has been characterised as "suicide" justly by the Vedas. Not

to work is to kill ourselves and commit suicide, because we live and grow by work : as life is work and work is life. In Yajurveda, xi, it is stated : " One, only doing karma here, should wish to live a hundred years. No way is there for thee but this. For thus karma (action) cleaveth not to man." Thus and in such clear terms does the Veda command man to act and work. Not only does the Veda command men to lead an active and strenuous life but it does also warn men of the ruin they would bring upon themselves if they broke the commandment to work in the very next mantra thus : " Aye, to those Asurya worlds enwrappt in blinding gloom depart the men who kill the Self when they die." Here the phrase : who kill the Self, means those persons who break the commandment to work by going against the rule of life, namely, to work, which was laid down as a commandment in the preceding mantra. The meaning of the two mantras put together is this : work, if you want to live; but if you do not work, you will kill yourself, *i.e.* pass after death into gloomy miserable condition. In the first of these two mantras the most important word is Nara, and in the second, Asurya. Nara means leader, a wise great learned man, or one who has what is called vairagya, passionlessness, dispassionateness. So the first of these two mantras lays down that even wise and dispassionate men should work. The commandment to work is for

all men including even the *vairagees*, those that have risen above petty selfish considerations. The reader can refer to our book *Veda Mantrartha Prakasha*, Part II, if he wants this point to be explained clearly. Asura in the second mantra means those who are given to sensuality. So the second mantra means that persons who do not work will find themselves even after death in such gloomy miserable places as are fit for sensualists : in other words, idle lazy inactive persons and sensualists will have to suffer the same or similar dreadful fate. The Geeta too preaches this same Vedic commandment: to work and do one's duty conscientiously, in many a well-known passage. The wiser a person the more work he should turn out for the betterment of his fellow-beings. Mankind will be happy only when wise learned upright godly men will come forward to work for the general weal. And mankind suffers whenever the unwise unjust and illiberal get into power as leaders and rulers of the people. These are almost truisms. Knowledge wisdom and work must be coupled with justice uprightness and righteousness to give us the best of results. This is taught in the following two mantras taken from Yajur Veda xl: "To blinding darkness go those who make a cult of non-knowledge exclusively. The exclusive devotees of knowledge enter into still greater gloom" "He who knoweth and maketh use of both these two at the same

time gaineth eternal life by means of knowledge after overcoming death by non-knowledge" (12, 14). Non-knowledge here means work. These two mantras condemn with great force and clearness exclusive attention and care bestowed either upon Karma (Work) alone or upon Vidya (Knowledge) alone : and assert that two must be utilised combinedly if we want to get the best result.

VI. Attainment of greater and nobler Spiritual Vigour : We now come to the last point in our discussion to which the other points naturally lead as the chief object at which they aim. To the enquiry : How should we shape our course of life ? the mantra has furnished a six-fold answer. Out of the six points we have considered already five, and we have now to discuss the sixth and the last. That man should think out all possible ways of acquiring wealth, that he should strive to acquire it only by fair, just and lawful means always walking along the path of divine laws, that he should do all this in a humble pious spirit devoted to adoration of God, that he should acquire a full and deep mental insight, wisdom, tact and discretion that he should apply all his wealth wisdom and devotion to selfless disinterested work such as the service of humanity—these are the five points we have already discussed. These are quite sufficient, nay, are more than enough for a well-ordered noble career of life in

this world as it now is. Wealth, Wisdom, Work and Worship, all lawfully acquired, conscientiously done and devotedly performed—these are enough, more than enough, for an ordinary man to set before him as the guiding principles of his life. What more does he want to make his life happy and contented at least on this planet? Just as the three R's, writing, reading and arithmetic, were considered sufficient for the common man in the street, so these four W's, Wealth, Wisdom, Work and Worship are quite sufficient for the average man to make him happy. How many men pass away from this world without having either wealth or wisdom or worship. How many men there are to whose lot only work falls. So taking the present condition of man into consideration, a combination of the four W's is quite enough to make the average man happy. Wealth lawfully acquired, Wisdom strenuously gained, Worship God-devotedly performed, and Work conscientiously done—these are the four W's the Veda places before us to look to in order to make our life blessed and blissful here and hereafter. In the first two sections we were told to acquire wealth right lawfully, in the third section we were told to worship and adore God with humble devotion, in the fourth we were told to gain deep mental insight and wisdom, and in the fifth conscientious work we were told to do with the help of wisdom wealth and worship.

But we must remember that these four W's are but the means to an end and not an end to themselves. And what that end and purpose is is stated in the sixth section we are treating now. Why should we work and worship? And why should we acquire wealth and wisdom? To attain to greater and nobler Spiritual Vigour is the answer. But what is this Spiritual Vigour: and how is it the end and aim of human life? It is called Divine Light in the second mantra with which we have opened our subject. It is also called Aindram Balam, Divine Strength, in Yajurveda, xix,8. In later Sanskrit Literature it is known as Brahma Varchasa, the Highest Divine Splendour. The end and aim of human life is to attain Spiritual Vigour, Divine Light, Aindram Balam, or Brahma Varchasa. The Yajurveda mantra to which we have just referred can be rendered thus: "O man thou art bound by duty to possess Splendid Physical strength Intellectual Power and Spiritual Vigour for therein is the source of great unfailing joy, delight, bliss and glory". In Rigveda ix,113, 7-12, we are given a glimpse of the blessedness of Divine Light of Spiritual Vigour thus: "Holy One, place me in that deathless undecaying world wherein the light of heaven is set and everlasting lustre shines. Make me immortal in that realm where they move even as they list (where action is unrestrained) in the third sphere of inmost Heaven where lucid worlds are full of light.

Make me immortal in that realm of eager wish and strong desire—the region of the Radiant One which is full of delight. Make me immortal in that realm where happiness and transports, where joys and felicities combine, and longing wishes are fulfilled”. On this, Professor Von Roth observes: “The place where these glorified ones are to live is heaven. In order to show that not merely an outer court of the divine dwellings is set apart for them, the highest heaven, the midst or innermost part heaven, is expressly spoken of as their seat. This is their place of rest; and its divine splendour is not disfigured by any specification of particular beauties of enjoyments, such as those with which other religions have been wont to adorn the mansions of the blest: the language used to describe their condition is the same with which is denoted the most exalted felicity” Thus we see that these mantras give us but a glimpse of weal that awaits the blessed ones who shape their course of life and regulate it according to Vedic Dharma as propounded by the mantra with which we have opened this paper. Wealth, Wisdom, Worship and Work lead to Weal says the Veda mantra which, we see, deals with five W's that man requires if he wants to make his life a complete success. The mantra gives the first place to Wealth lawfully acquired, the second place to Worship and Adoration of God most humbly performed, the third place to Wisdom & Knowledge most strenuously

gained, fourth place to Work most conscientiously done, and the fifth place to Wealth everlasting and spiritual, showing that the last is the consequence of the preceding four combined in a well-ordered life. Here are some prayers for well-ordered life: "Thou over all, O Exalted Lord, art Sovereign, be they Gods or mortals, O Mighty One; grant unto us, to see a hundred autumns; may we enjoy the blessed long well-ordered lives of our predecessors" (ii, 27,10) "To whom Thou Lord of blessed riches grantest freedom from all sin with perfect soundness and wholeness, and whom Thou with auspicious strength quickenest with noble children and wealth—may we be they O Boundless Eternal One" (i,94,15) "Shower upon us for our great good fortune Thy mighty bliss, most excellent be Thine effulgent glorious splendours for us; may our affairs be well-ordered and harmonious making it easy to maintain our lordship and subduing the might of the hostile" (v,28,3). We now give a few more mantras which have a general bearing upon the subject: "Yea, grant us treasure thousandfold prosperous with noble children; grant us splendid vigorous manhood, exalted and undecaying" (iii,13,7) "Lord of great felicity wealth and manly vigour, grant us, as such, deal us wealth and hero-might, O Bounteous Most Glorious One, most lofty, very glorious rich in progeny, free from disease, and full of power. Give us not up to indigence nor to want of hero sons nor

to lack of wealth, nor to blame; drive Thou our enemies away. Help us to strength, Blessed One, rich in heroic progeny, abundant; flood us with riches yet more noble and plenteous, bringing weal, with high renown, Most Glorious One" (iii,16,3,5,6) "The man whom Thou providest enjoyeth domestic plenty undiminished; blest is Thy favour pouring plenty; Thy worship blesses men thousandfold Bestow on us resplendent wealth; let us enjoy Thine overflow of bounty: vast and wide as the sea our longing hath expauded, fulfil it, O Thou Treasure-Lord of treasures" (iii,30,7,19) "I crave Thy mighty powers, I crave Thy mighty friendship full many a prayer goeth to the Evil-Destroyer; we seek the favour of the Prince Be Thou, O Bounteous One, our Guard and Keeper. Showerer of blessings, Dear to all, who giveth the power of living, come unto us with Thine auspicious friendship, hastening, Mighty One, with mighty succours. I honour Thee with worship; chase Thou the many godless evil creatures, and give us Thy heavenly light to help us, O Lord of bounteous wealth" (iii,31,14,18,19) "With reverence let us worship the Mighty Lord, Great and Sublime, Eternal, Ever-Youthful; whose greatness the world-halves have not measured, no, nor conceived the might of Him the Holy. Many are His nobly wrought achievements, and none of all the Gods transgress His statutes; He beareth up the earth and heaven, and

Doer of marvels, He begeth the sun and the dawn" (iii,23,7,8) "O Glorious Bounteous Lord of wealth, grant us abundant wealth that bringeth all blessings: give us a hundred autumns for our life-time, give us heroes" (iii,36,10) "Tvashter, the Omniform Creator, God, begets and feeds mankind in diverse manner; is, verily are all these creatures living; great is the God's sole and supreme dominion" (iii,55,13) "Joying in sacred food and free from sickness, with strong knees striding on the earth's broad surface, following with full knowledge closely Divine Statutes, may we remain in His gracious favour who is the Friend of all. Auspicious and Adorable, He is Friend King Disposer of fair dominion; may we enjoy the grace of Him the Holy, yea, may we rest in His propitious and loving kindness. Foremost will he be who worshipping Thee strives to keep Thy sacred Law and never is he slain or subdued whom Thou helpest; on him falls no affliction from near or far" (iii,59,3,4,2) "O Holy Purifier give us such blessed wealth as is praiseworthy and strengthens life increasing vital power; bestow on us O Helper that which many crave, more glorious still by righteousness" (viii,49,11).

In these mantras too we meet with same Five W's: Wealth lawfully got, Wors'hip of God humbly performed, Wisdom strenuously sought for, Work

righteously turned out, and Wealth undecaying aimed at. To secure the last we must have the preceding four. Through Wealth Wisdom Worship and Work, Wealth must be sought after. Now we close this rather lengthy discussion with a short but sweet sublime prayer taken from Tenth Book of Rig Veda: "Longing and yearning for Thee, and depending wholly upon Thee, O Glorious One, close to Thy friendship do we cling ; lead us beyond all evil and suffering, along the path of Thy Holy Law" (x,133,6) Yes, in longing and yearning for Him, in depending wholly upon Him, and in closely clinging to His friendship, dose lie our real weal and happiness, joy and blessedness, as thus alone we can reach beyond all sin sorrow and suffering by walking along the Path of Divine Law ever and always. Thus can we grasp higher and nobler Spiritual Vigour ; thus can we fulfil our highest human destiny leading well-ordered holy life for it is said: "The winds waft sweets, the rivers pour sweets, for the man who does keep the Law" (i,90,6) Let us shape our course of life according to Holy Law, as laid down in the Vedas, seeking unfailing Wealth through lawful Wealth, deep wisdom, devoted Worship and conscientious Work. May the Lord give us His blessed succour.

OM Shantih Shantih Shantih.

