

44. Love of the Motherland

To achieve release, man kneels before

A million gods, in frantic pain.

If he but blasts the ego within,

The goal is reached; he is freed indeed!

It is difficult indeed to understand the ego---its depth and devious ways. It is an inert entity, that is to say, it cannot know itself nor can it know others. It has no fear; it will not bend before others. It degrades man from the golden glory, which is his due, to the level of lowly dust. Snakes hiss, pigs grunt, bulls moo! They are asserting their ego, intent on keeping others away. Of the traits of ego, pride is the most poisonous. But, the pride of the scholar, the pride *of pandiths* is so thick that it is impossible for them to get rid of it.

The dog feels proud of its master's home. So, it barks at strangers trying to enter it. Man too is so attached to 'my home,' 'my people,' 'my property,' that he too keeps people away, from the moment he awakes to the moment he sleeps. But, egoism is contrary to genuine human nature. In fact, it is the trait of an animal only.

The fully blossomed flower fades and falls apart within hours. Even while a person is proud of his physical strength, mental freshness and intellectual sharpness, old age creeps in, with its debilitating effects. And, wealth? And power over men and things? They are like lightning flashes, illumining only a fraction of a moment. They are here today; they are gone tomorrow!

These transient natures and possessions, interestingly, produce lasting impressions! Man's enemies are not outside him; the sins he commits are his greatest foes. They prompt him to act contrary to all codes. Raavana was prompted into sin by his nefarious ego and his crime reduced his splendid kingdom to a heap of ash. Hitler rose to be the Dictator in Germany; victory over sundry neighbouring states boosted his ego and made him power mad. He caused a World War and died amidst the ruins of his own capital city. Egoism is an infection that ruins all chances of expanding and elevating one's consciousness. It can undermine genuine human qualities. So, educators must take special care that the tender hearts of children are not polluted by this virus.

Tripod on which prosperity of a Nation rests

Every nation depends on three sections of its people for its progress---the producers, the protectors and the preceptors. All three are equally important and closely interdependent. This is the tripod on which prosperity rests. Love is a seat placed on the three legs and the nation can be happy and peaceful if all the three sections work together in mutual love for the nation.

Today, we parade devotion which has no human sympathy and patriotism which has no morality. Both are barren. Egoism cannot tolerate love for others, nor can it be happy with itself. If the harvested grain is neither consumed nor shared, it will only rot. Egoism reduces man into a demon. At the least provocation, egoism gets irate against one's parents, children or wife or teacher! It thrusts aside everyone who comes in its way.

God is the vastest among the vast, the minutest among the minute. Yet, God has no ego. How then can man who has no claim to even the tiniest glory parade himself as great? It is really a

ridiculous pose. The egoist ignores the source which can bring respect to him. He loses the chance of developing his skills and talents on right lines.

The country is harmed more by the educated

Education must result in humility. Humility is the best credential one can earn. That yields wealth and through wealth one can promote righteousness and engage in charity. This ensures happiness here and hereafter. Humility cannot grow through poring over books. The educational process prevalent today does not promote humility. It confers degrees which swell the heads of recipients. It does not sanctify the person who is educated. It does not promote the nation's progress. But, education has to encourage the exploration, of the true needs of the country and the methods by which they can be met. Youth must dedicate itself to this work. But, what do we find? Even persons, who have grown old, and who move about with sticks are anxiously trying to squeeze a drop or two of pleasure from life. After having retired from Government service, they still seek jobs and start circumambulating likely patrons! The idea that they should spend at least the remaining years of their lives in serving their fellowmen does not dawn on them.

The uneducated may not all be patriotic; but, the country is harmed more by the educated! As soon as they are awarded the degrees or diplomas entitling them to pose as doctors or engineers, they run after some travel agent, and secure passports and try to bribe their way to Iraq, Iran or Dubai. Of course, money is desirable. But, only as much as is essential. Cannot one earn enough in his country itself and, at the same time, serve one's poor and struggling brothers and sisters in the villages?

Can it ever be a sign of education when one has no love for the land where he was born and where he grew up? Consider for a while the wisdom of disliking one's motherland and becoming fascinated with another land. One must serve one's own people and thereby the people of other countries. But what are we to say of those who hate their own and love others! How can a person who has no respect for the land of his birth be respected by the land he attaches himself to? This distortion is the result of the educational system.

Students should avoid demeaning temptations

The beggar at the door wails "*Maa!* I am a stranger, a *paradeshi*. Give me alms." He means that he does not belong to the village, that he has no one to support him or feed him at the place. *Paradeshi* means a person who has moved into a new place from his own *desh* or country. The beggar hopes to get a loaf of bread or a rupee. The educated person in the strange land hopes to get a hundred or a thousand or even a lakh. They too belong to the same profession. Students should avoid such demeaning temptations. They should not give up their mother country and proceed overseas. And, they must not commit the mistake of believing that a person becomes great if he goes overseas. Air hostesses do it every day! Have faith and love towards your home, your village, your part of India, your Motherland. But that does not imply hatred of other countries. On no account should hatred or enmity or intolerance pollute your minds.

Consider an example from the Raamaayana. After the death of Raavana on the battlefield, Lakshmana asked Raama, "Brother! Our brother Bharatha has been ruling the kingdom of Ayodhya very well, for fourteen years. That kingdom, though poor, is happy under his rule. Now, Lanka has come into our hands. I pray that you assume rulership over Lanka and reform the *Raakshasas*." Raama smiled at this suggestion. He replied, "Does any son give up his mother because her features are ugly? My motherland may be poor but it is my mother. Can I adopt a

woman as mother, if she is more charming than my own? However rich and prosperous this Lanka is, I do not wish to be here." Raama held up the ideal of a patriot eager to serve his native land.

Goodness has totally disappeared in cities

I shall relate an example in which I myself am the subject. Forty years ago, a rich lady named Sakamma (famed as a big planter and manufacturer of "Sakamma Coffee") used to come to Puttaparthi from Bangalore. In those days journey to this isolated hamlet was a difficult venture. Those who came by car had to negotiate mud tracks and park the cars on the right bank of the river and trudge across. On one occasion, Sakamma came with two maternal uncles of the Mahaaraja of Mysore, and prayed "Swaami! This place is very inaccessible. Devotees are undergoing much trouble. We shall purchase a few acres of land in Bangalore City and spend a few lakhs to build a fine spacious *Mandhir* for you there. Swami must agree and move to that city." I told her, "Sakamma! What is the greatness in promising water to those who come to the River Ganga? The greatness consists in promising water to those who come to the desert. Listen! This is the place where this body was born. You may build the *Mandhir* you plan, anywhere. I shall come there and be there for some days. However, I shall not forsake this place." Now, this tiny hamlet which was difficult to reach has become the centre of even a University. Can mere man transform it so? Through whom has this village gained every modern convenience needed for a happy life?

Students today are deserting their villages and migrating to cities. They sell off their hereditary lands and homes and live miserable lives in congested towns. And, many prefer city institutions for their studies even though cities do not provide a proper atmosphere for study. They are enticed into the undesirable company of bad people where their minds and bodies are ruined by bad habits. Keeping oneself strong and straight is a difficult process in cities. And reaching the real goal of life is quite impossible.

Cultivate universal heartfelt Love

Traces of goodness, reverence and sympathy still survive in villages but they have totally disappeared in cities. The methods of education are responsible for this sad situation. Confining education to worldly and material knowledge, children are being exiled from their heritage of courage and strength. They grow without either general knowledge or common sense. It is hard to understand how they will pass examinations and administer the country after getting jobs. They concentrate on selfishness every moment; they have no thought for the welfare of others.

Technological education has become valuable today but even here, human values have to be emphasised. Technology must be dedicated to the promotion of high ideals, those which are cherished in Bhaarathiya culture. For, without the background of that culture, educated people are easily turned into slaves of other cultures. Those who belong to a country have to proceed along the special circumstances and resources of that country. Of course, one must love all mankind, all are children of God. One must not emphasise the difference between nations, or between castes and creeds. Cultivate universal heartfelt Love.

In the universities of past ages, each one specialised in learning and teaching one subject only. But, in this University, we must teach the importance and meaning of human values. We do not value education which does not uplift man and make him aware of his Divine Reality. Means of

Living and the Goal of Living are the two wings; the two wheels are material and spiritual, skill and *saadhana*.

The Mind, the Reason, the Scholarship

The Ego, bawling, brawling---

When will these bend low and yield?

Then, Shiva is revealed as one's Aathma, Truth.

The *Aathma*, everyone is, vast and expansive. We fancy that the *Aathma* is in us, in each of us. No. We are in the *Aathma*, we are all in the *Aathma*. The *Aathma* is not in us! All beings are alive and active, moving and resting in the all-pervading *Aathma*. We are all in this hall; the hall is not in us. To say 'the *Aathma* in me and the *Aathma* in you' is to declare your ignorance of the Truth.

Once we establish ourselves in this Truth of Unity, we will not be afflicted by scandal-mongering, jealousy and other low traits. Students have to be free from these shackles, even at this tender age. They can be helped to lead happy, healthy useful lives and promote, by their actions, the prosperity and welfare of the world.

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