

The Need for Sanathana Vidya

Have not men trained themselves in countless arts and skills and sciences? Have they not devised countless machines? Have they not accumulated vast tonnes of knowledge? Nevertheless, man has not attained peace of mind, which is so essential for happiness. Instead, with every passing day, this *Vidya* (learning) is dragging man into deeper and deeper waters and peace is receding more and more into the distance.

The reason can be stated thus. These arts and sciences have only transitory value. These machines cater to worldly comfort. This knowledge is all about temporary, transitory things. This *Vidya* does not reveal to one the Innermost Secret of the Universe. There is one secret which if known, lays bare all secrets; if that problem is solved, all are solved. There is one knot which if untied, all knots are loosened.

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There is one science, which if mastered, all are mastered. That key science is *Sanathana Vidya* (ancient wisdom).

If a tree has to be destroyed, its tap root has to be cut. There is no use trying to kill it by plucking its leaves one by one. It takes too long a time, besides, it may not work. The ancient Vedic seers knew this *Vidya*, but Indians are getting ashamed to claim them as their kith and kin. They saw God through their ascetic endeavours and won His Grace. They expounded the Science which they so boldly discovered. Seekers from other countries perused these books and said that India had blazed a trail for the whole world. This is a well-known fact. The lamp illumines the house; but just at the very foot of the lamp, there lurks a dark circle. India does not know or care for that treasure. Can we ascribe this to the play of Fate and keep quiet?

In the past ages Indians performed their daily rites, sat in a purified place surrounded by sacredness, and immersed themselves in the study and the practice of the teachings of the Vedas and the Upanishads. Besides, they recorded their experiences in order to guide others and in order to bring those experiences back again into their own consciousness. But their children and grandchildren placed those books on the altar and duly worshipped them. Neglect has reduced them to dust or lumber, the palm leaves have disintegrated and rats have eaten into them. But eager students from the West have sought out this lumber and realising that it enshrines incomparable sources of illumination and priceless

pearls of wisdom, they lift it reverentially above their heads and acclaim it as the precious gift of Bharath to themselves and their children. They carry it across the seas, with joy in their eyes and thankfulness in their hearts.

Now shall I reveal what the children of India have been doing? They neither open the pages nor peruse the contents nor even concern themselves about them. Only one in a million reads them, but even he is ridiculed as a fool and as a crank. The books are laughed at as a conglomeration of lies and legends, and they argue about the historicity of the books and their authors. They dismiss the Sanskrit language as “very hard to learn” and pass on the treasure to scholars from other lands. What a sad spectacle is this. It would have been some compensation if they attended carefully to the study of their mother tongue; but even this, they do not do. It is neglect, neglect everywhere.

No, I do not condemn worldly happiness. I feel glad when people are happy. But please do not believe that this happiness is permanent. I want that you should study all the arts and sciences for acquiring worldly happiness. But I want all to remember that this happiness is not everlasting.

Permanent happiness can be secured only through one Vidya, the Upanishad Vidya. That is the science of God-realisation, that is the teaching of the Rishis. That alone can save man and grant him peace. There is nothing higher than that, this is an indisputable fact. Whatever your joy and sorrow, whatever the subject you have specialised in for a

living, have your eyes riveted on Brahma Vidya. If intelligence alone is sharpened, without the growth and practice of virtues, and if mere information is stored in the brain, the world cannot progress and its welfare will be in jeopardy.

But people now seem to be losing faith in virtues, for the educational system does not assign any place for spiritual teaching or training. True education does not mar or pervert the beautiful virtues of boys and girls, it does not content itself with filling the brain with cumbersome junk. That education alone is beneficial which gives full scope for the blossoming of all the virtues which distinguish man.