

## CHAPTER XIX

**O**f the three instruments used by man for thinking, speaking and action, the third instrument is the body with its hands ready to execute the thought which is expressed in words. The deed, the work, the labour that the hand of man is engaged in are the source of all the happiness or misery that man is involved in. Man asserts that he is happy, or that he is anxious and afraid or that he is in trouble. He attributes the cause of these conditions to some person other than himself. This belief rests on a wrong basis. Happiness and misery are due to one's own actions. Whether one accepts this truth or rejects it, one has to go through all the consequences of one's action. This is the law of nature. One may not believe in summer or winter, in fire or rain, but one cannot escape from heat and cold. Their effect will affect him, nevertheless. Therefore, the best course is to direct our activities along proper lines.

Hands are not the only limbs or agents that are involved in human activity or Karma. Whatever is done, whatever is seen, whatever is heard, one should be vigilant about its purity. Thought, word and deed must be free from pride, greed and hatred. The words that one utters must be free from these faults. Things that one yearns to hear must be free from these superficially attractive qualities; the pleasures that one seeks must not be polluted by evil. Students must first assimilate these mental lessons and demonstrate their effect in their speech. The lessons that are taught by words must be translated by them into action.

Today, however, education does not transform the mind. It stops the listening process through the ear. What enters the ear might not be clear to the mind; it might reach the mind in a hazy form only. So education has to be so imparted that it is received by the mind clearly. To achieve this aim, it has to be transmitted through heads, tongues and hands that are pure, with no blemish that warps. Then only can the learning be clear and the wisdom bright.

Students study only for a few years. But teachers, in order to justify being in the profession, have to be engaged in studies always without stopping. So teachers are to be reckoned as the only genuine students. To the question, who is a real student the answer is, "The teacher." "I shall be the ideal student which my pupils can emulate": this must be the motto inspiring the teacher. Such a teacher has surely

recognised his duty. The teacher must come down to the level of the student. If he does not and still continues to teach, the fate of the student is best left to the imagination.

This is the process called "Descent." It does not mean stepping down from the top to the ground. It means only accepting the level of the person who is to be benefited. The baby on the floor cannot jump to the arms of the mother, when she calls upon it to come up. "I am a great person. I cannot stoop"—if the mother feels like that, she cannot possess the child. Stooping does not make a person small. The teacher too, is not demeaning himself when he comes down to the level of the pupil in order to teach him. It is only a laudable sign of Love.

Many teachers, at the present time, have fallen into the habit of asserting. "Well, I have got ready one lesson on one topic for today. My duty is to speak on that. I will do just that and go." Have the pupils grasped the lesson aright? Which subject has to be taught in which way, through which method? These problems do not seem to bother them. Moreover they should conduct themselves just in the same manner as they advise and expect the students to behave. When they are taught the lessons through love, their reverence for the teacher will also be deepened. Each teacher should strive to encourage the all-round development of the student. He must expand his own heart through Love, and not waste the years of his life in furthering his own interest.

The teacher should not cultivate divisive traits. The Rishis and sages of ancient times treated their own sons and their students with equal affection. Today we have lost faith that our teachers are of this nature. When the principal's son is answering question papers for an examination in one hall, the principal will not be posted as invigilator there, lest he should dictate the correct answers and help his son to get good marks! But in the hermitages of old, there would be no suspicion that the guru would show such preference or partiality. Today corruption has crept into thought, word and deed at all levels. Hence these precautions. Teachers have to adopt the Sadhana of purifying their emotions in order that they may earn the status and authority of gurus. The true guru must lead the pupil into a worthy and happy life. The true pupil must respond with eagerness and adoration.

Teachers are responsible for the nature and quality of the activities and character of students. For they impress the youth by their scholarship and leadership. So they must keep clear of selfish aggrandisement and political manoeuvring and have spiritual enlightenment alone as their ideal in life. The members of the teaching staff must move among themselves as brothers. Students become aware of differences and rivalries between their teachers. Of course, differences are inevitable and may even be useful. But they should not pollute mutual relations, hinder the progress of the institution and affect adversely the processes of teaching

and learning. In these fields, they must consult each other and co-operate with others.

Among students too we do not find this spirit of singleness of purpose and fraternal co-operation. *Sadbhava* and *Sathsanga* have become rare; mutual love and yearning for good company have weakened. "As the ruler (*Raja*), so the ruled (*Praja*)," says the proverb. "As the teacher, so the pupil" seems to be equally true. Teachers, therefore, have to be interested in high thinking and a life steeped in renunciation. The person who is an expert in chemistry or physics may not know as much of biology as an expert in that science. But there is every need for them all to be friendly and work as a team. For whatever the science one specialises in, the science of the spirit, the science that leads to the ultimate Truth has also to be mastered. At the Atomic Research Centre, I said that everything has energy latent in it—a piece of paper has it, a strip of cloth has it. When the latent energy is exhausted, death results; when energy fills, birth happens. Sath-Chith-Ananda is energy. We (Sath) are (chith) happy (ananda). Energy is all and energy is derived from God. That is the very basis of man. Now, we are building superstructures somewhere else, not on the basis. The foundational Divine Principle is being ignored. We are fascinated by subjects and studies that promise to feed our stomachs and make us materially happy and powerful. But the hard truth is the Divine beneath all. Man must either know the supreme Truth of the One Being behind all

Becoming or at least know the practical Truth of Love and Brotherhood. These two points are the limits which education must ever keep in mind—the starting point and the goal.