

Rule - 5

Practice of Truth

Do everything according to the dictates of dharma = virtue i.e. after due reflection over right and wrong.

Discriminating. O King, between truth and untruth attain to the lordship of My empire. Rigveda X. 124.5

Right Knowledge, a Duty — In our exposition of Principle IV we have anticipated Principle V. The latter is an exhortation to practice what the four foregoing tenets have taught us regard as right. Between belief and practice there should be perfect concord. Right knowledge precedes right action. Unconscious virtue is simply action, not virtue. Not so unconscious vice. It affects others prejudicially. It is mischievous in its results. The harm it does, there is no reason to condone. Right knowledge is a duty, not a privilege. Its absence cannot help in redeeming the sin to which it may have perchance led. Between unconscious immorality and deliberate sin, there is a difference only of outlook. The latter is more culpable but the former is no less serious in its social sequels.

The Irreducible Minimum of Individual Right and duty — We pointed out in the introductory chapter that the principles of the Arya Samaja concern themselves equally with the individual and collective duties of mankind. What has been inculcated in the first four principles is the path of dharma for individual man and woman. From sixth to tenth will be principles of social, i.e. communal, religious, national and cosmopolitan conduct. Principle V stands between the two groups facing Janus-like

both ways. Conduct is both social and personal and to decide whether a particular course of conduct is in consonance with the dictates of duty, one has to fall back on the primary consideration whether that course conforms to, or falls foul with, the interests of truth. Though in the interests of society the personal interests of individuals have, if necessary, to be sacrificed, a distinction has to be made here between the material and spiritual interests of man. The Latter, as outlined in the first four principles, are the inalienable minimum which no member of the society, community, country, and humanity, will under any circumstances be required to forego. The Arya Samajist will, for instance, on no occasion give up his belief either in God or in God's revelation, the Vedas. Nor can he part with his right to say his prayers to GOD = Parameshvara whose salient characteristics are delineated in Principle II. The duty to read and write, teach, and listen to a recitation of the Vedas is equally sacred. The truths taught by the Vedas, as a matter of his personal conviction, and as the foundation further of his personal practice, are to be his inviolable sanctuary giving him inner solace which no compromise with his fellow-beings can ever deny him. This granted, he is to place himself unreservedly at the disposal of humanity.

Knowledge of right and wrong followed by conduct conforming thereto is what in Arya religion is called dharma And the object of the principles of the Arya Samaj is to teach that dharma. This term occurs in its most appropriate place in this principle.

The Man of Sacrifice — No man is fitted to serve his fellow-beings, who has not made himself first a man of principles. Only such people as have firm convictions and a will equally firm to execute them are qualified to enlist themselves as servants of mankind. Despicable sham to make indifference to religion a condition of national service! Religion has till now been the only mighty lever that has upheld humanitarian

activity. To all causes of uplift of man it has given a sacred orientation. It has made charity a holy principle, self-sacrifice a heavenly virtue. Misguided religion has led to fanaticism and superstition which in their turn have in the long run been causes of bloodshed and war. It is the business of religion to provide safeguards against such perversities of religious dogmatism. Not all dogma, however, obsesses the human intellect. Belief in God and the Vedas is, as we have shown, the minimum philosophic requisite of the rational-cum-devotional nature of man. It is a demand from within and must be satisfied if the worker is not to waver at every step as he proceeds on his life's voyage. The Veda to him is the chart and God the unerring pilot of his boat. Truth, the voice of his trained conscience, is the needle of his mariner's compass. With this equipment let him launch out undaunted on the troubled waters of humanitarian service. Success will hail him as her lord, her beloved mariner.