

of their duties they will meet their end (fate).



Link:—The Lord, now mentions the natural duties of a Brāhmaṇa (a member of the priest class).

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिरार्जवमेव च ।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम् ॥ ४२ ॥

**śamo damastapaḥ śaucam kṣāntirārjavameva ca
jñānam vijñānamāstikyam brahmakarma svabhāvajam**

Serenity, control of the senses, austerity, purity, forgiveness, uprightness, knowledge (wisdom), experience of the proper performance of sacrifice and belief in God and Vedas etc., these are the duties of a Brāhmaṇa, intrinsic to his nature. 42

Comment:—

'Śamaḥ'—'Śamaḥ' means, control of the mind, freeing it from distractions and concentrating it, on the point, where it should be concentrated.

'Damaḥ'—Control of the senses, withdrawing them from external objects and employing these, where they should be employed, is 'Damaḥ'.

'Tapaḥ'—Austerity of the body, mind and speech, has already been described in the Gītā (17/14—16). Here this term means enduring hardships happily, while discharging one's duties.

'Śaucam'—'Śaucam' means, purity of one's mind, intellect, senses and body, as well as of the activities and food etc.

'Kṣāntiḥ'—Total absence of the spirit of retaliation, even when one is insulted or hurt or pained, in spite of having power to take vengeance is called, forgiveness (Kṣānti).

'Ārjavam'—Simplicity, of the body and speech etc., without having any crookedness, fraud and knavery in the mind, is known uprightness (Ārjavam).

'Jñānam'—Study of Vedas, the scriptures and historical records, and fully grasping their teachings and meanings, as well

as, the awareness of what ought to be done and what ought to be refrained from, is 'Jñāna'.

'Vijñānam'—The proper method and observance of religious sacrifice (yajña), according to Vedas and scriptures, is known 'Vijñāna'.

'Āstikyam'—Firm belief in God, the Vedas, the scriptures and life after death, and translation of their teachings into practice, is 'Āstikyam'.

'Brahmakarma svabhāvajam'—A Brāhmaṇa's temperament, is naturally suited to the performance of these above-mentioned duties, such as serenity and self-control etc., he experiences no difficulty in performing them.

A Brāhmaṇa who has the predominance of mode of goodness, whose forefathers have been pure and whose actions of the previous birth, are pure, faces no difficulty in possessing the above-mentioned, nine qualities. In his life, the actions of earning livelihood occupy a secondary place. As far as, the people of other three Varnas (castes), are concerned, because of predominance of the modes of passion and ignorance, their actions, of earning their livelihood also, are included, in natural actions. Therefore, in the Gītā, in the duties of a Brāhmaṇa, only actions which involve these qualities, not those of livelihood, have been included.

Appendix—If the Varna tradition has been properly followed, a Brāhmaṇa naturally possesses these qualities. But if a hybrid is born viz., if there is an inter-mixture of castes, then the Brāhmaṇas don't naturally possess these qualities, there is deviation in those qualities.

In the preceding verse the expression 'svabhāva prabhavai-rguṇaiḥ' was used, therefore here the Lord mentions 'svabhāvaja karma'. In the formation of nature (temperament) the first importance goes to birth and then the company a person keeps, is important. By company, by the study of books (self-study) and by practice etc., the nature changes.

