

All good acts which are conducive to public welfare are emphatically enjoined in the Sastras. Therefore they may be all undertaken even without consulting the Sastras. But whatever act is harmful, it is prohibited by the scriptures which are the infallible guides. Therefore the Sastras necessarily come in for guidance whenever a doubt arises about the validity of an action.

Beings depend on food for their existence. Voluntary distribution of it is therefore a mark of consideration and regard for beings. Cherishing beings with food is a form of worship of the Almighty.

*Mantrās* are the external indications of the solemn determination and noble intents behind an action. An undertaking which is devoid of elevating ideas is more mechanical than human.

Reverent gifts are to be made to those who participate in a *Yajna* with an attitude of service. Gifts are also to be made to other deserving people and to good causes.

Above all if a holy undertaking be devoid of *sraddhā*, it is to be eschewed as vainglorious and demoniac. The *Tamasika* type of people undertake *Yajñās* full of these defects.

Austerity is a holy means for the human to emerge into the divine. Its characteristics are mentioned in the following few stanzas :—