

ousness that explains the decorations which are further accompanied by wreaths of flowers placed at the foot of the Lamp which generally consists of a solid stand made of brass with a basin at the top for holding oil. The lamp is placed on the ground. The light is considered as the embodiment of auspiciousness and prosperity, and hence it is that the place where it is to be kept is prepared as for an honoured guest. The स्थानानि here meant are the several places where lights are kept, such as the room which forms the *sanctum sanctorum* of the household idols, the principal hall, the veranda at the entrance of the house, and also other parts that require lights or that the occupant can afford to provide with lights. Besides the Rângolî and flowers, akshatâs or entire grains of corn are also strewn about the places occupied by the lamp stands.

संध्यामङ्गलदीपिका, मङ्गला दीपिका मङ्गलदीपिकाः संध्यायां या मङ्गलदीपिकाः ताः संध्यामङ्गलदीपिकाः. Auspicious lights of the evening. The auspiciousness of the lights may be understood from the fact that it is considered highly inauspicious not only if the light is not lighted in the evening at all, but even if it is lit up late, say an hour or two after nightfall. And poor people who cannot afford a light will have it if it be for a few moments even at the beginning of the night. If there be no oil in the house a man will burn something else but he *must* have a light for a short time at least. The idea among the people is that Lakshmî the goddess of wealth and prosperity, always fickle and always arbitrary, enters any house she likes at the beginning of the night, and if she finds there is no light in it, she will go back, and woe to the man whose house Lakshmî wished to enter but from which she went away for want of a light therein !

विभजते, 'worships' 'honours.' When the light is placed the females, generally the elder ones in the house join their hands in reverence and address it thus :