

*Can God Improve My Balance Sheet ? : Invoking the Inner Potential* : Dwarakanath Reddy (New Delhi : Affiliated East-West Press, 1994, pp. i-xviii, pp. 127, Price Rs. 90)

This book presents the reflections of an entrepreneur-CEO of a Rs. 150 crore company. Mr. Reddy is a Masters degree-holder in chemical engineering and now heads this company which he had inherited as a small nucleus from his father.

In this book, with beautiful English from a technocrat-manager, the author looks 'meticulously at the energy that functions *through* the mind and *as* the mind'. This is what Mr. Reddy calls "God" -- but not until the very last page of the book.

In chapter after chapter the author crisply covers most of the major concepts of Yoga - Vedanta - Gita psycho-philosophy, but without using the indigenous phrases. In this veiled style we are presented with useful interpretations of the theory of *karma*, *nishkam karma*, *chittashuddi*, etc. The author warns against ego-centered energisers of work by declaring that 'Personal doer-ship cannot scale greater heights'. He also says : 'When the intellect is blocked by egoism, the source of inner counsel is stilled'. It is important, he advises the manager to practise meditation to achieve an 'aware but inactive' mind. This will allow the all-pervading consciousness to improve the clarity and perceptiveness of mind, leading to 'action without reaction'.

Mr. Reddy illustrates his subjective approach to business problem-solving in chapters 10 and 11 through an imaginary CEO-Union Leader confrontation process. The two most critical subjective issues highlighted by him are : Managing the CEO's ego, and quietening his mind. Neither the use of brute egoistic authority, nor the application of clever ruses to dupe the union-leader can contribute towards an enduring or authentic solution. If there has to be a parting of the ways, be it so. But let it *follow* after the righteous path has been pursued with honesty, understanding and truthfulness in thought, mind and action. This indeed is the way of human values with the vision of tomorrow and thereafter, not merely that of to-day and now.

The subject of meditation (chapter 12) has been dealt with in a non-theological, non-religious style. 'Meditation is mobilizing one's mental energy to achieve one's objective', the author states. Yet, he warns later that such mobilization around one's ego-centre will

be self-defeating. Instead, one has to let go the ego, and immerse in the central pool of all-pervasive consciousness by withdrawing from perception of the external world. All this is not so easy or quick as it may sound. Agree or not, some spiritual disciplines lies at the basis of this endeavour.

Mr. Reddy then initiates an exposition about the science of work - the issue of I-ness, doer-ship, egoistic will, etc. Even if one pursues the goal of honestly-made-millions, the perception behind all one's actions should be correct. He uses the analogy of a switch which lights up a bulb. Does the switch really pour light into the bulb? 'Personal doer-ship cannot scale greater heights' -- the author concludes again. It is a mistake to forget that one does not write the script -- though one has to act. The *Gita's* counsel of *nishkam karma* has been elaborated in chapter 14 with the concluding observation: 'to be a millionaire there has to be a deserving beyond the easy desiring'. Based on this gospel, the author advises (chapter 15) that dispassion about the future at this moment, even as one devotes all one's energy to the present task, is the real art of perfect doer-ship.

As a solid support for cultivating this art of doer-ship, chapter 15 expounds the law of cause-and-effect (without mentioning it as the doctrine of *karma*). So, it is asserted, and correctly, that there are no accidents, but only happenings. Nothing happens that should not happen. It is disastrous to read the occurrence of apparently unconnected events as a negation of this over-arching law. Perceiving the truth of this law is not at all fatalism; it is a superior understanding of the orderly principle beneath chaotic surface events.

Containing a lot more of such analysis and observations, Mr. Reddy's book is a timely and relevant contribution towards integration of the practical aspects of Indian philosophy with the requirements of hands down management. This reviewer feels immensely grateful and gratified to find that what he had begun writing about since 1985 from scholastic conviction, to-day stands vindicated by this eloquent book from a practising entrepreneur-technocrat-CEO. Well done, Sir.

— Dr. S. K. Chakraborty