



THE SPEAKING TREE

Do You Lack Integrity?

Small incidents tell us all about an individual's personality, says MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN

If a single drop of water from a vessel is found to be brackish, it means that all of the liquid is undrinkable. We need sample only one drop to know with certainty what the rest will be like. Much the same is true of the human personality.

Small instances of an individual's behaviour and quite short interludes in his company are generally sufficient to tell us what his overall personality is like. A thoughtless remark, an unfair manoeuvre, failure to give much-needed sympathy or support, a devious transaction — all these are the plain indicators, like those brackish drops of water from the larger vessel, which indicate lack of integrity or callousness of the person you are dealing with.

The human personality has the same homogeneity as water. A single human weakness cannot, therefore, be considered in isolation, as if it were an exception. It has to be looked upon as being representative of the entire personality. If an individual proves unreliable in one matter, he is likely to evince the same unreliability in other matters; if he is guilty of untrustworthiness on one occasion, the chances are that this trait will show up time and time again.

A man who has made a mistake can completely erase the marks of what is an unfortunate experience for others by admitting his mistake and begging forgiveness. Some people are pricked by their consciences, but do nothing to assuage the ruffled feelings of others, thinking that to do so would be sheer weakness and mean loss of face. They do not realise that a man displays his true mettle when he sees his own wrong actions for what they are, and humbly asks for forgiveness from the one whom he has hurt. ■