

achieved only by personal upgrading. To be truly helpful, one must rise to the point where he has something to offer to others.

Materialistically, the valuable person is the one who has money or tools to use or to lend, or potatoes or skills to sell. Intellectually, the valuable person is the one who has knowledge and understanding which are available to others in search of knowledge and understanding. Spiritually, the valuable person is the one who, by reason of a love of righteousness, discovers some of the divine principles of the universe and becomes able to impart to others that which he has perceived—by deed as well as by word.

#### SELF-CULTIVATION

ALL ASPECTS of upgrading are creative in character. Necessarily they first demand an attention to self—that is, self-cultivation. Nothing creative is induced by compulsion. With the possible exception of a low form of imitation, compulsion has only the power to restrain, repress, suppress, destroy. By the use of sufficient force, I can keep you from acting creatively; but no amount of force can compel you to think, to invent, to discover, to attune yourself to the Infinite, the source of all knowledge and understanding. Compulsion is antagonistic to creativeness.

The point here under discussion is this:

I cannot indulge in my own upgrading at the same time I am inhibiting someone else's creative action. Therefore, to the extent that one's life is spent in using force to direct others, to that extent is one's life destroyed, its purpose frustrated.

In a reference to political authority, Lord Acton stated: "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." This warning is not to be taken lightly. One does not have to look far for the evidence nor to think deeply for the reason.

Probably you have noted the profound change that comes over men when they are given power over others. When acting as responsible, self-controlled beings—when attending to their own affairs—they were admirable both in their thinking and in their behavior. Then comes power through some office of governmental control. In due course—usually soon—they begin to think like authoritarians; they talk like authoritarians; they act like authoritarians; for, indeed, they are authoritarians. It is as if a chemical change had taken place.

#### INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCE

POWER OR AUTHORITY over the creative activities of others—that is, a responsibility for the behavior of others—is an assignment with an inevitable consequence. Thus overburdened, a wielder of power eventually comes to be intolerant, quick-tempered,