

FOREWORD

A Reflection in brief

Authoring a biography - a life story of someone else, is an easier thing to do than to write an autobiography, which is a difficult task indeed; one has to steer clear through the two extremes, self appreciation on one hand and understatement of achievements on the other. One has to be true to himself and be more than just and honest and at the same time courageous enough penning down the realities, the truth of oneself.

Autobiography is a hazardous attempt. It needs a clear understanding of oneself, and then the art of articulating the understanding in the choicest words with lucidity of style. Someone has said that history is the essence of innumerable biographies/autobiographies; any departure from truth therein may have the effect of embellishing the history. The best of autobiographies are those which are not ego-centric. An autobiography is worth being written if the author has played a role in life impacting the society and events around. He should have been not a mute spectator but one who has also moved the needles. The narration called autobiography then focuses on contemporaneous events and developments worth being placed on record with the autobiographer's self in the centre.

The manuscript of '*On the Loom of Time*' is in my hands and I have turned over its pages. I did not have an opportunity of personally knowing Shri Shivakant Jha. His sketch emerges life size from the '*Loom of Time*'. As a member of IRS he has always lived by his conscience and performed at his best. While honouring the discipline of a true government servant he has been bold enough to the occasions, responded to the calls of times and never missed an opportunity of taking decisions and acting thereon

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as a true citizen of India, as an upholder of the constitution and the laws, and, as a reformist. He has been critic on points of principles but not on personalities. A reading of the autobiography reveals that he is one who has no regrets in his life. He has never looked back. He has marched with the times with firm footsteps and played well his role in life as assigned by the Divine. Teachings of *Shrimad Bhagwad Gita* have been his guide. For him work has been worship. He has believed in 'work is thy duty, reward is not thy claim'. He has rightly described '*On the Loom of Time*' not as an autobiography but as an autobiographical memoir.

A crusader has to stand alone, to suffer at times, and also to pay the price but in the long run he earns admirers and followers too. Today, such memoirs as this one are needed the most, to instruct and inspire the youth who might be searching for a role model. These memoirs provide an interesting reading apart from satisfying the intellectual urge of an astute reader.



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