UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OU_164597

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

NEW LIGHT

ON

FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS

INCLUDING

THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF ART

Thesis approved by the Madras University for the Doctorate in Philosophy

NEW LIGHT
ON
FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS

INCLUDING

NATURE AND FUNCTION OF ART

and being

A Critical and Constructive Study of the Problems of Philosophy
from the new point of view of Henri Bergson

BY

T. V. SESHAGIRI ROW, M.A., Ph.D

UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS

Price Sh. 4 1932 Price Rs. 3

PRINTED AT
THE MADRAS LAW JOURNAL PRESS
MYLAPORE, MADRAS
1932

CONTENTS

PART I

PAGE

INTRODUCTION ix—xv

CHAPTER I

The Intuitionistic Philosophy:—

The broad features of the new Philosophy of Henri Bergson of France 1

CHAPTER II

Concrete Becoming:—

The conception of pure qualityless and changeless Being is a false impossible abstraction .. 19

CHAPTER III

"*Duration*":—

The Absolutist's arguments to show the unreality of Time critically examined .. 28

CHAPTER IV

The time-honoured Principles of Philosophy:—.

(1) Ground and consequence; (2) Causality; (3) Substance, (4) Teleology:—These considered from the point of view of Taylor, the Absolutist, and that of Bergson .. 36

CHAPTER V PAGE

The Criterion, Data and Construction of the Reality of the Absolutist:—

The fundamental positions of the Absolutist with regard to these, examined critically from the point of view of Bergson .. 47

CHAPTER VI

Contingency:—

The fallacy in the Absolutist's reasoning by which he rules out 'Contingency' .. 58

CHAPTER VII

Degrees of Constructed Reality:—

An examination of the old conceptual method and the conception of the Degrees of constructed Reality: The need for a new method of Philosophy suggested .. 67

CHAPTER VIII

Intuition:—

The new method of Philosophy: A critical statement of its Nature and Function .. 79

CHAPTER IX

The Problem of Reality:—

Bergson's treatment of the issue between the Idealists and the Realists: The discovery of the unique standpoint for solutions to the problems of the relation between:—(A) Body and Mind; (B) Perception and Memory; (C) Matter and Spirit .. 88

CHAPTER X

Life and Consciousness:—

The triple problem of Life, of Consciousness, and of the relation between Life and Consciousness .. 104

CHAPTER XI PAGE

Freedom:—

The unique conception of Freedom—Personal and Impersonal—a freedom that transcends both Mechanism and Finalism .. 129

CHAPTER XII

The Moral Problem: *A Constructive Theory*:—

Criticism of the theory of Self-Realization and of other theories:

A new solution of the Ethical problem, suggested on the lines of Bergsonian thought, —a way of getting over the recurring metaphysical difficulties involved in the Ethical problem .. 140

CHAPTER XIII

The Ethics of Self-Creation as Normative:—

An argument by which the theory is defended. 160

CHAPTER XIV

The Supreme Idea of God:—

The fallacies in the reasoning by which Sir Dr. Radhakrishnan attempts to show the inconsistencies in Bergson's idea of God:

An argument by which it is shown how Bergson's God may be construed as Personal in the best sense of the term:

A line of thought by which the implications and merits of the Immanence of a god like that of Bergson are shown: The glorious conception of a Growing God as one that moves from Perfection to Perfection, from Splendour to Splendour .. 178

"In every Domain, the Triumph of life is Creation."

—Henri Bergson.

"Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!"

"I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Unless I've built my own city,
In God's ever green and growing Land."

—William Blake.

(Words underlined are the author's.)

"Life, as I imagine it, is still a life of striving, a need of invention, a creative evolution."

—Henri Bergson.

INTRODUCTION

THE present work represents a very humble effort to re-state the problems of Philosophy, especially the Moral Problem and the Problem of God, in the light of the fundamental principles of recent Bergsonian thought. It is also an attempt to express certain developments on the lines of philosophical thought which I learnt to value and appreciate in the course of my studies of modern and contemporary Philosophers.

I believe that the future history of man is bound to be influenced by the ideas that Monsieur Henri Bergson of France has ushered into the world of thought. The poet and the philosopher, the man of action and the religious mystic will all have the golden touch of these ideas, and will all be different hereafter from what they have been hitherto. And further they will contribute to the current of thought that has been deepened by Bergson. It is nothing short of this conviction that has inspired me to undertake this small work.

To show the value of Bergson's thought, I have had to devote a considerable portion of this thesis to a criticism of the old system of Philosophy, Absolutism, and to a comparison of some of the fundamental posi-

tions of the Absolutists with those of Bergson. If it is deemed that any of my criticisms are somewhat too strongly urged, I crave the indulgence of the readers who may allow a fair margin for my enthusiasm for the new point of view that has been so recently inaugurated in the world of philosophical thought.

Though I have divided the treatment of this subject under various headings for the sake of clearness, still my readers will find that the consideration of the topic of one leads on to the topic of the next one, so that while each chapter represents a problem that has been tackled within it, nevertheless the continuity of the whole thesis is sought to be maintained.

In Chapter I, I have outlined the fundamental positions of the new Philosophy of Bergson. In Chapter II, I have dealt with Concrete Becoming which is such a fundamental idea of Bergson. And in Chapter III, I have dealt in detail with Bergson's 'Duration', which is the fundamental basis of his 'Creative Evolution', and have considered critically the arguments of a typical Absolutist against the ultimate reality of Time.

After next considering some of the time-honoured principles of Philosophy like those of Ground and Consequence, Causality, Substance, and Teleology in the fourth Chapter, I have proceeded to describe in Chapter V some of the positions with regard to the Criterion,

the Data and the Construction of Reality which Taylor sets forth in Book I of his "Elements of Metaphysics", and have considered what might be the attitude of Bergson with regard to these positions of the Absolutist. This conception of an Ever-perfect Absolute has led me to take up the question of 'Contingency' in the sixth Chapter. I have examined critically the arguments of Taylor by which he seeks to rule out contingency and have contrasted Taylor's view with that which Prof. Ward set forth in his "Realm of Ends". In all these discussions I have taken Taylor as the typical champion representative of Absolutism.

In the next Chapter I have shown the irrationality of the old conception of the Degrees of Reality which is implied in the Philosophy of Absolutism. I suggested the need for discarding the method of Intellectual Construction as incapable of grasping Life, and for discovering a new method of Philosophy by which we can know the Living Creative Reality. Chapter VIII is devoted specially to a treatment of Bergson's Intuition, which being the double essence of both intellect and instinct, is best fitted to grasp the double aspect of Living Reality, viz., Matter and Spirit.

In the next Chapter I have presented the new suggestions which we get from the intuition of Bergson for tackling the Problems of Reality—for solving the

ever new problems of the relation between Body and Mind, Perception and Memory, Matter and Spirit.

In Chapter X, I have described the lines of argument which Bergson followed in his glorious Huxley Lecture delivered at Birmingham, which point to us the directions in which we may find the solution of the triple problem of Consciousness, Life, and the relation of Consciousness to Life. I claim nothing in that Chapter as my own. Nothing has been added to what Bergson himself says, either by way of criticism or by way of construction. It seems to me that a re-statement in a simpler form of the important facts which Bergson brought to light in that lecture is absolutely necessary for ensuring in the reader a sympathetic understanding of the spirit of Bergson's thought and investigation.

Bergson's conception of Freedom is unique. It is vital to his Philosophy. Hence I have devoted Chapter XI to this important topic. It is shown there that by means of his intuition Bergson saw a levelling up of the Impersonal to the height of the Personal. It is also shown how the Philosophy of life in general, to which he leads us transcends, like his Philosophy of Personal Freedom, both Mechanism and Finalism.

This leads on to a discussion of the Moral Problem and an attempt to show the futility of the Ethics of

Self-Realization. I have shown how an Ethics of Self-Expression or Self-Creation, in which the Metaphysical difficulties involved in the Ethics of Self-Realization are overcome, may be developed on the lines of Bergsonian thought. I have described how on these lines my esteemed teacher, the Rev. Dr. A. G. Hogg, has conceived of Moral action as "Artistic Creation". The next Chapter is devoted to a consideration of this theory of Self-Creation as a Normative Ethics. I have considered the steps whereby, in the argument referred to, a most satisfactory theory may be evolved and defended. Then I have applied those steps to the theory of Self-Creation and have shown that in this theory the conditions are satisfied. I believe that these lines of investigation are a substantial contribution to the ethical thought of the world and mark a distinct change in the course of ethical enquiries.

The last Chapter contains some suggestions for the construction of a really consistent and useful idea of God such as the world never conceived before. In my opinion my esteemed teacher, Sir Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the eminent Indian Absolutist of more than national repute, has levelled a most ruthless, unjust and sweeping condemnation at Bergson's idea of God. I have accordingly tried to analyse his criticisms and expose the fallacies involved in them. After this, I

have unravelled, I believe with some amount of success, the real idea of Bergson's God. I have argued that the highest glory of the Divine Self, His sign of Personality, is revealed in his Self-determination. And I have indicated how it is possible to conceive that Bergson's original active conscious principle, choosing, out of its own freedom, to turn back upon itself to bring out the material for facilitating the evolution of species and the construction of human personalities, is the Divine positing of an Other in Himself as Not-Himself. Herein lies the highest glory and the sign of the Personality of Bergson's God. I have then proceeded to urge that the conception of the Immanence of God, involved in Bergson's idea of God, makes Morality and Religion one, and thus gives a very high value to both. Next it has been shown how Bergson's Growing God, instead of being an imperfect God, is really a process from Perfection to Perfection, from Splendour to Splendour, and how upon such an idea of God coupled with the idea of a World that has scope for growth and progress, a glorious religion of Love may be based.

Finally I have maintained that, on account of this intuitive vision of Bergson, founded on facts of life and sustained by reason, we may rejoice "in a morality that is positive and triumphant, in a religion that breaks

into the joyous morality; and above all in the knowledge that God is with us, and that therefore nothing can be finally against us." This is what Bergson can give us. He has not given us as yet his own system of Ethics or his ideas of Religion. But, I believe that, when he gives it to us, as he has promised to do, his system must have the broad features that have been indicated in my later chapters, and his theory will have the stuff and complexion of the theory of Self-Creation that has been suggested in this thesis. If and when that system is given to us there is bound to be a distinct step in advance, in the ethical and religious thought of the world.

I have great pleasure in acknowledging my deep debt of gratitude to my 'Pradhana Acharya', the Rev. Dr. A. G. Hogg, M.A., D.Litt., for having taken the trouble to read some of the chapters of my book and for having permitted me to publish his letter regarding the Ethics of Self-Creation, which is printed as a note to Chapter XIII. I am also indebted to him for allowing me to re-state his theory in my book and to draw upon his books and notes for quotations.

MADRAS T. V. S.
SOUTHERN INDIA
June, 1932

PART I

New Light on Fundamental Problems

CHAPTER I

THE INTUITIONISTIC PHILOSOPHY

THE BROAD FEATURES OF THE NEW PHILOSOPHY OF HENRI BERGSON

ABSOLUTISM, as represented in Britain by Bradley, Bosanquet and Taylor, has for its Reality an Absolute such as would be found to be apprehended by one who has perfect knowledge. It is to be attained by a systematic and gradual progress of thought, which consists in the gradual elimination of all degrees of inconsistency and in the consequent attainment of an ever-increasing consistency. The Absolute thus to be reached by progressive thought is an eternal perfect Reality. It is the only Reality. Everywhere else there is some element of inconsistency, and therefore there are only degrees of Reality. The Absolute does not change ultimately: but it has change

Absolutism.

Reality, a static Absolute.

in it and it is the basis of all change. It tends to be static, because it is already perfect, and does not admit growth. It is further the fulfilment of a purpose or a scheme realised through the changes that occur within it. It is the one beyond all Space and Time, which have no ultimate reality. Speaking broadly we may say that Reality for the Absolutists is One. It is static. It is conceived as teleological by Absolutists like Taylor. It is a perfect or completely self-consistent system, real at all times. And it can be comprehended by the 'conceptual method', which consists in passing from concepts of narrower meaning to concepts of broader and broader meaning. Such is the method which the Absolutist philosophy employs. And such is the Reality it has in view.

The Absolute attained by the conceptual method.

In direct antithesis to this philosophy, we have Pragmatism in America, which derides Conceptualism as no proper method of philosophy. It seems to be satisfied for its method with an 'immediate feeling'. And its criterion of truth is practicability or workability. It tends to posit as real a number of individuals. Thus while Absolutism is Monistic, Pragmatism tends to be Pluralistic. While for the

Pragmatism. Its method—immediate feeling. Its criterion of truth—practicability.

Reality—a number of individuals.

one the Real is once for all given, for the other it is plastic and admits of modifiability, of being acted on and of reacting. And again, while the former conceives the Real as having an ultimate purpose guiding the Universe, for the latter the Real is immediate and depends on immediate purposes of individuals and species. Such are the features of Pragmatism,* which seems to be in direct *antithesis* to Absolutism.

The real as plastic.

Bergsonism of France, while taking advantage of this reaction of Pragmatism against Absolutism, conserves the features of Absolutism, so far as they are conservable in an Intuitionistic Philosophy, while avoiding its excesses as well as the excesses of the reacting Pragmatism. Neither mere 'Conceptualism' nor mere vague 'Immediate feeling' is recognised as the proper method of philosophy. But an *'Intuition'*, which is the double essence of both Instinct and Intellect, and which is to follow the double aspect of Reality, viz., Materiality and Life, is recognized as the proper method.

The Philosophy of Bergson—a synthesis of Absolutism and Pragmatism.

Its method—Intuition.

* Only a very rough statement of Pragmatism has been attempted here.

The Real is not understood either as already perfect or as merely plastic, but as an endless creativity—as Creative Evolution. Neither is it mere unity nor mere multiplicity. Neither is it determined by the ultimate purposes nor by mere immediate purposes. It is not Substance or Substances, but an eternal energy engaged in eternal Creativity. Thus we think that Bergsonism may in a way be said to be a *synthesis* of the Absolutism of Britain on the one hand, which is the *thesis,* and the Pragmatism of America on the other, which is the *antithesis,*—between which the real movement, the real Becoming tried to escape but is ultimately grasped by Bergson.

The features of Reality.

An Eternal Energy engaged in Eternal Creativity.

We know how the great Hegel of Germany, in his immortal discovery of the "Doctrine of Opposites," has shown that the conceptions of Being and Non-Being are self-contradictory and therefore false abstractions. If we try to think of an "is" and then of an "is not", we find that our conceptual attempt to conceive "is" passes into "is not" and *vice versa.* Each means to mean the opposite of the other but succeeds only partially. The Unity alone which is *Becoming*

The discovery of Hegel that the conceptions of Being and Non-Being are self - contradictory, and therefore false abstractions.

is Real. The movement of thought between the "is" and the "is not" represents the Real as never "is" or "is not" but always the *unity* of both, viz., Becoming. The opposites are opposed to each other but not to the unity. The Real is concrete. It is always Becoming, movement, development. Such is the discovery of Hegel. But on account of Hegel's failure to distinguish the Life Process or Concrete Duration of perpetual motion from the timeless logical relation of Distincts, it is itself mistaken by him for a mere timeless logical process. It remains thus in the hands of Hegel only an ingenious feat of Conceptual thinking.

"Becoming" in the hands of Hegel remains only an ingenious feat of conceptual thinking.

But while thus Hegel *thinks* Becoming, and defines Reality through a movement of concept, Bergson on the other hand perceives or *intuits* the Becoming, the concrete creativity. He gives a direct exposition of the meaninglessness of Nothing, and tries to *exhibit* the Concrete Creativity or Becoming which he intuits, by conceptually splitting it into tendencies and by trying to show their relation by means of concepts and images.* His improvement upon

Bergson's improvement upon Hegel.

Bergson intuits Becoming as concrete creativity.

* Bergson: Creative Evolution, pp. 293-314 (English translation, Macmillan & Co.).

Hegel consists, in the first place in the fact that he first *intuits* the concrete creativity and then attempts to conceptualise it so as to be able to suggest it to others, however imperfectly that may be.* And secondly, while Hegel has not insisted on the interesting and important fact that the real Becoming is not a mere swinging backwards and forwards between two extremes but involves *novelty* and *creativity,* Bergson has taken special care to emphasise these essential characteristics of Duration, which he represents as Creative Evolution.

"Becoming" for Bergson is not a mere swinging backwards and forwards between two extremes, but involves novelty and real creativity.

Bergson's Creative Evolution is not mere Science, for it is not practical as the ordinary sciences. Nor is it a complete Cosmological History, for it is not a downright exposition of the wholesale intuition of the entire Reality. Intuition is only fragmentary and gives but glimpses of the Absolute Reality. So we have to push Intuition further and further. We must try to get beyond mere glimpses of Intuition on the one hand and mere concepts on the other hand, so as to get a system of Philosophy. And

The progressive Philosophy of the Real.

* Bergson says that it is impossible to conceptualise and communicate the intuition of Duration completely and correctly. But he tries to bring home to us his intuition by using 'fluid concepts' and 'concrete images' *vide* p. 17.

no Intuitional system can ever claim to be complete. The systems have to correct one another by comparing their intuitions and their results, and thus to contribute to the progressive philosophy of the Real. Each intuitional system of philosophy can at best be a suggestion only, and can never be a representation of intuition completely. In the first place intuition itself is fragmentary. And secondly, there can be no perfect exhibition of intuition in language. It cannot be expressed in static concepts, in abstract, general or simple ideas. For, there is an *illusion* and there is a *danger*.

Intuition is fragmentary. Its complete exhibition in language is not possible.

Each concept retains only that part of the object which is common between it and other objects, and expresses a comparison between the object and the others which resemble it. "As comparison manifests as resemblance, as the resemblance is a property of the object, and as a property has every appearance of being a part of the object which possesses it, we easily persuade ourselves, by setting concept beside concept, to think that we are re-constructing the whole of the object with its parts, thus obtaining, so to speak, its intellectual equivalent." "In this way," as Bergson puts it, "we believe that we can form a

The illusion involved in trying to express intuition in static concepts.

faithful representation of Duration by setting in line the concepts of unity, multiplicity, continuity, finite or infinite divisibility, etc."* This is the *illusion.*

The danger involved in such an attempt.

And, further, as the concept can only symbolise a particular property, we make it common to an infinity of things. This abstraction and this generalisation always deform the property by the extension given to it and consequently goes farther and farther beyond the concrete object itself and divides the concrete unity into symbolical expressions. And that is the *danger.*

The image has the advantage of keeping us in the concrete.

But language need not use general terms only. It can use 'images' also. The 'image' has the advantage of keeping us in the concrete. No single image can replace the intuition of Duration. But a number of diverse and variegated images, "flushing" with multiplicity, *may,* by the convergence of their action, direct consciousness to the *precise point,* where there is a certain intuition to be seized. Bergson tries to bring home to us his intuition by using both Concepts, simple and "fluid," and also Concrete Images. Neither one nor even many concepts together can

* Bergson: An Introduction to Metaphysics (Translation), Macmillan & Co., p. 15.

suggest intuition, and much less *represent* intuition. Not even an image, if it is single, can suggest successfully the real intuition without deceiving us. Nor even a free interplay of fluid concepts and chosen images used in a living artistic language can successfully exhibit the intuition. And yet living language and living images *put together* and wielded by an intuitionistic philosopher like Bergson, can promote a certain *effort* in us to catch the intuition of the philosopher to which he struggles to point. The single aim of a philosopher should be to point to such an intuition.

A living language and living images wielded by an intuitional philosopher can promote a certain effort in us to catch the intuition which he struggles to point to.

And that is exactly what has been the aim of Bergson, especially in his "Creative Evolution." It is vain to look there for a perfect representation of an intuition that is complete and perfect. His Intuition is confessedly imperfect and incomplete. So what we have to look for in Bergson's philosophy is a necessarily imperfect representation of a necessarily incomplete intuition, which can only help us in our efforts to experience the same intuition. It is at best but a *suggestion*. Our look out now is just to catch that suggestion or intuition at a certain point by our own

What Bergson aims at.

intellectual sympathetic effort, by availing ourselves of the help which Bergson succeeds in giving us. Can Bergson suggest anything at all? If he can, is his intuitive suggestion worth anything? And if it is worth anything can we do something to make it more than a mere suggestion, or at least to make it more than a mere vague suggestion? With these objects and with what sympathy we can command, let us enter into some of the problems which Bergson raises and attempts to solve.

"Duration."

Let us first take up Bergson's 'Duration'. 'Duration' is only a Concept, at best, a Fluid Concept. In this concept we have the movement of the mind between an *'is'* and an *'is not,'* the suggestion of a strife between something positive and something negative. More precisely, there is the suggestion of an interaction and struggle between a Reality *making* itself and the same Reality *unmaking* itself, corresponding in consciousness to the *tension* and the interruption of the tension which is *extension*. To come to still further precision,—the opposites are Spirit and Matter. Spirit and Matter constitute the *concrete Becoming*, which is life on earth. To catch it up we have to squeeze Instinct and Intellect, and get their double essence.

Spirit and Matter —opposite tendencies of the same 'Vital impetus'.

This has the appearance of 'Dualism'. And the difficulty is not avoided by merely saying that Spirit and Matter are unreal opposites, whereas the Synthesis, *viz.*, Becoming, alone is real. For, Bergson says that the current of Matter *is only* the inversion of the current of life-making-itself choosing to keep up its tension. Spirit to him is Reality making itself; whereas Matter is the same Reality, unmaking itself. These two are not two independent energies, but only two opposite tendencies of the same *Vital Impetus,* counteracting each other. It is the privilege of Reality to advance forward or to cease to advance. The interruption of the movement forward is the reversion of the movement. Interrupted from continuing to move in the direction it is moving, it *cannot but* follow the inverse direction. Why do we say it cannot but? Because, it is the nature of the Vital Energy to move. It must be moving in some direction or other, to greater or less extent. And hence when interrupted in moving forwards the movement turns backwards.

The appearance of Dualism.

But then the question arises,—wherefrom does the interruption come? The answer is that the interruption *is not* something that comes from outside the Vital Impetus. The interruption comes from within the Vital Impetus itself. For it has the *freedom* either

to proceed or not to proceed, to keep up tension or not to keep up tension. And when it does not keep up tension, it is bound to move backwards as Matter, for it is *energy* and cannot but move some way or other.

When the Vital Impetus chooses not to keep up tension, it is bound to move backwards as Matter.

All that is thus conceptually suggested is re-suggested in a better way by means of images. First Bergson gives us the Image of a Jet of steam getting condensed into falling drops, a part of which however subsists and makes an effort to raise the drops which are falling.* But this condensation and this congealing in this image are determined by something outside itself, *viz.*, the cracks in the kettle and the cool atmosphere around the kettle. So this image does not suggest that the creation of the world is a free act not determined externally.

What is thus conceptually suggested is re-suggested by means of 'Images'.

The Image of a Jet of steam.

And therefore Bergson brings in another image. The Vital Impetus is like the action involved in raising the arm.† The raised up arm left to itself falls back. But there subsists the energy to raise it up again, something of the will that animates the hand. It is

The image of a raised arm left to itself.

*Bergson: Creative Evolution, p. 260.
†*Ibid.*, p. 261.

at this point that we have to catch the intuition of a creative action which unmakes itself, of the Vital Impetus that is congealed into falling Matter, of a Reality that is making itself in and through the unmaking itself.

This Reality-making-itself-through-the-unmaking-of-itself sets up the whole biological evolution in which we find each special evolution turning upon itself, but is borne up by the great blast of life. And this is the Vital Impetus succeeding in making itself by keeping up the tension, through the unmaking itself, which is both its freedom and its interruption at one and the same time. Such is the Vital Impetus; and such is the Duration of Bergson. And such is the suggestion which he tries to give us by means of images and concepts of the intuition he had of the process of the Vital Impetus being congealed into matter.

This Reality-making - itself - through - the - unmaking - of - itself sets up the whole biological evolution.

Bergson does not claim that his Philosophy is either Monistic or Dualistic in the conceptual sense of the terms. To him Reality is both Unity and Multiplicity at once. It is Life. It is a variety of qualities, continuity of progress, and Unity of Duration all at once. But the multiplicity is not a

Bergson's Reality is both a unity and a multiplicity at once.

Mathematical Multiplicity. It is a Multiplicity of qualities interpenetrating one another. And the Unity is not an abstract motionless, empty, colourless unity, which the concept of pure unity circumscribes. But it is a Concrete Unity in which there is Movement or Change. It cannot however be maintained that Bergson is a Monist. Neither does he claim to be that. But from what has been said, it is clear that he is not a Pluralist either.

A multiplicity of qualities interpenetrating into one another.

A concrete unity in which there is movement or change.

The Life which Bergson speaks of has no ultimate purpose. It transcends both Mechanism and Finalism.* But Bergson reads Modified Finalism into it. The present is rich with possibilities. When the possibility has become actuality, we can turn back and find out that it is borne in the past in an inchoate form, as the fragrance of a full-blown blossom is borne in the bosom of the bud that is still to bloom. Purpose then in ethical life can be construed not as something determining the life of man. Thus Bergson clears up the Dualism that

Modified Finalism.

There is no ultimate Purpose of which the Real is the expression.

And yet it may be seen that the actual present is borne in the past as the fragrance of the full-blown blossom is borne in the bosom of the bud that is still to bloom.

* Bergson: Creative Evolution, p. 53.

lingers in the mind of the Absolutist who says that the Real is the *expression* of a Purpose. For Bergson there is neither anything to leave impression, nor anything to receive impression. Reality is not like the bud that is there *for the purpose of* blooming into a blossom. But Reality *is* the bud-bursting-into-the-full-blown-blossom. A free Act is the act that springs out of the abundance of free creative activity.

Bergson clears up the Dualism that lingers in the mind of the Absolutist.

A Free Act.

Another important problem that Bergson forces is that of Body and Mind relation—the unsolved problem of the Realist and the Idealist. The solution is suggested to Bergson by the stand-point from which he looks at the problem. Life is Activity, and living action is essentially the relation between Mind and Body. Biology tells us that consciousness and the nervous system by which it functions come into existence, and develop to meet the need of free activity. Matter and Spirit are not two realities, but one reality making itself through the unmaking itself. And Body and Mind represent two extremes of two tendencies or activities of the same energy to secure a unique result, *viz.*, Life.

Another problem—Body and Mind relation.

Body and Mind represent two extremes of two tendencies or activities of the same energy to secure a unique result, viz., Life.

Such are the problems of Philosophy which Bergson has undertaken to solve, and such have been his solutions or rather suggestions towards complete solutions. Such is the unique method he adopts and advocates, and such are some of the results of an Intuitionistic system of Philosophy. This Philosophy and this Method bear some resemblance to the Philosophy and the Method of the Vedanta. The Upanishads bear truths that were intuited by the ancient seers. But their Intuition is unregulated and erratic. We do not find a gradual lowering down to the level of intellect so as to interpret in a systematic way their intuitive experiences. We find however in the Upanishads the two cross-currents, Vidya-Maya and Avidya-Maya, of which the former, *i.e.,* life through instinct, reason and intuition, counteracts the latter, *i.e.,* life unmaking itself as materiality. But there the first current completely overcomes the latter current. On the other hand in Bergson the first current, *i.e.,* Life-making-itself does not thoroughly succeed in resisting the second current, *viz.,* Life-unmaking-itself. Thus Bergson's Philosophy and the Vedanta Philosophy form as it

The relation of this Philosophy and this method to the Philosophy and the method of the Vedanta.

The Intuition of the ancient seers was unregulated and erratic.

Two cross-currents in the Upanishads.

were two parallel orbits, one of which turns *within* Time, while the other *beyond* Time. Both these standpoints however we find represented by the Intuitionist seer of one of the later Upanishads. "From Time Life in all its forms evolves, through Time it develops, and into Time it goes back; verily Time has both embodied and disembodied aspects." And therefore, "The Absolute is known as Time and as beyond Time," so that, though Time in its own Infinite Self digests all forms of life, he who knows that in which Time itself becomes re-absorbed, knows the highest that is to be known.

If this Absolute Brahmam is thus taken *beyond* Time, He cannot, need not, and does not change or progress, but only floats beyond our ken as an eternally perfect Infinite, tediously the same for ever. But Bergson has shown the need to *vitalize* Him, and *energise* Him. And if in India the philosophers see this need to vitalize Brahman and to energise Him then the only way by which they can do it is to make Him create Himself *through* time eternally. There is no other way. But would the Indian thinkers do this? If they would, there will be ample scope for inaugurating a new point of view and new developments

The suggestion that the Brahman of Indian thought may be vitalised and energised by the only way of making Him create Himself through time eternally.

in the realm of Indian Philosophy in which for centuries together the Changeless Absolute has been the supreme unquestioned monarch domineering over metaphysical speculation and over Ethical and Religious investigations. But what we however now propose is only to do our best to bring out all the valuable implications involved in, and the possible developments that may follow from, the fundamental positions of Bergsonian thought, to study their merits as contrasted with the implications of the Absolutist system of thought, and to present them in a manner that can appeal to the reason and sympathetic understanding of our readers.

CHAPTER II

CONCRETE BECOMING

THE CONCEPTION OF PURE QUALITY-LESS AND CHANGELESS BEING IS A FALSE IMPOSSIBLE ABSTRACTION

THE great Hegel of Germany has shown that Pure Being is identical with Nothing. He argues that Pure Being points to the same abstraction as Pure Nothing does, that it is the same 'Voidest abstraction' as Pure Nothing is, and that it is thus identical with it. When we absolutely abstract from all particularity, what remains is just "the indefinite immediate". Being is what *is* when everything is abstracted,—the abstract Universal of *all* particulars, the one thing common to all particulars. It is the absence of all distinguishableness. Next then, how are we to define Nothing? How otherwise can we define this than as also the absence of all distinguishableness, of every discrimination whatever? "But the absence of every

Hegel's argument to show that Pure Being is identical with Nothing.

Pure Being is the absence of all particularity.

Pure Nothing is the absence of all distinguishableness.

recognisable distinction is just the absence of all particularity, and the absence of all particularity is but the abstraction from all particularity—Pure Being."

So, both mean the same thing.

Pure Being and Pure Nothing then are identical. Each is the absence of all distinguishableness, of every recognisable discrimination. There can be no discrimination in Pure Being any more than in Pure Nothing. Even if you say that you can *conceive* Pure Being, that possibility of its being conceived is itself a distinction, and therefore a quality, and hence it is not strictly Pure Being. So then Pure Being and Pure Nothing are absolutely identical, absolutely indistinguishable. Being is not anything more than Nothing is. Pure Being and Pure Nothing point to absolutely the same abstraction, absolutely the same "retirement into the abstraction from all discrimina". Both are the ultimate abstractions and "the voidest of all abstractions". Neither of these is real. What is real is the *composite or union* of both, which is Becoming, *i.e.*, "Nothing passing into Being, or Being passing into Nothing".

There is another line of reasoning by which Hegel shows that Pure Being and Nothing are indistinguishable. In all cases of distinction, there must be two

Hegel's additional line of reasoning to show that Pure Being and Pure Nothing are indistinguishable.

things, the word 'things' being used here in the loose sense. And these two things should satisfy two conditions so that comparison may be possible. But it will be seen below that neither of the conditions is satisfied in the case of Pure Being and Nothing. (1) In the first place one of the two things must possess an attribute which is not found in the other. But in this case, Being is an absolute absence of attributes, and so is also Nought. Hence the distinction between Being and Nothing is only *meant* to be. It is quite a nominal distinction. It is no distinction at all. (2) In the second place, there must be some common point which comprehends both things. Suppose, for example, we are comparing two different Species. There is a common ground between the two, and that is the Genus. But in the case of mere Being and Nothing, distinction is, "without a bottom to stand upon".* Hence there can be no distinction, both determinations being the same bottomlessness. It may however be replied that Being and Nothing are *thoughts* so that thought is the base for distinction to stand on. But the answer to

In all cases of Distinction there must be (1) one quality present in one thing and absent in the other, and (2) some common point present in both.

But neither of these is present in the case of Pure Being and Nothing.

*From William Wallace's translation of the "Logic of Hegel" from German. *Vide* Rand: Modern Classical Philosophers (Constable & Co., Boston and New York), p. 586.

this is that Being is not a particular or definite thought, so that Being, quite indeterminate, cannot be distinguished from Nothing.

Next it may be said that we may represent Being as "absolute riches" and Nothing as "absolute poverty".

An argument in defence of the view that Pure Being and Nothing are distinguishable.

It may be urged that when you speak of a quality-less Being, you do not speak of Being which is stripped of its qualities, which it wears as so many pieces of dress that a man wears; but you speak of a Being which is but the essence of all qualities. The Being has, no doubt, no qualities differentiated; but the *possibility* of differentiated qualities is there. So also is Being the possibility of all change. Pure Being then is not an utter *negation or abstraction* from all qualities and changes; but it is only a contraction or *implication* of all qualities and changes, so that we may represent Being as "absolute riches". And then as for Nothing, being the abstraction from all particularity, it is "absolute poverty". So it may be argued that Pure Being and Pure Nothing, instead of being identical, are absolutely opposed to each other.

We may represent Being as "absolute riches" and Nothing as "absolute poverty."

In answer to this we point out that if you say that in Pure Being there is the possibility of all qualities

being differentiated, then yours is not Pure Being at all. Because it has at least one quality, *viz.*, the possibility of this Being conceived and spoken of at all. This is itself a quality and hence again it is not quality-less Pure Being. And lastly, since Pure Being only means that everything *is* and neglects all speciality and particularity, all change and all quality,—we should suppose that instead of absolute plenitude we have in it only an absolute emptiness, *i.e.*, Nothing. Thus once again we find that Pure Being and Nothing come to be ultimately one. Both are the ultimate abstractions and "the voidest of all abstractions". Neither of these is real, but the Real is the composite or union of both, which is Becoming,* *i.e.*, "Nothing passing into Being, and Being passing into Nothing".

Hegel's reply to this defence.

Since Pure Being is mere is-ness and omits all quality and all change — we should suppose that instead of absolute plenitude we have in it absolute emptiness, *i.e.*, Nothing.

These criticisms are applicable to all those who define the Absolute as a Pure Being, who define God as a mere Being,—a definition which is no better than that of the Buddhists who make out God as Nought, and who from that principle draw the

These criticisms are applicable to all those who define the Absolute as Pure Being, as well as those who make out God as Nought.

*Logic of Hegel. *Vide* Rand: Modern Classical Philosophers, p. 586.

further logical conclusion that annihilation of all qualities is the means by which man becomes God.

From what Hegel has said we see that the *implication* of all particulars and the *abstraction* of all particulars are the same—*i.e.*, the same concept, *viz.*, Pure Being. It is both an *attempt to retain* Being without its determinations, and an *actual expulsion* of Being along with its determinations. Further Hegel says that though the middle is common to both Being and Nothing, *viz.*, indefiniteness, yet the extremes differ. There is a side in Being in which it is Nothing; and again there is a side where it is Being. The difference lies in this—that in the one, one side is accentuated, and in the other the other side is accentuated. They *mean to mean* opposites; but they succeed only in meaning the same. Our thought swings between Being and Not-Being.

Our thought swings between Being and Nothing.

Bergson conclusively proves that the conception of Nothing is an impossibility. He shows that we can neither *conceive* nor *imagine* Nothing.* He shows how in our attempt to imagine Nothing, we can only go by turns from an external to an internal Nothing but not to both at once. He

Bergson's proof that the conception of Nothing is an impossibility.

*Bergson: Creative Evolution, pp. 289 and the following.

also shows how we fail to get the idea of Nothing. When we try to think away an object, some other object takes its place, and when we try to annihilate a state of consciousness some other state of consciousness at once takes its place. Annihilation signifies, before anything else, substitution, and hence the idea of the annihilation of everything is as absurd as the idea of constructing a square circle. The function of negation is only to affirm or deny something of an affirmation, but not to deny an object. Negation is only a replacement of one quality or object by another, which we leave indeterminate because we are not interested in it. Thus the conception of Nothing is an impossibility.

We can neither conceive nor imagine Nothing.

It is in this way that it has been proved to us by Hegel and Bergson that the conception of neither Pure Being nor Pure Nothing is possible, and that the truth of Pure Being and Pure Nothing is accordingly the *unity* of the two. And this unity is *Becoming.** Every one may have a mental idea of Becoming. It is one idea. But when it is analysed it will be found to involve the attribute of Being and also the very reverse

Becoming.

The truth is Becoming, *i.e.*, the Unity of Pure Being and Pure Nothing.

* Schiller thinks that Becoming is a contradiction in terms, merely a word to designate a forcibly effected union of Being and Not-Being. *Vide* F. C. S. Schiller: Riddles of Sphinx, pp. 72-73.

of Being, *viz.*, Nothing. These two lie undivided in the one idea. So we say that Becoming is the unity of Being and Nothing. Another concept like this is *Beginning*. In its beginning the thing has not as yet come into existence. But it is something more than merely Nothing, for its Being is already in the Beginning. Being is itself a case of Becoming.

"As the first concrete thought-term 'Becoming' is the first adequate vehicle of truth.* In the history of Philosophy this logical idea has its first analogue in the system of Heraclitus. Heraclitus said that the universe is a state of ceaseless change: "You could not step twice into the same rivers, for other and yet other waters are ever flowing on."† When he thus says that 'All is flowing,' he enunciates Becoming as the fundamental feature of all existence. Whereas the Eleatics saw the only truth in Being, rigid processless Being,—Heraclitus goes on to say thus. Being no more is than not-Being,—"a statement expressing the negativity of abstract Being, and its identity with not-Being, as made explicit in Becoming: both abstractions being alike untenable."

The first analogue of this logical idea of Becoming is in the system of Heraclitus.

*Logic of Hegel. *Vide* Rand: Modern Classical Philosophers, p. 587.

†Frank Thilly: A History of Philosophy, p. 23.

Even Becoming, however, by itself is an extremely poor term. It needs to grow in depth and weight of meaning. This deepened force is given to it by Bergson who recognises that Reality is Life. Life is a Becoming. And in Mind also there is Becoming,—richer and more intensive than mere Logical Becoming.

This term 'Becoming' receives its deepened force from Bergson who recognises that Reality is Life.

NOTE.

Even an Idealistic Absolutist like Taylor would grant what is said in this chapter about the unreality of Pure Being and Pure Nothing, and the reality and concreteness of Becoming; for we know his Absolute is not a mere Pure Being but is a Concrete Absolute. But yet the fact is that Idealists like Taylor are apt, having got their Concrete Absolute with its determinate character or union of 'Is' and 'Is not,' to predicate of it what amounts to a pure 'is' when they assert its timeless self-identity. And thus when they do this they are only going back from their acceptance of the Being, Nothing, Becoming dialectic.

CHAPTER III

"DURATION"

THE ABSOLUTIST'S ARGUMENTS TO SHOW THE UNREALITY OF TIME CRITICALLY EXAMINED

WE devoted the last two chapters to outline some of the important positions of Bergson. Now we propose to show the starting point of Bergson's thought. For this purpose we have to deal critically with the old system of Absolutism, so that we may be able to compare some of the fundamental positions of the Absolutists with those of Bergson. In this connection we take Taylor as the champion representative of the cause of the Absolutism of Britain.

We propose to compare some of the fundamental positions of the Absolutists with those of Bergson.

In this chapter we shall consider Bergson's Duration, and examine critically Taylor's arguments to show the unreality of Time.*

Bergson's Duration is what we can *intuit* when we try by a *dis-interested effort* to understand our own

*A. E. Taylor: Elements of Metaphysics (Methuen & Co., London). The quotations in this chapter are from Bk. III, chap. iv, pp. 241 and the following.

conscious life in which the parts, or the so-called 'states', are not external to, or distinct from, one another,—but, interpenetrating in such a way as to exclude repetition and prediction, constitute a *continual creation* of what is new. Our Duration is not merely one instant replacing another; for then, "it would never be anything but the present—no prolonging of the past into the actual, no evolution, no concrete Duration." But our Duration is the "continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances."* Not only is Duration an undeniable fact of our conscious life, it is a fact even in the material world and in the biological realm. "The universe *endures*. The more we study the nature of time, the more we shall comprehend that Duration means invention, the creation of forms, the continual elaboration of the absolutely new."† Duration is thus creative and therefore *"concrete time"* and not the *"abstract* time which enters into our speculations or artificial systems." It is not even *perceptual* time which

Bergson's 'Duration'.

Duration is the undeniable fact of our conscious Life.

Duration in the material world and the biological realm.

Duration is invention, the creation of forms, the continual elaboration of the absolutely new.

It. is creative.

*Bergson: Creative Evolution, p. 5.

†*Ibid.*, p. 11.

can be perceived from the special practical point of view of the individual. It is not *conceptual* time which is constructive quality-less abstraction from the concrete contents of perceptual times. It is not discrete relativity; it is not pure homogeneity. But real Duration is that which gnaws on things and leaves on them the mark of its tooth. It is the *ceaseless upspringing of something new.* It can only be intuited by an effort of sympathy or by a strong recoil upon ourselves rid of all interests in action. It is not one moment replacing another. But it is one *concrete creative continuity,* so that the past, present and the future, as it were, shrink into a single moment which is eternity.

It is concrete, creative continuity.

Such is what Bergson claims to be real Duration. But the Time which Taylor, the British champion of Absolutism, argues against, is unmistakably and confessedly spatialized time, which is of two kinds. That both the Perceptual time and the Conceptual time are spatial is evident from the fact that Taylor places Space and Time on the same level and meets both of them at once by the same arguments. So we are disposed to think that Taylor's reasoning does not really affect the Durational

The Perceptual and the Conceptual Time of Taylor.

time which is intuitional, because it is neither discrete nor abstract. Bergson's Duration is like a flying bird that is singing creation while it flies. But the perceptual and conceptual times and spaces are like silent stationary birds, which Taylor tries to shoot down together at one shot. He uses the same arguments to show the unreality of Space and Time (either perceptual or conceptual). Hence it is evident that Taylor's Time is Spatial time, which Bergson takes special care to see not to be mistaken for Durational time. Bergson himself devotes some attention to show the falsity of such a time, in which the intellect is at home. And therefore Taylor's arguments against the Spatial time seem to be almost irrelevant to the real Duration of Bergson, which is concrete and intuitional, but not either discrete or homogeneous, perceptual or conceptual. But since Taylor describes Perceptual time as "Sensibly continuous," it may appear that we are not entitled to draw so very sharp and absolute a distinction between Taylor's Perceptual Time and Bergson's Duration. Then Taylor's arguments against Perceptual Time will not be entirely irrelevant against anything like what Bergson means by Duration. And therefore we cannot consistently hold that it is altogether irrelevant to enter into an

Are the arguments of Taylor against Time relevant with regard to Bergson's Duration?

examination of the arguments of Taylor, with a view to see whether they are true or untrue, partly and wholly.

For Taylor Time as well as Space is unreal, because an all-comprehensive experience cannot apprehend the detail of existence under the forms of time either perceptual or conceptual. It would not be perceptual time because "it is to me what it is on account of the fact that I see it in perspective from the special standpoint of my own particular *now*"; and as such "the whole character of perceptual time depends upon the very imperfections and limitations which make our experience fragmentary."* But the Absolute experience, which alone is real for Taylor, "is free from the limitations of interest which condition the finite experience, cannot see the order of existence from the special standpoint of any of them, and therefore cannot apprehend it under the guise of the perceptual space and time system." And the all-comprehensive experience cannot apprehend existence under the form of time as we conceptually re-construct it; for "conceptual time is constructed by deliberate abstraction from the relation to immediate experience

For Taylor neither the Conceptual nor the Perceptual Time gives a point of view that is both individual and infinite. So neither can be Real.

*A. E. Taylor: Elements of Metaphysics, Book III, Chapter IV.

implied in all individuality," and consequently can contain no principle of internal distinction, its constituent terms being all exactly alike and indistinguishable. But Reality, for the absolute experience, must be a complete individual whole, with the ground of all its differentiations within itself. Taylor sums up the argument and declares that Time is unreal in this way. The perceptual time-system of our concrete experience represents *individual* but imperfect and *finite points of view.* The conceptual time of our scientific construction represents the mere *abstract possibility* of an *infinite* point of view.* And since "an infinite point of view" is a contradiction in terms, the conceptual time is an unreal figment. Thus we find that therefore neither of these gives a point of view both *individual* and *infinite,* and therefore, neither can be the point of view of an absolute experience. And therefore neither can be real.

Taylor's impossible test of Reality.

Now, we shall notice that Taylor's grand test of the Reality of Time (conceptual and perceptual) as of everything else, is an inconsistent and therefore impossible test of Reality. How can anything be an individual whole,

Inconsistency between Individuality and Infinite point of view.

"with the ground of all its differentiations within itself," and at the same time represent an infinite point

*A. E. Taylor: Elements of Metaphysics, p. 255.

of view? Any point of view can be only a finite point of view; for no one single point of view can exhaust Reality which has varied and numerous and infinite number of points of view. So, individuality, "with the ground of all its differentiations within itself," cannot be an infinite point of view. Hence, the test, by which Taylor declares Time unreal, is an impossible test, which is itself unreal, because it contradicts itself.

Another difficulty with regard to Taylor's reasoning.

And there is yet another difficulty. For Taylor the Absolute Reality is not only both individual and infinite; it is also a *purposive* infinite individual Reality. And yet it is an Absolute all-comprehending Ultimate Reality. This is very strange. For, what is purpose? purpose to fulfil something which is not already fulfilled. So, the individual whole which is purposive is finite, because it is limited by that which is yet to be fulfilled. If so, how can it be both purposive and infinite at one and the same time? Evidently it cannot be. And, the purposive individual Reality, being finite, may give room for the possibility of perceptual time for which a finite point of view is essential. But, if the Absolute must be infinite lest it should cease to be Absolute, then it should cease to be

Inconsistency between Purposiveness and Infiniteness.

purposive. So each of the three elements of Taylor's test, viz., *individuality* with all its differentiations, *infinitude* and *purposiveness*—are inconsistent with one another. And it is therefore no wonder that Time, conceptual or perceptual, or Time of any other possible kind, cannot satisfy the test. So, we think that Taylor's arguments against perceptual and conceptual Time are untrue because the contradiction involved is not only at the very foundation of the entire metaphysical edifice of the Absolutist, but because also it is specially brought into use in the specific arguments he uses against Time. Therefore we think that the arguments of Taylor against Time do not affect Bergson's Duration, even though it may be possible for some to suppose that Taylor's perceptual Time, which he describes as "sensibly continuous", is not quite unlike Bergson's Duration.

A contradiction at the very foundation of the entire Metaphysical edifice of the Absolutist.

CHAPTER IV

THE TIME-HONOURED PRINCIPLES OF PHILOSOPHY

THE PRINCIPLES OF (1) GROUND AND CONSEQUENCE, (2) CAUSALITY, (3) SUBSTANCE, AND (4) TELEOLOGY, CONSIDERED FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF TAYLOR, THE ABSOLUTIST, AND THAT OF BERGSON

THE conception of things as interacting leads to the problem of change. All change is succession within an identity; for where there is no underlying identity there is nothing to change, and thus change would be impossible. And this identity is the unity which the singleness of plan or law brings about between the earlier and the later stages of a process. In the technical language of Logic, this underlying principle of any system is called its Ground, and the detail in which the principle finds systematic expression is called its Consequence. Thus Ground and Consequence are one and the same systematic whole considered from two different points of view. To understand a process of change is to bring it under the principle of Ground and Consequence, and to detect a common principle of structure for the Ground of the

(1) The Principle of Ground and Consequence.

system, and a plurality of successive states as its Consequence. The peculiarity of the case of a change, however, is that it is the principle of Ground and Consequence as applied to a material which is successive in time. When it is thus applied the principle is called the principle of Sufficient Reason. This is simply one case of the fundamental axiom of all knowledge, viz., that what truly exists is a Coherent Whole. This is how Taylor, having the principle of Ground and Consequence as the axiom of all philosophical thought, interprets the case of Change, which is the fundamental basis of Bergson's philosophy, as simply *one* case of the axiom of *all* knowledge, viz., that what truly exists is a Coherent whole.*

The principle of Sufficient Reason.

This principle of Ground and Consequence is then purely a logical concept, a mould of intellect into which Taylor wants to force all Reality—all things both living and inert. This he attempts to do, because to him the presupposition is that Reality is a coherent system of unreal parts, and to him the grand test of Reality is Self-consistency. It is not our object now to bring out the logical inconsistency in

This principle of Ground and Consequence is a purely logical concept—a mould into which Taylor wants to force all Reality—all things both living and inert.

*A.E. Taylor: Elements of Metaphysics, pp. 164 and the following.

these presuppositions, on which this axiom of knowledge, viz., Ground and Consequence, is based. It is enough to say that for Taylor, Reality is that which fits into the logical concept, viz., Ground and Consequence, and that for him the understanding of any process is the attempting to fit it into this ready-made mould, by splitting it into a Ground and a Consequence.

What we now ask is, would Bergson admit this as the axiom of all Philosophy? Our answer is that he would admit it as an axiom so far as the understanding of inert Matter is concerned, but that he would not admit it with regard to the true nature of Life. Bergson proves that Intellect (in the narrow sense, *i.e.*, in the sense of the faculty of reasoning, which is the sense in which Taylor understands Intellect) is intended to think Matter only. "Of the discontinuous alone does the intellect form a clear idea."* It is unfit to present the true nature of life, the full meaning of the evolutionary movement. Deposited by the evolutionary movement in the course of its way, it cannot be applied to

Our view is that Bergson would admit this principle so far as the understanding of inert Matter is concerned, but that he would not admit it with regard to the understanding of the true nature of Life.

Intellect, in the narrow sense in which Taylor understands it, is unfit to present the true nature of life, the full meaning of the evolutionary Movement.

* Bergson: Creative Evolution, p. 163.

the evolutionary movement itself. Bergson says that "not one of the categories of thought—unity, multiplicity, mechanical causality, intelligent finality, etc.,—applies exactly to the things of life."* When thus, according to Bergson, Multiplicity and Unity are categories inadequate for the things of life, how on earth can he be made to speak of *a* "coherent system" in which the *parts* are consistent with one another? When he thus says to Taylor "Your coherent system won't do," how can he accept the principle of Ground and Consequence, which is the implication of this conception of 'Reality as a systematic whole', as an axiom of *all* philosophic thought?

What Philosophy is for Bergson.

Philosophy, for Bergson, is a mere *form* which our thought can give, which we have to stuff with the concrete. It is not mere theory of Knowledge, nor is it mere theory of Life. A theory of Life should be accompanied by a criticism of knowledge, lest it should be obliged to accept as ultimate the concepts which the understanding puts at its disposal. On the other hand a theory of Knowledge which does not replace the Intellect in the general evolution of life will teach us neither how the frames of knowledge have been constructed nor how we can enlarge or go beyond them. Both these inquiries should join each other, and by a

*Bergson: Introduction to Creative Evolution, p. x.

circular process, push each other on, so that they may together solve by a method more sure the great philosophical problems. The main object of Bergson is to give the *push,* he referred to above,—the push which the theory of life has to give to the theory of Knowledge. And it is for Taylor to retaliate this push which Bergson gives to all logical concepts, including the concepts of Multiplicity and Unity, on which Taylor's 'Systematic Whole' is constructed, and from which Taylor draws the principle of Ground and Consequence.

A way in which Bergson's 'Change' may be accommodated under the supremacy of Taylor's Ground and Consequence.

By way of retaliation or rather reconciliation, we suppose that Taylor gives Bergson the concession that he would *somehow* make room for his 'Change' under the supremacy of his Ground and Consequence. For, we have seen that Taylor says that the case of change is a special case of the application of ground and consequence because it is succession in *time.* But, Bergson would ask, "if you want to bring my Change and Time within the all-comprehensive logical concept of 'Ground and Consequence', on the ground of the same axiom, I ask, how do you solve the problem as to *why* succession in time should be a feature of experience?" But Taylor has no answer, for, he says, he cannot show that

succession in time is a logical consequence of the existence of any multiplicity forming a systematic whole. Why should Bergson then covet a doubtful place for his Change and Time, by accepting the Principle of Ground and Consequence as the axiom of *all* philosophical thought? Bergson knows the danger of his Change and Time being first of all somehow admitted under Ground and Consequence, and of being scandalised later on as unreals and appearances. Thus it appears to us that it is far from truth to say that Bergson would be ensnared into admitting the logical principle of Ground and Consequence as an axiom of *all* philosophical thinking.

(2) The Law of Causality.

The law of Causality is an instance of the principle of Ground and Consequence. Cause in the modern sense means the *ground* of a change when taken to be completely contained in preceding changes. Taylor shows that this principle, viz., that every Change has its complete ground in preceding changes is neither a self-evident axiom nor a well-ascertained truth, but is only a postulate suggested by our practical needs. His main argument is that any form of the principle which is practically useful is untrue, and any form which is true is not practically useful.

Taylor shows that Causation is not true, but is only a postulate suggested by our practical needs.

To illustrate the difficulty Taylor takes up the *puzzle of continuity* and shows that the implication of the principle (viz., that the cause precedes the effect) rests upon the notion that the time series is one in which each member has a next term, which is inconceivable. For, however small may be the parts into which you sub-divide any finite time, however small the point at which the division is effected, it is itself a moment in the time-series lying *between* the beginning and the end of the original interval. So, time must be continuous, and we are led to suppose that gaps of empty time are what separate the first event, the cause, from the subsequent event, the effect. And then it would follow that the assemblage of events, say A, is not the 'totality of conditions' requisite for the occurrence of another, say B, for there would be a certain lapse of time in the interval left unconsidered. To this criticism Bergson would give complete assent. And he would add, that the world which the mechanical causation deals is only a world that dies and is reborn at every instant, and that what flows on between moment and moment, between what he calls 'cause' and 'effect', which constitutes real time, real life and duration, escapes calculation.

*The puzzle of continuity.

*A. E. Taylor: Elements of Metaphysics, pp. 171 and the following.

As another instance of the difficulty, Taylor brings in the argument of *indefinite regress.* He says that the indefinite regress in the causal series is an inevitable consequence of the structure of time, and shows how it may be detected both inside and outside any causal relation of two events. From this difficulty causation cannot extricate itself either by the arbitrary postulation of a first cause, or by the absurd postulation of an indefinite lapse of empty time. Bergson would give his consent to this criticism, but he would make the remark that Taylor should not hastily suppose that he has given the analysis of Time *as such.* What Taylor gives is only Time as must be involved in the principle of causation. And, secondly, there cannot be more than one 'cause' for one effect, for the 'plurality of causes' so essential for practical purposes, is inconsistent with the conception of Cause as the Totality of conditions. Further, it involves the fallacy of taking into account concrete Causes and abstract Effects, or, of omitting to notice the variations in the Cause. As for the Totality of conditions, it is said, that, since the whole fact which we call an Effect is never complete until we have taken into account its entire connection with everything else in the universe, and since it is also the case with the Cause, both Cause and Effect

*The argument of indefinite regress.

*A. E. Taylor: Elements of Metaphysics, pp. 177 and the following.

would each become identical with the Universe and thus with each other, and thus cease to be Cause or Effect. Thus causation itself vanishes.

Bergson's idea of Causation. Causation fails to catch Duration, and that is the defect.

And Bergson shows in 'Time and Free-will' that causality, as the pre-figuring of the future phenomenon in its present conditions, strips matter of the concrete qualities, so that there remains only a homogeneous extensity, and thus destroys concrete phenomena, and leads to 'relations of inherence' and to do away with active duration, and to substitute for apparent causality a fundamental identity. And further as in the case of our psychical nature, although the later was not contained in the earlier, we had before us at the time a more or less confused idea of it. The question now is how this potentiality has become actuality? Mechanical causation, though it conjures up the help of 'inheritance,' pre-established harmony, etc., cannot account for it, for it denies active duration by which the unactualised possibility becomes actualised. Even in the case of matter the principle fails. But in the case of psychic life, there are volition and freedom which account for the transformation of the idea into activity, of psychical possibility into actuality. In short, causation fails to catch Duration. And that is the defect.

(3) and (4) Substance and Teleology.

Regarding Substance and Teleology, for achieving brevity and precision, we institute a dialogue between Bergson and Taylor:—

Taylor : Change by itself, apart from a background of identity is impossible.

Bergson : Why?

Taylor : Because, where there is no substance, there can be nothing to change. So where there is change there must be something.

Bergson : But when that something changes, it ceases to be the same thing and becomes another thing.

Taylor: No, no. The thing remains the same. The change is only *within* it.

Bergson : So you say it is a change *in* the permanent, and not *of* the permanent itself.

Taylor : Exactly. It is also the change of the thing, but somehow, the permanent remains the same for ever.

Bergson : What you say is absurd. You do not distinguish between the whole which includes all the changes and the substratum that underlies beneath untouched by these changes. When you say that the change is *in* the thing, you mean the whole. But

when you say the substance is permanent, you mean an imaginary something upon which the changes come and go without touching it.

Taylor : No, I mean only substratum.

Bergson : If the substratum is permanent and unchanging, how can changes ever come into it? And how can there be any end or purpose *in it,* which is to be realized *through* the changes?

Taylor : I do not mean a permanent substance or *something* at all. I only mean a system of plan or law which the successive stages embody.

Bergson : Then why did you say that identity of purpose was just as permanent before the changes as after the changes. I wonder what you really mean.

Taylor : I mean that *change* is *unreal.*

Bergson : Oh! That is a different matter. You should have told that in the beginning only.

CHAPTER V

THE CRITERION, DATA AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE REALITY OF THE ABSOLUTIST

THE FUNDAMENTAL POSITIONS OF THE ABSOLUTIST WITH REGARD TO THESE, EXAMINED CRITICALLY FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF BERGSON*

The criterion of Non-contradiction.

Taylor's defence of the criterion of 'Non-Contradiction' against an objection.

For the absolutist 'Reality' is a self-consistent and systematic whole. Taylor defends this criterion of self-consistency or non-contradiction against an objection. The objection is that this criterion is simply the Logical law of Contradiction, and therefore it is concerned not with real things but exclusively with the Concepts by which we think of them. Hence, to assume that this Law of our thinking is also a Law of the things we think about, and then to proceed to establish a criterion of their reality, is illegitimate and fallacious. Taylor answers that this objection is due primarily to a confusion between a psychical law and a logical law. The Law of Contradiction ought not to be understood as a psychological proposition, but as having a logical sense,

*For a statement of these positions, I depend on Taylor's Elements of Metaphysics, Book I, Chapter II; Book II, Chapter I.

i.e., as a statement about the conditions under which any thought is valid.* To think truly about things is to think in accord with their real nature, to think of them as they really are. Hence, he argues that non-contradiction is a fundamental condition of true thinking inasmuch as it is a fundamental characteristic of real existence.

But we do not think that Bergson would admit the fundamental assumption of Taylor that "to think truly about things is to think in accord with their real nature" unless it be that we suppose that 'thinking' may mean 'intuition' which alone can apprehend real Duration and change without falling into contradictions. Bergson's main contention is to deny Intellect the claim to apprehend Reality. He says that the tendency of Intellect is to fabricate. It has for its chief object the unorganised solid; for it fails to grasp the Creative Change and Novelty which are the essential aspects of Life and Reality. Intellect is at home only with the material world which presents to us objects external to other objects, and parts external to parts. Thus, it is only the *discontinuity*

Bergson's reply to this defence.

The tendency of Intellect is to fabricate.

Intellect is at home only with the Material world.

* Taylor: Elements of Metaphysics, p. 21.

that is thinkable by the Intellect, that the Intellect can form a clear idea of. It always starts from immobility, as if that were the ultimate reality; and when it tries to form an idea of movement, it does so by constructing movement out of immobilities put together and thus it fails to reconstitute the movement as it really is. "It is bewildered when it turns to the living and is confronted with organisation." It cannot think true continuity, real mobility, reciprocal penetration,—that Creative Evolution which is Reality.

Intellect grasps the Movement of Life.

Against Taylor's Criterion there is another objection which Taylor answers in a way that Bergson would not approve. The objection is that our truth is only relative truth, that even the fundamental conditions of true thought are only valid relatively; and that therefore it is wrong to assume their *absolute* validity and to argue from it to the real constitution of things. Taylor challenges the objector to put forth what *he* knows about the nature of Reality which makes him think that Reality is incoherent. Here comes Bergson with his intuition of Reality, and says that Reality is Change, which defies all attempts to restrict it into 'systems' (in the sense in which the word is commonly

Another objection answered by Taylor.

Bergson's view that Reality being Change, defies all attempts to restrict it into systems.

understood when it is applied to Reality). He denies that Reality is a system at all; and he says further that the history of Philosophy has hitherto been a history of unsuccessful systems of Reality each professing to be complete in itself and mutually destructive of one another.

Taylor, thus missing the fact that Reality is Change, and supposing that it is an eternally permanent system which thought has to attempt to comprehend more and more of, next proceeds to consider the data of which the system of Reality is composed. All the materials or data of Reality consist of experience, *i.e.*, psychical matter of fact, which is given in immediate feeling. The only difference which *we* can point to between the real thing and its unreal or imaginary counter-part is that the thing is indissolubly connected with the psychical life of a sentient subject, and as so connected, is psychical matter of fact. It is in this connection with immediate psychical fact that the reality of the Real thing consists.

The data and construction of Reality.

Taylor's position that the Reality of the Real consists in its connection with immediate psychical fact.

Taylor warns us against assuming that experience consists of subjects and their states; or again that it is mere succession of 'states of consciousness'. It is false

to say, for example, that the play of 'Hamlet' is but a succession of words. Its character as a work of art depends entirely on the fact that it possesses, as a whole, a further unity of structure and aim,—that the words and sentences which are its material, embody an internally coherent representation of human character and purpose. What is thus true of an æsthetic whole is universally true of every genuine system of totality.

But Experience is not a mere succession of "States of Consciousness".

The data or materials of Reality are then nothing but "facts of experience". The "fact" is *that,* which is directly apprehended in a single moment of consciousness. And "experience" involves *immediacy* whether it be of feeling or apprehension or presentation or emotion or will. And 'immediacy' is what distinguishes an actual mental state from the mere thought of that state. This immediate feeling or apprehension, etc., then, is that which is at the basis of our knowledge, is that reality which we are said to be conscious of as receiving form, as illustrated in Bradley's doctrine that knowledge arises in a felt-reality before thought, a *that* of which we afterwards ask *what.* Here again Bergson differs from the Absolutists. Experience, for Bergson, is not a mere imme-

Experience involves immediacy.

diate feeling or apprehension, etc., but it is actual 'living'. "Feeling" or apprehension or anything of the kind does not bring out the entire richness of the content and colour of 'living.' When, for example, I interest myself in the verses a poet reads to me, my experience is not merely the feeling of pleasure, etc., of its hearing. "I enter into his thoughts, put myself into his feelings, live over again the simple state he has broken into words and phrases. I sympathise with his inspiration: I follow it with a continuous movement which is, like the inspiration itself, an undivided act."

Taylor, for clearer understanding of his Experience, undertakes to distinguish an immediacy of feeling or experience which is below mediate reflective knowledge from a higher immediacy which is above it (in which the union of existence and content which is broken up in reflective knowledge or thought is restored). He explains this distinction by means of an example. A work of art such as a musical composition, as directly presented to an uncultured man, is but a mere succession of immediately given data in which the aspects of existence and content are not as yet

Taylor distinguishes between an Immediacy of Experience which is below mediate Reflective knowledge and a higher immediacy which is above it.*

An example to illustrate this distinction.

*Taylor: Elements of Metaphysics, pp. 32 and 33.

separated. It has no meaning but merely *is*. As education in the perception of artistic form proceeds, the separation begins to appear. Each part acquires a meaning and significance in virtue of its relation to the other parts, and this meaning is something what is to be grasped by reflective analysis and comparison of part with part. But with the completion of æsthetic education, the immediacy thus destroyed is once more restored. To the fully trained *perception* the meaning of the composition is no longer something to be pieced together and inferred by reflective comparison, but is now directly apprehended as structural unity. Taylor says that now as the composition has a meaning, the results of the intermediate stage of reflection and comparison are not lost, but taken up into the completed experience So, he says, is the case with the understanding of reality. This experience is thus, after all, the result got through reflective analysis. It is almost the same thing as saying that real experience can be got through reflective analysis. It is the same thing as saying that real experience can be got by first tearing it up into several pieces and then putting them together again and making a synthesis. But Bergson condemns this pretension of intellect to bring out unity which is real, by first analysing it. Intellect is spatial in charac-

ter. It apprehends Reality through the medium of space, which lends itself indifferently to any mode of decomposition whatsoever. Things have a natural tendency to enter into a frame of this kind with which alone Intellect is at home. If then the Intellect is characterised by the unlimited power of "decomposing according to any law and of recomposing into any system", then how can it be said to have attained the actual unity of Reality?

Bergson condemns the pretension of the Intellect to BRING out the actual Unity of the Real by first analysing it.

But Taylor would say that the complete experience is got through an intermediate stage of reflection and comparison. Yet it is not got *by* reflection itself. It is got by the trained *perception,* without any intellectual addition, formal or material. But Bergson would then ask, "what is Perception?" Perception is limited to the actual moment of time which we call the present, so that to say that you perceive the everchanging, rising, falling and growing music that is sung from moment to moment, is absurd. You may perceive several notes of the song, but that is not the entire experience of the song. The actual fact is that as the song proceeds, you too pro-

Taylor's position that complete experience, though got through reflection, is not got by reflection, but that it is got by the trained perception.

Bergson's position with regard to this view about the capacity of Perception.

ceed with the song. In fact there is no 'You' simultaneously existing with the song. As long as the song progresses, there is no 'I' for you. But there is only the song and nothing more. This is not surely perception. In perception, there is not only a limitation to the mere moment present, but there is also a consciousness of the difference between the Perceiver and the Perceived which you do not find in the actual experiencing of a song, either heard or sung. And lastly in actual practice we never find pure perception. It never occurs without the admixture of Conception and Reason, which have the character of fabrication, of misrepresenting reality.

Taylor's proposal as to how to construct a system of Reality.

Next Taylor proceeds to propose how to "construct" a system of Reality. In the first place, we must have a general conception of what in outline the constitution of experienced Reality as a systematic whole is. Next, we should be able to arrange the various concepts and categories by which we seek to interpret the world of our experience, in an ascending order of degrees of truth and reality, according to the extent to which they would require to be modified before they could become adequate to express the nature of a systematic experienced Reality. Such a knowledge would still refer to something beyond itself and thus have a meaning other than itself.

But in the view of Bergson, Reality is not such as can be comprehended in fixed Concepts. The more of conception there is in our knowledge, the farther are we from, but not nearer to, the fundamental Reality. Reality is not a tank of water, from which we may take required quantities by means of the vessels, viz., concepts and categories. While the Metaphysical method then according to Taylor is analytical, critical, non-empirical, non-inductive and *a priori, i.e.,* while it is intellectual and rational,—the method of Bergson on the other hand consists in first undoing the work of Intellect which breaks up Reality into elements and gives a false representation of a false unity, and then having the intuitive apprehension of the Life of Reality. Intuition is the apprehension by the mind of Reality directly as it is and not under the form of a Perception or a Conception, nor as idea or object of reason, all of which constitute intellectual apprehension or intellectual views of Reality. Intuition is not an external view of Reality, but an absolute experience of Reality. If we realise to ourselves our Life as it is *being lived,* we get an intuition of Reality. It is a Consciousness of the actual life we are living as we live it. Bring it

Bergson's disagreement with this view of Taylor regarding the comprehension of the Real.

The metaphysical method of Bergson: the intuitive apprehension of the Life of Reality.

as a picture to the mind, present it to the mind as an object of thought, and it is gone. But what is possible is described in Chapter I of this thesis, viz., that by means of a living language consisting of fluid concepts and a number of diverse and variegated concrete Images, converging in action, consciousness may be directed to the precise point where there is a certain Intuition to be seized.

CHAPTER VI
CONTINGENCY

FALLACIES IN THE ABSOLUTIST'S REASONING BY WHICH HE RULES OUT CONTINGENCY

WE have seen how, after taking much trouble to show that Reality is a connected and self-consistent system, Taylor proceeds to consider the data of which the system is composed. The material of this system is 'experience'; and 'experience' consists of 'psychical matter of fact'. The experience must be actual experience, but not mere 'possibilities' of experience. This is the position in outline, which Taylor maintains regarding the Real. To establish the rationality of his position, he introduces us to a very difficult piece of reasoning by which he attempts to let us understand what is meant by 'the Possible', 'the Real' and 'the Actual'.*

The 'Possible', the 'Real', and the 'Actual'.

For Taylor, 'the Possible' is that which *would*, under known conditions, be *actual*. But inferences as to what would be actual under suspected or imaginary conditions are not *realities*. Therefore, Taylor seems

*Taylor: Elements of Metaphysics, Book I, Chapter II, Sections 4 and 5, *i.e.*, pp. 23-27.

to think that 'the Possible' may also be 'Real'. This implies that inferences from the actual (*i.e.*, that which is "indissoluble from immediate apprehension") are the 'possibles' and these 'Possibles' or possibilities are real, because they are 'guaranteed by the evidence of immediate apprehension'. That is, the Possible or the Real, is what is "guaranteed by the evidence of immediate apprehension". So far we may say Taylor is quite consistent.

Taylor argues that the 'Real' or the 'Possible' is the 'Actual' and thus rules out the 'Contingent'.

But in arguing next that the Real or the Possible *is* the Actual, Taylor commits the fallacy of 'Four terms'. The *Actual,* for him, is "that which is *indissoluble* from immediate apprehension, or psychical matter of fact". The *Real* is that which is "guaranteed by the *evidence* of immediate apprehension". So, he says, "we have found that the Real is also Actual, or that there is no reality which is not at the same time an actuality", thus ruling out "the Contingent".

The Fallacy of Four Terms in the argument.

But what is "Indissoluble from immediate apprehension or psychical matter of fact" which is "*immediate* feeling", is not "what is guaranteed by the evidence of immediate apprehension" which is inferential and therefore *mediate.* This is the fallacy of 'Four

terms', because what is *immediate* cannot be the same as what is unmistakably *mediate.*

And this is not *all* the mistake in the argument. There is yet another logical fallacy involved in the same argument. Let us suppose "what is indissoluble from immediate apprehension" is the same as "what is guaranteed by the evidence of immediate apprehension". Then this will be the Middle Term. But this will be undistributed in both the premises, as it stands as the predicate in both the propositions which are A. So, the conclusion that "All Real is Actual" is doubly illogical deduction from Taylor's own premises.

Another fallacy in the same argument.

But again let us concede for a moment that the premises in Taylor's argument are not what we have taken them to be, but instead they are as follows: 'All that is indissoluble from immediate apprehension or psychical matter of fact is the Actual'. (Major Premise.) 'All that which is guaranteed by the evidence of immediate apprehension is the Real'. (Minor Premise.) Even from these premises in which we have secured that the Middle Term is distributed, it does not follow logically that 'All Real is Actual', for there is Illicit Minor. But we may conclude however that 'Some Real is Actual.' But then we have to con-

Room for Contingency.

cede that there *may* be some Real which is not Actual. This means that there may be some Real which is outside actual existence in the present and which may come into existence in future, or in other words the 'Contingency' which Prof. James Ward speaks of in his 'Realm of Ends: Pluralism and Theism'.* And then Taylor would not be able, as he desires, to stand on the same ground as that of the modern logicians like Bradley and Bosanquet, who tell us that "there is no possibility outside actual existence", and that statements about the possible are only an indirect way of imparting information about actualities. But, in the first place, Taylor's propositions, as we have shown, do not unfortunately admit of being brought together as premises under a valid logical syllogism at all, since there is no Middle Term, the indispensible element in all logical reasoning.

So, we are obliged to think, if our attempt to represent him correctly have been successful, that Taylor makes a hopeless muddle of the whole thing; and yet claims to have shown that the Real is the Actual, and that there is no possibility outside actual existence, and that there can be no Contingency. Nevertheless, to understand further details about his Reality, let us grant that the Real is actual existence. What then?

* Prof. James Ward: Realm of Ends: Pluralism and Theism (3rd ed.), Lecture IV and also the supplementary note on p. 454.

If the Actual and the Real are one, then what do we mean when we refer to it as the 'Actual' or the 'Real'? Though both the names refer to the same thing, each of them lays stress on a certain aspect. When we call it as the 'Actual' or the Being, we mean that "it is an object for the knowing consciousness, that it has its place in the system of objects which coherent thought recognises." When we call the same as 'Real' or Reality, the emphasis is on the consideration that "it is something of which we categorically *must* take account, whether we like it or not, if some purpose of our own is to get its fulfilment". And if the 'Real' then is thus relative to the special ends of this or that particular agent, there may be as many different orders of "reality" as there are special purposes, and what is "real" for one agent may be unreal for his fellows, for no two men's abiding purposes are identically the same.

What does follow even if we grant that the Real is the Actual?

And, if there is no identical character about the purposes and interests of different individuals, Reality would not be a self-consistent system but a chaos. So, Taylor, in a big sentence which is here quoted and which involves many difficulties, effects a transition from the many individual reals to an Ultimate Real

Transition from many individual Reals to an Ultimate Real.

or the Absolute. "The very recognition of the fact that any one individual purpose or interest can only get expression by accommodating itself to a definite set of conditions, which constitute the Reality corresponding to that purpose, carries with it the implication that the world is ultimately a system and not a chaos, or, in other words, that there is ultimately a certain constitution of things which, under one aspect or another, is of moment for all individuals, and *must* be taken into account by every kind of purpose that is to get fulfilment."*

Now the world, which is here spoken of, being *ultimately* a system, implies purposes and individuals. As each individual is active and as such is capable of progressive experience, his purpose changes; and as the purpose changes the Reality also should change, because it is relative to the purpose. Then the Realities relative to the various changing purposes, change. But this does not of course imply that the ultimate Reality or the Absolute world order should also change. And yet, there is no necessity why this Ultimate world-order should be static, as Taylor makes it out to be by ruling all Contingency or Possibility out of his system.

There is no real need for Taylor to Rule out 'Contingency' altogether.

*Taylor: Elements of Metaphysics, Book II, Chapter I, section 2, p. 53.

We may however say that this static system is due to some extent to Taylor's recognition of one side only of the fact, viz., that purpose or interest gets expression by accommodating itself to a definite set of conditions. If Taylor had recognized the other side of the fact which James Ward recognises,* viz., the adaptation of the definite set of conditions to the individual purpose or interest, he would have been led not to an once-for-all given system of common elements of all individual realities, but to a real *Creative synthesis.* And if he had thus admitted *Creative synthesis,* he would not have thought that there would be chaos, in case he had not granted certain fixed characteristics that ought to be unconditionally taken account of by every individual agent for the execution of his purpose.

If Taylor had recognised the other side of the fact which James Ward recognises, he would have been led to a real creative synthesis.

Anyhow, Taylor crosses from individual realities relative to various purposes, to an Ultimate Reality that every individual agent has to take account of. Let us proceed and see what else Taylor has to say about his reality.

We have noticed in the beginning of this chapter how by an illogical reasoning Taylor attempted to show

---

*James Ward: Realm of Ends: Pluralism and Theism, Lecture IV on "The Contingency in the World."

that the Real is the Actual in one way. Now comes another illogical argument by which he tries to attribute to his *Ultimate* Real what is true to the *Relatively* Real or Actual. In brief it is this. Feeling (psychic matter of fact) is teleological. Therefore, to say that reality is essentially one with immediate feeling is only another way of saying that the Real is essentially that which is of significance for the attainment of purpose. So, feeling or immediacy, in which is implied purpose, is the common platform where the Real and the Actual once again become one.

Another illogical argument of Taylor—that by which he tries to attribute to his ultimate Real what is true to the relatively Real or Actual.

But let us examine the cogency of the argument by which Taylor maintains that the Ultimate Real is purposive or teleological or "uniquely individual" as he puts it. The Ultimate Real or the Absolute is what is real at all times and at all places. The Actual "fact" which is here and now is individual and relative to a purpose. So, Taylor argues that the Ultimate Real also is purposive and "uniquely individual". What is true of each real or of *some* reals that are relative to some purposes, is also true of *all* the Reals as a whole. This may not be the fallacy of Composition, an argument from

A logical error that lies at the very foundation of the metaphysical edifice of Taylor.

parts to the whole. But this is certainly a fallacious inference from what is real conditionally to what is real unconditionally. It is a plain logical error that lies at the very foundation of the entire metaphysical edifice of Taylor.

CHAPTER VII

DEGREES OF REALITY

AN EXAMINATION OF THE OLD CONCEPTUAL METHOD AND THE CONCEPTION OF THE DEGREES OF CONSTRUCTED REALITY. THE NEED FOR A NEW METHOD OF PHILOSOPHY SUGGESTED

THE conception that there are Degrees of Reality, and that the affirmation of a Reality implies the simultaneous affirmation of all the Degrees of Reality intermediate between it and Nothing—is as old as Plato and Aristotle. We find it however taking prominence in modern philosophy when Leibnitz said that the Monads form a graduated progressive series from the lowest to the highest, each representing the universe from its own point of view, and that Reality ranges in a continuous line of infinitesimal degrees of infinitesimal differences from the dullest piece of inorganic Matter to God. The Pre-Kantian Mechanistic theories speak of "the successive degrees of complexity"

A critical account of the history of the conception of the Degrees of Reality.

Plato and Aristotle.

Leibnitz's graduated progressive series of Monads.

Pre-Kantian Mechanistic theories. Successive degrees of complexity.

in their consideration of Matter, of Life and of Thought. And we find that the Post-Kantian Philosophy too still speaks of degrees—degrees of a scale—which Being traverses in a single direction. The successive degrees of complexity of the Mechanists are replaced by the degrees of the "realisation of an Idea" or "the objectification of a Will". The "design" here is the same as in Pre-Kantian Philosophy. The colouring only is different.

Post-Kantian philosophy:—

Degrees of the Realisation of an idea, or the objectification of will.

For Hegel the *Rational* is the *Real.* Logic is Metaphysics. He replaces by another method the method of cutting a concept by another external to it "like a cake" into so many little pieces which remain separate from one another, of conceiving the spirit as a "bag" full of faculties, forces or activities, and of thus breaking up Reality into a number of elements "external and indifferent to one another."* This method is the process by which the concept or the Real "divides itself by a movement internal to itself", so that, as Croce puts it, "throughout these acts of self-distinction it will maintain its own identity, and the

Hegel's view that the Rational is the Real.

*Benedetto Croce: What is living and what is dead of the Philosophy of Hegel, Chapter IV, p. 84. (Translation, Macmillan & Co.)

distincts will not be in a relation of mutual indifference, but of lower and higher degrees". This is Hegel's Doctrine of Implication or the Doctrine of Degrees as contrasted with that of Classification or 'Distincts'. According to his theory every concept is both distinct from and united to, the concept which is superior to it in degree. And Reality which is one "divides in itself and grows on itself, passes through its ideal history .....and in the last stage gathers up in itself all the preceding stages and attains to itself, in its complete or perfect form".* In this *nexus of degrees,* as Croce points out, the lower concept as independent, is overcome, is suppressed and preserved as dependent in the higher concept;—whereas in the *nexus of opposites both* of them are suppressed and maintained, and that *only* metaphysically, since they never exist independently of each other. Hegel, not considering this fundamental distinction, ventures to apply to the connection of degrees the Triadic Form which is strictly applicable only to the synthesis of opposites, and builds his grand logic for which he claims both rationality and reality. But this edifice on the top of which the highest Abso-

Hegel's confusion between the 'Nexus of degrees' and the 'Nexus of Opposites'.

*Croce: What is living and what is dead of the Philosophy of Hegel, Chapter IV, p. 96.

lute with the involved (or implied in realising it) succession of degrees is placed has finally to collapse, because it is based, as we have seen above, on an irrational identity of two distinctly different doctrines.

The Hegelian Logic suffers from another fundamental error. This error is that the conclusion Hegel reaches is presupposed in the beginning. He does not deduce that Nature is real seeing that it is rational. But seeing that it is real, he presupposes its rationality. And then he attempts (imperfectly) to exhibit this rationality in such a way as to make it possible to conceive Nature as reflex of reason. It is not so much a *construction* as a *vision* which is the result of looking at all reality at an angle from the human stand-point. Baillie's remarks regarding the point in consideration now seem to demand complete acceptance.* He says that the "Very principle of degrees of truth is the expression of, and rests upon, the essential finitude of the human spirit, which seeks by means of it to determine the meaning of the whole and its place in the

Another error in Hegel's reasoning.

Hegel's Real is not a construction, but a vision, which is the result of looking at the Real from the human stand-point.

Baillie's remarks that the "very principle of the Degrees of truth is the expression of, and rests upon, the essential finitude of the human spirit."

*J. B. Baillie: Hegel's Logic, pp. 361-363.

Universe. It is because man's life lies between complete attachment and proximate realization that the conception possesses its significance." And it is because the degrees are significant in this way that at either end of Reality there cannot be degrees. The Absolute can have no degrees because it is not constituted by them, and because its activity is "full and perfect in the hair as in the heart." And, at the lowest level of the world again, there can be no consciousness of degrees, for there the sentient life "has no being for itself at all."

So, Reality can have no degrees, and if any degrees there ever are, they are due to looking at Reality with reference to a certain stand-point. And this is exactly what we find in Hegel. He has a vision of totality, not even a direct vision from within, but a vision got while standing outside at a certain angle. And to approximate to this vision, he enunciates the principle of degrees, for otherwise, his process would not take place at all. Moreover that conception or vision cannot be completely expressed, for that would render the presence of the standard meaningless. "When Hegel, therefore, claims that the method determines the different degrees of truth, and presents a complete sys-

Hegel is contradicting either the aim of the method or the content of Absolute Truth.

tem of Absolute Truth, he is contradicting either the aim of the method or the content of Absolute Truth."*

Taylor and Bradley: Their constructions of the Real.

We find however that Taylor and Bradley attempt a real *construction* of the real. They conceive of the degrees of Reality varying according to the approximation to the standard of consistency. Reality being a single systematic whole, in each of its constituents the nature of the whole system manifests itself in a special way. Each of the constituent parts contributes its own peculiar content to the whole system. And as the suppression or change of any one of them would alter the character of the whole, so also it is the nature of the whole which determines the character of each of its constituents. In this way Taylor shows how completely the whole and its constituents interpenetrate and form a perfect systematic unity and how thus in each of the constituents the structure of the whole manifests itself.

Degrees of approximation to the standard of consistency.

But though thus the structure of the whole is present in every part, it need not equally be present in every part, *with equal adequacy and fulness.* Some 'parts' or 'appearances' exhibit the structure of the whole more

*J. B. Baillie: Hegel's Logic, p. 363.

adequately than others. Therefore, "Reality has degrees, and the forms of appearance in which its *common nature* is most fully and clearly manifested have the highest degrees of reality." If reality is one in the sense of being an individual self-contained whole; and if its individuality means the systematic embodiment of a *single coherent structure in the plurality of elements or parts,* which depend for their whole character upon the fact they are the embodiment of precisely this structure;—then we may say that *'degrees of reality' mean the same thing as degrees of individuality,* and that a thing is real precisely to the extent to which it is truly individual. So the criterion by which we can ascertain the degree of reality of any special partial system is individuality or non-contradiction. The marks of this criterion of individuality are comprehensiveness of existence and internal systematization. Taylor and Bradley hold that, applying this criterion, we find that no partial system can be a complete individual, because it is incapable of explication solely from within but always partly from outside the system; and that ultimately only the whole system of experience is completely individual because it alone is explicable from within.

"Degrees of Reality" mean the same thing as Degrees of Individuality, — Non-contradiction or consistency.

Before noticing the pertinent criticisms regarding the applicability of this criterion to reality, we shall now notice that a strange contradiction is involved in this criterion of non-contradiction itself, so that we see that it itself commits suicide thus rendering superfluous the vehemence of Schiller to nullify it. The Absolute is completely real because there is no inconsistency whatsoever between the "parts" or "the subordinate individuals" arranging themselves upwards according to the degree of consistency in them. These 'parts' or 'subordinate individuals' must either—

A contradiction involved in this criterion of Non-contradiction.

The present writer's independent criticism of this supreme criterion of the Absolutists.

(*a*) Not exist, or

(*b*) Exist, in the most Real.

(*a*) If these 'parts' do not exist, or are not preserved in the Absolute, then it is absurd to call the Absolute real at all, much less the most real, because it cannot be an individual or a system since there are no parts to be consistent with each other; and because this is so, there cannot be any consistency or inconsistency in the Absolute itself. So what is the most real for Taylor or Bradley cannot satisfy the criterion, and therefore cannot be real at all.

(*a*) If the 'parts' are not preserved in the Absolute, we cannot speak of the Absolute as a consistent system.

(*b*) But, on the other hand, if the 'parts' are preserved in the Absolute,—then there may be consistency, because there are 'parts' which are not inconsistent with one another. But then the 'parts' could never have been parts of any degree of reality whatsoever but for the inconsistency in them. To be perfectly consistent means to be the whole, *i.e.,* to cease to be a part. But, if there are no parts, there can be no consistency in the whole. So, for having consistency in the whole, there must be parts whose very possibility is due to an element of inconsistency. This inconsistency claims to be recognised as real, if we want to have a real consistent system. So you cannot say that, because one individual has more inconsistency than another, it is less real than the other on account of its inconsistency which we must admit to be real. If thus all individuals consist of some consistency and some inconsistency, both of which are real, then they are completely real. That is to say 'degrees of reality' is absurd on the very ground of the criterion which claims to be the criterion to

(*b*) If the 'parts' are preserved in the Absolute, we cannot dismiss 'inconsistency' as unreal, as it is upon this that the 'parts' depend for their existence.

So, if we want a real consistent system, we must recognise inconsistency as real.

Thus a strange inconsistency creeps into the very standard of consistency, upon which the Absolutist's real is based.

ascertain 'degrees of Reality'. The criterion of the degrees of Reality has inconsistency in itself, and is therefore itself unreal.

Schiller's criticism on this criterion of consistency.

And as Schiller points out, we do not know in what sense we may accept this principle of consistency or non-contradiction. "Only propositions are properly contradictory and only a reasoning being can contradict itself and it is an abuse of language to describe our use of incompatible statements about the same reality as an incoherent contradiction in the reality itself."* If everything but their Absolute seems to be contradictory to Bradley and Taylor, and if to us their Absolute and their criterion are also contradictory, then it is the mistake of human reasoning and not the mistake of reality. So to say that anything is less than real is to insult reality simply because we could not understand it. So our duty is to purge it of apparent contradiction by discovering the real method of apprehending reality. "If therefore it appears 'contradictory' the fault is ours. It can be purged of its

It is an abuse of language to describe our use of incompatible statements about the same reality as an inherent contradiction in the Reality itself.

Our duty is to purge Reality of apparent contradiction by discovering the real method of apprehending it.

*Schiller: Humanism, Essay XI. (*See* pp. 189 and the following.)

apparent contradiction, and it is our duty to effect this and to interpret it into a harmony with itself which our mind can grasp. Only this purification may require something more than a dialectical juggle with terms. We may need a real discovery. We may have to make a real advance, before the refractory ore of 'appearance' will yield us the pure gold of 'reality'."

Bergson's discovery of this real method of apprehending Reality.

The way is clear to Bergson, who sees the need for such a method and discovers Intuition as the proper method. He discards the method of intellectual construction and appeals to an experience which is purified of the "moulds" that our intellect has formed and "in which we see continual re-arrangements between the parts, that concrete Duration in which a radical recasting of the whole is always going on". This method "does not lead us to higher and higher generalities,—piled up storeys of a magnificent building". And it "leaves no play between the explanations it suggests and the objects it has to explain."

There are no Degrees of Reality.

Reality is change, and there are no degrees of change. You either catch the changing real that is flowing away, or fail to catch it. There are, therefore, no degrees of reality in the sense of existence or of actuality, or in the sense that our human knowledge

about the real approximates in varying degrees of truth, because you must either catch the real or let it go so that there is no play possible between the explanations and the objects it has to explain; or in the sense of the presence of a common characteristic (Taylor and Bradley), as has already been shown; or in the sense of degrees of change or Duration. There may, however, be degrees only with regard to the completeness or fulness of the Intuition or representation of this Reality.

CHAPTER VIII

INTUITION

THE NEW METHOD OF PHILOSOPHY

A CRITICAL STATEMENT OF ITS NATURE AND FUNCTION

IN the case of the Intuition of Bergson, statement and criticism are not distinct. The difficulty is in understanding what intuition really is. Critics have understood it in opposite ways.* Intuition is taken as a kind of impressionism; or as a substitution of feeling and emotion for clear logical thinking and sharp intellectual analysis; or as a kind of religious mysticism; or as a clear and definite method. Writers like Wildon Carr have emphasised that Intuition is *experience*. On the other hand critics like Prof. A. D. Lindsay

Different interpretations of Intuition.

*H. Höffding in his Lecture on Henri Bergson's Intuition (Modern Philosophers, pp. 255-259) distinguishes four forms of Intuition, (1) Concrete Intuition which involves immediate perception, (2) Practical Intuition which is a spontaneous synthesis of experiences and observation, (3) Analytical Intuition which is the immediate knowledge of a relation, (4) Synthetic Intuition which is the immediate perception of a connection or a totality which may be acquired by going through a series or a group of members or parts if one has a certain comprehension of their mutual relations. Höffding states that Bergson's Metaphysical Intuition approaches rather to the second kind of Intuition than the fourth. He further adds that Bergson's Intuition gives us the romantic idea of having reconquered something *in spite of* intelligence.

seem to take much trouble to let us understand that Intuition is fundamentally *intellectual.* Those who support the view of Lindsay seek for authority in these words of Bergson:—"Intuition is *thought* lived, hence still intellectual." And those who hold the view that Intuition is a special kind of experience note the closing sentence in "Introduction to Metaphysics", in which Bergson says that Metaphysics 'might be defined as *integral experience*'.

The old Method of Comprehending Reality.

We need not waste any words to show how Bergson, with the mighty force of that great German philosopher, Kant, behind him, once for all dispossesses 'conceptual knowledge' of the claim to represent Reality. We have only to note that, while Kant despaired of Metaphysics, Bergson discovered in Intuition a Method which is not merely intellectual, and by which Metaphysics is still possible. The discovery of this method is nothing short of a revolution in the realm of philosophy. The old method of trying to comprehend Reality by means of a fabricating intelligence is entirely cast away, and a new method of knowing Reality is discovered by recognising a faculty which is the development or enlargement of Instinct. Though Bergson assures us that we do not miss this in the systems of great thinkers, yet its recognition as the only method

of metaphysics, really reverses the direction that philosophy has followed throughout its history. He says that even the Post-Kantian philosophy, severe as it may have been on mechanistic theories, accepts from mechanism the idea of a science that is one and the same for all kinds of reality. "And it is nearer to mechanism," he says, "than it imagines". For though, in the consideration of matter, of life and of thought, it replaces the successive degrees of complexity that mechanism made out to be the degrees of objectification of a will, it still speaks of degrees, and these degrees are those of a scale which Being traverses in a single direction. Thus Post-Kantian philosophy, though it has been very severe on mechanistic theories, still makes out the articulations of nature as Mechanism does; and retains the whole "design" of mechanism, but merely gives it a different colouring.

But it is this design itself that Bergson wants to be re-made, for which re-making, he thinks, that "we must give up the method of construction" and "appeal to experience", an experience "purified" or "released" from the moulds that our intellect has formed in the degree and proportion of the progress of our action on things. He shows us the nature of this experience to which philosophy has to

Appeal to an Experience that illumines the detail of the Real.

appeal. An experience of this kind is not a non-temporal experience. It only "seeks beyond the spacialized time in which we believe we see continual rearrangement between the parts, that *concrete Duration* in which a radical recasting of the whole is always going on. This experience "follows the real in all its sinuosities". "This does not lead us like the method of construction, to higher and higher generalities,—piled up storeys of a magnificent building." But then, proceeds Bergson to say, "It leaves no play between the explanations it suggests and the objects it has to explain. It is the detail of the real and no longer only the whole in a lump, that it claims to illumine."

Thus we see that Bergson's Intuition is fundamentally experience,—a special experience, no doubt, which consists of a great effort on our part to press our individuality or personality to the centre of the reality whose true knowledge is our aim, whether it be the reality of our own personality or any object or person outside ourselves. Bergson does not mean anything other than this when he says, "Philosophy consists precisely in this, that by an effort of intuition one places oneself within the concrete reality". This placing oneself within the concrete Reality which Bergson refers to as Intuition

Intuition consists in placing oneself within the Real so as to grasp the concrete Duration.

in his "Introduction to Metaphysics" is the same as what he speaks of in his "Creative Evolution" as the Experience that *"seeks concrete duration"*, that *"follows the real in all its sinuosities."*

The psychology of intuition.

This intuition is a psychical fact, and as Bergson says, "it is incontestable that every psychical state, simply because it belongs to a person, reflects the whole of a personality. Every feeling, however simple it may be, contains virtually within it the whole past and present of the being experiencing it."* An author may multiply the traits of his hero's character, may make him speak and act ever so much, but all this can never be equivalent to the simple and indivisible feeling which I should *experience* if I were able for an instant to identify myself with the person of the hero himself. "Out of that indivisible feeling, as from a spring, all the words, gestures and actions of the man would appear to me to follow naturally".† So we have to say that, to have the living knowledge of the hero, the only method is to *live* the hero for the time. That is intuition. That is living direct experience,—nothing short of the projection of personality through an intellectual effort.

---

* Bergson: Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 21.

† Bergson: *Ibid.*, p. 3.

This projection of Personality into Reality (of the person himself, or of another person or scenery or work of art outside) is what Bergson calls "sympathy". He says "By Intuition is meant the kind of *intellectual sympathy* by which one *places oneself* within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible". Now what does Bergson mean by saying that the sympathy is intellectual? He has explained what 'sympathy' means, viz., placing oneself in an object. In "Creative Evolution" he explains that Intellect is necessary to rouse up instinct and enlarge it into intuition. He says, "Then by the sympathetic communication which it (Intuition) establishes between us and the rest of the living, by the expansion of our consciousness which it brings about, it introduces us into life's own domain which is reciprocal interpenetration, endlessly continued creation. But, though it thereby *transcends* intelligence, it is *from* intelligence that has come the push that has made it rise to the point it has reached." Intellect *tries* to catch life and reality, but fails; and thus failing, it gives the

Intuition is a kind of intellectual sympathy by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it, and consequently inexpressible.

What is Intellectual sympathy?

Intellect rouses up Instinct and enlarges it into Intuition.

start for instinct to enlarge itself into Intuition so that it may catch the Real.

Thus we see that Intuition really has its birth in the death of Intellect. When Intellect *breaks away,* Intuition springs up. Thus, though Intellect and Intuition are complementary, yet they are different and divergent. When Bergson says that Intuition is intellectual sympathy, he means that Intuition is sympathy, not Intellect,—but a sympathy which is got through the help of Intellect. This is what he means when he says that we do not obtain an intuition from reality *unless* we have won its confidence by a long fellowship with its superficial manifestations. He is more precise when he says that "metaphysical intuition, although it can only be obtained *through* material knowledge (such as intellect supplies), is quite different from the mere summary or synthesis of that knowledge. It is distinct from these, we repeat, as the motor impulse is distinct from the path traversed by the moving body, as the tension of the spring is distinct from the visible movement of the pendulum." "In this sense metaphysics has nothing in common with the generalization of facts, and nevertheless it may be defined as *integral experience.*"

Metaphysics is integral experience.

Bergson further says that, when Instinct is once *roused* by Intelligence, when once it is freed, it can turn

inwards on itself, and awaken the potentialities of intuition which still slumber within it. This unmistakably shows that there is no intellect at all in Intuition, *as such.* "You must take things by storm: You must thrust intelligence outside itself by an act of will."

The function of Intuition.

Now, we are in a position to see what the function of intuition is. Intuition does not give us more and more of reality. It gives the knowledge of the reality of the object in a flash; or we take the knowledge by a grasp or by storm, if we may say so. Or we may get the knowledge of the reality by *weaving ourselves* into every nook and corner of the Real. The difficulty is entirely in starting the intuition, in working ourselves *through* the material knowledge of the superficialities of the object, into the attitude of sympathy, in rousing up of the instinct. Next, Intuition penetrates into every detail without any conscious effort. The details, so to speak, spring up or flow out. Thus Intuition gives us a glimpse of Concrete Reality which is Duration, but not of mere degrees of Reality. It does not attempt to minimise the value of science, nor triumph over the limitations of science. On the contrary it recognises its value in its limitations, and seeks to supplement it by a knowledge which itself

Intuition gives us a glimpse of concrete Reality which is Duration.

cannot get. Science is a discovery of law. It cannot comprehend freedom, the fact of life that exists through Duration, which Intuition alone can comprehend. If we realize our life as it is *being lived,* we get an intuition of reality, which is not a *thought* of it or a conception of it, but a conscious experience of the actual life as we live it. It is not even a comprehensive *vision* that strikes our mind after we take a series of views of the Real. It is a living experience, or consciousness which *overflows* intellect. A good actor knows it. An artist knows it. A poet on the breach or before a waterfall knows it. A young and ardent lover knows it. And a true philosopher knows it.

The competency of Intuition to comprehend freedom.

CHAPTER IX

THE PROBLEM OF REALITY

BERGSON'S TREATMENT OF THE ISSUE BETWEEN THE IDEALISTS AND THE REALISTS. THE DISCOVERY OF THE UNIQUE STAND-POINT FOR THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE RELATION BETWEEN:

(A) BODY AND MIND

(B) PERCEPTION AND MEMORY

(C) MATTER AND SPIRIT

ONE of the problems, which habits of thought create, is that underlying the controversy between Idealism and Realism, the controversy regarding the nature of Reality. On the issue of this broad controversy depends the solution at once of the problems of the relation between Body and Mind, Perception and Memory, Matter and Spirit.

The broad controversy regarding the nature of Reality.

It is a common-place observation that a close connection exists between the Mind and the Brain which makes us regard the Mind as dependent on Brain. *i.* The apparent correspondence between deficiency of Brain and lack of intelligence. *ii.* The direct

(A) Body and Mind.

evidence that certain brain processes are attended by certain psychical states. *iii.* The fact that Sensation ceases when we divide the fibres that connect the sense-organs with the Brain. All these seem to give some credibility to the view that the Brain produces the Mind. According to this view the Realist maintains that the object is independent of the Mind, and that the Mind has a perception of the object, though he cannot explain how a perception formed in the Mind or the Brain can agree with a real object that is thus entirely independent of the Mind or the Brain.

I
The Realist's view that the Brain produces the Mind.

Two strong reasons may be urged against this view of the Realist. In the first place, the chain of causes and effects in the physiological series of which the Brain is the centre is complete by itself without the need of the psychological process intervening. And, in the second place, the psychological process of consciousness, though a connected series of events, is not a relation of effects to causes, but is an *association* of ideas and involves no conversion of physical energy (as there is no exact quantitative equivalence between the two series such as is required by the Laws of the conservation of matter and the conservation of energy). And again, consciousness does not accompany the phy-

(1) A reasoning urged against this view.

sical process all through. Though its sudden appearance at certain moments in the physiological process is a fact, yet it is not the effect of that process or a conversion of the energy in that process;—since in the first place the physiological process is complete without it, and since in the second place to seek to connect together two physical states by an intervening consciousness is as absurd as to "hang a coat on the idea of a peg."*

(2) Another reasoning urged against this view.

The second reason we may urge against the Realist's view that the Mind is produced by the Brain is that it impels us on the inescapable horns of a dilemma.† One of the horns is that the Mind produced in the Brain must be potentially present in the Brain or in the material supplied to it before it is produced. The other horn is that what is potential already in the Brain cannot be the revelation of what is outside the Brain. From this it follows that either some at least of the vibrations that reach the Mind must be more than mere vibrations, since they bring to the Brain ideas of the external world,—or else, these ideas are potentially in the Brain when the move-

*H. W. Carr: The Philosophy of Change, p. 49 (Macmillan & Co.)

†H. W. Carr: *Ibid.*, pp. 45-55.

See also Bergson: Brain and Thought. (A paper read at the International Congress of Philosophy at Geneva in 1904).

ments come in to evoke them. So, if we say that Brain produces Mind, we must admit also the consequence that it produces the external world. Or, if we say that we have knowledge of the world, not confined within our body, then we must admit that the Mind cannot be produced by the Brain.

For these two above reasons, it is admitted that Consciousness is not an effect of cerebral hemispheres, though it is not independent of the process.

II
The view that consciousness is Epiphenomenon.

The suggestion then arises that Consciousness is an Epiphenomenon,* an effect which does neither absorb nor give out energy, but which is only like an ineffectual shadow that accompanies a moving body. The supposition is that the vibrations transmitted through the molecules of the brain-cells produce a kind of phosphorescence or luminous trail, which is the perception of things. But this becomes incredible when we notice the fact that in this luminous trail, our consciousness is not that of the nerve currents or stimuli or changes that are occurring in the Body, but of the world outside the nervous current,—of things like stars infinitely distant in space, and of recollections and thoughts of things that have

*The view of Prof. Huxley.

happened infinitely remote in Time from the moment when the passing current gives forth its luminous trail.

This is the reef on which split all the theories that derive Mind from Body. It is really audacious to attempt to derive a reality that is unconfined in space and unlimited in Time from a reality that is limited to a definite portion of Space and to a definite moment in Time. And, supposing we succeed in the attempt, the consequence is that the only fact is the Brain process with the Epiphenomenon, and therefore the Reality we are aware of may be illusory. And yet this knowledge of a Brain process with this consequence is an inference from the Reality we falsely suppose ourselves to know.

Since the difficulty of the Realist, as is thus seen, is due to the assumption that there is a Reality outside, which needs to be represented in the Mind,—let us join the Idealist and abolish such a Reality and see what the consequences may be. From such a step it will follow that conscious experience is the only reality we are aware of, and that this experience is consciousness or awareness, is a perceiving and is a percept in content and character. It would mean that perception is essentially subjective, and that objectivity is added to it by the Mind. The problem of

III

The view of the Idealist that Mind produces Matter.

Mind and Body arises in a new form. It is not, as in the case of Realism, how a Reality conceived as physical, produces a Reality not physical. But the problem now is *how* one group of my perceptions can stand in a special relation to *all* my perceptions, itself included, so that the latter depend for their existence on the former. To this problem Idealism offers no solution.

So then neither Realism nor Idealism can explain the relation of the Mind and the Body as one of direct causation. It is as impossible to conceive the body producing the Mind as the Mind producing the Body. Thus it is that we are forced to give up the notion of direct causation or production entirely in the one form or the other.

Neither Realism nor idealism can explain the relation between Mind and Body as one of direct causation.

We therefore give up the notion of direct causation altogether.

But when such a notion is given up, two alternatives immediately spring up. One is that there are two orders of Reality which are *Parallel*,—the other is that there are two orders of Reality which *Interact*.

Two alternatives then follow.

IV

The theory of Parallelism.

According to the former alternative which is the Theory of Parallelism, every psychical change has a parallel physiological change, and the same physiological event in the Brain is accompanied by the same

mental state and no other. This theory presents both scientific and philosophical difficulties. According to it there must be *three* things implicated in the simple act of perceiving a reality, *e.g.*, the starry firmament. (*a*) First there is the reality *I* am aware of; (*b*) secondly, the awareness in the form of perceptions and thoughts; and (*c*) thirdly, the activity of the material elements that compose my Brain. If then, the activity in the Brain, *i.e.*, (*c*), is in one to one correspondence with my consciousness, *i.e.*, (*b*), it is so because it is in one to one correspondence with the reality perceived, viz., the starry firmament, *i.e.*, (*a*). If the Brain were a "mirror of the Universe", this would have been clear, though then the Parallelism would not be between Body and Mind, but between Mind and the whole Reality. But science does not say that the Brain is a "Mirror". It only says that a movement communicated from outside passes through the Brain. If then a movement passing the Brain is one to one correspondence with a perception or a Thought in the Mind—it is so because the movement is exactly equivalent to the qualitative differences of the reality it represents. And then we have to say that this movement passing through the Brain is more than a mere

The difficulties which this view presents.

The objection of Science to this view.

movement, since a mere movement can have no qualitative differences. In addition to the objection of science there is a logical objection also to the theory.

The logical objection to this view.

The movements in the nervous system are themselves parts of an infinitely greater whole. And our theory supposes that this small part of a whole movement is the exact equivalent of the whole, which is theoretically absurd.*

If thus the theory of two different realities which are parallel is to be rejected, we are led to the alternative theory of two different orders of Reality which *interact*.† This interaction between Body and Mind has been explained on the analogy of the driver controlling and guiding a motor-car. But this analogy rather shows the difficulty of conceiving interaction than explains it. For, however small may be the energy the driver spends in guiding the car, it is still physical energy only, and not psychical activity. Experiment has not yet demonstrated that psychical activity can undergo conversion into physical energy. In the absence of evidence and in the presence of such a

V

The Theory of Interaction.

*Bergson: Paper on 'Brain and Thought' read at the International Congress of Philosophy at Geneva in 1904.

See also Wildon Carr: Mind-Energy, p. 196.

† The view of Prof. MacDougal.

difference in character between psychical activity and physical action, we are not justified in assuming conversion. But we cannot deny that interaction between Body and Mind is probable though experiment has yet to prove it.

There is no evidence to show that psychical activity can undergo conversion into physical energy.

In all the theories considered above, one feature is distinctly noticeable, viz., the absence of any attempt to discover the stand-point from which the unity of the two different orders of Reality, Mind and Body, is to be conceived as a necessary fact. In the discovery of such a stand-point is revealed the genius of Bergson. It has hitherto been accepted that Mind is for knowing and contemplating Reality, so that there seemed to be a new order of Reality representative of the actual order of physical Reality. Hence the relation between the two orders remained a mystery. The Realist supposed that the Mind is unnecessary and is only added somehow to the Body. The Idealist supposed that the Body and the external Reality are only in the Mind. The Parallelist accepted the self-sufficiency of each and suspended his judgment seeking shelter sometimes in

A feature distinctly noticeable in the above theories,—the absence of the stand-point from which the unity of the two different orders of Reality is conceived as a necessary fact.

The discovery of such a stand-point, in which the genius of Bergson is revealed.

the name of God who somehow brings order in the world. And still this strenuous problem of Body and Mind stares us in the face.

VI
"Solidarity". The Union of Body and Mind, of Matter and Spirit, in Living Action.

A glance over the living world shows us that *living action* is essentially a relation between Mind and Body. Biology tells us that the consciousness, and the nervous system by which consciousness does its function, come into existence and develop to meet the need for free activity. The problem now assumes a different aspect when viewed from this stand-point of action. There are no longer two kinds of Realities which are to be accepted as being related to each other some way or other. But we see in living action the fundamental fact of which the union of the two orders is a necessary condition. This union of Body and Mind, of Matter and Spirit in Action, which is called "Solidarity" by Wildon Carr in his book "The Philosophy of Change", is Bergson's solution of the problem.* The union is called "Solidarity" by Carr, because there is a contribution of activities by each to secure a unique result. We do not blink the fact that the two

*Bergson himself uses the word 'Solidary' in this connection.

"Each part of the one is solidary with a definite part of the other" —'Brain and Thought: a philosophical illusion': Bergson. (*Vide* p. 208, *Mind-Energy*: H. W. Carr).

Vide also H. W. Carr: Philosophy of Change, p. 67.

Realities, Spirit and Matter, Mind and Body, the Psychical and the physical, are distinct and belong to different orders. One is Duration, a time-continuity. The other is a material mechanism contrived for the storage and utilization of energy. But yet we say they meet like the tangent and the circle at one point, viz., action. "The Mind is continuous with an infinite present spatial world. The ever-moving point at which these two realities meet is the present centre of action."

(B) Perception and Memory.

The realities come to our consciousness in action. The one is the present spatial world acting upon us. The other is the acted past of our experience. Our consciousness of them we name Perception and Memory respectively. The function of the Brain is simply to *transmit* movement, and its great complexity is to give choice of movement. In order to *choose,* consciousness must *perceive.* But perceptions would be useless if they are only manufactured in the Brain. So, if Perceptions are to be useful for action they must come from the objects around me among which my action is to take place. I do not perceive the whole of Reality. But I perceive only that part of it which interests me on account of the possible action that I have eventually to perform after having received the stimulus. It is *selection for*

Perception.

action that gives to the perception its distinctness and individuality. Perceptions are the movements from the objects outside the Body. And the Brain only throws up the image and illuminates it for consciousness. In conscious experience there is no Perception without Memory since Perception must have Duration, which is the existence of the past in the present. Pure perception exists only in theory. It is only what the present would be if it retained nothing of the past. Bergson calls 'Things' as really 'Images',* thereby indicating that the outlines of these 'Images' that external perception presents to us are *not absolute,* but *relative* to our bodily needs and functions, and above all to our purposes of action. The 'Images' into which external perception divides Matter are the *lines* that mark out our activities. There are no 'things' with absolute fixed forms. Reality flows, according to Bergson, and Perception, so to speak, cuts out of this flow 'images' with marked boundaries for purposes of action. The fundamental function of Perception is to concern itself with the uses to be made of things, the practical advantage to be drawn from them. When we perceive,

Selection for action: This is what gives distinctness and Individuality to perception.

Perception cuts out of the flow of Reality 'Images' with marked boundaries for purposes of action.

*Bergson: Matter and Memory (Translation), Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London. Introduction, p. vii, p. 1 and the following, and p. 305.

we do not as the Idealist supposes, *represent* things. But we only mark out, and select and pick out aspects or 'Images' from the flowing Reality, entirely for purposes of action.

We call the "Images" things.

As our pure perception is wholly in the *present,* so our pure Memory is wholly in the *past.* Though the past has ceased to *act,* it has not ceased to *exist.* The whole of our past perceptions survive their active living psychical states. Just as the body helps us to perceive only those 'images' in space which are necessary for action, so also the Mind enables us to shut out from consciousness all past recollections which do not interest the present action, and it brings into consciousness those recollections only which serve the purposes of present activity.* Both in Memory and Perception, the unconscious plays a similar part. When I perceive any object, I am unconscious of all but a small part of the existence which I perceive, though all those things I am unconscious of, form part of the present existence that I perceive. So also when I recollect any past event, I am unconscious of all but a very small part of the existence, which seems to be spread out behind me in the past. It

Memory.

The 'unconscious' in Memory and Perception.

*Creative Evolution, p. 5.

is the non-recognition of the existence of unconscious psychical states, of the reality of what Bergson names Spirit, that leads to the supposition that memories are in the matter of the Brain. Bergson's conclusion that consciousness is "tension" which holds together Duration at the centre of activity, or the convergence of life on its activity, dispels all such theories.

Though Perception and Memory exist together in conscious experience, and are only to be dissociated in theory, yet they are different in kind from one another. Memory is not a weaker kind of Perception and Perception is not an intenser memory. Pure perception is in the present. Pure Memory is in the past. Perception selects images from the spatial reality which is around us. But Memory selects recollections from temporal reality which seems to be behind us. Perception affirms the reality of matter. Memory affirms the reality of Spirit. Perceptions and Memories are both real. Both mind and outside world are real. Both Matter and Spirit are real. And these are complementary for action, for Life. But there is no Dualism. Perception and Memory, Matter and Spirit, serve the common practical purpose. They prepare us for and direct our actions.

Perception and Memory, different from each other in *kind*.

(C) Matter and Spirit.

They unite in the reality of the movement, which is Life.

Reality is Universal Becoming, which is Duration.

Reality is the Universal *Becoming* which is Duration. Duration is the "continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances." Not only is Duration an undeniable fact of our conscious life, it is a fact *even* in the material world and the biological realm. It is the ceaseless up-springing of something new. It is one concrete creative continuity, so that the past, present and future, as it were, shrink into one boundless eternal movement. Reality then is a movement, and is composed of various interpenetrating movements. Perception is the formation of these movements into objects and things. We stand at the point "where the present advancing into the future is becoming the past and at this point perception makes a *cut* across the Universal." This present reality is Matter. Matter is the section which we imagine to exist simultaneously at every moment of actual perception. As the centre of perception moves forward, the whole section seems to move with it. This is space. It is the continuity which seems to underlie matter. And time is the continuity which underlies the succession of our states. It spreads, if

Time and Space.

we may say so, behind us and before us, while space spreads around us.

The Eternally Evolving Creative Reality.

The Spirit is the progress,—the evolution of the past through the present into the future. It is time-existence. Perception unites it with matter. But the union is inexplicable in terms of space. It is the Memory that holds the past and unites it with the present in living Reality. This living Reality is one. We have not here then as in Parallelistic theories two independent series, psychical and physical, without a common measure between them. We have not, as in Idealistic and Realistic theories, two Realities the function of one of which is to construct or represent the other. But we have one solidarity of Body and Mind in action,—one living movement which, comprehending both Matter and Spirit, both Perception and Memory, constitutes the eternally evolving creative Reality.

CHAPTER X

LIFE AND CONSCIOUSNESS

THE TRIPLE PROBLEM OF LIFE, OF CONSCIOUSNESS, AND OF THE RELATION BETWEEN THEM

In the entire range of Philosophical thought there is perhaps no problem more fundamental than the triple problem of Life, of Consciousness, and of the relation between them. Bergson undertakes to show in that glorious Huxley Lecture which he delivered in the University of Birmingham in 1911 the different lines of arguments which point to us the direction in which we may find the solution of these problems.*

We should hope that we shall come nearer and nearer to truth through the joint effort of philosophers. Philosophers are only partners. Philosophy is no longer a "Construction". It is no longer the "systematic" work of a single thinker. It is

It is the joint effort of Philosophers that brings us nearer and nearer to truth.

*In this Chapter I do nothing more than give a mere matter of fact statement, largely in the unalterable words of Bergson himself, of these lines of arguments. Nothing has been added by me either by way of criticism or by way of construction to what Bergson himself says. A re-statement in a simpler way of the important facts which Bergson brought to light in his lecture is absolutely necessary for ensuring the sympathetic understanding in the reader of the spirit of Bergson's thought and investigation. This is what justifies the inclusion of this chapter in this book.

the progressive work of successive thinkers. It always needs corrections and re-touches. It progresses like Positive Science. And like Positive Science it is also "a work of Collaboration". With these observations Bergson proceeds to gather his contribution to knowledge that helps the solution of the above fundamental problems. Let us note the different lines of facts which he gives and which point to us the direction in which a solution of these problems may be found.

THE FIRST LINE OF FACTS

What do we mean when we speak of Mind? By Mind we mean above everything else Consciousness. But what is Consciousness? It is continually present in every one's experience. A definition cannot make it clear. But we may note certain of its most obvious features or characteristics. (1) Memory is the foremost of the characteristics of Consciousness. However limited its extent may be, unless Memory is there, there can be no Consciousness. A Consciousness which is unable to conserve the Past, forgetting itself unceasingly, would be a Consciousness perishing and having to be re-born at each moment. And that is but unconsciousness. (2) All consciousness is also anticipation of the future.

The characteristics of Consciousness.

(1) Memory.

(2) Anticipation of the future.

At any particular moment you will find that your mind is occupied with what now *is*. But, what is more, it is occupied with what is about to be. Without attention to life, there can be no consciousness. And attention is expectation. (3) And thirdly Consciousness is, as it were, "the hyphen which joins what has been to what will be: the bridge which spans the past and the future." Strictly speaking there is no instant which separates the past from the future. What we actually experience is "a certain span of duration composed of two parts—our immediate past and our imminent future."*

(3) The hyphen that joins the past and the future.

What purpose then does this bridge serve? What is the function of Consciousness?

What is the Function of Consciousness?

Before answering this question, Bergson proposes to answer a preliminary question. What beings are conscious? How far in nature does the domain of Consciousness extend? In answering this question we should not insist on scientific certainty. For, unless we coincide with a particular being, it is not possible for us to know with scientific certainty that that being

The extent of Consciousness.

*The quotations in this chapter are all taken from Bergson's Huxley lecture delivered at Birmingham.

is Conscious. So we are only to follow an analogical reasoning and may expect a conclusion of a very high degree of probability which may perhaps amount to even practical certainty.

An examination of the view that consciousness is present only in those beings which have a Brain.

It is held sometimes that, in man Consciousness is directly connected with the Brain and that therefore Consciousness is present only in those living beings which have Brain, and that it is absent in those which have no Brain. But, that this view is wrong may be seen from the following. Do we say that, because in us digestion is directly connected with the stomach, therefore only living beings with a stomach can digest? We do not say so. There is the amœba which digests. And yet it has no special organ for digestion. It is but such an undifferentiated mass. The fact is only this. The faculty of digesting is localized in the stomach, and so the stomach works better as it is confined to that one function only.

Brain is not indispensable to Consciousness.

In the same way, Consciousness in man is connected with the Brain. But, from this it does not follow that Brain is indispensable to Consciousness, that there can be no consciousness where there is no Brain. "The lower we go in the animal series, the more the nervous centres are simplified and separate from one

another, and at last they disappear altogether, merged in the general mass of an organism with hardly any differentiation. If then, at the top of the scale of living beings, Consciousness is attached to very complicated nervous centres, must we not suppose that it accompanies the nervous system down its whole descent, and that when at last the nerve stuff is merged in the yet undifferentiated living matter, Consciousness is still there diffused, confused but not reduced to anything?" This is how Bergson concludes that, theoretically at least, everything living is conscious, that *in principle,* consciousness is co-extensive with life.

In principle consciousness is co-extensive with life.

THE SECOND LINE OF FACTS

If then, in principle, consciousness is co-extensive with life, could this be so *in fact* also? It is said above that it is by no means by the Brain that consciousness works. Now let us examine the human Brain. How does it function? The Brain is a part of the nervous system. This nervous system includes, together with the Brain proper, the spinal cord, the nervous fibres, etc. In the spinal cord there are mechanisms set up. Each of these contains, ready to start, a definite action which the body can carry out at will according to the exigencies of any situation in life.

Can we say that in fact also consciousness is co-extensive with life?

But in some cases the body does not respond automatically through the spinal cord. The stimulus first ascends to the Brain. From there it is sent down to the spinal cord where a mechanism is then called into play. We may ask, why is this indirect path taken? What is the purpose of this intervention of the Brain?

The Brain is an organ of choice.

The Brain is related to *all* the mechanisms in the spinal cord, and not to some particular one only. So it receives all kinds of stimuli, but not certain special kinds only. "It is therefore a cross-way, where the nervous impulse arriving by any sensory path can be directed into any motor path. Or, if you prefer, it is a commutator, which allows the current received from one point of the organism to be switched in the direction of any motor contrivance". The purpose of the stimulus going off to the Brain instead of following the direct path is that it may set in action a most appropriate motor mechanism which has been chosen, instead of one which is automatic, to secure the most appropriate among the innumerable ready-made responses to the question which the circumstances address to it. The Brain is the organ of choice.

The lower we descend in the scale of animal series we find that the separation between the functions of the spinal cord and those of the Brain becomes less and less

definite, till at last there is the nervous system which is rudimentary and in which distinct nervous elements do not appear. Here the re-action is so simple that it appears *almost* mechanical. There is however hesitation and groping. This indicates that there is something voluntary. The Amœba for instance throws its filaments in the presence of a food-substance and seizes it. These pseudopodia are really temporary organs and exhibit thus rudiments of choice.

From this we find that from top to bottom of the scale of animal life, we find the faculty of choice (the faculty of responding to a stimulus by movements more or less unforeseen). Now this fact strengthens the conclusion which our first line of thought led us to. We said that consciousness conserves the past and anticipates the future. This is so probably because consciousness is called on to make a choice. To choose we have to foresee what is possible and desirable for us to do: and we must remember the consequence of what has been done before. This gives the answer to our question whether all living beings are conscious.

There is the faculty of choice from top to bottom of the scale of animal life; and choice means consciousness.

As consciousness means choice and as its role is to decide, we should not expect it in organisms which do not move spontaneously, and which have no decision to

take. But there is really no living being which is absolutely devoid of spontaneous movement. Even the vegetable is not devoid of movement. The discoveries of Sir J.C. Bose show that the faculty of movement and response is dormant rather than absent in the vegetable organism. It might awaken when there is any use. We have to believe therefore that all living beings possess this *in right*, though not *in fact*. In certain animals that have become parasitic, and in a large number of plants this faculty has been reduced to a minimum. We have therefore to conclude that consciousness originally immanent in all that lives, is dormant where there is no longer spontaneous movement, and awakens when life tends to free activity.

There is no living being which is completely incapable of spontaneous movement.

Consciousness originally immanent in all that lives, is dormant where there is no longer spontaneous movement, and awakens when life tends to free activity.

Now, this theory may be verified in our life. We learn an exercise like riding on a bycycle. In the beginning we are conscious of each of the movements we execute. This is so because we originate the movement, because we have to decide and choose. But gradually the movements determine one another mechanically. Then there is no need for choosing and deciding. Therefore, consciousness diminishes and finally

The above theory verified in our own life.

disappears. And on the other hand consciousness attains its greatest liveliness at certain times. It awakens to its fullest intensity when there is an attack on our life or when there is the need for deciding a course of action on which depends our honour with the world and with ourselves "at those moments of inward crisis when we hesitate between two, or it may be several, different courses to take, when we feel that our future will be what we make it".

"The variations in the intensity of our consciousness seem then to correspond to the more or less considerable sum of choice or to the amount of creation which our conduct requires. Everything then leads us to believe that it is thus with consciousness in general. If consciousness means memory and anticipation, it is because consciousness is synonymous with choice."

The variations in the intensity of our consciousness correspond to the more or less considerable sum of choice or to the amount of creation which our conduct requires. This is true of consciousness in general.

Let us now consider the living matter in its elementary form. What might it have been when it first appeared? It must have been a simple protoplasmic jelly like the amœba. It could change its form, and so was vaguely conscious. And for this there must have been two ways open to grow and evolve.

The basis or tendency of life at its entry into the world.

(1) There was the path towards movements and action involving risk and adventure and therefore involving consciousness. (2) And there was also the path of torpor and immobility. The faculty of acting and choosing was abandoned, and "life accommodated itself to obtain from the spot, where it was, all it required for its support, instead of going abroad to seek it. This involved unconsciousness. Life followed these two different paths. Speaking broadly, we may say that the first marks the direction of the animal world, and the second marks the direction of the vegetable world in spite of occasional lapses in both cases.

For living Matter there are two ways open to grow and to evolve—Movement or Torpor, Consciousness or Unconsciousness.

Thus we find that even at its very entry into the world Life brings "something which encroaches on inert matter". The material world is a mechanical world. Matter behaves in a determinate way. Nothing is unforeseeable in it. But Life is different. It brings with it free and unpredictable movement. The living being chooses. "Its role is to create. In a world where everything else is determined, a zone of indetermination surrounds it." But, to create the future, life utilizes what has been. It conserves the past while

At its entry into the world Life brings with it something which encroaches on inert matter. Life brings with it free and unpredictable movement.

anticipating the future. Thus "past, present and future tread one on another, forming an indivisible continuity". Such memory and such anticipation are consciousness itself. That is how we may show that consciousness is co-extensive with life, in right, if not in fact.

Matter is necessity. Consciousness is freedom. Thus they are opposed to each other. And yet life has reconciled them. "This is precisely what life is,—freedom inserting itself within necessity, turning it to its profit". If matter does not admit any relaxation, then life would not be possible. But fortunately matter is elastic at certain points. And there it is that consciousness inserts itself. Once installed it dilates and spreads and does not rest till it conquers the whole.

Life reconciles Matter which is necessity or determinism, and consciousness which is freedom.

At particular points where Matter shows a certain elasticity, there is the opportunity for consciousness to insert itself.

THE THIRD LINE OF FACTS

There are again new lines of facts which also point to the same conclusion. Let us consider the way in which the living body goes to work to execute movements. This consists in using the energy accumulated in foodstuffs. These foodstuffs are unstable sub-

The way in which a living body goes to execute movements.

stances, which like gun-powder require only a spark to explode them. The plants gather from the Sun a sum of potential energy. This is received into the body of the animal which feeds on it. And this is available there to be converted into movements. To execute a movement, this imprisoned energy is to be liberated by just applying a spark. The first living beings appear to have hesitated between Vegetable and Animal life. Life undertook both the functions, viz., (1) To fabricate the explosive, and (2) to utilise it in movements. Later, Vegetables and Animals became differentiated. Life split off into two kingdoms. The one specialised in the fabrication of explosives, and the other specialised in exploding them. But life, as a whole, is a double labour of slow accumulation and sudden discharge. "Its task is to ensure that matter, by a slow and difficult process, shall store potential energy and hold it available at need as kinetic energy. Now what could a free cause do,—a cause which although unable to break the necessity to which matter is subject would yet be able to bend it,—a cause which, although able to exercise but a very small influence on matter, yet should propose to obtain move-

Functions of life. (1) Gathering potential energy. (2) Utilizing it in movements.

Life split up into two kingdoms, the vegetable specialising in gathering energy, and the animal in using it up in movements.

ments ever more powerfully in a direction ever more freely chosen? Would it not behave exactly in this way? It would strive to have nothing more to do, in order to release an energy which it had caused matter slowly to accumulate than touch a spring or apply a spark."

Let us again consider another line of facts. Consider the *idea* which precedes an action in a conscious being. What is it that marks a man of action, the man that leaves his impression on the events in which he is called on to take part? It is a "momentary vision which embraces the whole course of events in one purview". "The greater his hold on the past in his present vision, the heavier is the mass he is pushing against the eventualities preparing. His action, like an arrow, flies forward with the greater force, the more tensely in memory or in experience his idea had been strung".

What characterises a man of action is a momentary vision which embraces the whole course of events in one purview.

Let us now think of our usual consciousness. "In its briefest moment consciousness embraces thousands of millions of vibrations which for inert matter are successive." When I open and close my eyes in rapid succession I experience a succession of visual sensations, each of which is the condensation of a long history. These billions of vibrations are a series of events which

might take me thousands of years to count. Yet these dull events which would fill thirty centuries of matter occupy only a second of my consciousness which is able to contract them into one picturesque sensation of light. The same thing is true of all the other sensations also. "Placed at the confluence of consciousness and matter, sensation condenses, into the duration which belongs to us and characterises our consciousness, immense periods of what we can call by analogy the *duration of things.*" Why does our perception contract material events in this way? This is so in order that our action may dominate them. Suppose the necessity inherent in matter is such that sometimes it yields, though only within restricted limits. In such a case how must consciousness proceed if it would insert a free action into such a material world? It would adopt the above method, viz., contracting material events.

In the case of sensation the billions of events which would fill thirty centuries of matter occupy only a second of consciousness.

Perception contracts material events in this way, so that our action may dominate them.

The innumerable instants of the material world can be held in one single instant of the conscious life, so that the desired action of consciousness could sum up within it the indeterminations almost infinitesimal which each of the moments of matter admits.

The tension of the duration of a conscious being is the measure of its power of acting, of the quantity of free activity it can introduce into the world.

In other words, the tension of the duration of a conscious being is the measure of its power of acting, of the quantity of free creative activity it can introduce into the world.

Thus this new line of facts also leads us to the same conclusion as the former line. Either in the case of the act which consciousness decrees, or in the case of the perception which prepares that act, we find that consciousness appears as a force or activity seeking to insert itself in matter in order to get possession of it and turn it to its profit. We find that it works in two complimentary ways. (1) "By an explosive action it liberates instantly in the chosen direction, energy which Matter has been accumulating during a long time." (2) "By a work of contraction it gathers into a single instant the incalculable number of small events which matter holds distinct, as when we sum up in a word the immensity of a history."

We find that consciousness appears as a force or activity seeking to insert itself in Matter in order to get possession of it and turn it to its profit.

THE CONVERGENCE OF THE ABOVE DIFFERENT LINES OF FACTS

Let us now survey from the converging point these different lines of facts. On the one hand there is Matter, subject to necessity, almost devoid of memory.

On the other hand, there is Consciousness, Memory with freedom, Continuity of creation in the Duration in which there is real growth. This is a duration wherein the past is preserved indivisible, a Duration which grows and transforms from moment to moment like the plant of the fairy tale. In *Creative Evolution* it has been shown that Matter is action continually unmaking itself, or using itself up, and is therefore the inverse of Consciousness, and that on the other hand Consciousness is action unceasingly creating and enriching itself. If this is so, then neither Matter nor Consciousness can be explained apart from each other. In the whole evolution of life on earth we find "a crossing of Matter by a Creative Consciousness, an effort to set free by force of ingenuity and invention, something which in the animal still remains imprisoned and is only finally released when we reach man".

A crossing of Matter by a Creative consciousness.

The scientific investigations since Lamarch and Darwin more and more confirm the idea of an Evolution of Species from one another, the organised forms from the simpler. Science has also shown that along the whole Evolution of Life living beings must be adapted to the conditions of the environment. But this fact explains rather the arrest of life in certain forms than explain the moment of Life which carries the

organization higher and higher. Even a very inferior organism succeeds in maintaining its life and is as well adapted as ours to the conditions of its existence. Some living forms which we see to-day have come down through ages quite unchanged. So then it is an interesting question to ask, why Life did not stop at some one definite point, why it has gone on. Why does Life, which has succeeded in adapting itself, go on complicating itself more and more dangerously? There can be only one answer to this. And that is that Life went on thus complicating itself on account of "an *impulse* driving it to take ever greater and greater risks towards its goal of an ever higher and higher efficiency". Even a rough survey of the evolution of life gives us the assurance that this *impulse* is reality. Bergson shows in *Creative Evolution* how this vital impulse or the 'elan', meeting with resistance in the Matter which it has had to use, needed to split itself up to distribute along different lines of evolution the tendencies it bore with it.

An impulse drives life to take ever greater and greater risks towards its goal of an ever higher and higher efficiency.

"Things have happened just as though an immense current of consciousness interpenetrated with potentialities of every kind, had traversed Matter to draw it towards organization and make it, notwithstanding that it is necessity itself, an instrument of freedom. But

consciousness narrowly escaped from being ensnared. Matter enfolding it bends it to its own unconsciousness. On certain lines of evolution, those of the vegetable world in particular, automatism and unconsciousness are the rule". On other lines however consciousness succeeded in freeing itself sufficiently for the individual to acquire a certain latitude of choice; but the necessities of existence restrict the power of choosing to a simple aid of the need to live. "With man alone a sudden bound is made; the chain is broken."

Reproduction and Evolution are Life itself. Both are the manifestations of an inward impulse. They are the manifestations of the two-fold need of increasing in number and wealth by multiplication in space and complication in time, of two instincts, which make their appearance with life, and which later become the two great motives in human activity, Love and Ambition. There appears to be "a force working, seeking to free itself from trammels and also to surpass itself, to give first all it has and then something more than it has". This is what mind or consciousness is. Its peculiar characteristic is that it has the faculty of drawing from itself more than it contains. It has however to encounter obstacles. There is Matter to offer it resistance. "The

The peculiar characteristic of this force is that it has the faculty of drawing from itself more than it contains.

evolution of life, from its early organisms up to man, presents to us the image of a current of consciousness flowing against Matter, determined to force for itself a subterranean passage, making tentative attempts to the right and to the left, pushing more or less ahead, for the most part encountering rock and breaking itself against it, and yet in one direction at least, succeeding in piercing its way through and emerging into the light. That direction is the line of evolution which ends in man".

A current of consciousness flowing against matter.

WHY DOES MIND ENGAGE ITSELF IN THIS ENTERPRISE OF BORING A TUNNEL THROUGH MATTER?

Here also to answer this question we have to follow several lines of facts and see on what point they converge. We shall now consider certain facts concerning psychical life, psycho-physiological relation, the moral ideal and the social progress.

There is matter and there is consciousness confronting each other. Matter brings precision and division. But thought or consciousness is continuity. In all continuity there is indistinctness. For a thought to become distinct it must be expressed in words and the words must be set down side by side on a sheet of paper. Mere thought costs little of toil. This is true also in the case of a work of art which is only conceived,

or a poem which is no more than a dream. "It is the material realization of the poem in words, of the artistic conception in statue or picture, which demands effort". This effort though toilsome, is a precious effort. It is precious because we draw out from the Self more than what it had already and thus we are raised above ourselves. But this effort is not possible without Matter. "By the resistance Matter offers and by the docility with which we endow, it is at one and the same time obstacle, instrument and stimulus". That is why it may be better to say that spirit, instead of being opposed to Matter, is wedded to Matter, and that Creation is the offspring of this union.

It is by an effort that we draw out from the Self more than what it had before.

This effort is precious because we are raised above ourselves. But this is impossible without the resistance which matter offers. Thus matter is at one and the same time obstacle, instrument and stimulus. Creation is the off-spring of the union between Matter and Spirit.

Nature gives us a sign by which we may know that our destiny is attained at some particular time. That sign is "joy"—*not* pleasure. Pleasure is only a contrivance by which Nature devises to obtain for us the *preservation* of life but not the *evolution* of life or Creation of life. But on the other hand it is joy that indicates the approval of the direction in which Life is striving to move. It is joy that "always announces that Life has succeeded, gained ground, conquered. If

we take this into account we find that wherever there is joy, there is creation. The richer the creation, the deeper is the joy. The mother is joyous at the sight of her child, because it is she that has created it. The merchant developing his business is joyous because he has started an enterprise which prospers. Take even the joy of an artist, the joy of an inventor, or the joy of a thinker like Archimedes who jumped up naked from his bath shouting out with joy 'eureka, eureka'. They are all joyous because they are conscious that they have brought something new to the world, because they have brought something to life, because they have added their contribution to the Creative Evolution of the world. It is a profound error to say that these persons work for glory or honour merely. They seek approbation only to reassure themselves about the direction in which they are thrusting their self. But the hero that is absolutely sure of having produced a work or created something that will endure and live care nothing for praise and feels far above glory, because he is a Creator and feels the joy, the 'Ananda' of a God. "If then in every domain the triumph of life is Creation, must we not suppose that human life has its goal in a creation which, unlike that of an artist or a philosopher, can

Wherever there is joy there is creation.

In every domain the triumph of life is creation.

Human life has its goal in a Creation which can be pursued by all men—Creation of self by self, the growing of the personality by an effort which draws much from little, and adds unceasingly to whatever wealth the world contains.

be pursued always by all men—Creation of self by self, the growing of the personality by an effort which draws much from little, something from nothing and adds unceasingly to whatever wealth the world contains?"*

Let us now consider the case of outside Nature. We find the joy of creation there also. It is "an immense inflorescence of unforeseeable novelty". The force or the spirit that animates it seems to create for the love of it. What an endless variety of vegetable and animal species! On each it confers the absolute value of a great work of art. It seems to have devoted as much attention on a tiny blooming flower as on a huge mountain. "It seems to be as much attached to the first comer into world as to man himself". That

We find joy of creation in outside nature also.

*Compare these words with the following words which Bergson uttered in an address at a prize-distribution:—"Strive then to sustain this fire of energy within you; call upon your powers, concentrate your attention, bring to bear the utmost strength of your will, so that your intelligence may attain the fullness of its range. Go down into the depths of your being and bring thence to the surface all that there is —nay more than there is—within you. Remember that the will can perform this miracle; you have only to demand that it shall...."—Quoted by Ruhe and Paul in "Henri Bergson—An Account of his Life."—Macmillan & Co., p. 29.

spirit then seems to create lovingly, for nothing, for the mere joy of it.

The moral man is a creator in the highest degree.

If we take again the moralist into consideration we find that his standpoint is even higher. In man, especially among the best of men, the vital movement is most effective. In him we find the "creative current of moral life" running deepest. It is the moral man who is the creator in the highest degree. He is the great success of life. He is called on at every moment "to lean on the totality of his past in order to bring his weight to bear more effectively on the future". He is the man "whose action, itself intense, is also capable of intensifying the action of other men, and itself generous, can kindle fires on the hearth of generosity". "The men of moral grandeur, particularly those whose inventive and simple heroism has opened new paths of virtue, are revealers of metaphysical truth. Although they are the culminating point of evolution, yet they are nearest the source and they enable us to perceive the impulsion which comes from the deep." They are like the volcanoes at whose summit the earth's hidden fire appears. We may be able to penetrate by an act of intuition to the life principle itself, by studying these great lives and by striving to experience sympathetically what they experience.

If we take social life into account, here too we find that across innumerable obstacles, by struggling to eliminate contradictions between individual wills and social will and between the wills of different and diverse societies, we find that life is working to obtain the greatest quantity, the richest variety, the highest qualities of invention and effort, of creation and evolution.

In social life too we find that life is working to obtain the greatest quantity, the richest variety, the highest qualities of invention and effort, of creation and evolution.

Thus all these lines of thought clearly lead us to the conclusion that the Consciousness in its passage through Matter prepares itself for a more and more efficient action, for an intenser life, and that Life is a life of striving, a need for invention, a creative evolution. We can do no better than quote the thrilling words which Bergson uttered at Birmingham when he delivered his Huxley lecture. "If we now take into account that the mental activity of the man overflows his cerebral activity, that his brain is a store-house of motor habits but not of memories, that the other functions of thought are even more independent of the Brain than Memory is, that preser-

The above lines of thought lead us to the conclusion that consciousness in its passage through matter prepares itself for a more and more efficient action—for an intenser life; and that life is a life of striving, a need for invention, a creative evolution.

vation and even intensification of personality are not only possible but even probable after the disintegration of the body, shall we not suspect that, in its passage through the Matter which it finds here, consciousness is tempering itself like steel and preparing itself for a more efficient action, for an intenser life? That life as I imagine it, is still a life of striving, a need of invention, a creative evolution?"

CHAPTER XI

FREEDOM*

THE UNIQUE CONCEPTION OF FREEDOM—PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL

I PASS from state to state. Sensations, feelings, volitions and ideas are all "the changes into which my existence is divided and which colour it in turns"†. I change without ceasing; but the change is not a mere passage from one state to the next. Every feeling, every desire, every idea and every volition is undergoing change every moment. Thus the 'state' is but change, and the change from state to state is one continuous change. And my memory is there carrying the past into the present. I change without ceasing, and I *grow* as I change. 'Duration' then is the stuff I am made of. "It gnaws into the future" and "swells as it advances".‡ The thousand incidents that arise,

Our Personality. "Duration" is the stuff I am made of.

---

* "Freedom is the relation of the Concrete Self to the act which it performs. But this relation is indefinable, just because we are free." We can analyse a thing but not a process. We can break up extensity but not duration. *See* Bergson: Time and Free-will, p. 219.

† Bergson: Creative Evolution, Chapter I, page 1.

‡ Bergson: Creative Evolution, p. 5.

though they appear discontinuous, in fact "stand out against the continuity of a back-ground on which they are designed". They are like "the beats of the drum which break forth here and there in the symphony".

The "deeper states of the Self," then, do not "stand in juxta-position, but they "permeate and melt into one another", and each is "tinged with the colouring, which they assume in the case of a definite person, and which comes to each of them by the reflection from all the others". In each the "soul is reflected", in each the "whole personality" is present. And, a "free act" is just the "outer manifestation of this inner state", "since the Self alone will have been the author of it, and since it will express the whole of the Self." For, the act does not then express some superficial idea, almost external to ourselves, distinct and easy to account for, "but agrees with the whole of our most intimate feelings, thoughts and aspirations, with that particular conception of life which is equivalent of all our past experience....". All our past experience is preserved, is "leaning over the present which is about to join it, pressing against the portals of consciousness"* which

The deeper states of the Self permeate and melt into one another.

The 'free act' agrees with the whole of our most intimate feelings, thoughts and aspirations, with all our past experience.

*Bergson: Creative Evolution, p. 5.

would fain leave it outside under the pressure of necessity. Our character may be said to be in a way the "condensation" of our past history. It is with our entire past, including the bent of our soul, that we desire, will and act. And this past is made manifest to us in its impulse, and is felt in the form of tendency. This past constitutes our personality which "shoots, grows and ripens without ceasing".*

Our personality shoots, grows and ripens without ceasing.

This entire past which thus constitutes our fundamental self is not stirred up and pressed into acts in our ordinary daily life, in which is to be found only "the spatial and social representation" of the fundamental self. But it is only "at the great and solemn crisis, decisive of our reputation with others, and yet more with ourselves, that we choose in defiance of what is conveniently called a motive. . ." It is there that the fundamental self is touched. It is there that the endeavouring, striving, active principle prompts and controls what Stuart calls "the valuation process". It is there that the deeper depths of the pregnant past are stirred up. It is there that the

The deeper depths of the past, which constitute our fundamental self, are stirred up in moments of solemn crisis when free acts issue.

* Bergson: Creative Evolution, pp. 5, 6.

glimmering candle-light of intellect gives place to the broad search-light of intuition, which discloses every sinuosity of the situation. And it is there that finally the "free act"* is thrown.

As the self passes through more and more of such situations, and as it throws more and more of free acts, the birth-throes become less and less painful, the valuation process becomes less and less difficult; and then the free acts will begin to fall as gently as "ripened fruits". And all are free acts, if only they involve the whole of our personality and are truly ours. Since they are free acts they could not have been foreseen, even though their antecedents explain them when they have been accomplished. Though the free act is the realizing of an intention, it differs from it in its being the present and new reality. Mechanism and Finalism are only external views of our conduct, whose intellectuality only they grasp. "But our conduct slips between them and

The character of our evolution. The freedom which Bergson ascribes to human activity.

A free act cannot be foreseen.

*Every attempt to define a free act brings us to the question "Can time be adequately represented by space?" Though freedom is the clearest of facts, the difficulties of the problem arise from 'the desire to endow duration with the same attributes as extensity, to interpret a succession by a simultaneity, and to express the idea of freedom in a language into which it is obviously untranslatable".—Bergson: Time and Free-will, pp. 219-221.

extends much further". It is fundamentally *creative,* and is unique and individual; and "no rules can ever be sufficient" for creation. No external personality, however great and good, can be the ideal that has the right and the worth enough to be *copied* out *in its entirety,* even though that were possible at all. "Such is the character of our own evolution; and such also *without doubt,* the character of the evolution of life."

Our conduct is fundamentally creative.

If such is the freedom which Bergson ascribes to human activity in its deepest form, and if such a freedom has never been before ascribed to human activity, then it is impossible to suspect that there could ever be a levelling *down* of the personal in Bergson's identification of the personal freedom with the natural or impersonal freedom. And if there could possibly be no such levelling *down,* then surely there must be a levelling *up* of the impersonal to the plane of the personal far above the level at which it is placed normally. Wherein and how then is such a levelling up found possible by Bergson?

Impersonal freedom.

The levelling up of the impersonal to the level of the personal.

The philosophy of life in general, which Bergson leads us to, claims to transcend, like the philosophy of personal freedom, both Mechanism and Finalism,

and is nearer to the second doctrine. The organised world is a harmonious whole but admits of much discord. Each individual, like man, retains only a certain impetus from the universal vital impulsion and "tends to use this energy in its own interest," whence arises possible conflicts with other forms of life. Hence harmony is 'behind' and not 'before', and is due to "an identity of impulsion and not to a common aspiration."

The philosophy of life in general which Bergson leads us to. Bergson's Modified Finalism.

There is no end, no finality, we can assign to life, as there is no end, no finality in human conduct. There is no pre-existing model which is to be realised. The action differs from a model or motive or intention if there could be any such, in its being in the present, in its newness. And so it is, as we have seen, in the case of man. The future cannot be read in the present. Prediction is impossible.

There is no end, no finality, that we can assign to life, just as there is no end, no finality, in human conduct. There is no pre-existing model which is to be realized.

Life does not work as our intellect presents it. Life wherever it be, either in man or in beast, moves, progresses and *endures* in time. In time the same cannot be reproduced. The reality of life is undoubtedly creative, *i.e.*, "'productive of effects

The reality of life is undoubtedly creative, is productive of effects in which it expands and transcends its own being.

in which it expands and transcends its own being." Duration is the stuff of animal life, just as it is of human life. In pressing its past into the present lies the freedom of the animal or even the vegetable, just as it is in the case of man. The whole past is behind pushing it when life flows and shoots or sprouts into action, either in the case of man or beast. The freedom of man or personal freedom consists in the capacity to create "just that way of acting in a concrete situation which gives free expression to the living individuality of the total endeavouring self. . ."* And this is the case anywhere else where life is. The circumstances of an animal or any organism are not "a mould into which life is inserted and whose form life adopts". There is no form for itself, suited to the circumstances which are made for it. It will have to make the best of these circumstances, neutralize their inconveniences and utilize their advantages, in short, *respond* to outer actions by building up a machine which has no resemblance to them. Such adapting is *"not repeating,* but *replying"*, an entirely different thing.† But this replying or responding is *not* a *calculated* solution to the problem set

Life must create form for itself suited to the circumstances which are made for it.

*The Rev. Dr. A. G. Hogg: Unpublished notes of the year 1917.

†Bergson: Creative Evolution, p. 61.

out in the conditions. But it consists in the active cutting out a form into Matter by the ever-growing and ever-strengthening vital effort, "an effort of far greater depth than the individual effort, an effort far more independent of circumstances". It is the simplicity of such an effort alone that can explain the contrast between the infinite complexity of an organ and the extreme simplicity of the function. It was thus that the development of an eye like that of the mollusc and of the vertebrates was possible. It was thus again that the organism of man evolved out of that of the monkey. And it is exactly in the same manner that the free acts of man are possible.

The simplicity of the vital effort in man and in animal.

Life in man and in animal is nothing but a tendency to act. This tendency in man is the manifestation of the entire past in the present and gives birth to free acts which take place in time which is flowing. In beings other than human, the tendency exhibits itself in creating or bettering and developing forms suited to the circumstances made for it, without being restricted to mere repeating. The direction of this action is not pre-determined. This action, as the human action, presents *to some extent,* the character of contingency and implies at least a

Life in man and in animal is nothing but a tendency to act.

rudiment of choice. And "choice involves the anticipatory idea of several possible actions", so that the possibilities of action need be marked out before the action actually takes place. The capacity to mark out these possibilities of action is supplied by the visual perception. The animal is free to increase the vision by increasing the complexity of the visual organ.

The direction of this activity is not pre-determined, but presents to some extent the character of contingency.

The personal freedom and what is called the impersonal freedom are then identical. For Bergson there is no difference of freedom in life except only in degree. If there are infinite possibilities of action for man, and if there are only limited number of possibilities for animal, the difference is due to the relative complexity of their organisms. But the organisms, whether animal or human, are due again only to the vital impetus that is common to both.

The difference of freedom in life is only in degree.

So Bergson's identification of the personal freedom with that of impersonal freedom does not amount to a levelling *down* of the personal to the level of the impersonal, but to a levelling *up* of the impersonal to the height of the personal. But in spite of this identification Bergson estab-

Man is supreme over the natural level of life on account of the higher degree of his freedom.

lishes the supremacy of man over the natural level of life. His freedom is of the same kind as that of the natural, but is of a far higher degree. "It is given to man to continue the vital movement indefinitely, although he does not draw along with him all that life carries in itself." "It is as if a vague and formless being, whom we call as we will, man or super-man, had sought to realise himself, and had succeeded only by abandoning a part of himself on the way. The losses are represented by the rest of the animal world, or even by the vegetable world."*

And yet Humanity is not isolated in the Nature that it dominates.

But Bergson persists in saying that humanity is not isolated in the Nature that it dominates. "As the smallest grain of dust is bound up with our entire solar system, drawn along with it in that undivided movement of descent which is materiality itself, so all organised being from the humblest to the highest, from the first origins of life to the time in which we are, and in all places, in all times, do but evidence a single impulsion, the inverse of the movement of matter, and in itself indivisible. All the living hold together, and all yield to the same tremendous push. The animal takes its stand on the plant, man bestrides animality, and the whole of

*Bergson: Creative Evolution.

humanity, in space and in time, is one immense army galloping beside and before and behind each of us in an overwhelming charge able to beat down every resistance and clear the most formidable obstacles, perhaps even death."*

All the living hold together, and yielding to the same tremendous push, beat down every resistance.

*Bergson: Creative Evolution, p. 285.

CHAPTER XII

THE MORAL PROBLEM: A CONSTRUCTIVE THEORY. CRITICISM OF THE THEORY OF SELF-REALIZATION AND OF OTHER THEORIES

A CONSTRUCTIVE THEORY FOR THE SOLUTION OF THE ETHICAL PROBLEM, SUGGESTED ON THE LINES OF BERGSONIAN THOUGHT; A WAY OF GETTING OVER THE RECURRING METAPHYSICAL DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN THE ETHICAL PROBLEM

THE whole struggle of human life with the facts of the situation arises from the "deep-seated desire in us for an experience richer and more contented than that which is as yet ours". Our life then is a struggle and striving to get that which we have not, and to become that which we are not. If such is our life, an inactive, empty or qualityless God cannot be the ideal of our life-activity. Then the problem arises as to what is the kind of activity that should be the ideal of our life and that we should bestow on our God?

The moral problem.

However exalted and far-reaching it may be, the moral ideal remains primarily the ideal of an individual, "the formula in which an individual finds the most coherent and adequate account of his

The disappointment and failure that man seems to be doomed to in his moral endeavour.

own most deeply-rooted preferences." Difficulties naturally arise from such an ideal. Conflicts arise at certain stages of human development between the claims of self and the claims of society. In addition to these conflicts an irreconcilable contradiction creeps into the individual's own experience. The end must be capable of attainment and of being enjoyed within the limits of the individual's life. For otherwise, since the whole struggle arises from the deep-seated desire for an experience richer and more contented than that which is as yet his, man must be doomed from cradle to hopeless disappointment and irremediable failure. And, again, the end just because it is an ethical end, must be incapable of being completely realised. For, as a moral being, man can never exist without some unreached ideal to serve as a spur to his activity.*

Aristotle's "Universal" — Energeia akinesis—as the ideal of moral endeavour.

Shall we accept something like the "universal" of Aristotle (*energeia akinesis*) and conceive a "Being which has realized all its potentialities" as our God?† Then, the promise is a state of peaceful activity, which transcending time and change, preserves itself in an harmonious equipoise,—a perfect state of "Blissful activity",

*Compare F.C.S. Schiller: 'Riddles of the Sphinx,' pp. 120-122.

†F. C. S. Schiller: Humanism, Essay XI on Activity and Substance.

wherein the *"Bliss"* consists of the harmonious equipoise secured against the irruption of intrusive discords, and the *"Activity"* consists in merely trying to retain that state. Such a blessed state will be the culmination of a life of loyalty to ethical conviction and of honest moral endeavour. And the means by which man can live such a life, we are told, are (*a*) true knowledge, (*b*) self-mastery, and (*c*) sound physical health. But the first condition is impossible to satisfy, for every puzzle solved gives rise to a multitude of unsolved ones so that the result is only the sad discovery of the extent of our own ignorance. The second condition, self-mastery, is purely negative and worthless; and if it has any ethical value, it derives it from the nature of the positive ideals which it is the negative condition of realizing. And, lastly, health by itself is no satisfactory end for which to live.

Thus, we have to say that our end that is to be felt as worth striving for, must be infinite and infinitely remote. But if it must thus be infinite, it must be out of the reach of attainment. And, the "infinitely distant" ideal makes all moral action meaningless and worthless. The history of the religious life of individuals and nations bears testimony to the mischievous ravages of the fatal devotion to so

This is an infinitely distant ideal. So it makes all moral action meaningless and worthless.

perverse a moral doctrine. The fundamental contradiction which is thus inherent in our position as moral agents, is, as Taylor points out in his "Problem of Conduct",* in the "guise of a discrepancy between the *form* and the *content* of ethics." Nothing in the end is really worthy except the "Good will". But the good will is an empty form. To say that the good will is the will that wills the good, and again to say that the "Good" is nothing else but the "Good will" is to revolve in an empty circle. Good will alone is said to be adequate to afford final contentment to our moral aspirations. But to will the good will is to will an empty form, which is incapable of being attained. Thus we find that we cannot escape the conviction that an inevitable note of sadness and weariness is inseparable from all earnest moral endeavour.

The discrepancy between the Form and the Content of Ethics.

And now let us suppose that Aristotle's "blissful activity", transcending time and change, can somehow be attained in our life. And what is our lot then? No progress is possible there in that "perfection", for there all potentialities are already actualized. It is in the words of

The motionless perfection of the Aristotelian ideal. Even if it can be realized, it stultifies, but does not complete, the moral endeavour. It is "the very haven of quietism".

* Taylor: Problem of Conduct, Chapters VII-VIII.

Boyce Gibson, "the very haven of quietism". This motionless perfection, "suffused with a glow of æsthetic delight," "does not complete but stultifies the moral endeavour", which is so vital for human life. "Aspiration here yields its morality as it passes over into fruition, and the fruition itself is but a poor reward for a forgotten morality." This blissful kingdom of monotonous perfection is too narrow to hold back the aspiring soul struggling to soar far beyond.

If such an ideal is thus doubly unsatisfactory, firstly because the ideal seems to be impossible of attainment, and secondly because though it may be achieved it cannot yield complete satisfaction;—what else can be a better ideal? What else may be a more potent antidote against moral weariness and despondency? Can what is called the "modern ideal" be a solution to this perplexing problem?

The Modern ideal of Nietzche.

We shall cease to think that each one of us is an end in himself, and think as Nietzche asks us to think, each as "something that must be overcome, or as a bridge and path to the overman". My ethical end then must be capable of at least approximate realization by my own efforts and within the life of myself. And such realization must itself be regarded

Here Humanity is conceived, not as a means but as an end. The individual is both the means and the end.

as a means to something beyond itself—a means to the ultimate production, by the ethical co-operation of mankind in general, of "a civilisation in which human beings shall, as far as possible, be the actual controllers of their own destiny." This ideal seems to be satisfactory and quite practicable, for Humanity is not conceived as a means but as an end, and the individual is both the means and the end. But is this ideal free from contradictions?

My individual life is both the means and the end. My hard-won moral gains are not lost. For I can hand them on as my voluntary contribution towards the creation or the perpetuation of a type of society which permanently embodies my highest hopes and cherished ideals.* And now, supposing the ideal of a perfect society is once realized, let us examine if that would then really provide full and complete satisfaction for the desires and endeavours of its constituent members. Will not the old antithesis between the desirable and the attainable still haunt the member of this "perfect" community? Suppose, the member of that perfect community has still an ethical ideal, then his ideal like our

The antithesis between the desirable and the attainable exists in the case of this ideal also.

*Compare F.C.S. Schiller's ideal of 'Perfect individuals in a perfect society'. Riddles of the Sphinx, pp. 233-235.

own, is something which is never ultimately reached but recedes like the ever receding horizon as he advances towards it. Suppose, on the other hand, that he has no unsatisfied longings or unfulfilled ideals. Then we must pronounce him not a man, or if a man at all, an unhappy man. He would be worse off, in fact, than we, his predecessors. For, we have at least the as-yet-dimly imagined ideal of a perfect common-wealth before us to stimulate us to moral exertion. But he, with nothing but the mere perpetuation of the present to care for, is condemned by his very perfection to a life of "un-ideal" unsatisfactory routine. If then the inhabitant of this future state wishes to have ethical experience he should have before him a still more perfect state of existence, which will be as remote to him as his is to us. So, the perfect common-wealth, in other words, though valuable as a regulative model, must be pronounced as an "illusory ideal". Once again, we have no choice left between "infinite and unending progress" and "predestined failure". And once again we are brought to notice the note of sadness ingrained in the very nature of morality. All the elements of contradiction which beset the "Aristotelian ideal" beset likewise this seemingly most ultimate, and practically the most satisfying formulation of the

The 'perfect common-wealth'— though valuable as a regulative model—is yet an 'illusory ideal'.

moral endeavour. What other ideal can we look to next?

The central flaw of the ethical experience, we are told by Bradley,* is the secret aspiration of the moral man to obtain "individual perfection", which is a contradiction in terms. For, perfection and finite individuality are mutually incompatible. "Nothing is ultimately perfect except the universe of being as a whole, and you cannot therefore be perfect except in some sense in which you are more than a finite individual". So, if moral experience is to be raised above the level of the antitheses and contradictions which beset it as mere morality, it needs to be transformed into a higher form of experience in which we are something more than man. The contradictions in the moral experience, are due to the retention, as a characteristic form of experience, of the distinctions of past, present and future, *i.e.*, the temporal character of moral experience itself, in virtue of which ideal and achievement inevitably fall apart. And so, "if we are to find an experience in which human craving and aspiration may find a satisfaction, which is neither transitory nor illusory, it must be the experience of a type

Individual perfection—a contradiction in terms.

Moral experience transformed into Religious experience to avoid the contradictions which beset it.

*F. H. Bradley: Appearance and Reality, p. 104.

which transcends this severance of "now" from "no longer" and "not yet". It must be an experience of perfection not as something that possibly may be achieved in the remote future, "but of perfection as a quality in some way pertaining to human existence *here* and *now* and characterising our failures no less than what we call our successes". In other words, it must be an experience of ourselves as being something more than finite individuals or subordinate "parts" of a world system. The ultimate satisfaction arises thus from the conviction that our lives, with all their mistakes and failures, are "as functions of the universe already perfect", and that we are ourselves in some implicit way the "perfect universe" of which our lives are functions. (Bradley's "Appearance and Reality".) Such an experience is what may be called the *religious experience,* a form of direct and immediate apprehension or intuition, which transcends reason or is "ultra-rational", since it contains a wealth of detail and colour which cannot be adequately represented in the conceptual or "thought" form.

Principal Caird and Prof. Caird attempt to bring out the relation between this religious experience and moral experience. Both try to maintain that moral experience is not swallowed up in the religious. According to Principal Caird, religious

progress is progress *within* the sphere of the infinite, while ethical progress is progress *towards* the sphere of the infinite. Thus, according to him moral life does not cease to be progressive on becoming religious. And Prof. Caird says, "The faith that the moral ideal will be realized is one with the faith in it as the absolute reality: it *ought* to be realized because it *can* be realized and even because, in a sense, it *is* realized already".* But as Boyce Gibson in his "God with us" points out, it is not easy to see (according to either of Cairds) under what new forms the virtues of the moral life persist within the religious life of fruition. And as Boyce Gibson further points out, it would seem to follow that the infinite inheritance of which we are already in "possession" (Prin. Caird), and the moral ideal which in a sense "is realized already" (Prof. Caird) bring with them "the stultification of our moral freedom" or "demoralization". Hegel and Sankara express the view of our Cairds more explicitly when they say that the consummation of the infinite end consists merely in

The relation between Moral Experience and Religious Experience. Principal Caird and Prof. Caird try to maintain that Moral Experience is not swallowed up in the Religious.

Boyce Gibson points out that their representation of the Ideal involves the stultification of our moral freedom.

*Boyce Gibson: God with us, pages 81-202.

Hegel and Sankara express the same thing as Cairds when they say that the consummation of the infinite end consists merely in removing the illusion (Maya or Avidya).

These views reduce moral struggle to a struggle with illusion. And so the struggle in the religious sphere, where the illusion disappears, reduces itself to a struggle with nothing.

removing the illusion (Maya or Avidya) which makes it seem yet unaccomplished. This is the illusion under which we live. But if this is true, if the Good is already in full actuality accomplished, then morality is but a struggle with illusion, a struggle which, in the religious sphere, where the illusion disappears, reduces itself to a struggle with nothing.

This is a real difficulty and Boyce Gibson attempts to meet it. His conclusion is that realizations of fruition are not revelations of the external extinction of evil but only a sacred intimacy between man and God, in which the worthlessness and vulnerability of all that is not of God is so impressed upon the soul that the conflict with evil, in one form or another, becomes for the sincere a spiritual necessity, and the conquest of it, an achievement of which he is always capable. Such fruition cannot spirit away evil. On the contrary, it can only intensify our sensitiveness to the curse of it. And it can supply us with the whole armour of faith, and give to the

Boyce Gibson's attempt to overcome this real difficulty pointed out above.

conflict with evil a religious inspiration. But here Boyce Gibson seems to involve himself in a kind of contradiction which he overlooks. Fruition cannot spirit away evil, and so evil has a real existence; and we seek God and have Him with us to conquer evil? Evil has its own existence for it is "not of God". And so God Himself is finite, and evil is finite and man is finite. So, the fight between God and Evil is fight between two finites. And what religious inspiration or ethical encouragement can be had from such a solution of the difficulty involved in the moral life of a human being? So our troubles do not seem to have been overcome for us by Boyce Gibson even.

The contradiction involved in his solution.

But Euckon seems to show the way towards a satisfactory solution. "The eternal is the active fruition of all true spiritual labour, and can be sustained anywhere and everywhere by rightly directed force of will". The spiritual life is just "the revelation of the Eternal *in* and *through* time, and may be justly characterised *as a progressive harmonizing of fruition and action*". We thus find our satisfaction in and through our work (Nish-

Euckon shows the way to a satisfactory solution.

The spiritual life is the progressive harmonizing of Fruition and Action. *Nishkama Karma or Leela.*

kama karma*). And all that is implied in the ideal of realised fact—the joy of attainment, the peace of self-possession, grace, composure, fruition—is, for Euckon, vested in the very struggle through which we strive inwardly towards what is deepest in ourselves (Leela).† "As fact" Eternity subsists for us only through a sustained decision, which is the supreme test of spiritual faith; and "it is a spiritual world built to the music of our own activity, and such music is still far from being a finished symphony". There is a further conviction in Euckon that the "life of fruitional action has its roots in the life of the Heart" (the concentration centre of our full personal experience), "the spiritual home to which our life incessantly returns for its revivification".

Bergson's improvement on the view of Euckon.

All that is here said by Euckon is said by Monsieur Bergson of France. The spiritual life for Bergson is the life in Duration, the same as Euckon's "life in the Heart", the concentration centre of our full personal experience. The past, pent up in the individual, is the birth-place of free acts that fall as "ripened fruits." Bergson tells us that in free action (which is moral

* Nishkama Karma is action performed without attachment, without a thought of the fruit thereof. *Vide* Bhagavat Geeta: Discourse III, Text 19; Discourse VI, Texts 1 and 4.

† 'Leela' is graceful play.

because free, and is spiritual because it is in the time following, and is the outcome of the past) we contract with a painful effort our whole being in order to thrust it forward. And every such voluntary act that manifests or expresses the growing self brings something new into the world; and hence our free act is a Creation and *our free spiritual life is creative.*

Our free act is a creation. The free spiritual life is creative.

The more we live in Duration and the less in Space, the less painful and easier should the creation of free acts become. We think that the more our life is in duration, the whole past responds the more readily and easily to the needs of the environment. Free acts may then perhaps be said to flow out of the abundance of the rich past at the mere touch of the tap. The trouble and pain involved in the "creative synthesis of the volitional attitudes", which Prof. Stuart speaks of, may disappear on account of a rich supply of floods of intuitive light, that an advanced spiritual individual can command. The creative activity would then be best conceived as my revered professor of the Madras Christian College, Dr. A. G. Hogg, used to conceive it, viz., as "Artistic Creation". The novelty of creation, the facility and ease of self-expression, the simplicity of execution, and the joy and satisfaction

Moral action as 'Artistic Creation'.

involved in the production of a work of art are involved in such activity. Such an activity is "permanently contenting because self-perpetuating" and self-creating. I quote at length the words of my Professor for the sake of clearness and definiteness.

Talking of the moral duty of truthfulness, he said: "No rule or pattern can determine in what precise way the true impression is to be conveyed, which is just the all-important point. While there are always possible different ways of telling the truth, often only one of these is the right way or only the most morally valuable way. The fact is that the right or morally valuable act is like an *Art, the creation of just that way of acting in a concrete situation which gives free expression to the living individuality of the total endeavouring self, by providing a synthesis of as much as possible of the manifold volitional attitudes and loyalties by which it is animated; and no rules can ever be sufficient for art or creation.'**

No rules or patterns are ever sufficient for Art or creation.

"The right or morally valuable act is like an Art, the creation of just that way of acting in a concrete situation which gives free expression to the living individuality of the total endeavouring self, by providing a synthesis of as much as possible of the manifold volitional attitudes and loyalties by which it is animated; and no rules can ever be sufficient for art or creation."

* These quotations are taken from the unpublished notes of Dr. Hogg of the year 1917.

Dr. Hogg further said in the following way:—"Valuation is more thorough and more valid (*i.e.*, an act is more thoroughly moral and valid) in proportion as there is a holding together and synthesising of more and more of the total wealth of endeavour or creative impulse which the self is, so that the volitional attitude adopted towards the means or the end which is being valued may be an expression of this totality and not a mere phase of endeavour momentarily in the ascendant, and the way to ensure this thoroughness is to rethink (or to rehearse in the mind) the older valuation processes and their condition in the light of the present;—in short to carry out the kind of mental *dramatic rehearsal* of which Dewey and Tufts speak."

The holding together and synthesising of the total wealth of endeavour.

The mental Rehearsal.

Now wherein lies the unique value of this theory? This view gets over all the metaphysical difficulties which the effort to conceive an ultimate good involves the Ethics of Self-Realization. We escape these difficulties by defining moral endeavour, not as the endeavour to actualize a concept of the self, but the effort to devise or *create* modes of conduct which would be adequate to the totality of endeavour that is seeking expression.

The unique value of this new and original theory of Dr. Hogg.

This may be called the Ethics of Self-Expression or Self-Creation as contrasted with the Ethics of Self-Realization. The ethics of Self-Realization tends to conceive the self as *drawn onwards* by a more or less determinate ideal in front of it, a standard of self-hood and achievement to which it endeavours to approximate, whereas we conceive the Self, in the way in which Prof. Stuart conceives it, viz., as *pushed onwards* from behind, or rather from within, by a living impetus which may indeed employ ideals and standards to express itself, but remoulds them freely in the service of its growing creative life.

This Ethics of Self-Expression or Self-Creation as contrasted with the old Ethics of Self-Realization.

We deliberately part with Green and with all those thinkers—eastern and western—who hold that Self-Realization is the ideal of moral activity. We cannot think that the ideal of morality can be the conscious attempt to become the perfect Self. Can it be true that I do an honest deed because I want to realize myself? Morality can have no fixed ideal standard which overrides or coerces human activity. Moral judgment is not subsumption, but creation or con-

We deliberately part with Green and with all those thinkers—eastern and western—who hold that Self-Realization is the ideal of moral activity.

Morality can have no fixed ideal standard which overrides or coerces human activity. Moral judgment is not a subsumption. It is a construction or creation or invention. Moral act is always new—always an artistic creation.

struction. Our whole point is that the moral act is always new,—always an artistic creation. We go on constructing or inventing ways in which we express our fundamental self in concrete situations. We think and re-think. We bring together the various elements that constitute the concrete situation in which action is to take place, and the elements that compose our total endeavouring self. We project a possible line of action. And we rehearse the action in our mind. We survey the whole situation. We revise the old standards. We summon up the innermost aspirations of our self. And we do not feel ready to act until we have succeeded in creating a plan of action, which expresses our total self in that particular situation with its unique character, urgency and importance. And thus we prepare ourselves for a practical step.

When we come to the point of acting according to our decision, when we approve of it and will to discharge it, we feel ourselves in the presence of the morally valuable and truly satisfying. As Croce holds, 'Good' expresses the way in which man approves and wills the act. And if there is no will, there is no Good, and if there is no Good, there is no will. Will and Good are inseparably associated. The moral activity consists in discovering what you *will*. Anything that is unrea-

An effort to define the 'Eternal value' is thoroughly irrational. To lay down a rule as to what is good for ever in ignorance of the situations that arise, is to propose something irrational.

sonable is *ipso facto* not what the moral consciousness finds satisfaction in. That which cannot be consistently willed, *i.e.*, that which cannot consistently be wholly willed, or that which is not rational, is not moral. An effort to define 'eternal value' is thoroughly irrational. To lay down a rule as to what is good for ever, in ignorance of the situations that arise, is to propose something irrational. Morality does not consist in laying down primary distinctions between the good and the bad. Moral maxims are abstractions abstracted from particular concrete cases. The only way of making a man understand what his duty is, is to exhibit

Every moral act, which expresses the total endeavouring self, and which fits the situation, is itself the realization of what for that act and that situation is the moral ideal, and it brings something new into the Universe.

it as that which exactly fits the situation with the agent in it. Every moral act, which expresses the total endeavouring self, and which fits the situation is itself the realization of what for that act and situation is the moral ideal. It brings something new into the universe. Thereby the self itself

Both the standard and the self grow on account of a moral act. Either is meaningless without the other.

grows. And also the ideal grows and becomes richer on account of the concreteness it gains. Thus the *Standard* and also the *self* grow

on account of a moral act. They are dependent on each other, and either is meaningless without the other. They are as inseparably related to each other as "expression" and "impression".

Such a moral act, as we have been considering, *i.e.*, an act which expresses the total endeavouring self, which fits the situation and which therefore is itself the realization of the "moral ideal"—(in the only sense in which there is any such thing) we call a *free act,* not because it is inexplicable, but because it is the result of a synthesis which is unique and incapable of repetition. The self alone could have been the author of it, and it expresses the whole of the self. And because it is an act which brings together into a new whole the elements of the past it is really a creation. Such an activity which gives birth to such free moral acts, is contenting while still unfinished, and can be permanently contenting, for it is intrinsically self-perpetuating and self-creating.

A moral act is incapable of repetition. It is a free act and is the result of a synthesis which is unique and incapable of repetition.

An activity which gives birth to such free moral act is contenting while still unfinished, and can be permanently contenting, for it is intrinsically self-perpetuating and self-creating.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ETHICS OF SELF-CREATION

THE various issues raised in the treatment of the Moral problem in the last chapter pointed to the theory that the best way of conceiving Moral Activity is to conceive it as 'Artistic Creation'. We pointed out that the unique value of this theory lies in the fact that it gets over the metaphysical difficulties in which the effort to conceive the ultimate good involves the Ethics of Self-Realization. We escape these persistent difficulties by defining Moral endeavour, not as an endeavour to actualize a concept of the self, but as an effort to devise or invent or create modes of conduct which would be adequate to the totality of endeavour that is seeking expression.

The Ethics of Self-creation. The conception of Moral Activity as Artistic Creation.

Now let us consider whether this Ethics of Self-Expression or Self-Creation, as we may choose to call this theory based on Bergsonian principles, may be considered as 'Normative' in the sense that it can show that Morality may be defined as rationality in conduct.

Can this Ethics of Self-Creation be considered as Normative?

The Rev. Dr. Hogg in the constructive portion of his brochure on "A method of Ethics" works out an argument containing certain steps by which the kind of theory that might satisfy us may be defended. On examination we shall find that the conditions embodied in these steps are satisfied in the case of this theory now under consideration.

Dr. Hogg's constructive argument containing distinct steps by which the kind of theory that might satisfy us may be defended.

Moral judgment is interested in the worth or worthiness of the will-attitude. Or, in the words of Dr. Mackenzie, in Moral judgment the object of the judgment is the character expressed in the act*. In estimating character or will-attitude, we have to take into account *all* the factors that constitute the inwardness of the action judged. According to the theory of Dr. Hogg, the right or morally valuable act exhibits artistic creativeness. It is the creation of just that way of acting in a concrete situation which gives free expression to the living individuality of the total endeavouring self. And, this free expression of the living individuality of the total endeavouring self is possible only by providing a synthesis of as much as possible of the *manifold volitional attitudes and loyalties* by which that living individuality is animated.

*J.S. Mackenzie: A Manual of Ethics, p. 139.

"Valuation is more thorough and therefore more valid in proportion as there is a holding together and synthesising of more and more of the total wealth of endeavour or creative impulsion which the Self is, so that the volitional attitude adopted towards the means or the end which is being valued may be an expression of this totality and not a mere phase of endeavour momentarily in the ascendant; and the way to ensure this thoroughness is to re-think the older valuation processes and their conditions in the light of the present, in short to carry out the kind of Mental Rehearsal which Dewey and Tufts speak of. That validity should be proportional to the degree of this interpenetration of present and past volitional attitudes is not a surprising claim, for all rationality is a holding together of many in one"*.

All rationality is a holding together of many in one. And so moral valuation is more thorough and therefore more valid in proportion as there is holding together and synthesising of more and more of the total wealth of endeavour or creative impulsion which the self is, so that the volitional attitude adopted may be an expression of this totality and not a mere phase of endeavour momentarily in the ascendant.

If we follow H. W. Stuart's psychological analysis, in his essay on "Valuation as logical process", of what happens in the case of a Moral judgment in actual life we find that the more mature the moral judgment becomes, the more and more com-

Mature moral judgment does not consist in the application of ready-made standards.

*The Rev. Dr. Hogg's unpublished notes of the year 1917.

pletely does it lose the appearance of consisting in the application of ready-made standards, considered to be so authoritative as not on any account to be themselves criticized but only to be implicitly obeyed. So then, no theory of Ethics can reach the normativeness of genuine rationality by providing fixed standards from which the practical moral judgment can deduce by deductive reasoning what ought to be done in a particular case. To do so would be to stultify itself by an internal discrepancy of procedure. On the one hand there is the attempt to see that moral conduct shall be rational. On the other hand there is the proceeding of making it imperfectly rational by "foreclosing the rational or deliberative process". This will be to settle what one should do long before the situation has arisen and long before the conditions under which one has to act are known. But strictly speaking, from what we have been saying of a unique synthesis to fit in a unique situation, there can be no room for 'subsumption' in our idea of the truly moral action, just as there can be no true work of art that can ever be brought into existence by mechanically following certain rules.

What do we find in the case of Art or Artistic creation? Here no rules can ever be sufficient. There is the unique synthesis of colours and sounds for the production of the picture or the song. There is first

the mental rehearsal before the final execution of the work of art. And further the idea of the picture or the song gradually develops as it is being put on the canvas or as it is being sung, so much so that the picture, as it actually appears on the canvas finally, or the song as is actually sung, is different from, and is far richer than, the idea with which the painter or the songster has begun. Thus it is quite clear that no mere rules or fixed patterns are ever sufficient for art or creation. In the same way, in the case of a free moral act, according to our theory, it can never be 'subsumption' but it is a 'construction' or 'invention' or just that way of acting which fits the unique situation and which expresses the unique total endeavouring self, by providing a unique synthesis of the manifold volitional attitudes and loyalties by which it is animated.

As in the case of a work of Art, a free moral act can never be a 'subsumption'. But a free moral act is a 'construction' or 'invention' of just that way of acting which fits the unique situation and which expresses the unique total endeavouring self by providing a unique synthesis of the manifold volitional attitudes and loyalties by which it is animated.

"In fully evolved moral judgment, the act of judging an action as 'good' or 'right' consists essentially in finding out whether our conscience, after free and full reflection, completely approves of that action". This itself implies as Dr. Hogg proceeds to show that morality is reasonable. In a particular case there may

be a conflict between what the traditional morality prescribes and what the individual moral man himself after *mature consideration* feels to be right or good. In such a case, according to the theory we are considering, the moral agent will have to say that, in the given circumstances, the judgment of traditional morality is wrong and immoral. What can suit a unique situation is only a unique synthesis of the volitional attitudes and loyalties of the growing endeavouring personality which is not exactly the same at any two moments of its existence. It is on account of this uniqueness that we call the synthesis an Invention or Creation—Just as, on account of the uniqueness of the combination of diverse and varied elements in an Artist's original work, we call that work an Artistic Creation. And further the Artist's mind grows on account of its new production. So also something has been added to the personality of the moral agent when he expresses himself in a Free Moral Act. This is what Bergson

It is on account of this uniqueness of the synthesis that we call it an Invention or Creation.—Just as on account of the uniqueness of the combination of diverse and varied elements in an Artist's original work we call that work an Artistic Creation.

Just as the Artist's mind grows on account of its new production, so also something substantial has been added or contributed to the growth of the personality of the Moral Agent when he expresses himself in a free moral Act. This is really what justifies our calling this theory as the theory of self-creation or creation of self by self.

himself says, "And just as the talent of the painter is formed or deformed—in any case, is modified—under the very influence of the works he produces, so each of our states, at the moment of its issue, modifies our personality, being indeed the new form which we are just assuming. It is then right to say that what we do depends on what we are; but it is necessary to add also that we are, to a certain extent, what we do, and that we are creating ourselves continually. This creation of self by self is the more complete, the more one reasons on what one does.* This is really what justifies our calling our Ethical theory as the theory of Self-Creation.

If we suppose that Moral judgment is only *subsumption* and that it is governed by accepted authoritative standards, then it is quite plain that there will be agreement in the moral judgments of different people. But what we hold is that the more mature moral judgment becomes, the more is it a *synthesis*, and the more completely it loses the appearance of consisting in the application of ready-made standards, considered to be absolutely authoritative. According to this theory under consideration, the moral self is autonomous. It is *autonomous*

The more mature Moral judgment becomes, the more is it a synthesis.

*Bergson: Creative Evolution, p. 7.

in the sense that it can accept no value-judgment but its own. The value with which it is concerned in moral deliberation is always unique and individual, the judgment being in relation to the individual's need of finding a way of expressing its totality of endeavour under the conditions of a concrete individual situation.* From this it might appear that there may be no agreement at all between people in their moral judgments.

The moral self is autonomous in the sense that it can accept no value-judgment but its own.

And then this theory might be accused of *subjectivity*. It may appear that no Normative Ethics is possible, and morality may have to be supposed to consist of individual idiosyncracies, or capricious tastes. No two Artists can conceive the same thing in exactly the same way. And even in the case of the same Artist no two original representations of the same idea can be equally beautiful to him. So also we should expect that no two persons will ever be able to hold the same action as the right thing to do in given circumstances. No two persons can be exactly alike in their manifold volitional attitudes and

The possible accusation of subjectivity with regard to the theory under consideration.

No two persons would independently approve and decide on exactly the same way of behaving in given circumstances.

*Cf. The Rev. Dr. A. G. Hogg's "Redemption from this World," pp. 220-224.

loyalties. If so, how can they ever, when thinking for themselves perfectly freely, come to approve of exactly the same way of meeting a given concrete situation? If not, then is not our theory open to the criticism that it is subjective and that no Normative Ethics on these Bergsonian lines is possible?

The sufficient answer seems to be that there is such a thing as agreement in difference—that since, what one man prescribes to himself, he prescribes in the light of self-knowledge, it is quite possible for him to approve of the different imperative which another man will lay upon himself. Let us suppose with Dr. Hogg that two different persons *A* and *B* are brought independently face to face with the same situation. Suppose they resolve to do the right, *i.e.*, to invent and perform whatever action seems to each of them, after mature and free consideration, what the situation requires of a man like himself. It is no doubt true that, if we take into account the individualities of thought, emotion and method, which make the action a unique personal activity, then it is not possible at all that both *A* and *B* should approve of or decide on exactly the same way of behaving. But there is yet an agreement possible between both of them. If one of these men, say *A*,

And yet, according to this theory agreement is still possible between different persons in their moral judgments.

were to describe to the other, *B*, what he thought and felt and aimed at and everything else in full detail, it is possible for *B* to say that he could understand that what *A* did was the best that could be done by him under the circumstances, though himself, viz. *B*, would have acted in a different manner. Thus judging is still possible, and approbation is still possible though the personalities are different.

Judging is still possible and approbation is still possible, though the personalities are different.

Thus between these two persons there is both diversity and agreement. There is *diversity* in the modes of behaviour invented and followed. There is *agreement* in the approbation of these modes. Now what does this combination of diversity and agreement signify? It signifies the possibility of one person entering, with sympathetic understanding or intuition, into the stand-point of another and recognizing that the other's so different personality is after all not alien to his own spirit. This implies that the divergent personalities of different persons are only the manifestations of one and the same spiritual life. In the case of two different artists,

There is diversity in the modes of behaviour invented and followed. There is agreement in the approbation of these modes.

This implies that the divergent personalities are the manifestations of one and the same spiritual life, autonomous and diversified.

it is possible that one artist appreciates the work of another though their style and manner may be altogether different, because their minds are inspired by the same general artistic sense. Just as flowers on the same tree, though never quite the same, are yet manifestations of one and the same life, so also the divergent modes of behaviour invented and followed by different moral agents are yet manifestations of one and the same spiritual life, at once harmonious and diversified—more diversified than the flowers.* On no other hypothesis can we account for the divergence and the agreement between men when they will and judge morally. It is only on such a supposition that we can account for the fact, "that out of free individual choices and judgments, there actually grow up widely respected new common moral standards, and that even amid their noteworthy differences, the moral standards of widely-separated peoples and ages reveal to careful analysis a striking degree of harmony."†

Now, how far does this Hypothesis help us?—the Hypothesis that the moral choices and judgments of mankind are manifestations of a spiritual life that is common to humanity. As Dr. Hogg claims, it allows us to admit the self-dependence and individuality of

*†The Rev. Dr. Hogg: A Method of Ethics, p. 27.

moral judgment, its freedom from abject subservience to fixed standards, without reducing it to the level of capricious taste. It gives a satisfaction to the individual by enabling him to assure himself that his moral judgment is not merely his own opinion, but is the expression in time of a spirit universal in humanity.

How far does the above Hypothesis help us? It allows us to admit the self-dependence and individuality of moral judgment, its freedom from abject subservience to fixed standards, without reducing it to the level of capricious taste.

But even with this we are not satisfied. Just as the best sentiments of the monkey might seem strange and unworthy in the view of men, so also the best thoughts of man may appear to be merely curious opinions in the view of still higher beings.* And so, if we wish to regard our moral life as something of really universal worth and validity we must interpret the universal spiritual life of our hypothesis as something more than a life universal to mankind. "We must mean by it an absolutely universal spiritual life, a life which is the inspiring meaning of all reality. When we speak of our moral choices and judgments being expression of a Universal spiritual life, we must mean that they are just Reality itself ceasing to be

The universal spiritual life of our hypothesis must be a life which is the inspiring meaning of all Reality.

* *Ibid.*, p. 28.

unconscious of itself, and coming in our choices and judgments, to a consciousness of its own true nature and value".* On no narrower basis is it possible to vindicate the independence and individuality of moral choice and judgment without impugning the impersonal or super-personal validity of morality.

Our moral judgments and choices are just Reality itself ceasing to be unconscious of itself and coming in our choices and judgments, to a consciousness of its own true nature and value.

We do not say however that this Universal spiritual life, which we have been positing along with Bergson, completely permeates human consciousness or equally inspires all moral judgments. It is said above that mature moral judgment consists in approving of whatever commends itself to oneself after thorough and perfectly free reflection. This means that every truly moral judgment is a free judgment. It does not mean however that every free judgment is a moral judgment. There may be judgments which are *free,* but *not moral.* Hence we find that the judgments of different men, and of the same man at different times are sometimes not merely different but contradictory. The same spiritual impulse may express itself in diversity of

All free judgments are not necessarily truly moral judgments.

Ibid., p. 29.

forms; but it cannot express itself in such contradictory forms. So we see that these judgments are not *all* inspired by this universal spiritual life. No judgment can be truly moral unless it is inspired in its freedom by the same spiritual life. As the subject in truly moral judgment is the Self, it is quite possible that the free and thorough reflection which preceded the action of a moral agent is the best means that is within the control of the agent to break down prejudices and other unspiritual elements in him and to give the universal spiritual life a chance to permeate his individual consciousness at the supreme moment when he is called on to act.

This hypothesis of a Universal spiritual life enables us to conceive how it is possible for a finite consciousness to pass any valid judgments at all, how also it may be possible for us to acknowledge common moral standards.

This hypothesis then that a universal spiritual life inspires all truly moral judgment is not brought in as a rational justification of the moral judgments *actually* passed. It is brought in only as a way of conceiving how it is possible for a finite consciousness to pass any valid moral judgments. It is designed to explain the fact that there is such a thing as a harmony in the judging and willing of men so that it may be possible for us to acknowledge common moral standards. It is not a criterion to prescribe moral actions before they take

place. It is only progressively and only through particular decisions to which it prompts us, that we can find out the principles by which that universal spirit is animated.

In the case of a moral agent that entered on a deliberative process, there are two ways in which he may go wrong. Before the deliberation is really mature it may halt and issue in action. Even when he waits till his reflection is complete, still the moral agent may miss choosing the course of action that is truly expressive of the universal spiritual principle. It is on these occasions that moral maxims and principles are of immense use.

The use of moral maxims and principles in valuation process. They are not coercive but are persuasive.

"For, the moral maxims and principles which have resulted from the presence in mankind of a universal spiritual life are reminders of attitudes and points of view that belong to this universal spiritual life; and by taking up these attitudes or points of view in his deliberation, a man may ensure the awakening to activity in himself more and more completely of that universal spiritual life which will render his judgment truly moral."*

And lastly we may note that it is the consciousness in our acts of moral judgments of something wider than

*Ibid., p. 35.

our particular selves, the consciousness that these judgments are the expression of a universal spiritual life, that explains the authoritativeness felt to characterize judgments about Good and Duty. This consciousness finds a natural and true expression in the conception that such judgments are the utterances of the voice of God within us. Perpetual creativity is the dominant feature of this universal spiritual life. In every domain the triumph of life is creation. The creation of an artist or a philosopher cannot be pursued by all men. But human life has its goal in a creation which can be pursued by all men—"Creation of self by self, the growing of the personality by an effort which draws much from little, something from nothing and adds unceasingly to whatever wealth the world contains."*

What explains the authoritativeness that characterises judgments of Good and Duty.

Perpetual creativity is the dominant feature of this universal spiritual life which is the inspiration of all free and moral creative acts.

NOTE TO CHAPTER XIII

With the permission of Dr. Hogg, I publish his letter written to me, in which the fundamental affinities of the Ethics of Self-creation with the Kantian ethic are expressed:—

* Bergson: The Huxley Lecture delivered in the University of Birmingham, May 24, 1911.

SCOTLAND,
7, February 1928.

DEAR MR. ROW NAIDU,

I thank you for letting me read the manuscript of your chapter on 'The Ethics of Self-Creation'. It is not without diffidence that I see my own somewhat tentative work so confidently drawn upon therein and dignified with the name of 'a theory'.

The affinities with Bergson which impress you I am far from denying, but for my own part, I think the affinities with the Kantian ethic more fundamental. It is in line with the Kantian emphasis on autonomy as the constitutive ethical principle that I stress the manner in which moral deliberation, in proportion as it develops to complete self-consciousness, regards all standards as subject to criticism and reformulation. And it is by way of putting in modern language Kant's conception that only in his capacity as Reason does man possess this autonomy that I insist that not by its deliberations is moral judgment made valid but only by the degree in which it expresses a universal spiritual life. And the explicitness of my rejection of the subsumptive method I regard as simply an emphasis on the truth in the Kantian contention that duty cannot be adequately exhibited as 'a hypothetical imperative.'

Duty, being as individual as it is universal, can be cognized only by an exercise of that integral knowing which Bergson misnames 'intuition'. But this knowing, though it cannot proceed by subsumption under rules imposing classes of cases of conduct, must, for the very reason that it is integral, involve an activity of interpretation, the principles of

which are progressively ascertainable by ethical analysis. Thus I am led to hold, although your quotations hardly bring this out, that even the moralist who disclaims the task of proving the validity of a determinate code of duties and is content to define his undertaking as primarily that of establishing an identity of meaning between the moral and the rational in conduct, will find himself naturally led on to an exhibition—tentative and persuasive rather than demonstrative—of a system of moral principles or judgmental standpoints.

Yours very sincerely,
(Sd.) A. G. HOGG.

I take this opportunity to express my indebtedness to my revered teacher, Dr. Hogg, for this kind letter which he wrote to me and for the permission to publish it in my book. I am also to express my gratitude to him for allowing me to re-state his theory in my book and to draw upon his brochure and unpublished notes for quotations.

T. V. S.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SUPREME IDEA OF GOD

I

THE FALLACIES IN THE ARGUMENTS OF AN EMINENT INDIAN ABSOLUTIST AGAINST BERGSON'S IDEA OF GOD.

My esteemed teacher, Prof. S. Radhakrishnan,* George V Professor of the Calcutta University, undertakes in his book, "The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy," a discussion of Bergson's idea of God, with a view to show that the idea is riddled with contradictions and inconsistencies.

Prof. Radhakrishnan's discussion on Bergson's idea of God.

At the outset, he complains that from the writings of Bergson, it is not clear as to what exactly Bergson means by God. He points out that there are at least two possible alternative ways in which we may interpret his idea of God. (1) The God of Bergson is the super-conscious, spiritual, trans-human ground of Reality from which have proceeded both the *elan* or the *vital impetus* and the Matter that opposes it. (2) Or, God is the *'elan'* itself opposed by Matter, the evil principle.

He shows two possible alternative ways in which we may interpret Bergson's idea of God.

---

*Since writing this Prof. Radhakrishnan has been Dr. Sir Radhakrishnan and the Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University.

Prof. Radhakrishnan then enters on an enquiry as to the exact relation of Life to Matter. Bergson's argument in 'Time and Free-will' is based on the *distinction* between Life and Matter. Matter is inert, is necessity. On the other hand, life is mobile. If we grasp by intuition Life as it is, we shall find that its essence is freedom. Thus there is a dualism between Life and Matter.

Prof. Radhakrishnan's enquiry as to the exact relation of Life to Matter according to Bergson.

But in 'Matter and Memory' an advance is made. There even Matter is looked upon as a kind of movement akin to that of consciousness. The dualism between Life and Matter is not however completely transcended. Matter is something over against Life, an obstacle to its free flow and necessary condition of its progress. It thus appears to be quite as original and as fundamental as the *'elan'* itself for the world-evolution. And this conclusion, Prof. Radhakrishnan says, Bergson fights shy of.

In 'Creative Evolution' Bergson makes the two, Matter and Life, the inverse directions of one and the same spiritual movement. Materiality is only the interruption of spirituality. It is not a positive somewhat but only the arrest or interruption of life. Now, the main difficulty for Prof. Radhakrishnan is in understanding why the ascending spiritual movement should

ever have become interrupted; and when it has been once interrupted how does it get itself condensed in Matter? And this involves him in further difficulties regarding Bergson's theory of Matter. He assails the theory with a sweeping criticism.

His argument against Bergson's theory of Matter.

We may express his argument in the following dilemma.*

If (to save his monism) Bergson makes Matter unreal,	then, he cannot account for the Evolution of the world;
And if (on the other hand to account for the Evolution of the world) he makes Matter an independent existence,	then, his Monism is affected.

Matter is either unreal or has an independent existence.

Therefore, either he cannot account for the Evolution of the world, or his Monism is affected.

Before examining the above argument let us note what we consider to be really Bergson's theory of Matter. As has been indicated in Chapter I of this thesis what Bergson struggles to show

* Prof. Radhakrishnan: The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy, p. 212.

in Chapter III of his 'Creative Evolution' when dealing with the 'ideal genesis of Matter' is that Matter and Life are movements of an identical activity and that Matter is only a movement that is the inverse of life. Bergson says "the impetus of life of which we are speaking consists in a need of creation. It cannot create absolutely, because it is confronted with Matter, that is to say with the movement that is the inverse of its own."* This is the idea which we get also from the images that he gives us. There is first the image of the jet of steam making an effort to raise the drops of the same jet falling. But to give a better impression of the idea that creation is a free act and that the life within the material world participates in this liberty Bergson calls our attention to an action like that of raising the arm, which left to itself, falls back, and yet in which subsists, striving to raise it up again, something of the will that animates it. "In this image of a *creative action which unmakes itself* we have a more exact representation of Matter. In vital activity we see, then, that which subsists of the direct movement in the inverted movement, a reality which is making itself in a reality which is unmaking itself".† In this way Bergson suggests his theory of Matter.

Bergson's actual theory of Matter.

* Bergson: Creative Evolution, p. 265.
† *Ibid.*, p. 261.

From this it is clear that Matter is not anything that has existence independent of Life, nor is it anything unreal. It is real in the sense that it is an inverse movement of an original activity. And at the same time it is not altogether an independent movement which exists apart from the *'elan'*, because it is nothing more than the movement which is the inverse of itself.

The fallacy in Radhakrishnan's argument.

Thus we see that the alternatives which Prof. Radhakrishnan gives us in the disjunctive proposition in the Minor premise of his dilemmatic argument are neither mutually *exclusive* nor together *exhaustive* of all the really possible alternatives. The Reality of Matter flows full between these two apparently dangerous alternative possibilities. However static it may appear to the intellect, Matter is still a movement and all attempts to reduce it to a 'thing' are futile.

We wish to say just a word with regard to the Professor's reference to the Monism of Bergson. He says, that, if Bergson, to account for the 'drama of the universe', makes Matter an independent existence, then his Monism is affected. We do not think that Bergson ever claimed for his philosophy the honour of being a Monism, which is no doubt the prerogative of

Is Bergson's philosophy monistic?

Absolutism. Monism is one of the intellectual moulds into which the intellect of man tries to thrust Reality, and like all other moulds it is too rigid and too narrow, and it is bound to crack. Let us see what Bergson himself says on the subject. "In fact we do indeed feel that not one of the categories of our thought, unity, multiplicity, mechanical causality, intelligent finality etc., applies exactly to the things of life: who can say where individuality begins and ends, whether the living being is one or many."*

So much for the attempt made by Prof. Radhakrishnan to show the contradictions and inconsistencies in Bergson's theory of Matter. They are both fallacious and inappropriate as applied to Bergson's thought and philosophical position. We shall now proceed to consider his criticism on Bergson's idea of God. He says that corresponding to the two views of Matter which he has unnecessarily attributed to Bergson, there are two different conceptions of God, one leading to Deism and the other to Pantheism. He is led thus to attribute two views of Matter and two views of God to Bergson. This is so because he does not make any allowance for the provisionally over-emphasised contrasts of which Bergson is fond and

Prof. Radhakrishnan's view that Bergson lands us in either Deism or Pantheism.

* Bergson: Creative Evolution, Introduction, p. x.

which are natural in any polemic. This is the chief trouble with Prof. Radhakrishnan.

Once again we may express Prof. Radhakrishnan's criticism in the form of a dilemma, which may be presented in the following manner.*

If *Dualism* is the last word of Bergson's philosophy,	then, God is the 'Elan' itself opposed by Matter, the evil principle (This is *Deism*);
and if *Monism* is to be the last word of his Philosophy,	then, his free creative God is the author of both Life and Matter (This is *Pantheism*).

Bergson's philosophy is either *Dualism* or *Monism.*

Therefore, according to him either God is the 'Elan' itself opposed by Matter, or God is the author of both Life and Matter.

Now the first alternative in the conclusion implies that God is a suffering deity, who is limited as much as any of us mortals, for He has to struggle through opposing conditions to win his freedom. Thus to say that God is the Life-current is to establish *Deism.* On the other hand the second alternative means that God is the Absolute whole, an impersonal principle. He is

*Prof. Radhakrishnan: The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy, pp. 212, 213.

not an immanent principle but an ultimate transcendent like Spinoza's substance. Thus Bergson lands us in either *Deism* or *Pantheism*. So then this is how Prof. Radhakrishnan concludes his argument. "It is the same old trouble between the Absolute of logic and philosophy and the God of ethics and religion. This struggle between the logical and the empirical tendencies we notice in the philosophy of Bergson".

In this argument the first alternative does not hold good in the case of Bergson because he explicitly states that his God is not the 'Elan' merely but is a continued creative effort producing Matter and Life at once. "The considerations put forward in my essay on 'Immediate Data' result in an illustration of the fact of liberty. Those of 'Matter and Memory' lead us, I hope, to put our finger on mental reality. Those of 'Creative Evolution' present creation as a fact. From all this we derive a clear idea of a free and creating God, producing Matter and Life at once, whose creative effort is continued in a vital direction, by the evolution of species and the construction of human personalities."*

An examination of the above criticism in the light of Bergson's statements regarding God.

Bergson's God is a continued creative effort producing Matter and Life at once.

*Quoted in Le Roy, "A New Philosophy": Bergson. And also *vide* p. 210 of Prof. Radhakrishnan's "The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy."

And what about the consequence or consequences of the second alternative. Prof. Radhakrishnan makes out that this amounts to Pantheism, to reducing God to something like the 'substance' of Spinoza, a mere transcendent but not an immanent principle. But we ask, in what sense does Bergson say that the free Creative God is the author of both Life and Matter, why can he not be an activity both immanent and transcendent? Let us note what Bergson himself says. "Now if the same kind of action is going on everywhere, whether it is that which is unmaking itself or it is that which is striving to remake itself, I simply express this probable similitude when I speak of a centre from which worlds shoot out like rockets in a fire-works display—provided, however, that I do not present this centre as a *thing* but as a continuity of shooting out. God thus defined has nothing of the already made; He is unceasing life, action, freedom. Creation, so conceived, is not a mystery; we experience it in ourselves when we act freely". Such an activity which is everywhere and which we ourselves experience when we act freely cannot be said not to be immanent but merely transcendent. So we wish to point

Another statement of Bergson regarding his idea of God—a centre from which worlds shoot out like rockets in a fire-works display.

God is the centre of unceasing life, action, freedom.

that the consequence which Prof. Radhakrishnan draws from the second alternative of the major premise in his argument does not really follow from the alternative. It cannot be shown that Bergson's active principle which is the centre of activity everywhere is something like Spinoza's 'substance'. It does not follow from a *concrete monism* like that of Bergson, if we may be permitted so to call it.

Bergson's God is both transcendent and immanent.

II

PROF. RADHAKRISHNAN'S SWEEPING AND DOGMATIC STATEMENTS AGAINST BERGSON'S GOD AND WORLD.

Prof. Radhakrishnan next proceeds to show that Bergson's God does not satisfy the religious-minded, by pointing out that he is neither personal nor purposive, neither free nor creative. Our Professor's criticism consists of a number of dogmatic and sweeping statements such as the following:—

(1) There is no 'sufficient reason for the Personality of God'. He is not personal in the sense in which human persons are persons. (2) The supra-conscious spirit works without plan and purpose. This God is the universal flux which is exalted to the high position of divinity. This God does not know the end, and if his nature is merely to grow, then it means he is imperfect. (3) "Whatever else 'God' means it means

the highest we can think of, something in which all that we love and adore in human beings and nature exists without any alloy". "But Bergson's God is a non-moral principle from which all things good, bad and indifferent flow. His view is destructive of belief in a purposive God". If he is movement, incessant life, action, liberty, there is no room for the fixed thoughts and purposes that theists attribute to the Creator.

(4) The Professor goes to the length of saying that Bergson's God is neither 'free' nor 'creative'. "In spite of his vehement protest against both Mechanism and Finalism on account of their common assumption that 'all is given', it is a matter of grave doubt whether in Bergson's system all is not given. Creative Evolution is only the differentiation or dissociation of these tendencies. 'The unity is derived from *a vis a tergo;* it is given at the start as an impulsion'.* Can we not say that all sides of future evolution are pre-figured in the original unity? Nothing not contained in the original impulse can come out at any stage. True, the future is incalculable, but surely there is no element of chance."

(5) God is not creative either. "We shall be twisting words if we make Bergson's original principle the creator of the world. Growth is not creation in

* Creative Evolution: Bergson, p. 109.

the technical sense in which it is generally understood. According to Bergson it is not only God that creates. We also do so. 'Creation' is not a mystery; we experience it in ourselves when we act freely" (C. E. Page 262). The individual shares in the Creative Evolution of which God is the centre and source. He creates, he grows, he is being made and re-made continually. We have freedom, duration and creative life and so has God. If we have obstacles in the way of our full freedom in that our souls are entangled in Matter, God is no better off. For only with effort and trouble can we press into and penetrate the resisting wall of Matter. Thus Prof. Radhakrishnan concludes by saying that Bergson does not give us a 'free' and 'creating' God. His God is inadequate to the needs of the religious soul. It is likely to repel rather than attract religious people.*

We do not propose to answer point by point these sweeping criticisms of Prof. Radhakrishnan. Our purpose is only to note the line of violent attack arrayed against Bergson's idea of God and World by an eminent Indian Absolutist. We believe that the real implications of the philosophy of Bergson which are brought out in the following pages will show the hollow-

* The quotations given in these above three paragraphs are from Chapter V of Prof. Radhakrishnan's "The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy".

ness of these criticisms and reveal to us one of the best conceptions of God that the philosophers of the world have as yet been able to reach.

III

GOD AS PERSONALITY.

Let us first consider how we may be able to say that Bergson's God is 'Personal' in the best sense of the term.

What is personality.

We may define 'self' as the total continuity of our empirical consciousness, when viewed as having a unity of reference. This is the best view of Self that we may gather from the treatment which Bergson gives in the first few pages of his "Creative Evolution" about the self whose essential nature is shown to be continuity, duration. The idea of personality is a still fuller idea. It may be defined as the Self in the full circle of its relationships. It refers to all the relations which pertain to self-hood. It refers to the social, ethical, æsthetic, intellectual and religious ideals which give life its worth and meaning. The merely individual person cannot be viewed as existing by himself. "His life, his meanings, his ideals are unrealizable in isolation. He is a member of society and is dependent on

'Self' is the total continuity of our empirical consciousness.

'Personality' is the Self in the full circle of its relationships.

others for the expression of himself, and for the realization of values which make his life. He has relations also to the world, and to God which form an integral part of his true personality".* Hence we say that the idea of personality is a complete circle of relations.

It is this positive conception of Personality as the *Self in the full circle of its relationships* that can give us a clue to the interpretation of the Divine personality in positive terms. This alone removes the common objection to the Personality of God as implying limitation. From the point of view of our idea of Personality we have to say that God is fully personal in the infinity of His relations; and that any limitation of His is due to His own self-determination.

Three logical stages in the Divine Life.

Three logical stages in the Divine Life may be indicated† and these may be explained on the basis of our own self-hood.

(1) The first is His Subjectivity, Eternal and Self-determining.

(2) The second is His Objectivity, posited in relation to Himself as subject, and consisting of the real universe in time, including our experience, and being thus itself of the same type of subject-object.

---

*E. N. Merrington: The Problem of Personality, p. 204 (Macmillan & Co.).

†*Ibid.*, pp. 195 and 196.

(3) And the third stage is included in the second, as object, but is given the special character of Not-Self by the Divine Self-limitation.

This Not-Self is posited as autonomous in spite of certain conditions involved on account of its relation to the self-determining subject, this relation being something like the political relationship of a Self-governing colony within the British Empire, under certain prescribed conditions by virtue of which the colony enjoys its freedom. The highest glory of the Divine self,—His rationality and the real sign of His personality,—is revealed in His Self-determination. This Divine positing of an Other in himself as not-Himself is equivalent to the immanence of God in the Universe as Object merely in regard to Matter, which serves as the passive condition for development towards subjectivity, and "to the so-called 'creation' of an infinity of Selves with their own point of view, as finite subjects, with their own moral autonomy and individual freedom, with their own privilege of the voluntary choice of goodness, and participation in the life of God. Now the essence of this Not-self as posited, is the likeness of the human selves to God Himself."*

The highest glory of the Divine Self—the sign of Personality—is revealed in His Self-determination.

*E. N. Merrington: The Problem of Personality, p. 196.

Now, what we wish to suggest is that it is quite possible for us to conceive that Bergson's original conscious active principle choosing, out of its own freedom, to turn back upon itself so as to bring out the material for facilitating the evolution of species and the construction of human personalities is the Divine positing of an Other in Himself as Not-Himself, which is equivalent to "the so-called 'creation' of an infinity of selves with their own point of view as finite subjects, with their own moral autonomy and individual freedom, with their own privilege of the voluntary choice of goodness and participation in the life of God". It is this distinctness from the Divine active Life principle which we conceive as the subject and as the person that is the condition of the Universe as significant and ordered, the path of its truest unity and fullest organisation and the expression of His Purpose in creating many worlds, in constructing many personalities and in bringing many souls unto glory. And, in man's higher life and progress in the search for truth, goodness and beauty, the individual self expresses itself in the highest form; and these ideals present in human life are evidences

It is quite possible to conceive that Bergson's original active conscious principle choosing freely to turn back upon itself to bring out the material for facilitating evolution of species and construction of human personalities is the Divine positing of an Other in Himself. Herein lies the highest glory and the sign of personality.

of the immanence of the Divine Active parent personality.

Thus it is quite possible to see that the original active spiritual creative conscious principle of Bergson may be construed as a comprehensive parent personality with all its relations to a Universe consisting of several worlds that spring from that one great original centre of all activity, creativity. As has been already said, such a view of the Personality of God is not open to the objection that it implies limitation. God, we may say, is fully personal in the infinity of its relations, and is only limited by His own self-determination.

The original active spiritual creative principle of Bergson may be construed as a comprehensive parent personality with all its relations to a Universe consisting of several worlds that spring from that one great original centre of all activity, all creativity.

God is fully personal in the infinity of its relations, is only limited by His own self-determination.

It is true that creation implies limitation, if the creation is a real entity. It is true also that God, in determining the world, determines Himself also. But this does not mean that by determining Himself He also diminishes Himself. "God does not transform, differentiate, fractionate Himself into the world, and so cease to be God".* That would be Pantheism. On the other hand the truth appears

God determining Himself does not mean God diminishing Himself.

* James Ward: The Realm of Ends (Pluralism and Theism), p. 443.

to be this. If the world, though God's world, is yet not God, if though he is immanent in it, he is also as its creator transcendent of it, "surely the greater the world, the greater the freedom and capacity of his creatures, the greater still is he who created and sustains and somehow surely overrules it all".* Absolutists have made God synonymous with an 'Infinite and Absolute'. This leaves room for no other and can brook none. Those who differ from this view have invented the much misunderstood term 'Finite God'. The Absolutists interpret it as implying imperfection and dependence. But really the term 'Finite God' means all that God can mean, if God implies the world, and is "not a potter God with a world of illusory clay, not an inconceivable abstraction that is only infinite and absolute, because it is beyond everything and means nothing."†

'Finite God' means "a living God with a living world: not a potter God with a world of illusory clay".

IV

THE DIVINE IMMANENCE.

The idea that God is a continuity of Creation, an unceasing life, action and freedom, involves in it the idea of Divine Immanence in things finite. That is why Bergson says "Creation, so conceived, is not a mystery;

* James Ward: The Realm of Ends, p. 443.
† *Ibid.*, p. 444.

we experience it in ourselves when we act freely". Thus we find that "instead of a Divine Being who dwells aloof from the world-process and can only look on it, seeing that it is already statically perfect, God reveals *Himself* in that process". He is the process from stage to stage.

God reveals Himself in the world-process. He is the process from stage to stage.

This conception of Divine Immanence in a growing world involves the rejection of the idea of God as perfect in the sense that he is unchangeable. We cannot hold that the impossibility of change or its absence is either a feature or a condition of perfection. "Changelessness may be a ruinous condition."* The conception that changelessness is a feature or condition of perfection is totally inapplicable to life in every form at every stage. Life is a constant self-re-creation. The past constantly and at every instant enters into us and becomes a part of us. And so every day we are in some way and in some degree new beings. The instant that process stops, death ensues. "Death is the stopping of a process. But it is also the substitution of another; decay sets in". For, life is movement. If it ceases to go

This conception of Divine Immanence in a growing world involves the rejection of the idea of God as perfect in the sense that **He is unchangeable.**

Life is a constant Self-re-creation.

* Sir Henry Jones: A Faith that enquires. Last Chapter, p. 359.

forward it goes backward. Bergson has taken infinite pains to impress on us the fact that the Universe *endures,* that *Duration* is the stuff we are made of. In neither the world of dead objects nor in the world of living can we find anything but process. The whole Universe is a single process. And the reality at the heart of that process, which expresses itself in it is the Reality of Philosophy, the God of Religion.

Further this conception of the indwelling of the Divine Creativity in the finite means the immanence of God in man's nature and his participation in his moral strivings. "Man's blind and pathetic gropings after the best become from this point of view the working within him of the Divine Will". Nothing can be more divine than the moral process of acquiring spiritual creativity which is the nature of God, the process of constructing or inventing or creating free moral acts that contribute to the growth or creative evolution of the Universe, that make substantial contribution to the duration which is the stuff of an ever-growing Reality. In such a process, man partakes of the true nature of God, establishes his right to the heritage of God as the child of that Divine Creativity. He shares the glory of God.

Further this conception of the indwelling of the Divine Creativity in the finite means the immanence of God in man's nature and his participation in his moral strivings.

Thus we believe that Bergson's theory makes Morality and Religion one and raises the value of Morality instead of condemning it, as the Absolutist does, as representing a lower stage of human development. And further, as we shall show in the next few pages, the idea of a Growing God that we get from Bergson as a movement or growth from Perfection to Perfection and as an eternal achievement and continuous realization of the ideals of goodness in human history is more attractive and more consistent with our experience than the idea of a Divine Being who sits aloof from the world process, eternally contemplating his own perfection. Such an aloofness is inconsistent with Love. But, on the other hand, the identification of the destiny of God and Man, and the idea that God shares with man in the endless glorious struggle to bring out and sustain new and yet more new creations, can very well be the basis of a Religion of Love. And yet Prof. Radha-

Bergson's theory makes Morality and Religion one and raises the value of morality.

The idea of a growing God as a movement or growth from Perfection to Perfection and as an eternal achievement and continuous realization of the ideals of goodness in human history is more attractive and more consistent with our experience than the idea of a Divine Being who sits aloof from the world process eternally contemplating his own perfection. Such an aloofness is inconsistent with Love.

On the other hand, the identification of the destiny of God and Man and the idea that God shares with man in an endless glorious struggle to bring out and sustain new and yet more new creations, can very well be the basis of a splendid Religion of Love.

krishnan says that Bergson's God, "when stripped of all poetry, will be found to be inadequate to the needs of the religious soul. His idea of God is likely to repel rather than attract religious people."*

V

THE GROWING GOD.

We said above that Bergson's God *is* a process from stage to stage. This idea has been interpreted by writers like Prof. Radhakrishnan as amounting to the idea of a God who is no better than the flux of the Universe, an imperfect God and therefore a God that is most unsatisfying. But this process from stage to stage, which is God, is really a process from perfection to perfection. This conception of the Divine as movement from perfection to perfection is not an absurd one though it may be a difficult one to establish. Bergson's fundamental idea that Life is a life of striving, a need of invention, a creative evolution, his conception that the evolution of species is a movement to new perfection, each construction of the best organism under the needs of a situation being the starting-point for a new departure leading

The Divine is a process from perfection to perfection.

The fundamental ideas of Bergson that lead us to characterise the Divine, not as movement from imperfection to imperfection, but as a movement from perfection to perfection, from splendour to splendour.

*S. Radhakrishnan: The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy, p. 217.

on to invention of new species still better and yet the best for the needs of new situation, and the treatment of the moral process of a human agent as a process of inventing or creating free acts more and more new to respond to the needs of a growing personality and of the circumstances of a changing situation,—all these lead us to characterise the Divine, immanent in these processes, not as a movement from imperfection to imperfection, but as a movement from perfection to perfection, from splendour to splendour.

The logical possibility of a movement from perfection to perfection.

This conception of the Divine as moving from perfection to perfection has substantial support in the argument which Sir Henry Jones adopts in the last of his Gifford Lectures. This is how he justifies the conception. "Compared with the later stage, the earlier manifestly comes to appear to be defective and imperfect. A movement from perfection to perfection looks like a logical impossibility. Every present, when it arrives, seems to condemn what went before as at least a partial failure. But at A, may not *a* be perfection, and at stage B, may not *b* acquire that character? Is it quite certain that there are static limits to the indwelling perfections of the divine nature, or indeed to anything that develops? What is admirable in a grown-up man can be repellent

in a child. We value events often on the ground that they are timely: the fact is there to meet the need. Besides, may not *the process* once more, rather than either of the stages, be the true object of judgment, and the divine mode of existence? God Himself may have in His power no better way than to sustain the process by which goodness is achieved."*

The possibility of a Religion of Love being based on this idea of a Growing God.

This idea of a Growing God, that we get from the implications of Bergson's thought, as a movement or growth from perfection to perfection, from splendour to splendour in the spiritual world, as an eternal achievement and continuous realization of the ideals of goodness in human history, is "endlessly more attractive and undoubtedly more consistent with our experience in the present world than the idea of a Divine Being who sits aloof from the world-process, eternally contemplating his own perfections." Love, as has been said, is inconsistent with such an aloofness. A religion of Love should identify

A Religion of Love should identify the destiny of God and Man. And this is what the philosophy of Bergson provides.

While God is the original source of all, He sets apart His glory and takes His stand by the side of man as a loving parent or a devoted friend, suffers in his sufferings, rejoices in his joys: and shares in the endless glorious struggle to bring

* Sir Henry Jones: A Faith that enquires, p. 359.

out and sustain new and yet more new creations.

the destiny of God and Man. And this is exactly what Bergson's philosophy can be understood as providing. While God is the original source of all, He sets apart His glory and takes His stand by the side of man as a loving parent or a devoted friend, suffers in his sufferings, rejoices in his joys, and shares in the endless glorious struggle to bring out and sustain new and yet more new creations.

Look at the world that God provides for man by His own self-determination. It is *not* a so-called 'perfect world' which stands in no need of improvement, and has no room nor call for change,—a world that has nothing in it that 'ought' to be done,—a world in which there is no scope for human activity which is of any good,—in short, a world where spirituality is extinguished. But fortunately the world that man has, is a world capable of endless growth, a world which on account of its imperfections furnishes the opportunity for the moral process and demands it as the ultimate good.

An incomplete world is the best world.

The world that man has, is a world capable of endless growth, a world which on account of its imperfections furnishes the opportunity for the moral process and demands it as the ultimate good.

It is thus for the first time in the history of consistent philosophic thought, that we are enabled to consider our world as friendly and helpful. Coupled with this is the idea of a God inspiring us and endowing us with a power, which elevates each one of us to the dignity of a Creator. As Lily Dougall said in her essay on 'God in Action', "The adventure of world-creating in conscious communion with the spirit brings about a better future, while it affords the individual who pursues it the fruition of all his permanent desires".* Now we may rejoice at this intuitive vision which is sustained by reason and facts of life. "Now we can rejoice in a morality that is positive and triumphant, in a religion that breaks into the joyous morality, and above all, in the knowledge that God is with

Thus it is for the first time in the history of consistent philosophic thought, that we are enabled to consider our world as friendly and helpful, and to consider one God as inspiring us and endowing us with a power which elevates each one of us to the dignity of a Creator.

Rejoice at a friendly world and an Inspiring God.

The adventure of world-creating in conscious communion with the spirit brings about a better future, while it affords the individual who pursues it the fruition of all his permanent desires.

We can now rejoice in a Morality that is positive and triumphant, in a Religion that breaks into the joyous morality, and above all, in the knowledge that God

*The Spirit (God and his relation to man), by A.S. Pringle Pattison, Lily Dougall, etc., p. 24.

is with us, and that therefore nothing can be finally against us.

us, and that therefore nothing can be finally against us."

"All tended to mankind,
And man produced, all has its end thus far:
But in completed man begins anew
A tendency to God." —*Browning.*

END OF PART I

PART II

PART II

THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF ART

EMBODYING ORIGINAL SUGGESTIONS FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE ÆSTHETIC THEORY

PREFACE

In this brochure I have attempted a critical inquiry into the very fundamentals of Art—its basis, its essential characteristics and its glorious objects. I have given a critical exposition of the Expressionist theory of Benedetto Croce, the ablest authority on the subject of Aesthetics, and I have tried to show the fundamental defect in this famous theory of our great Italian contemporary.

I have also embodied in this work my humble suggestions for the construction of a better theory of Art on the fundamental principles of thought inaugurated by our great French contemporary, Henri Bergson.

To illustrate the idealising function of Art I have written descriptive and critical notes on some of the great paintings of the famous artists of the world, both eastern and western.

The Author

The Nature and Function of Art

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

THE BASIS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF ART

SECTIONS

I The Basis of Art.

II Intuition—The Root of all Art.

III Intuition and Expression.

IV The Characteristics of Art:—

A. Universality of Art.

B. Lyrical character of Art.

C. Uniqueness of Art.

D. Unity and Indivisibility of the work of Art.

CHAPTER II

A CONSTRUCTIVE THEORY OF ART

V Croce's Expressionist Theory of Beauty.

VI The Creative Evolution Theory of Art.

(Criticism of the Expressionist Theory of Art, and original suggestions for a constructive Aesthetic Theory.

Art conceived as a Creative Synthetic Expression of an Evolving Intuition, and as a Revealer

SECTIONS

of the Evolving Ideals in a perpetually Growing Creative Universe.

Art is a unity of both the Expression of Impressions and the Expression of Expression.)

CHAPTER III

THE FUNCTION OF ART

VII *A.* The stimulation in us of Creative Intuition.

B. The Revelation of Nature.
(Illustrated by the Tragic Drama.)

C. The Idealising Function of Art.
(Illustrated by a review of some of the famous paintings of the world.)

D. The Moral and Social Influence of Art.

E. The Salutary Influence of Art on our Intellectual faculties.

F. The Liberating and Purifying Function of Art.

VIII Art, Philosophy and Religion.

CHAPTER I

THE BASIS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF ART

SECTION I

THE BASIS OF ART

IT is by his æsthetic activity that man builds his world of beauty and joy. Aesthetic activity is the root of Fine Art. The great thinkers of the world gave an exalted place to it above the practical and theoretical spheres of life. Immanuel Kant of Germany places Art among the highest of the expressions of the human activity. The great Hegel places it in the highest sphere of Absolute mind and brings it into direct relation with Religion.

The exalted place given to Art by the great thinkers of the world.

We shall now enquire what is this æsthetic activity which is the basis of Art. We shall dig up and try to bring out the fundamental basis of all Art and present its chief characteristics. Our great Italian contemporary, Benedetto Croce, holds that æsthetic activity is the simplest and most elementary activity of the mind. Man

Aesthetic activity is the simplest and most elementary activity of the mind.

is by nature an artist and a philosopher. And what is still more interesting is the fact that man is a philosopher only by reason of his being an artist. He has a unique status in the wonderful scheme of the Universe. The Universe is an ever-evolving Creative Universe. And it is the supreme birthright of man to contribute his humble share to the eternal growth of the world. The world changes on account of each man. Man changes it because he can understand it. And his will depends upon his knowledge.

What is this knowledge of man? The knowledge of man consists of two forms or modes: (1) By *imagination* he gives shape to single things. (2) By *thought* he relates images in universal concepts. Thought is not possible unless there is first imagination. Let us consider what is involved in the most ordinary and elementary process of thinking. In thinking, we abstract, compare and classify. But this thinking activity does not create its own matter, or form it. So we have to assume that there is already in existence some matter for thought to deal with.

Two forms of human knowledge: (1) Imagination, and (2) Thought.

What then is this matter? If we push the psychological analysis of an ordinary process of thinking, we find that, ultimately, at the bottom of everything, there is

Aesthetic activity is the activity of forming images out of sense matter.

this matter which is sensation. This is a mere *unformed* sense-matter, a chaos of sense-impressions. Mind cannot think on this. It cannot form concepts on this; for conceptualising involves abstraction, comparison and classification. But then where there is no form, no abstraction is possible. Thus we are compelled to admit that there is an activity before logical process can begin. It is an activity which converts the chaos of sense into *images* on which intellect can work. This image-forming activity is the æsthetic activity. It is the artistic activity of man. It is a distinct mental activity. It is creative. It invents, creates, produces images, while on the other hand the work of intelligence or thought is contemplative and interpretative only. And also it is the first activity of the mind, because without it thinking is not possible. It is the pre-condition of all thinking. There can be no thinking, no reflection, until images are born.

It is this image-forming activity that gives us the artistic aspect of Reality.

This image-creating activity is the activity which gives us the artistic aspect of Reality. It presents Reality to us as a single immediate individual thing, free as yet from the conceptual element. This creative activity gives expression to the pure intuitions of the mind in the form of images. These images

may be connected with one or the other of our senses. They may be visual or auditory, gustatory, tactile or kinetic. It is these images that constitute the wealth of Art. They are our common patrimony. That is why it is said that Art is ruled uniquely by imagination. Art grasps and presents these images. In so far as it apprehends Reality without alterations and classification, Art is *intuition.*

Art is intuition.

The force and fascination of Art lie in its weakness, in its simplicity. If we can for a moment think of Eve at the first moment of her unfolding theoretic life, her mind as yet unencumbered by abstract reflection, in that first moment, purely intuitive, she could not but be a poetess. She must have sat before the world with wondering gaze in which all was dispersed and lost. But it was her artistic imagination that must have created the first presentations and inaugurated the life of knowledge. Without it thinking would lack both the stimulus and the very material of its mysterious work. And it is this that is at the very root of all artistic activity.

Artistic imagination inaugurates the life of knowledge.

SECTION II

INTUITION—THE ROOT OF ALL ART

Intuitive knowledge distinct from Intellectual knowledge.

The knowledge that we get by imagination is what may be called Intuitive knowledge, different from the knowledge that we get by intellect, the conceptual or logical knowledge as it is otherwise called. In ordinary life there are many things that we know immediately and instinctively, many truths which are self-evident and require no demonstration. This is intuitive knowledge. Philosophers and men of science had been for a long time reluctant to recognise this knowledge as distinct from, and independent of, intellectual knowledge. Intuition was supposed to be blind and to be fit only to be the hand-maid of intellect. But philosophers to-day like Croce of Italy and Henri Bergson of France hold that this is a mistaken view.

What is Intuition? (Examples.)

What then is this Intuition? We may give some instances of this. The impression of the waves on the sea-shore with the moon-light playing upon them, portrayed by a painter, a "Ragam" or "Keertan" as it is being sung, the character of Polinius which Shakespeare portrays in the speech addressed to Polinius's son, Kalidasa's presentation of the beauty and grace of Sakuntala in the garden near Kanva's "Ashram" when King Dushyanta hails

as a hunter,—all these are intuitions, though they are, of course, woven into the web of life and form part of complex experience.

Intuition different from Perception.

From the above it may be seen that Intuition is different from Perception. "Perception is the apprehension of something as real." It is the knowledge of events as they actually happen in life. But intuition is much more than perception. "The intuition is the undifferentiated unity of the perception of the Real and of the simple image of the possible. In intuition we do not oppose ourselves as empirical beings to the external authority, but we simply objectify our impressions whatever they be." (Estetica, p. 4, translated from the original Italian of Benedetto Croce by Douglas Ainslie.) Intuition is an activity that characterises. It gives us a knowledge of things in their concreteness and individuality. While intellect grasps the common characteristics of things, intuition grasps what is unique, the *individuality* of things. That is why it is said that intuition is an activity that characterises.

Intuition gives us knowledge of things in their concreteness and individuality.

Intuition introduces us to life's own domain.

For Henri Bergson Intuition is a kind of *intellectual sympathy* by which one places oneself within an object in order to

coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible. Bergson says in *Creative Evolution* that by the sympathetic communication which Intuition establishes between us and the rest of living, by the expansion of our consciousness which it brings about, it introduces us into life's own domain, "which is reciprocal interpenetration, endlessly continued creation."

Intellect cannot comprehend freedom, the fact of life that exists through duration. And this freedom Intuition alone can comprehend. If we realise our life as it is *being lived,* we get an intuition of Reality, which is really not a *thought* of it or a conception of it, but a conscious experience of the actual as we live it. It is not even a comprehensive *vision* that strikes our mind after we take a series of views of the Real. It is a living experience or consciousness which *overflows* intellect. (Compare Chapter VIII, Part I of this book.) A good actor knows it. A true philosopher has it. A poet when he is at the beach or before a waterfall knows it. A young and ardent lover experiences it. It is the crown of the artist who is verily the prince of the kingdom of Beauty.

SECTION III
INTUITION AND EXPRESSION

Intuition is the very first thing of which we can say, "Here is mind". This first mental fact may be distinguished from natural fact by referring to a fundamental characteristic that belongs to it and is absolutely its own. This character is that every intuition is an *expression*. Whatever is not objectified in an expression is not intuition. It is not an image as yet. It is a mere sensation. The mind does not produce intuitions save by making them, by forming them, by expressing them. To intuit is to express.

Every intuition is an expression.

This theory that every intuition is also an expression and that there are no unexpressed intuitions is the basis of the æsthetic theory that "Beauty is Expression." This theory is known as the Expressionist theory. It sounds like a strange theory and might appear at first contrary to our experience. We feel that we often have intuitions, but not the power to express them. "How often we seem to have inspirations of truth, impressions of Beauty, visions of imaginary scenes, equalling—we are often certain of it—the most gorgeous visions of painters and poets, the most lucid insight of philosophers, yet nothing of this have we

Beauty is Expression.

the power to express, lacking as we do the skill of poet, painter, musician, philosopher, as the case may be. We know, of course, that there are men of great creative genius, men like Shakespeare, Raphael, Michael Angello, Beethoven, Newton, Hegel, men who have not only had inspiration but who also had the skill, natural or acquired, to express it; these we recognise are incomparably greater than ourselves, intellectual giants, but even in them the art and the expression, the thought and the speech, seem distinct, and we imagine they might exist independently." (H. Wildon Carr: The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce, p. 67.)

Internal and External Expressions.

But this illusion that intuition and expression are different is due to the fact that we understand the term "Expression" in a restricted sense. When we say that all intuition is expression, the term "expression" refers to every kind of human manifestation, both internal and external. Many expressions are internal and mental only. Still they are expressions. For example, the intuition of a circle or a triangle can be had only when we mentally draw it and present it to the mind as an expression. Far the greater part of every expression of an intuition is internal. In our ordinary life the outward expression is often a mere sign or index of the full expression. For example, the expression of

the intuition of the common fact of beckoning a man or child is just shown in the outward sign of the motion of a half-lifted up hand. The mind of every one of us is full of these internal or mental expressions. They are the common patrimony of all men and women.

It is erroneous to suppose that we may be Raphaels or Muzumdars or Rama Rows, Thyagarajas or Kittappas,* so far as only intuitions are concerned, while yet we do not rise to the level of their capacity for expression. It is erroneous to suppose that intuitions exist without expressing themselves. The fact is that each one of us is a born artist on account of the intuitive imagination which he possesses as his birthright. Each one of us is something of a painter or a sculptor, a musician or a poet. But his intuition is not so extensive as that of a genius whom we call the great artist of the world. The difference is quantitative but not qualitative.

The difference between our intuition and the intuition of the great artists is only quantitative but not qualitative.

However small the amount we possess, intuition or presentations are our real patrimony. "Beyond these are only

Our own real patrimony.

* Muzumdar and Rama Row are well-known modern Indian painters. Thyagaraja and Kittappa are famous South Indian musicians.

impressions, sensations, feelings, impulses, emotions, or whatever else one may term what still falls short of the spirit and is not assimilated by men." (Croce's Estetica—Translation, p. 11.)

Section IV

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ART

What is particularly interesting about intuition is its artistic character. All intuitive knowledge is called forth by the artistic nature which every man possesses in some degree by virtue of his being a man. "From this it follows that all intuitive facts, even the most common and every-day facts of sense experience, are artistic facts." (Wildon Carr: The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce, p. 73.) "Every man is a born poet, little poets some, great poets others." The difference then between us and the great gifted artists is not difference in *kind*. "Genius is not something that has fallen from heaven, but humanity itself." (Estetica: Benedetto Croce, translated by Ainslie, p. 15.) The difference is only quantitative or extensive. What differentiates this

The artistic character of all intuition.

Every man possesses artistic nature in some degree.

But the intuition of the artist is more complex and more comprehensive than ours.

intuition of an artist is only that it is more complex and is more comprehensive than our own.

The artist has the skill to create beautiful forms to express his intuition.

And besides, there is another thing which the artist possesses, but which we do not possess or cultivate. Besides "their greater power of discernment which reveals the beauty of the world," these great artists "have added to it the endowment of the skill which can create beautiful forms wherein to express that beauty." But in the nature of the intuition itself of the great artist, there is nothing different which makes it totally different from ours. The intuition of the simplest popular love song which breaks forth from the lips of thousands of ordinary mortals is as perfect in depth and sincerity as the intuition of a sonnet of Shakespeare or Shelly.

The artist assists us in our effort to express our own intuition.

And further when I am enjoying a poem or a picture or a song or any other work of art, what I am really enjoying is *my own intuition* that I express in my mind. The great artist only assists me in my effort to express my own intuition. He enables me to create in my mind an intuition similar to what he himself created originally in his own mind. The greatness of Shakespeare consists in the fact that he enables me to rise to higher and more extensive,

more complex and more comprehensive ranges of intuition than I could hope to reach without his assistance.

A
The universality of Art.

Herein lies the *universality* of Art. It has in it the power to rouse up almost similar intuitions (never absolutely similar) in the minds of different persons that appreciate and approve them. Though an original intuition is supremely unique and cannot be ever reproduced in its entirety, though the styles of the artists may vary, still the creation of *almost* similar intuitions is possible. And thus approbation and æsthetic judgment are still possible. So while Art is *unique in its origin,* while it brings out what is unique and is the unique expression of what is the unique intuition of the unique individuality, it is *universal in its effect,* on account of the appeal it makes to all men and women that enjoy it and on account of the approbation which all persons can give when it has the stamp of genius.

B
The lyrical character of Art.

We shall now note some more essential characteristics of Art. Art is essentially 'lyrical'. "It is the outpouring of the human soul, the giving expression to what forms itself within." The artist brings out what is but a part and parcel of the mind. What the poet sings is of a certain mood which was his and his

alone. What interests us in the work of a dramatist is the glimpse or the intuition we get of certain profound moods or inner struggles which the dramatist himself intuits or makes his own. If the characters created by a dramatist give us the impression of life, it is so because they are the dramatist himself,—the dramatist sounding the depth of his own nature.

C

The uniqueness of Art.

Another characteristic of Art is that it always aims at what is *individual,* and what is *unique.* What the painter fixes on his canvas is something which he has seen at a certain spot, in a certain instant which will never again happen and whose colours will never again be seen. The æsthetic expression of it he will never have once again in the same way. It is gone. The same waters never flow twice. The same event never happens again. The same individual will never remain the same at two successive instants. The world continuously changes. So also the mind of an artist. Because it is progressive, it never repeats itself, but in every act it attempts the production of a newer and fairer whole. Beauty is the moment of transition. It is a momentary flash. As Emerson says in his essay on Art, "its nature is like opaline dove's neck-lusters, hovering and evanescent."

Another well-marked characteristic of Art which is interesting to notice is the *unity and indivisibility* of the work of Art. The artistic activity is "a 'fusion' of the impressions of an organic whole", "the synthesis of the varieties or of the manifold into the one." The intuitive expression always arises directly out of the impressions. For example, the dramatist who conceives of a tragedy, puts so to say a great number of impressions into a big retort, boils them down, and fuses them together into a unique intuitive expression, even as we may throw into the melting pot several shapeless bits of bronze and also most choice pieces of statuettes. All these are melted down to fuse into a new creation of perfect statue. The old expressions also must become impressions again, so that they may be synthesised with the rest in a unique expression.*

D
The Unity and Indivisibility of a work of Art.

* Estetica: Croce. Translated by D. Ainslie, p. 20.

CHAPTER II

THE THEORY OF ART

SECTION V

THE EXPRESSIONIST THEORY OF ART

LET us now enquire what is Beauty. According to Croce's theory, Beauty is expression. Unsuccessful expression is ugliness. "The ugly is spoilt expression, a shortcoming or failure to express." "When we have mastered the internal world, when we have vividly and clearly conceived a figure or a statue, when we have found a musical theme, expression is born and is complete; nothing more is needed. If then, we open our mouths and speak or sing, the action is voluntary, it is something we *will* to do, and what we then do is to say aloud what we have already said within, sing aloud what we have already sung within." If our fingers strike the strings of a 'Veena,' or if we take a brush or chisel and wield it, what we are then doing is executing in great movements what we have already executed briefly and rapidly within. "By these actions we stamp our in-

The internal and external work of Art.

tuitions on a material which will hold the traces of them more or less enduringly. All this, however, is an added fact; it obeys quite other laws than the æsthetic fact; it is a production of things and therefore a *practical* or *voluntary* fact. In this way we come to distinguish the internal from the external work of Art. The terminology is unfortunate because the work is always and only internal, and what is called external is no longer the work of Art."

The above theory is called the Expressionist theory of Art. Croce is the ablest advocate of this theory. In the next section I shall give my criticism on this famous theory. I shall note here only the central idea in this theory. According to this, what is valuable, what is beautiful, in Art is the Artist's æsthetic creation which is purely mental, but not the stamping of that creation on physical things. The so-called external works of Art—poems, pictures, statues, songs, etc.—are only the stimuli which evoke the reproduction in us of the original internal æsthetic expression of the Artist. It is this æsthetic expression, but not the physical embodiment which is only a stimulus for reproducing it, that can alone in the strict sense be termed beautiful. *Art then is wholly a mental fact.* The

The theory that Art is *wholly* a mental fact: "Art is the expression of impressions, not expression of expression."

physical fact only comes to be called beautiful by transferred epithet. "The beautiful is not a physical fact, beauty does not belong to things, it belongs wholly to the human æsthetic activity, and this is a mental or spiritual fact." The transmission of the æsthetic fact on to a physical medium is a stage of the complete process of the æsthetic production. It is only the final stage of this process.

What it is that we judge as beautiful.

When we pronounce a work of Art, say a poem, a picture or a song, beautiful, the judgment is only of the intuition which finds expression in the work of Art. And what is more interesting is the fact that this intuition that we judge as beautiful is not the intuition of an individual artist expressed once and for ever. But it is the intuition of the mind which makes the æsthetic judgment. "It is my intuition which finds expression in the beautiful work of Art. In other words, to have æsthetic experience we must ourselves be actively creating; our own mind must be giving birth to an intuition and finding its expression, and it is that expression that is beautiful."* I cannot see in a work of Art another's intuition save in so far as it is my own intuition.

* Wildon Carr: Philosophy of Croce, p. 166.

SECTION VI

THE CREATIVE EVOLUTION THEORY OF ART

[Criticism of the Expressionist theory of Art and original suggestions for a constructive theory.

Art conceived as a Creative Synthetic Expression of an Evolving Intuition and as a Revealer of the Evolving Ideal in a perpetually Growing Creative Universe.

Art is a unity of both the expression of impressions and the expression of expression.]

A fundamental defect in the Expressionist theory of Art.

IN the theory which we have been presenting in the last section and which is called the Expressionist theory of Art, it appears to me that a very important matter is ignored. It is ignored that the original intuition is continuously being re-cast in the light of new impressions. The evolutionary character of intuition is ignored. Intuition grows and swells while the work of Art is under construction, so that what it is when it finally comes out is far richer and fuller than the vague original intuition with which the Artist has begun. Hence we hold that Art is essentially Creative.

The process of creating a work of Art is a Creative Evolution. It is unique and novel. For example, the picture which is the creation of an Artist when it finally comes out of his hand, is far different from the idea with which he has taken his brush. Each touch of his brush, each colour that he has added, or each curl he has given, has continuously contributed to the Creative Evolution of his original intuition with which he has started. Hence it appears to us that the Expressionist theory of Croce is not thorough-going.

The process of creating a work of Art involves the Creative Evolution of an original intuition of the Artist.

In so far as what is outside the mind acts and reacts on the mind of the Artist, while yet the Artist puts forth his whole soul as it were, and struggles even as a woman struggles in her birth-throes, to transmit his intuition to his physical material, to that extent we hold that *what is outside the mind is not out of the province of the beautiful as Croce holds.* What is outside the mind, viz., the Beauty that is embodied in the material form is also within the province of the Beautiful, because Expression completes itself in and through the process of embodying Beauty in a material medium. And yet we can hold that the work of

What is outside the mind, *viz.*, the embodiment of Beauty in the physical medium, is not out of the province of the Beautiful as Croce holds.

My view of Art as a constructive Synthetic Expression of the Creative Evolution of the æsthetic intuition of the Artist.

Art is a Spiritual fact, sheer Matter wedded to what is in the Soul. Adapting the terminology of my master philosopher, Henri Bergson, I wish to call this as the Creative Evolution theory of Art,—the theory that Art is a Constructive Synthetic Expression of the Creative Evolution of the æsthetic intuition.

There is yet another reason why we should consider higher Art as implying Creative Evolution. No representation has any claim to the title of Art except so far as it is made more beautiful, more perfect. It is true that Art is always a *representation*. And yet all real Art is always an *idealisation*. And what is it that constitutes this idealisation? The process of nature is a struggle to bring forth new and yet new types, more and more perfect types. These are latent in the present in an inchoate manner. But the penetrating intuition of the Artist gets beneath the unmeaning detail which obscured it and brings out prominently its principal features. A study of the Present with all the Past pent up in it reveals to the Artist the Future in general outline. Thus an Artist anticipates what Nature is struggling to realise from moment

Art implies Constructive Idealisation. It is a presentation of more and more perfect types which the Artist intuits in Nature's struggle to bring them out.

to moment and reveals it to us. He grasps the *process* of Nature to construct the ideal or rather to contribute to the evolution of the ideal latent in her. This *constructive idealisation* has been becoming more and more the characteristic feature of the æsthetic productions of the great Artists of the world.

Now then this is what we find in the case of Art or artistic creation. Here no rules can ever be sufficient. There is the unique synthesis of colours or sounds for the production of the picture or song. There is first the mental rehearsal before the final execution of the work of Art. And further the idea of the picture or the song gradually develops as it is *being put* on the canvas or as it is *being sung,* so much so that the picture as it actually appears on the canvas finally, or the song as it is actually sung, is different from and is far richer than the idea with which the painter or the songster has begun. Thus it is quite clear that no mere rules or fixed patterns are ever sufficient for Art or Creation. It is a Construction or Invention of just that way of expressing in a unique synthesis of colours or sounds or of whatever else the material may be, as would bring out a unique growing

Art is a Construction or Invention of just that way of expressing in a unique synthesis of colours or sounds or whatever else the material may be, as would bring out a unique growing intuitive synthesis of a totality of impressions.

intuitive synthesis of a totality of impressions. Thus our view of Art, while partaking of Croce's view that it is "the expression of impressions"* differs from that of Croce in advocating that it must also be an "expression of expression". And we also emphasise on the fact that on account of the uniqueness of the combination of diverse and varied elements in the Artist's original work, we call that work an artistic creation. And further the Artist's mind itself grows on account of its new production. Thus the Artist in his original work realises the creative principle of his evolving Self.

Art is not only an expression of impressions, but is also an expression of expression.

The Artist's mind grows through the process of the production of the work of Art.

No two Artists can conceive the same thing in exactly the same way. And even in the case of the same Artist, no two original representations of the same idea can be equally beautiful to him. And yet though thus there might be diversity in the modes of expression, there is agreement in the approbation of those modes. This implies that divergent intuitions of different Artists are only the manifestations of one and the same æsthetic activity of the human mind. In the case of different Artists, it is

Explanation for the divergence and agreement between different Artists.

* Estetica: Translated, p. 13.

possible that one Artist appreciates the work of another though the style and manner are different, because their minds are inspired by the same artistic sense. The flowers and leaves of the same tree are never the same. And yet they are manifestations of one and the same vegetable life. Even in the same way the divergent modes of expression invented and transmitted to a material medium by different Artists are manifestations of one and the same æsthetic activity, at once harmonious and diversified. On no other hypothesis can we account for the divergence and agreement between different Artists when they intuit and transmit their intuition. It is only on such a supposition that we can account for the fact that, out of the free activity of different Artists of different ages and divergent schools and nationalities, there actually grow up widely appreciated new common æsthetic standards, and that even amid their very striking differences, the æsthetic standards of Artists belonging to widely separated ages, schools and nationalities, reveal to the careful analysis of a student of Art, a striking degree of marvellous harmony. It is such an hypothesis alone that provides for the individuality or

The divergent modes of expression invented and transmitted to a material medium by different Artists are manifestations of one and the same æsthetic activity, at once harmonious and diversified.

uniqueness of Art without reducing it to the level of capricious taste. It gives satisfaction to the individual by enabling him to assure himself that his æsthetic judgment is not merely his own opinion, but is the expression of the "Spirit Universal in humanity", as the Rev. Dr. A. G. Hogg, my revered teacher, calls it, or of the "Supreme Person" as Dr. Rabindranath Tagore calls it, or of the "Creative Impulse," which according to Bergson is engaged in the endless Creation of new and yet new forms.

Joy or 'Ananda' is the sign of true artistic creation.

Nature gives us the sign by which we may know and by which the Artist himself may know that true artistic creation has been attained by an Artist in his work. That sign is joy. Joy is the contrivance by which Nature devises to let us recognise whether genuine creation has been obtained. It is joy that indicates the approval of the direction in which Life is striving to move. It is always joy that indicates that Life has succeeded, gained ground, conquered. If we take this into account, we find that wherever there is joy there is creation. The richer the creation, the deeper is the joy. The mother is joyous at the sight of her child, because it is she that has helped its creation. The merchant developing his business is joyous because he has started an enterprise which is prosperous. Take the

joy of an inventor or a thinker like Archimides who jumped up naked from his bath shouting out "Eureka," "Eureka". They are all joyous, because they have brought something to light, something to life,—because they have added their contribution to the Creative Evolution of the world. Such is also the joy of an Artist. Even as a hero that is absolutely certain of having produced an abiding reform or created some new change that will endure for the bettering of life in the world,—an Artist feels that he has produced something enduring, something that enables his fellow-men to intuit the beauty he has himself grasped from both the inner world and the outer world, and makes them joyous. Thus he experiences the joy of a Creator, drinks deep of the 'Ananda' of a god.

CHAPTER III

THE FUNCTION OF ART

SECTION VII

(A) THE STIMULATION IN US OF CREATIVE INTUITION

Now after analysing the Nature of Art and discovering its fundamental basis and characteristics, we are in a position to investigate the object and purpose of Art.

We have seen how Art gives us the knowledge of things in their concreteness and individuality, and of the Ideal involved in the Creative process of the growing Universe. Every man possesses the artistic activity in some degree by reason of his human nature. Every one of us is an Artist. But yet we do not discern the Beauty of the world to the extent to which the great Artists of the world discern. The reason is that our Intuition is clouded by our practical interests. That is why we cannot see the Beauty of the world always, though in

Art gives us the knowledge of things and persons in their concreteness and individuality. It gives us also the glimpse of the Ideal involved in the Creative process of the growing Universe.

fact even the most common and every-day facts of sense-experience are artistic facts. Consequently we require the works of Art,—poems and pictures, statues and songs, dance and drama, to serve as stimuli to evoke the reproduction in us of the æsthetic expression and thus enable us to see and appreciate Beauty. Thus the object of Art is the production of the beautiful expression of impressions, while the object of a work of Art is to stimulate in us this Creative Intuition.

The object of Art is the production of the beautiful expression of impressions, while the object of a work of Art is to stimulate in us Creative Intuition.

Let me illustrate what I have said about the object of Art by referring to some particular Art. Take the Art of the Tragic drama. Henri Bergson gives a masterly exposition of the purpose of the Tragic drama.* What drama brings forth is a deep-seated Reality. Though we have the capacity to intuit the Beauty of this Reality, it is veiled from us by the necessities of life. The Tragic drama expresses inward states. Some of these are intense and violent. When persons are brought together, strong attractions and repulsions take place. They may be followed by the disturbance of

The object of Art illustrated by an explanation of the purpose of the Tragic drama.

* *Vide* "Laughter," p. 157.

the utter balance of mind, by what Bergson calls "that electrification of the Soul known as passion". If man were to give way to the impulse of his natural feelings, if there were no social or moral laws, these outbursts would be the ordinary rule in life. But utility demands that these outbursts should be averted. Man has to live in society and so he submits to rules. In the interests of the common good of all men the inner fire of individual passions must be covered by an outer layer of feelings and ideas. And in the interests of the progressing peaceful life, this layer gets hardened. But when man has repose, when his time is not demanded for working for the satisfaction of his animal wants and appetites, he would take delight in dreaming sometimes of these sudden explosions. Once in a way he would like to enjoy 'Deepavali'. He would like to enjoy a festival sometimes by resuming possession of his inner nature. This is just the kind of pleasure provided by the Tragic drama. The Tragic drama lays bare a secret portion of ourselves,—what might be called the tragic element in our character. It draws up from beneath our superficial utilitarian attainments, a deeper reality in us.

The Tragic drama lays bare a secret portion of ourselves, a deeper Reality in us.

When dealing with the Nature of Art we said that Art always aims at what is *individual,* what is *unique.*

What the painter paints on the canvas is what he has seen at a particular moment with a colouring that will never be seen again. The æsthetic expression of it he will never have in exactly the same way once again. What the poet sings of is a certain mood which was his alone. And this too will never again return to him. The dramatist unfolds before us the 'life-history of the soul', 'a living tissue of feelings and events'. This too happened once and it can never again be repeated. The feeling of Hamlet which Shakespeare intuited can never be the same thing in another Soul though it may generally be recognised. The hero of the tragedy presents an individuality unique of its kind. And yet the Artist forces into us an effort to intuit, to see sincerely his hero, "to have a glimpse of certain profound moods in his struggles." This holds good of all the other products of Art. Each of them is unique and yet if it is genuine it will come to be recognised by everybody, by succeeding to rouse up the artistic intuition latent in him.

The dramatist unfolds the life-history of a Soul that can never again be repeated.

The main point is that we must ourselves experience, we should ourselves intuit what the Artist himself has once experienced, has once intuited. Does this mean that the poet or the dramatist himself once

Does the dramatist himself experience what all he represents?

experienced what all he represents in his heroes? Does this mean that he has gone through the various situations which he makes his characters traverse? In short, does it mean that the dramatist lived the whole of the inner life of his characters? We cannot suppose that. The same man could not have been Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and several others. So then we have to make the distinction between the Personality *we have* and the Personalities *we might have had.* Let us quote from Bergson at length. Our character is the result of a choice that is being continually renewed. There are points,—at all events there seems to be,—all along the way where we branch off. And we perceive many possible directions, though we are unable to take more than one. To retrace one's steps and follow to the end the faintly distinguishable directions, appears to be the essential element in poetic imagination. "Of course Shakespeare was neither Hamlet nor Othello; still, he might have been these several characters if the circumstances of the case on the one hand, and the consent of his will on the other, had caused to break out into explosive action, what was nothing more than an inner prompting".* Thus we see that dramatic

The Personality *we have* and the Personalities *we might have had.*

* Bergson: "Laughter," p. 167.

imagination does not piece together its heroes out of fragments. Nothing living can ever be a patch-work. The characters of the dramatist give us the impression of *life* only because they are the poet himself. They are the different potentialities of the poet himself. "The poet plumbs the depth of his own nature in so powerful an effort of inner observation that he lays hold of the potential in the Real, and takes up what Nature has left as a mere outline or sketch in his Soul in order to make of it a finished work of Art."

What the dramatist does is to lay hold of the potential in the Real, and to take up what Nature has left as a mere outline or sketch in his Soul in order to make of it a finished work of Art.

This is true of the products of all Arts. They are a part and parcel of the inner or mental life of the Artist, what is latent in him struggling to find expression but kept back in the interests of practical life. The Artist brings out this reality of the inner life through his intuition and communicates it through his work. If it bears the stamp of genius, it will come to be accepted by everybody. We may ask then how it can come to be accepted in spite of its being unique? The Artist's work evokes

The true products of Art are a part and parcel of the mental or inner life of the Artist,—of what is latent in him struggling to find expression, but kept back in the interests of practical life.

The Artist brings out this inner Reality through his intuition and communicates it through his work.

in us the effort to put aside our utilitarian point of view for some time and have the intuition or the vision of the Real. What the Artist has seen we shall probably never see again or at least never see in exactly the same way. But if the Artist has actually seen and caught the Beauty of Nature or Reality, the attempt he has made to lift the veil stimulates in us the effort to lift the veil ourselves and have the vision. The greater the work, the more profound the apprehended Truth, and the more marvellous the vision of Beauty,—the more universal will the *effect* tend to become. Thus while Art is *unique in its nature,* it has its *universality* also. This lies in the effect produced in the minds of several persons that enjoy the Art.

The object of Art is to evoke in us the effort to put aside the usual utilitarian point of view for some time and enjoy the intuition of the deepest Reality.

(B) THE REVELATION OF NATURE

(*Illustrated by the Tragic drama.*)

The Beauty around

Unfortunately in our common every-day life, Reality does not come in direct contact with our consciousness. We seldom enter into direct communion with things or persons. Our minds fail to grasp them. If we do not

fail to understand them, if our Soul were always in perfect accord with Nature, then perhaps all of us would be artists, or rather, Art would be useless. In space and in time our eyes would pick out splendid pictures and carve out glorious statues. Carved in the living marble of human form, we would be able to see fragments of perfect Grecian statues. In the din of the world, we would be able to hear strains of our inner life's original unbroken melody. In the endless flow of gestures and movements of men, women and children, our Souls would be able to dance to the gentle ripples of life. As Auguste Comte said, "There is a musical element in the most ordinary conversation".* And as Emerson said, "A great man is a new statue in every attitude and action. A beautiful woman is a picture which drives all nobly mad. Life may be a lyric or epic as well as a poem or a romance." Such pictures and statues, such music and movements of grace and exquisite beauty are always around us and within us. Only we do not see their beauty. We hear them and yet we do not pause to listen to their melody. Our eyes look at them, but they do not see their beauty and grace. Between us and Reality then, there seems to be as it were a veil, dense and opaque, call it "Maya" if you like. We are too much in a hurry. We do not pause to see behind the

* A general view of Positivism, Chapter V.

veil. We do not pause to give a full play to our artistic intuition. As Dr. Rabindranath said, "Beauty is omnipresent, therefore everything is capable of giving us joy". It is this same idea that Emerson had when he said that "we are immersed in beauty". But our eyes have no clear vision. We do not liberate and purify our intuition. Nevertheless the poet or the musician, the painter, the sculptor or the dancer sees this beauty behind the veil.

Our utilitarian interests obscure the Beauty around us.

How is it then that only these see Nature? Why cannot the common herd also see? We live and have to live. And life is action. Life demands that we grapple things in their relation to our needs. We accept only the utilitarian aspect of things, events and persons, so that we may respond to them by useful reactions. We cannot pause to take in the other impressions. They have to be left out unrecognised. Aye, they are to be suppressed mercilessly. The practical interests in life thus dominate our vision of things, persons, events etc. in the world, so that they appear ugly and distorted. What we see or hear is what we *select* from the world for the purpose of our practical conduct and achievement in the world. We leave the core of things and care to know only what comes to the surface.

What enters into the daily vision of things is the resemblance. Differences are of no use to us. So we give up the differences or those characteristics that constitute the uniqueness or individuality of things or persons and thus the very core of their reality. We miss the colour and shape of things. Aye, we miss their very Soul. We record only the classification of things. To a tiger in the forest it does not matter whether it is this lamb or that lamb that it devours. All that matters is that it is a lamb. To a soldier on the battle-field, it does not matter whom he kills. In the forest the individuality or the uniqueness of individuals is not recognised. In the battle-field too this is not of any concern. So also is the case with our average life in the world. We miss the inner nature of things. We miss the beauty of the Souls that we daily come in contact with. The uniqueness of these escapes us. In short, we do not see the actual things themselves just as they are.

In our daily life we miss the inner nature of things and persons.

This is true not merely in the case of objects and persons outside us. Even in the case of our own mental states we miss their inmost personal aspect, the *life* they possess. When we love or hate, when we feel glad or sad, our

Even in the case of our mental states we miss their inmost personal aspect, the *life* they possess.

feeling has much of the concreteness that makes it something our own. But the colour and the concreteness do not always reach our consciousness. What we actually perceive is the outward display of our mental states. We catch only the impersonal aspect of these things. What is personal, what is unique, escapes our recognition. Thus we find that both in the case of our own selves and in the case of things and persons outside us, we miss their individuality, their reality, their uniqueness.

But Nature is not altogether unkind to us. She does not altogether conceal herself from man. Now and then he is granted a glimpse of her. Here and there she has raised Souls that have a detached view of things, Souls that have an insight into, or have the pure intuition of, the nature of Reality. These are the Artists of the world. Were there any Soul altogether detached from the practical interests in life, he would be an Artist like the one the world has never had seen before. He would experience all things in their native purity. But Nature however does not reveal herself to us so completely. Only on one side does she lift her veil. Each side corresponds to a sense. This explains diversity in Arts. Some see the Beauty of life appearing through forms and

Artists are the Souls that have a detached view of things.

colours. These are the sculptors and painters. Some see the Beauty in sounds and movements. These are the musicians and dancers. Some others see the Beauty of their feelings and emotions, the inner Beauty of the Soul. These are the poets and the dramatists. It is the purpose of these Artists to enable us to see or to intuit what they have seen, to have a glimpse of the glory whose vision is vouchsafed unto them. The Artist helps us for some temporary spell of time to divest our minds of the practical interest that distorts our view of things and thus brings us close to Nature. Though it may not be possible for us to sit for ever near Nature and sing to her praise,—yet, Art, angel-like, introduces us to her and enables us to see her. Thus a very high object of Art is to reveal Nature to us by lifting up the veil that conceals her beauty.

The wonders of the Beauty inside us are more enthralling than the wonders outside us. That is why some Souls retire within themselves. They dive deep into their minds. They go beneath outward actions and expressions to get at their very springs, to get at the original emotion in its native purity, certain rhythms of life and breath that are closer to man than his inmost feelings, being the living law—varying with each individual—of his enthusiasm and despair, his

nopes and regrets. They then contrive through a dexterous arrangement of words to make us see something of that they have seen, by inducing us to make the same effort ourselves as they have made. They impel us "to set in motion, in the depths of our being, some secret chord which only was waiting to thrill." These are the poets, the dramatists, and the musicians of the highest order.

The poets, the dramatists, and the musicians of the highest order, impel us to set in motion in the depths of our being some secret chord which was only waiting to thrill.

Thus we find that Art, whatever it may be, painting or sculpture, poetry or music, has a great object and function to fulfil. It has to give us the direct vision of Reality. And directness or purity of vision implies a "break with utilitarian convention, an innate and specially localised disinterestedness of sense or consciousness, in short, a certain immateriality of life, which has always been called idealism."* Thus we find that the object of Art is to brush aside the utilitarian point of view that dominates our average mental life, the symbols and conventions, the habits and customs, and every-

The object of all Art is to give us the direct vision of Reality by brushing aside the utilitarian point of view that dominates our average mental life.

* Bergson: "Laughter," p. 157.

thing else that may conceal Reality from us, to lift up with her angelic hands the veil that covers Nature, and to bring us face to face with her. The same idea Dr. Tagore expresses thus, "When man has the power to see things detached from self-interest and insistent claims of the lust of the senses, then alone can we have the true vision of the Beauty that is everywhere. Then only can we see that what is unpleasant to us is not necessarily unbeautiful, but has its beauty in truth." Thus Art is idealistic. Nevertheless it is also realistic, as "it is only through ideality that we can resume contact with reality." "When Art comes, we forget the claims of necessity, the thrift of usefulness, the spires of our temples try to kiss the stars, and the notes of our music to fathom the depth of the ineffable."

Art lifts up with her angelic hand the veil that covers Nature and brings us face to face with her.

"Eyes can only see dust and earth,
But feel it with your heart, it is pure joy.
The flowers of delight blossom on all sides, in every form,
But where is your heart's thread to weave them in a garland?"—(*A Baul poet.*)

(C) THE IDEALISING FUNCTION OF ART

(Illustrated by a review of some of the famous paintings of the world.)

Revelation of Nature is only one of the functions of Art. Art has a still more glorious function. I said already that no representation has any claim to the title of Art except so far as it is made more beautiful, more perfect. Let me re-state what I have said under "The Theory of Art" so as to make clear the idealising function of Art. It is true that Art is always a *representation.* And yet all real Art is always an *idealisation.* And now, what is it that constitutes this idealisation? The process of Nature is a struggle, a struggle to bring out new and yet new types, more and more perfect ideals. These are latent in the Present Real in an inchoate manner. But the penetrating intuition of the Artist gets beneath the unmeaning detail which obscured it and brings forward prominently its principal features. A study of the Present, with the Past pent up in it, reveals to the Artist the Future in general outline. Thus the Artist anticipates what Nature has been struggling from moment to moment to create and evolve out of herself, and reveals it to us. He grasps the

Real Art is always an idealisation.

What is it that constitutes idealisation?

The Artist anticipates what Nature has been struggling to create.

process of Nature to construct the ideal types, or rather to contribute to the Evolution of the Ideals latent in her, and represents it charged with emotion. If these ideals are not made aglow with emotion, they may not appeal to men and women. That is why the Artist captivates the heart by emotionalising these ideals. It is gratifying to note that this constructive idealisation has been becoming more and more the characteristic feature of the æsthetic productions of the great Artists of the world. As the great Indian Artist, Mr. H. Muzumdar, said, the ideals of the Artist cannot be measured by rule of thumb. "Depending upon the very personalities of the Artists, they are as manifold and as variegated as the individual Artists. When the ideal spells imitation, it becomes degenerate," for the ideal is but the reflex of the stage of the evolution of the Artist himself.

The ideal that the Artist grasps is but the reflex of the stage of the evolution of the Artist himself.

To illustrate this idealising function of Art, let us examine some of the famous pictures of the world:—

Illustrations for the idealising function of Art.

(A) *Famous European paintings.*

Let us take the picture called "Reunion," painted by the lady Artist, Miss E. J. Harrington. The ideal represented in this picture is illustrated by these immortal lines of the poetess, E. B. Browning:

"Guess now who holds thee?
'Death', I said: but there
The silver answer rang,
'Not death, but Love'."

(1) Mr. Harrington's "Reunion" represents the ideal of the continuity, constancy and eternity of Chaste Love.

In this picture we find a young girl shining in the broad clear sky in her nude chastity being held in the loving embrace of the angel-spirit of her dead lover and lifted up to Heaven. While the picture indicates the sweetness of love on Earth, it also suggests the immortality of Love. The lovers meet again on the other side of the earthly life and are re-united even at the very fringe of Heaven. Thus in this painting of the Artist, the ideal of the continuity, constancy and eternity of chaste Love which is implied in the lover's desire to continue to be in the sweet embraces of pure Love, is revealed to us.

(2) "Hope" of George Frederick Watts represents the

Take again another illustrious picture, which is entitled "Hope", and which comes from the hand of one of the greatest of our modern painters, George

larger hope of the world, and hints that there is peace and light above the turmoil and sorrow of the earth.

Frederick Watts. Watts's object is to make people think. He himself says, "My intention has not been to paint the pictures that will charm the eye as to suggest thoughts that will appeal to the imagination and the heart, and kindle all that is best and noblest in humanity." His "Hope" illustrates the power of his pictures to make people think. There is the figure of a graceful but blindfolded woman full of pathos. Her lyre is broken. One by one the strings of the lyre have broken and the sweet notes of music have disappeared. And yet she bends her ear to catch what music that may still be left in the last string. There is a tiny star above and she still sits above the globe of the world. She does not see either the star above or the world of darkness and gloom below. But she plucks with her tender fingers whatever melody there is in the last of those strings that gave her the full harmonies of Beauty. Thus the picture suggests the "larger hope of the world that there is a peace and light above the turmoil and sorrow of the earth."

(3) Sir Edward Coley Burhe Jones's finest work, "King

This is how Mr. C. K. Chestorton describes the finest work of Sir Edward Coley Burhe Jones, the picture "King Cophetua and the Beggar-maid,"

Cophetua and the Beggar-maid", represents the ideal world where Love knows no Rank.

which was purchased for £6,500 and a copy of which now appears in Cassel and Company's volumes of "Famous Paintings". "The Artist shows us the Beggar-maid wistful, bewildered and ethereal, seated in her poor grey robe upon the king's throne. She is bare-footed and her arms are bare also, and below her sits the king, with his jewelled crown in his hands, looking up at her while he thus pays homage of his love." The beauty of the modest Beggar-maid is in keeping with the description of Tennyson:

> "As shines the moon in clouded skies,
> She in her poor attire was seen.
> One praised her ankles, one her eyes,
> One her dark hair and lovesome mein,
> So sweet a face, such angel grace,
> In all that land had never been.
> Cophetua swore a royal oath:
> 'This beggar-maid shall be my queen'."

Love knows no Rank. Modest Beauty is valuable whosesoever it be and it is more valuable than even all the glory and pride of a king. This is really a picture of the ideal love of a king, and gives a glimpse of the ideal world, where even the highest in rank realises in life the truth expressed by Burns:

> "Rank is but the guinea's stamp
> And man is the gold for a'that, for a'that, and for a'that."

Sir Edwin Landseer gives us the picture which he so fittingly calls "Suspense". Here he shows us a huge dog with a huge heart. He shows him as the companion of man and the mourner of his loss. Landseer endows human intelligence and human affection to a dog watching at his wounded master's door. The grief of the dog expressed in his eyes and in his tears may bring tears even in the eyes of the Artist himself. Well, who can point out the line of demarcation between man and the so-called beast! All are the offspring of the same Eternal Mother.

(4) Sir Edwin Landseer's "Suspense" illustrates animal companionship and unity of life.

One of the contemporaries of Titian said of his works that they "are not Art, but miracles; they make upon me the impression of something divine, and as Heaven is the Soul's Paradise, so God has transfused into Titian's colours the Paradise of our bodies." Something like this is the impression we get from the picture "Venus and Adonis" which he painted in his seventy-seventh year, and which shows Venus trying to beguile Adonis from the allurements of the manly chase. "She is all ardour, but the God of Love is asleep and Adonis is unmoved."

(5) Titian's "Venus and Adonis" represents the Paradise of the human bodies.

George Frederick Watts's picture "Love and Life" shows a slight nude figure of pure beauty. This represents Life. The male figure with wings represents Love, not physical passion, but altruism, tenderness. He might as well fly upwards to the Heavens with the mighty wing. But he chooses with tender affection to lead Life upwards along steep and stony path. And Life ascends "with imploring trust in the power of Love, from the depths of brutality to the pure heights to which humanity climbs with painful striving."

(6) Frederick Watts's picture called "Love and Life" illustrates how, with imploring trust in Love, Life ascends from the depths of brutality to the pure heights to which humanity climbs.

Mr. Chestorton pays a glowing tribute to the picture called "The Angelus," painted by Jean Francois Millet, when he says that on a small canvas Millet has created a scene that is at once "a prayer and inspiration which will hold its strong appeal as long as the colours last". The peasant and his good wife worked during the day bending low on their field, weighed by their poverty and weariness; but at the vesper-hour, when the soft chimes call the toiler to thankful rest, they stand up in all the dignity of labour. They worked well and their sacks are full. And now

(7) Jean Francois Millet's "The Angelus" suggests the sublime in the commonplace, the promise hidden in the pain, and the mercy that hovers over sorrow."

they bend their heads in gratitude to their Creator for His gifts. Thus in this picture, which represents a humble peasant and his wife, Millet reveals "the sublime in the common-place, the promise hidden in the pain and the mercy that hovers over sorrow."

Let us now see some modern Indian Paintings also.

(B) *Famous modern Indian Paintings.*

Mr. H. Muzumdar's representation of Kalidasa's Yaksha making passionate appeal to the cloud to carry his message to his Love is a soul-stirring picture. By the inexorable decree of his lord, Yaksha is banished and is separated from his sweet-heart. He wanders disconsolate in the wilds of Chitrakuta. But he sees a passing cloud and appeals to him in frenzied despair to carry the message of his heart to his Love that pines for him. There is verily no such thing as absolute separation in existence and therefore the only way of attaining full life is through the interpenetration of our being into all objects. To realise this great harmony between man's heart and the spirit of the world in the spirit of sympathy is one of the greatest ideals of India.

Pictures of the great Bengalee Artist, H. Muzumdar.

(1) "Kalidasa's Yaksha" illustrates the great Indian idea of the Harmony between Man's heart and the Spirit of the world in the Spirit of Sympathy.

And again take the pictures of Muzumdar in which Sree Krishna's Flute is the central object, the picture named "The Seducer," and that other one named "Divine Flute." The Divine Flute pours out divine music. So trivial a bamboo piece and yet so potent. In the first picture we find a 'blue belle' of Brindavan, tall and graceful, coming upon Krishna's flute and contemplating of it in wonder. In the other picture, Radha hears the soul-enthralling tune, her lord pours out through his paltry reed, and implores her beloved to teach her the art that captivates her mind, and the first lesson already begins under the 'tamal' tree. It is only that heart which is in touch with the Divine Spouse that can draw out the beauty and grace immanent in the seemingly trivial things of the world.

(2) and (3). The Flute pictures of Muzumdar illustrate that it is only that heart that is in touch with the Divine Spouse that can draw out the grace and melody immanent in the seemingly trivial things of the world.

Pictures of the Andhra Artist, Rama Row.

The young Andhra Artist, the late Mr. Damarla Rama Row of Rajahmundry* is another great painter in India. But unfortunately his pictures are not reproduced and he is cut away in the prime of youth and on the eve of an international reputation. But those

* Rajahmundry is on the banks of the Godavari in Southern India. Here there is the Picture Gallery of Rama Row's original paintings.

who have an opportunity of visiting his gallery are impressed as to what great merit his productions show. Only a few pictures in India or elsewhere can compete with his in the matter of dignity and majesty of characters represented by him or of the combinations of his big group paintings.

Rama Row's picture of young Abhimanyu falling on the battle-field with the fatal wound and the broken arrow by his side—and also the picture of Bhimasen sitting leaning against the trunk of a tree in the wilderness with his 'gadha' (mace) by his side,—both these pictures represent the perfect strong body, the majesty and dignity of an ideal hero and the heroic calmness and strength of character of a fearless champion of Dharma either while at rest or in the agony of intense pain.

(1) and (2). "Abhimanyu" and "Bhimasen" represent the majesty and dignity of ideal heroes and the heroic calmness and strength of character of the champions of Dharma.

Only one more picture of this great Artist we wish to refer to for illustrating the idealising function of Art,—and this is the big painting of the royal family of King Dasaratha of Ayodhya when Sree Rama takes leave of his father before leaving the kingdom and home

(3) The big painting of the royal family of Dasaratha illustrates in splendid colours the eternal truth that Truth is bigger than even Love.

to live in the forest for fourteen years. The representation of the prince's heroic sacrifice of the palatial comfort and of his kingdom for enabling his father to fulfil his vow, and the agony under which the good old king is prepared to collapse for the sake of Truth, illustrate in splendid colours the eternal truth that Truth is bigger than even Love.

(C) *The idealism of the Rajput paintings.*

It may not be out of place to ask the indulgence of the reader to permit me to touch upon the idealism of the Rajput paintings. I shall refer just to four of them.

Plate No. LXXIII-A in the collections of Rajput paintings by Ananda Coomaraswamy represents an Abhisarika going through storm and danger to meet her lover. It is dense dark. The rain is pouring down. The lightning flashes. And the path is beset with serpents. The daring and adventure of the young woman is wonderful. She is tender and so refined, and yet love inspires her and dispels all fear. This illustrates an aspect of passionate love which a lover alone knows. Love knows no fear.

(1) "An Abhisarika" illustrates an aspect of passionate love, *viz.*, Love knows no fear.

Let us turn to Plate No. XLVI called "Bhojana Dana". Krishna, Bala Rama and

(2) "Bhojana Dana" represents that Life is sweet when it is sustained by the milk of human kindness.

another Gopa (cow-boy) are under a tree. Three Gopis or probably the wives of Mathura Brahmins with graceful and tender hands offer milk to them pouring it out in leaf-cups. On the banks of the Jumna there, there are two other Gopis with cows grazing nearby. A cup of milk is being offered to one of them. This illustrates the truth that life is sweet when it is sustained by the milk of human kindness. Self-supported, self-centred existence has no joy to give. Always Life supports Life with Love! Man, woman and beast blend beautifully to make the harmony of Life and Love!

There is yet another picture, Plate No. LI, known as "Sri Krishna Gopala," where this harmony of Life is illustrated. Here is a free mixing of the life of Gopis with pots of water on their heads and the life of Gopas returning home, one playing on flute, another beating the drum, another riding on a stick, a fourth one holding up two lotus flowers and following a herd of home-going cows and calves. There are women peeping through the windows trying to pick out cow-dust ('Godhuli'). Thus in this picture we have something like a trans-

(3) In "Sri Krishna Gopala" we have a transfiguration of an every day experience into the realisation of a grand harmony of life.

cendent transfiguration of an every day experience into the realisation of a grand harmony of life through a beautiful blending of man, woman and beast, play, music and freedom.

"Siva Sandhya Nrutya," or the evening dance of Siva (Plate LXVII), illustrates in a magnificent manner the human aspect of the life of Divine Beings. This is the golden floor of Kailasam (the hill which is the abode of Siva). There are the peaks of the encircling Himalayas. Devi is enthroned as Raja Rajeswari, the queen of queens, upon the golden throne studded with precious gems. And Siva dances before her. Women and Angels bring offerings to the Queen-Mother. Devas, Gandharvas, and Kinnaras, all join in a chorus. Yakshas, Siddhas, Vidyadharas, Amaras and Apsarasas and all the beings dwelling in the Mullokams (the three worlds) assemble there to witness this celestial dance and enjoy the music of the divine choir at the hour of delight. Gandharvas leap out of the clouds with sheer joy. Sarasvathi (goddess of learning) plays on the veena, and Indra (god of rain) on the flute. Brahma (the creator) holds the cymbals marking time. And Laxmi (goddess of

(4) "Sive Sandhya Nrutya" illustrates the human aspect of Divine Beings and the sublime Unity and Harmony of life representing the three worlds.

wealth) begins a song, and Vishnu (the protector, Laxmi's husband) plays on a drum. And all the Devas stand round above. There are also standing in wrapt attention Surya, Chandra, Ganesh, Narada, and kings. The three-headed Agni is also one of the witnesses. Devotees from the earth stand with folded-up hands and with their hearts full of joy and devotion. What a grand blending in joy of divine music and dance! What a splendid gallaxy of men, angels and gods! What a sublime unity and harmony of Life representing the Three worlds!

Thus Indian Art contains intimations of immortality and embodies transcendental glories.

Thus Indian Art, while representing "the rich heritage of pulsating life, of intense humanism, sympathy with Nature and deep feeling rendered with delicacy and intimacy by masters of the Arts," also contains "intimations of immortality" and embodies "transcendental glories".

(D) THE MORAL AND SOCIAL INFLUENCE OF ART

Thus by means of its power to idealise, Art charms and elevates human life and strengthens our sympathies. It cultivates our sense of perfection. Of all the phenomena which relates to man, human affections are the most modifiable, the most susceptible of idealisation.

So Art idealises human affections and loyalties. As I said already Art is engaged in constructing ideal types and utopias. And it is by contemplating of these that our feelings and thoughts are elevated. Such idealised affections and loyalties, made aglow with emotion, wield a great influence on the minds of men and women. And they are even far more efficacious when brought to bear upon social life. And so, Arts like Music or Poetry or Paitning or Drama have to be recognised as an agency of great power and of the highest importance for the purification of moral nature, and the elevation and ennoblement of the life of the individual, the family and the society.*

Through its power to idealise Art wields a great influence of the highest importance by purifying moral nature and by elevating and ennobling the life of the individual, the family and the society.

Art gives pleasure to men and women of all ranks and ages. "Art invites the thinker to leave his abstractions for the study of real life; it elevates the practical man into a region of thought where self-love has no place." By its intermediate position between theoretical enquiry and practical result, it promotes the re-

Art promotes the reaction of Affection and Reason by inviting the thinker to leave his abstractions for the study of real life, and by elevating the practical man into a region of thought. where self-love has no place.

Vide Auguste Comte: A General View of Positivism: Chapter on Relation to Art'.

action of Affection and Reason. It stimulates feeling in those who are too much engrossed with intellectual questions. And it strengthens the contemplative faculties in natures where sympathy predominates. Thus Art controls the ideal by a systematic study of the Real. This systematic study is necessary in order to furnish the ideal with an objective basis and so to secure its coherence and its moral value. By this, Art partakes of the object of all Creative Intellectual effort, *viz.*, the Organisation of Human Unity. "Next to direct culture of the heart, it is in ideal Art that we shall find the best assistance in our efforts to become more loving and more noble."*

(E) THE SALUTARY INFLUENCE OF ART ON OUR INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES

Art has also a salutary effect on our intellectual faculties. Through Art man or woman from childhood onwards gets familiarised with the chief features that characterise human efforts. The method of science has always been analytic. On the other hand Art always aims at synthesis, which is the final goal of all intellectual activity. The work of Art is essentially construc-

Art instils the taste and cultivates the faculty for ideal construction.

* Auguste Comte: A General View of Positivism: Chapter on 'Relation to Art'.

tive. And so it is sure to instil the taste and cultivate the faculty for *ideal construction.*

For the above reason, as the Positivists hold, Art deserves to be made the primary basis of general education, and the inspiring agency in spiritual life, though at a stage when systematic notions of the external world are required education may assume a more scientific character.

Art deserves to be made both the primary basis of general education and the inspiring agency in spiritual life.

(F) THE LIBERATING AND PURIFYING FUNCTION OF ART

There is yet another function of Art which needs special mention, though it is not unconnected with the idealising function of Art. This is the liberating and purifying function of Art. Art gives man the power to elaborate his impressions. All those impressions that in the average level of life have to be kept back in the interests of practical life, but which are all the same valuable as being parts of a living self, find expression in artistic intuition and objectify in the works of Art. By thus elaborating and expressing his impressions, "man

Those impressions that in the average level of life have to be kept back, find expression in artistic intuition and objectify in the works of Art.

Thus man is freed from the burden of impressions that are not expressed in practical life.

frees himself from them." And by objectifying them, giving them existence apart from his mind, he removes them from him and makes him their superior. This is a great relief to him, because activity drives morbid passivity and is a great deliverer. A similar relief may be had by one who enjoys an opportunity to express an intuition similar to that which had its birth in the mind of the Artist whose great work is now before him. The mind freed from hitherto unexpressed impressions becomes fresh and thus fit again for new adventures and new conquests.

The Artist combines in himself "the maximum of sensibility or *passion*, and the maximum of insensibility or olympian *serenity*." These are not two incompatible characters, for they refer to different things. Passion relates to the material which the Artist absorbs into his psychic organism. And the serenity refers to the "form with which he subdues and dominates the tumult of the sensations and passions." To maintain peace and equanimity amidst tumult, balance in activity, sweet composure amidst warring elements, is one of the highest human ideals of religious life.

To maintain peace and equanimity amidst tumult, balance in activity, sweet composure amidst warring elements such as the Artist combines in him, is one of the highest human ideals of religious life.

SECTION VIII

ART AND RELIGION

There is nothing then to surprise us if Hegel brings Art into direct relation with Religion and raises it to the dignity of Religion. He places Art and Religion within the sphere of Absolute Mind, and they stand there as thesis and anti-thesis with Philosophy as the synthesis in the highest triad. He says that it is true that Art is very often employed as a fleeting past-time. It is used to decorate our surroundings, to embellish the external conditions of our life. But when Art is thus employed, it is not independent, not free but servile. On the other hand, real Art is always free both in its end and in its means. Fine Art, when it is real by being free, achieves its highest object and it takes its place along with Religion and Philosophy. It then becomes a mode of revealing to human mind the divine nature, the 'Supreme Personality' as Dr. Rabindranath calls it, a mode of expressing the deepest interests of humanity and the most comprehensive truths of the mind. The works of Art embody the profoundest intuitions and ideals of individuals and nations and opens up to our understanding their learning. Art thus shares with

Art shares with Religion and Philosophy the attribute of revealing the Divine Nature and man's ideals of Beauty, Love and Truth.

Religion and Philosophy this attribute of revealing the divine nature, and man's ideals of Beauty, Love and Truth.

But in its peculiar mode of revealing, Art differs from Religion and Philosophy. It represents even the highest ideas and ideals in concrete sensuous forms and suffuses them with a glow of emotion and thus brings them closer and dearer to life. The world is a supra-sensuous world. It is beyond our immediate consciousness and sensation. But it is the freedom of thought that rescues it from its immediate sensuousness or concreteness. And in thus rescuing the world from its immediate sensuousness, Thought squeezes life out of the world and makes it a mere phantom. "Everywhere in man's world the Supreme Person is suffering from the killing of the human reality by the imposition of the abstract."* We transform the world of human personality into a monotonous abstraction, where things become dreadfully simple because robbed of their mystery of life. Art here comes to the rescue of our world. It heals the schism between Concrete Reality and Abstract Thought. As Hegels says, the

Art represents even the highest ideas and ideals in concrete sensuous forms, suffuses them with a glow of emotion and thus brings them closer and dearer to life.

Art heals the schism between Concrete Reality and Abstract Thought.

*Dr. Rabindranath Tagore: Personality, p. 37.

human mind "generates out of itself the works of Fine Art as the first Middle Term of reconciliation between pure Thought and what is external, sensuous, and transitory, between Nature with its finite actuality, and the infinite freedom of the Reason that comprehends."

It is the same idea that Dr. Tagore expresses in his deathless poetic prose in his essay on "What is Art." "In these large tracts of nebulousness, Art is creating its stars, stars that are definite in their forms but infinite in their personality. Art is calling us the 'children of the immortal,' and proclaiming our right to dwell in the heavenly world."

Art proclaims our right to dwell in the heavenly world.

THE END

PRINTED AT THE MADRAS LAW JOURNAL PRESS, MYLAPORE, MADRAS.