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Writing about the problems of the study of Jainism in 1938, Dr. B. C. Law, an eminent scholar of Jainology had occasion to observe that “the Jainas should found a society for the publication of important texts and commentaries and English translations of them to enable the world to realise and appreciate the noble teachings of Mahavira.”

The article in which he observed as above was published in the March issue of the *Jain Gazette* with a note that the Central Jain Publishing House has brought out 10 volumes of the *Sacred Books of the Jainas*.

What prompted Dr. Law to observe as above was the paucity of books in English on Jainology, particularly the absence of the English version of the *Agamas* and old texts which are all in Prakrit. The picture is not very different today even after seven decades, as the laudable work as mentioned in the *Jain Gazette*, started by men like J. L. Jaini, Ajit Prasad and others, had to be abandoned after their demise.

In this Mahavir Jayanti Number of Jain Journal, we are reprinting some of the writings of those stalwarts, as our homage to them, who were pioneers in the field, and had not only projected Jainism in the right perspective to the world through their innumerable writings but had upheld the glory of Jainism by their dedicated lives.

Distinction Between Living and Non-living

J. L. JAINI

It is necessary to emphasise and clearly realise that there are two distinct categories : Perfect and Imperfect. The Pure Disembodied Soul alone is Perfect. The mundane, matter-clad Soul is Imperfect. By Perfection here is meant a condition than which nothing is better *forever*. One may want £100. For him nothing is better *at present* than to get £100. But there is no guarantee that he will want nothing if he gets £100. Perfection is where there is no want, no need, no desire, no room for further improvement or betterment. Perfect desirelessness, complete non-attachment, imperturbable *vītarāgatā* are connotations of perfection. Thus it is that Jainism does not believe God, an Almighty, Perfect, Conscious Soul, to be a Creator. Creation means bringing about something which was not before. The mundane soul when it becomes a Perfect Pure Soul, at the end of the 14th spiritual stage, certainly creates its own perfect *condition* of Infinite Perception, Knowledge, Power and Bliss. In this sense, and in this sense alone, God or Siddha may be said to be the Creator of all the Universe, present, past and future, for the Siddha is Omniscient ; and all the Universe, with all its substances, with all their attributes and modifications, in all times and places, becomes subject to this All-Seeing Omniscience, and thus it may be said to *create* the Universe. Here Creation means the attainment of Perfection, of Omniscience, of Omnipotence, of Godhood, of Siddhahood. In no other sense, Creation is possible in Jainism. If Creation means the making or bringing into existence of something which was not before, (excepting that becoming Perfect means bringing into existence the condition of Self-perfection and Omniscience, which was not before), it implies the conscious Creation of something necessary and useful, or of something unnecessary and useless. If the former, why was a useful thing not made before ; if the latter, the Creator is a frivolous wastrel, or simply puerile in making, and then breaking the Universe.

If the Universe is created by God as an absolutely new thing, it must follow that before its creation God was not *kṛita-kṛitya*, one so perfect that nothing remained to be done by Him. If He only recreates a destroyed Universe, then the Jaina explanation (that the Universe is uncreated and passes through a sort of birth and death at the junction of Avasarpini and Utsarpini semi-cycles of time) is simple and sufficient.

If it be said that there must be some Creator (as distinct from some Cause or Co-existence or Sequence) of everything, then there must be some Creator of God, and so on *ad infinitum*.

Further, like creates like. God as Pure Soul can create only Living Soul. How then can He create non-living unconscious matter out of Himself ?

The Jaina doctrine is that the lifeless, non-living, unconscious Universe is eternal and uncreated, and it evolves and revolves within its own countless attributes and modifications for ever, and that it undergoes even radical, catastrophic changes in Space and Time, which the History of all Nations records as the Deluge, the Mahabharata, the Great War, the Pralaya, etc., etc., etc. Is this doctrine not more soul-satisfying, simple and stamped with cogency and Truth than an attempt to explain things by the doctrine of Creation ? Creation thus being only the creation of its Perfect condition by the Pure Soul, it is easy to see that all else in the Universe, from the point of view of conscious, living, knowing Soul, is Imperfect.

Obviously Imperfection is only tolerated because and so long as we cannot get rid of it. Therefore all worldly endeavour, being the child of the living Soul's union with non-living matter, is to be merely tolerated ; to be shunned ; to be renounced. When renunciation is impossible or impracticable, it has to be merely tolerated and controlled and regulated so as to keep it within the limits of the most minimum harm to Perfection.

A clear intellectual perception and a persistent, practical pursuit of this in our daily life is essential to keep us true to the Centre of Truth. No verbal jugglery, no pious deception of self or others will save one from error and harm if this Central Truth is lost sight of. All Politics, Ethics, Laws and Economics will be engulfed in stygian, chaotic darkness if once the human mind, the soul, loses or loosens grip of this First Fact of Life.

On the other hand, if this beacon-light is kept in view, nothing in the world can delude us long or deep. Our joys and sorrows, our successes and failures, our illness and health, births and deaths of relations and friends, victory and defeat, prosperity or adversity,—all these will be easily and instinctively referred to the Central Guide, and dealt with in their own proper perspective. All our worldly valuations depend upon our angle of vision. Ugliness is Beauty in the wrong place, or seen from the wrong angle. High treason is Patriotism from the wrong

view-point. The State and Politics create chaos in an attempt to save the country and citizens from disorder and disruption. Marriage sanctifies apparent monogamy and not seldom becomes an effective cloak for mental and even physical polygamy. Trade and Commerce meant for natural and equal distribution of things of Necessity and Use often result in extravagant waste or stagnation of such things in the hands of the rich few, to the agonising misery of the poverty-stricken many. Even Religion, the sign and mantle of God, has cloaked Satan more than the Light-ever-lasting against whom Satan rebelled for ever. Indeed there is nothing good or desirable in the world, which to some extent or other is not locked up in the arms of its contradictory. Verily, the extremes meet literally. Life means Death. Death breeds Life. The extremely rich are extremely poor. The possessionless are the richest. The crown of thorns is ever the real, ultimate adornment. The cup of misery is the only joy-giving nectar. Purusa and Prakrti are inextricably interlocked. Brahma and Maya lie mingled together ; none can say which is which. There is only one way out of the den of this Duessa. It is to recognise the reality of this den and also of the flowerful glade of real roses outside. Till the rose glade is gained, the dark den must be tolerated and regulated.

In fine, there is no aspect or detail of practical life where the teachings of Sri Kunda Kunda will not be of immense utility. Everywhere they will lay bare the deepest truth about the question in hand, and give the most lucid and calm guidance in the handling and solution thereof. Obviously the touchstone of the eternal Truth as laid down in *Samaya-sāra* is to be applied by every man or woman according to the point in hand and in the light of surrounding circumstances of Substance, Place, Time, and the Object in view. In this sense, Jainism may be said to be the apotheosis of Relativity with which Einstein has made the Western World familiar.

Dravya, Kṣetra, Kāla and *Bhāva* form the eternal quaternity for our practical guidance. The same question can be and even must be answered differently according to the differences in substance, place, time and circumstances. This gives a knock-out blow to rigid consistency, and conservative orthodoxy, social or political, and perhaps indicates the wonderful essential sameness of religion and true conduct in different forms in different countries and ages.

Great is the power of Purity and Truth. The ten aspects of religion—Supreme Forgiveness, Humility, Straightforwardness, Truth, Contentment, Self-control, Austerity, Renunciation, Possessionlessness and

Chastity or Self-absorption, are of eternal value, guidance and inspiration. They are God-given and God-giving. We reach God through them. They negate the sins and passions of Anger, Pride, Deceit, Greed, etc. Sin and sorrow also are as eternal and infinite and indestructible as soul and salvation. You cross the ocean of *samsāra*. You never destroy it.

The Bhavyas or Liberables only attempt to follow the path laid down by the Arhantas. But mundane misery must ever remain unkillable in its extent and length.

The motion and movements of matter are not necessarily the signs of life. Matter may be moved by soul. Then also it is moved by the non-soul partner of soul in its embodied condition. For Pure Soul has no desire or need to move matter of any kind. Thus in a way matter is moved by matter only. In other words, soul is not the cause of any motion except when the soul is impure, soiled with its connection with matter and then it becomes the cause of motion. Even Love and Art and the noblest and highest forms of endeavour in life are material and renounceable. A beautiful form is matter-born, a result of the physical body made of assimilative molecules (*ahāraka vargaṇā*). Love is only an effect upon the mind produced by this form of Beauty. The soul may also be affected by deep, devoted Love owing to this Love reinforcing a pure kind of Delusion which again is Karmic matter. Similarly Art. The Artist's unity with his all-absorbing aim in Painting, Poetry, Melody, Sculpture or Architecture is only a child of matter, which is subtle, pure, non-harming, but all the same matter, which soils the soul and stands between it and its full realisation. Similarly, religious practices, worship, postures of asceticism, etc., all the ladders to spirituality are material and matter-born. They fall into the category of non-soul. They are obviously not the soul in its entire fulness, in its perfect purity. They are help for the soul to achieve self-realisation. But they are not the soul. As pneumatic belts or upturned floating pitchers are help to a swimmer in water, but are not the swimmer, the practices of religion, even the highest of them, the sincerest and most earnest pursuit of right belief, right knowledge and right conduct are all mundane matters. They have no place in the region of pure souls. They are material, mundane, *cis-liberation*. As long as the soul is fascinated by or dependent upon or even in association with any of them, its connection with matter, with *karma*, with *samsāra* is not severed, and the mundane soul does not achieve the dignity and status of self-hood, of being its own pure self, of being a liberated soul, pure for ever.

Latest science has begun to perceive the existence of millions of atoms in a pin-head, revolving in a terribly continuous fashion. This is a great help to understand Jainism. Jainism posits the existence of an infinity of matter, *i.e.*, of infinite atoms and molecules. If a pin-head has millions of atoms, how many atoms must a hut or a palace or a street or a city have ? How many atoms must there be in a whole country or continent, in an ocean ? How many in our Earth, in the Moon, in the Sun ? In our solar system ? In all the solar systems in the starry sky ? How many in the whole Universe ? Certainly, infinite.

Again, it is clear that a pin-head has no life, when by life we mean a manifestation of soul or consciousness or attention by means of the 5 senses, respiration, etc. The presence of millions of atoms in a pin-head or in a speck of dirt on the paper or the pen or on the chair does not prove that the pin or paper or pen or chair are alive or have a soul. The multitudinous movements of matter and its uncountable variations and transfigurations do not demolish the eternal wall of distinction between soul and non-soul, between the Living and the non-Living. The Living now, as ever, has consciousness and attention. It alone has this. None else can be or is conscious (*cetanā*) or capable of attention (*upayoga*). The non-living never possessed this soulness ; never can and never shall possess consciousness. It shall never have the capacity of attending to anything ; it shall never have knowledge of anything. It cannot *know*. *Jñāna* is not its *forte* and never can be.

This is the one primary distinction between Living and non-Living, the ignorance of which is the fertile mother of many pitfalls in Philosophy and Metaphysics. The great teachers of Jainism insist upon this distinction in very lucid, persistent and unmistakable language. They emphasise with ceaseless repetition that the Pupil, the Disciple, the earnest Seeker after Truth must have a firm, un-faltering, un-loseable grasp of this basic *fact* of the Universe, that the Living and the non-Living substances quite exhaust the Universe, and make up a perfect division of it by dichotomy, and that the Living is the Living and never anything else, and the Non-Living is itself and never Living.

This lesson was taught in the great, soul-purifying *gāthās* of *Samayasāra* by Sri Kunda Kunda Acarya in the first century B.C.

Samayasāra is full of the one idea of one concentrated divine unity. It is as persistent and emphatic about the Soul's Identity with Itself being the only living Conscious Reality as pure Mahomedanism is about the Vahdaniyata of God or Monistic Vedantism about Para-Brahma.

This is the only One Idea which counts. All Truth, Goodness, Beauty, Reality, Morality, Freedom is in this. The Self and It alone is true, good, lovely, real, moral. The non-Self is error, myth, *mithyātvā*, ugly, deluding, detractor from and obscurer of reality, immoral worthy of shunning and renunciation, as bondage and as anti-Liberation. This Almighty, all-Comprehensive, claim of *Self-Absorption* must be perfectly and, completely grasped for any measure of success in understanding Sri Kunda Kunda Acarya's works, indeed for the true understanding of Jainism. Few are the works, if any, extant of Jainism as digested of old by the Apostles and Omniscients after Lord Mahavira ; and with the doubtful exception of Svami Kartikeya's *Anuprekṣā* none is older than Sri Kunda Kunda's. The tradition is much older. It is unbroken, continuous. Indeed it is claimed to be Eternal. But in its written form, no work is older than the Soul-analysing, Soul-clarifying, Soul-illuminating stanzas of Sri Kunda Kunda. They sparkle with one life and shed one white lustre, namely, the Divine, Limitless Nature of Soul when absorbed in Itself. *Sva-Samaya* or Self-Absorption is the key-note, the purpose, the lesson, the object, the goal and the centre of Sri Kunda Kunda's all works and teachings. The Pure, All-Conscious, Self-absorbed Soul is God and never less or more. Any connection, Causal or Effectual with the non-Self is a delusion, limitation, imperfection, bondage. To obtain Liberation or Deification this connection must be destroyed. Thus and then the bound soul, *baddha*, becomes the Liberated Soul, *Khudā*. Self come to Self, *Zat-e-paka*, Pure Entity. The man becomes Man. The Son of man returns to His Father in Heaven. Man becomes *Himself*. Man becomes *God*.

To guard against any misunderstanding of Jainism, this central teaching, this clear golden goal must ever be kept in mind and in view.

It may well and legitimately be asked : what is the practical use of this Jaina idea of Self-Absorption ?

The answer is : The mere insight into and knowledge of this Real Reality, is of everyday use in the conduct of our individual and collective lives. It is a true and the only panacea for all our ills. Its rigour may be hard. Its preliminary demand may occasion a wrench from our cherished habits, customs, and fashions of thought and action. But its result—which is immediate, instantaneous and unmistakable, —justifies the hardship and the demand. The relief and service, the sure uplift of ourselves, the showering of calm balm, by the practice of self-realisation, upon the sore souls of our brethren and sisters justify the price paid. Indeed it is merely the temporary yielding of a hollow, fleeting pleasure

for the attainment of a real, permanent Happiness and Peace, which once gained, can never be lost. Once the soul has had its first dip into its own milk-white nectar Ocean of Self ; in Christian phrase, once the Soul has seen the Presence of God, it can never go away from it for ever. It must come back to the Presence sooner or later, and oftener ; till in the end it is always *There* and nowhere else.

To this an obvious criticism would be directed that this is making men angels or at least faultless supermen, whereas Humanity consists at best of frail, feeble, faulty human mortals. This is quite true. Humanity can never become a community of angels. Our passion-tossed hearts must keep us generally deluded, weak, imperfect. But the practice of Self-Realisation makes us less deluded, less weak and less imperfect, and it brings us one or many steps nearer that condition of our purified and strengthened consciousness which is free from delusion, weakness and imperfection. Self-realisation deals with our inner warring impulses and feelings by suppressing some, eliminating others and by self-control, self-discipline and self-respect regulating the others into a self-guided harmony, which is a helpful reflection of God Himself.

Once you sit on the rock of Self-realisation, the whole world goes round and round you like a crazy rushing something, which has lost its hold upon you and is mad to get you again in its grip, but cannot. The All conquering smile of the Victor (Jina) is on your lips. The vanquished, deluding world lies dead and impotent at your feet.

from Introduction to *Samayasāra*

True Happiness

BRAHMACHARI SHITALPRASAD

Life has limited time, however long it may be. A wise man should pass the days of his life as peacefully and happily as possible. As the man is the highest being, he is responsible for leading his life as harmlessly as possible. True happiness is the nature of the soul. It does not depend upon external objects. It is contrary to sensual pleasures, just as peace is contrary to passionate thought-activity. Sensual pleasure is dependant on external objects. It can only be enjoyed if the desired object is procured and the power of enjoying it is present in the senses. If either of the two is absent, it cannot be enjoyed. How difficult it is to attain the desired thing. True happiness, being the nature of every soul, can independently be enjoyed, whenever attention is concentrated upon the true nature of the soul.

How can it be believed that there is any sort of independent true happiness in every soul ? A sensible man must seek after some proof. Let us try to find out a proof to show that there is a kind of happiness in the soul, which is not sensual pleasure, but is other than sensual pleasure.

Persons, doing good to others selflessly without a desire for any gain, generally experience it.

For example, a poor man is hungry. Having seen him, a good man becomes compassionate and supplies him with necessary pure food. At that very time he feels a sort of happiness involuntarily. He does not afford food with the object of having any pleasure, yet he feels happiness naturally. The same is the case with a true scout who takes up a wounded man from the street and brings him to a hospital and arranges for his treatment. A man is attending a meeting where an appeal is made for funds for a charitable institution. Being impressed with its utility he pays one thousand rupees. At that very moment when he gives up attachment to the sum, he feels some happiness.

These three instances are sufficient to proceed on with the philosophical quest after true happiness. In the above examples, not one person enjoyed his senses when doing good to others. Neither did he



J. L. Jaini



Ajit Prasad

touch any beautiful object, nor taste any sweet thing, nor smell any scent, nor heard any melodious song. There is absence of any act of sensual pleasure. It is, therefore, quite clear that happiness felt at the time of performing an act of selfless nature is not and cannot be sensual pleasure, but it is some thing other than the sensual pleasure. What is it and how is it felt ? These are the questions to be properly understood and answered.

As this happiness involuntarily felt at the moment of a charitable deed does not depend upon any enjoyment of senses, it must be taken to be super-sensual and independent. It cannot be an attribute of matter and consequently it must be taken to be an attribute of the soul. Whenever any charitable act is performed with unselfish motive, there is sacrifice of some attachment. Attachment towards worldly belongings does not give us any occasion to be attentive to the inner self and so we cannot feel that true happiness although it is always present in our soul. We feel it at the time of a charitable deed to the extent we give up attachment. If a thoughtful person gives up attachment altogether even for a moment, he will feel himself full of true happiness. Thus true happiness is the natural attribute of the soul and can be enjoyed independently without the help of senses.

True happiness is indestructible, as the soul is indestructible, while sensual pleasure is destructible. Sensual pleasure cannot last for ever. Death comes and separates us from this body and all the external objects of the senses.

True happiness purifies the soul from Karmic dirt, while sensual pleasure is the cause of bringing impurity to the soul. It is a rule that attachment is the cause of Karmic bondage and non-attachment is the cause of freedom from Karmic bondage. Without deep attachment, no sensual pleasure can be enjoyed ; therefore, it causes Karmic bondage. On the contrary, there is non-attachment at the time of enjoying true happiness ; it is, therefore, the cause of soul-purification.

True happiness is accompanied by peace, while sensual pleasure is always associated with passions or non-peaceful attitude. Thus, true happiness is the real happiness. Sensual pleasure is not real but is a fictitious idea of happiness. Sensual pleasure becomes the cause of grief and sorrow. If agreeable objects are lost for ever, we become disappointed and feel ourselves plunged in a deep ocean of sorrow and pain. There is no question of feeling any pain or sorrow in the case of true happiness. There can not be separation of soul from the soul at any moment.

Soul is always soul. True happiness brings satisfaction while sensual pleasure is the cause of increasing dissatisfaction or desires. Desires are going on increasing. If one desire is satisfied, others still remain unsatisfied. Besides that, the very same desire, which is satisfied for a while, rises up again with greater force than before. Each moment that desire is fulfilled, there is always an increase of desire. If any melodious song is heard, there is a desire to hear more melodious songs. Wise men have, therefore, said that as fire cannot be extinguished by pouring fuel into it, so the fire of desire cannot be satisfied by enjoying sensual pleasures. The time of this corporeal life is short. The time comes when a person is obliged to leave the body and along with it all the conscious and non-conscious objects. Soul, full of desires, leaves the body and goes disappointed to another body where he is again surrounded with desire according to the number of senses he possesses. There also a lifetime is passed after finding out means to satisfy the senses and at last he is again obliged to leave the body and go to take another body fully disappointed and unsatisfied. Thus numberless bodies have been adopted and left without ever being able to satisfy any of the five senses. Really, desires are diseases. Sensual enjoyments, instead of quenching the thirst of desires, increase the diseases of desires. Enjoyment of true happiness only can gradually cure the disease of desires. Desirelessness is the real health of the soul. True happiness only can procure desirelessness. Enjoyment of true happiness gradually diminishes the desire for sensual pleasure. We are habituated to sensual enjoyment for a very long period and it is, therefore, not possible for every soul to give up the desire at once. At first, we must have true belief and knowledge that true happiness only is the real happiness and it is the nature of the soul, while sensual pleasure is not only unreal and dependent but also the cause of miseries. To form our Conduct, according to our belief and knowledge, requires some time. Subsidence of passionate *Karmas*, bound before cannot take place at once. It is therefore found that right believing laymen, while enjoying true happiness by the practice of self-meditation and self-concentration, are obliged to enjoy sensual pleasures according to passions which arise on ripening of *karmas*, bound before. But their conscience, being pure, urges them to enjoy senses as harmlessly as possible. Although they believe and know that enjoyment of sensual objects is fictitious and unreal, yet being devoid of strong soul-power and being overpowered by effects of passions, they are obliged to satisfy their senses. Still they remain free from lust or strong desire for sensual pleasure. They are not fond of the sensual pleasures which wrong believers who have never realised that there is any kind of true happiness other than sensual pleasure, are always fond of. A patient who is unwilling to drink bitter medicine is obliged to drink it, on being pressed

by the doctor, for curing the disease. He being unable to suffer the pain caused by the disease is obliged to drink that bitter medicine. Such is the case with a right believing layman. In proportion to the increment of his non-attachment and soul-power, his desire for sensual pleasure diminishes. There comes a time when he gets such a strong non-attachment and soul power that he becomes free from sensual desire and then he dissociates himself from family-members and leads a pure and secluded life, fully devoted to the realization of true happiness and-self purification. Realization of true happiness only is the way by which the force of the passions which produce desire, is lessened or removed.

Realization of true happiness is based on honesty, justice and morality. A right-believer believes that there is a soul in every living creature and all the souls are equal by nature. They are therefore his brethren. Just as he feels pain on being tortured and troubled and enjoys relief on being cared for, so every worldly soul feels pain on being afflicted and enjoys relief on being looked after. It is therefore his duty to deal with the worldly souls as harmlessly as possible. Thus his right belief makes him honest, just and moral. By his nature, he will not tease others, will not speak falsehood, will not steal others' property, will not entrap himself in unjust and improper sexual enjoyment and will not be too greedy for worldly things since, to acquire them, he will have to mar the enjoyment of true happiness. Thus real morality will spring forth in the core of his heart.

Wrong belief that sensual pleasures would satisfy desires is the foundation of dishonesty, injustice and immorality. Bribe-taking, cheating and all other injurious and bad acts are performed on account of the strong desire for money and agreeable sense-objects. A wrong believer wants to satisfy his desires by fair or foul means. He does not care for the troubles and anxieties of others. He is blind to justice, honesty, compassion and morality. His life becomes a burden to the society, while the life of a right believer is an ornament to the society. He is useful, helpful and non-troublesome to the society. Belief, knowledge and practice of enjoyment of true happiness have made him a true gentleman.

A gentleman, having right belief in true happiness, can lead his life peacefully and happily under all the agreeable and disagreeable circumstances. His happiness does not depend upon external things. He may be poor or rich, a labourer or a lord, low or great, ugly or beautiful, illiterate or literate, beggar or a donor, young or old, soldier or a military officer, yet he can feel true happiness always. He will remain content

and satisfied even under the pressure of poverty and unemployment. Eating of grams will not disturb his mind. He will be satisfied with any kind of pure and simple food.

How golden and beautiful will be his life, how soul-inspiring will be his life, how good and honest will be his life, how simple and admirable will be his life, how cheerful and harmless will be his life can only be known to a right-believing person who is walking on the path of enjoyment of true happiness.

Real humanity can be seen only in such a right believing human being. This world will be worth living in, if human beings learn this lesson of enjoyment of true happiness.

from Jainism : A Key to True Happiness

The Doctrine of Ahimsa

AJIT PRASAD

The Doctrine of *Ahimsā* has been universally accepted as a basic principle of all religions.

Gautama Buddha, has been called the Lord of Compassion. The Allah of the Muslims is called Al Rahman and Al Raheem the Benificent, and the Merciful. Dayalu, Kripalu, are the names given to God by the Hindus. “Thou shalt not kill” is one of the ten commandments in the Holy Bible. Sage Tulsi Das, the immortal author of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, says:

*dayā dharm kā mūl hai pāp mūl abhimān
tulsī dayā na choḍiye jab tak ghaṭ me prāṇ*

“Compassion is the root of religion, pride the root of sin. Do not give up compassion, O Tulsi, as long as breath is within you.”

The great Rsi Veda Vyasa exclaims :

*aṣṭādaśapurāṇeṣu vyāsasya vacanadvayam
paropakāra hi puṇyāya pāpāya parapīḍanam*

“All the eighteen *Purāṇas* have been condensed by Vyasa in two phrases. The good of others leads to religious merit, causing pain to others is sin.”

Mahatma Gandhi in *Young India* dated the 6th August 1931, says that “in trying to enforce in one’s life the central teaching of the *Gītā*, one is bound to follow Truth and *Ahimsā*. Perfect renunciation is impossible without perfect observance of *Ahimsā* in every shape and form.”

Through the successful efforts of Mahatma Gandhi in making non-violence in word, thought, and deed, the basis of all struggle for political liberty, freedom, and self-government the word *Ahimsā* has acquired a world-wide recognition. An Ahimsa League has been established in London with branches elsewhere. A world conference is being convened to devise means to stop war ; which is against the basic principles of all

religions. A disarmament conference is being held by all the nations. The great apostle of *Ahimsā* has been respectfully invited and heartily welcomed by many leading Christian educational, and political bodies in England. He was unable to accept an invitation from America, but he visited the continent, carrying the message of *Ahimsā* far and wide. This apostle of *Ahimsā* is the first recipient of the Bronze Medal of the Community Church of New York for the most outstanding religious service in the world in the year 1981.

In queer contrast to all this, however, we find that every religion, except Jainism, has permitted, approved of, and encouraged *himsā*, the antithesis to *Ahimsā*, in various forms, and many have expressly sanctioned it and given it the name of Sacrifice, from the Latin *Sacrificium*, to sanctify, to make sacred, and called it *Yajña* from the Sanskrit root *yaj* to worship, consecrate, give, make an oblation, sacrifice.

Animal Sacrifice

The fundamental reason assigned for animal sacrifices by the Hebrews was that no one should appear before Jehova empty-handed,¹ just as it would be indecent to approach a king or a great man without some present, however trifling. Homer teaches that gods and kings alike are persuaded by gifts. Not only in Canaan, but among the Greeks, there is evidence that cereal oblations had a great place in early ritual, though afterwards they became second in importance to animal sacrifices, which yielded a more luxurious sacrificial banquet. With some people the idea of sacrifice is that the God has need of the worshipper and his gifts, just as the worshipper has need of the God and his help ; and thus with a matter-of-fact business-like people like the Romans, religion became very much a sort of bargain struck with the gods. In general however, we find an extraordinary persistence of the notion that sacrifices do in some way afford a physical satisfaction to the deity.

The notion that the more ethereal elements of the sacrifice rise to heaven, the seat of the gods, in the savoury smoke that ascends from the sacrificial flame, was of later development. Among the Semites, sacrifices were not originally burned. The God was not seated aloft, but was present at the place of sacrifice inhabiting a sacred stone. A refinement of the original usage was that the food, spread on the tables of the Gods, is eaten by his ministers, the priests to whom he is supposed to make over

¹ Exodus, xxiii-15.

the enjoyment of the banquet. In olden times the Gods themselves were held to partake of these gifts of food, just as the venerable dead were fed by meat and drink, placed or poured out upon their tombs. In the religions of savages, both Gods and the dead have very material needs among which the need of nourishment has the first place.² Among Greeks of the seventh century B. C., sacrifices to water-gods, were simply flung into the river, or sea ; and sacrifices to underground gods were buried, indicating the idea that the Gods were too ethereal to enjoy a sacrifice through any other sense than that of smell... Primarily, a sacrifice is a meal offered to the deity, but ordinarily the sacrifice is a feast of which the Gods and the worshippers partake together. The tendency was to give to all feasts, nay to all meals, a sacrificial character by inviting the Gods to partake of them. The Arabian invocation of the name of Allah over every beast killed for food is a relic of sacrificial formula. Among old Aryans, the sacrificial feast has had as its chief feature the *Soma-rasa*, Wine, which "cheereth Gods and men".³ The sacrificial meal was common to all the nature religions of the civilized races of antiquity. With the breakdown of this type of religion, the sacrificial ritual went under corresponding modification. Human sacrifices are associated with cannibalism, which means eating the flesh of men of alien nation or of hostile kin.⁴

The idea that God is the Lord of Creation, and hence the best, the most innocent, and the purest of His creatures should be offered to Him, accounts for the sacrifice of a son, of infants, of young boys, of human beings (*Narmedha*), of cows (*Gomedha*), of horses (*Asvamedha*), of buffaloes, goats, (*Ajamedha*), sheep, cocks, etc.

Even in the present refined and civilized times, we find some rulers of Indian States and principalities celebrating the brightest day in the annals of Hindu tradition, the *Vijayā Daśamī*, the day of the conquest of Rama over Ravana, by a wholesale massacre of buffaloes and goats in the name of religion, and a feast on the flesh thus obtained, is believed to be an act of religious piety.

The Muslim festival of Baquar-Id or Id-ul-Zuha commemorates the sacrifice of his son by Abraham ; and in India where the cow is held sacred as a mother by the Hindus, the cruel cow-slaughter has during the last 45 years or so, led to serious riots, resulting in considerable loss of human life, and injury to person and property.

² Herodotus, V-92.

³ Judges, ix-13.

⁴ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

Before many an altar of Hindu goddesses, thousands of animals and fowls are slaughtered by the priests, and their flesh distributed to the congregation as a sacrament. Such slaughter has hardened the hearts of the Hindus also, and they do not hesitate to meet their Muslim brothers in mortal combat, on religious pretexts.

Most heinous *himsā* is thus committed in the name of religion, and God, and goddesses.

The notion that the victim of a religious sacrifice is a fortunate being who suffers no pain, and attains bliss everlasting in the heavens on high, is obviously ill-founded. The moans and sufferings, the writhings and wriggings of the victim are tangible, and the loud noises created by the beating of drums and cymbals, and the chanting of hymns and psalms only serve to deaden sensibility of the insufferable sight. The sacrificial post, the *yūpa*, is an outstanding feature of the *aśramas* of Hindu sages. Why should there be need of a post to tie the victim to, if the sacrificial slaughter was not forcible killing of one who was unwilling to die.

Writing about the *Durga-Pūjā* sacrifices, Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal says :

“Goats only were sacrificed in our house, as a rule. I had then no sense of the cruelty of the thing. No tender feelings for the poor dumb animal that, when forced down into the artificial halter, used to look up to his tormentors with such pitiful gaze, with tears trickling down from the corners of its eyes, touched me then.”⁵

Although human sacrifices before grim goddesses, by the Thugs, and the self-immolation of deluded devotees at the sharp revolving wheel at Kasi, and beneath the chariot of Jagannatha at Puri, and of widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands, and the offering of human babies and tongues before goddesses are events of old history, we do occasionally hear of human sacrifices made in moments of religious frenzy. And animal sacrifices are daily offered in millions. Many a Hindu and many a Muslim sanctify all meat, obtained by killing, by reciting sacred words.

⁵ *Memories of My Life and Times* by Bipin Chandra Pal, 1932, p. 125.

Ahimsa League in London

It is a happy sign of the times that a World League of Ahimsa has been established in London by the Revd. E. F. Udny, M.A., as President, Mrs. M. F. St. John James, as Vice-President and Honorary Secretary, and Dr. W. Leslie Pearse, L. D. S., R. C. S., D. D. S., as Chairman, and Mr. Percy Hill as Honorary Treasurer at Ahimsa House, 137 Elgin Crescent, London W. 11. Their Motto is "Kill not for food, ornament or sport." The founders expect from a reformed diet the growth of a human and glorious civilization, where "they shall not hurt nor destroy.... for the earth shall be full of knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."⁶ The President says that "never can man progress spiritually until he is willing to abandon cruelty. We cannot connect the word righteousness with the murder of the weak, and helpless. For lack of teaching of 'Not-hurting', the Christian religion has been and is sadly impoverished. There is reason to think that Christ himself expressly insisted on abstinence from flesh. Those who accept the idea of re-incarnation would not find it difficult to believe that existence did not begin with the first birth in human form, but that life throughout all kingdoms was for ever one and divine in essence. A later generation would look back with horror and disgust at a practice which was now so general as hardly to excite comment or question. The benevolent intentions of many societies, seeking to relieve suffering of all kinds, were sadly hampered by the prevailing hardness of heart towards animals which hardened us even to our fellow men. It is no doubt an incredibly hard task to place before an indifferent, and pre-occupied world the message that all life is one, human, sub-human, and super-human, one in essence and destiny, moving slowly but steadily, however unconsciously, towards a glorious destiny. There is one great ladder for all living beings, whether they walk the earth on two legs or on four, whether they thread the waters with fins or stretch their wings to the air. The world is not deliberately cruel. It is but custom and thoughtlessness that support a cruel practice."⁷

The Flesh Food

While the principle of *Ahimsā* is gaining ground in the West, and vegetarianism is flourishing, we find that the evil habit of taking animal food is on the increase, spreading far and fast in India. There is at present a craze for moving in high society, and eating and drinking form the chief attractions of the upper social circles. The

⁶ Isaiah, xi-9.

⁷ Revd. E. F. Udny, in the *Ahimsa Journal*.

days of Epicurus seem to have returned. It looks as if we live to eat, and not that we eat to live. Wherever one meets a friend, some dish or drink is as a rule offered, insisted upon, and a refusal is considered rude. And further the eatables must be of a non-vegetarian character, for fashion so dictates. Nobody ever thinks, reasons out, considers, or decides—what he should eat or drink, how many times, and at what hours in the day or at night. Precious hours of life are frittered away in eating, drinking, smoking, talking and thus keeping the mouth ever engaged. The trade of the butcher, the confectioner, the keeper of hotels, restaurants, cafes and refreshment rooms is flourishing. Millions of living beings are daily killed to provide food and pleasure for the upper classes. The consequence is distress, discontent, disease, death. It is idle to argue that meat diet is necessary for human strength. Medical opinion is clearly and definitely against it. Chemical analysis has proved to demonstration that there is more vitality in vegetarian than in animal food.

It is said by some people that the abolition by statute of the taking of animal life, would be detrimental to the progress of civilised society. India was at a high pitch of power and glory when cow slaughter was prohibited by Akbar, the Great Moghul Monarch of India. In the vast territories of Bikaner State, covering an area of about 25,000 square miles and in some other Indian States, the killing of a bull, cow or calf is a very serious offence punishable with imprisonment which may extend to 7 years, and the sale or even the import of beef, and the killing of pigeons and peacocks are criminal offences. In the face of these facts it does not stand to reason that human progress would suffer if meat, fish, and fowl were abolished by statute at food, as least in countries where non-flesh diet is available.

Must Life be Killed ?

A Scientist writes :

Little animals feast on microscopically small organisms. As is usual where life is carried on in millions, the coral polyps go to fill the larder of fishes that thrive in their midst, the polyps being eaten when they thrust out their bodies with waving tentacles to gather in their own food supplies.

Swallows, swifts, small bats, and dragon-flies prey on insects. The trout is also responsible for keeping down insect life, his particular fancy being mayflies. As a result of a test made over four hours, it was found that a trout 2½ lbs. in weight ate 960 mayflies. And that was only one trout !

The lions and tigers and other members of the cat family enjoy their meal of raw flesh, as also do crocodiles, centipedes, dogs, weasels, sea-lions, walruses, seals, and birds of prey like the golden eagle.

Though it is disturbing to hear of the slaughter and spilling of blood that goes on all day and every day in Nature's kingdom, so that appetites may be satisfied, yet it must be remembered that under the present order of things, the flesh-eaters are playing a big and useful part in keeping down numbers and in balancing the scales of prolific life.

The argument that there are countries like the polar regions where no other food except flesh is available, is as irrelevant as the argument that life lives upon life, that wolves and tigers, cats and dogs, eagles and crows, fish and fowl, snakes and lizards etc., are all purely carnivorous ; and hence *himsā* is inevitable in the world. It may be inevitable in some circumstances ; but those circumstances do not apply to us. We must look to our immediate surroundings. Irrelevant speculation, supposititious arguments, and discussions as to what happens elsewhere, what happened in the past, and as to what may possibly happen in the future, lead not only to a sheer waste of time and energy but also to an abuse of intellect, and are positively injurious and harmful. Again, in a similar strain exclaims a carping critic, that the present cities have been turned into safe and secure, sanitary and sacred habitations as a consequence of the killing of wild and ferocious beasts, the destruction of death-dealing poisonous reptiles and the clearing away of thick forests and vegetable undergrowth, which involved gross *himsā* on an extensive scale ; and that if man would cease to kill the ferocious beasts, the venomous reptiles, and the vermin which destroy human life, domesticated animals, agriculture, and horticulture, life would become intolerable and impossible. Such speculations are advanced, not only by men of science, but by men of religion as well. They may or may not be excusable for the purpose of advancing honest scientific research, but they are quite out of place when indulged in by persons discussing religious principles. The essential truths, the universal principles, the basic axioms, do not admit of changing circumstances. They are eternal, everlasting, true in all circumstances, at all times, under all conditions. *Himsā* would not cease to be *himsā* by force of circumstances. Its resulting reaction, its karmic effect, as regards duration, kind, intensity and mass may vary with circumstances but its nature is unchanging. Even if it be excusable, or slightly harmful, in certain circumstances, it is never commendable.

What would happen if every living being in the world turned a Jaina, and ceased to commit *himsā* ? This is again an idle question. It leads to

nothing. It helps us in no way. It is no justification for the commission of *himsā*. Please do not bother about the world. The world will take care of itself. You would do well to take care of yourself. Do what you think best in the circumstances in which you are placed ; and do not worry about the others, how your action affects them. Do not cause injury to any living being by a voluntary act, or through thoughtlessness. When you have adopted the care and caution necessary under the circumstances, do not worry about the result of your action. But consider well, think carefully, act cautiously in right earnest, and do not delude yourself into a false belief that you are doing so. Do not shut your eyes to what is obvious and plain. Do your duty, but do it humanely, considerately, honestly, without the least malice, and without the slightest intention of causing injury to another. This is the gospel of *Ahimsā*. And remember that men who indulge in *himsā* and justify their actions on the ostensible plea of doing good to humanity in general, are really and actually moved by selfish desire of obtaining money, power, influence, popularity, name, fame, applause, advertisement, or some other personal benefit.

Hunting

To call the cruellest form of killing by the name of 'Sport' is an abuse of the word, a gross lie, and a despicable deception. What is fun to the boys is death to the frogs. Angling is fun indulged in on sacred Sundays. It is rather a desecration of the Sabbath, when creatures of water are baited out of their element and die an agonising death on dry land. The bringing down of chirping birds from their perches in trees by wounding them with stones thrown from a catapult, or with shots from a gun is cowardly cruelty, and no sport. The hunting of fox, deer, rabbit, etc, is equally cruel and cowardly. Big-game shooting is occasionally defended on the ground that the killing of ferocious animals saves men and beasts from their ravages. The pretext is false in fact. It is rarely that one goes with the sole object for shooting a man-eating, or a sheep-carrying wolf or a poisonous snake. Even when the avowed object of the hunter is protection of society from the ferocious wild animal, the real motives which impel him to such action are not humanitarian, but the desire of reward, the expectation of being called a brave man, or the excitement of the hunt.

A person may have a justification for causing the death of a wolf, or a tiger when he is compelled to do so in order to save the life of a man, or a beast. But a lion-hunt, or tiger-shooting as such, is a sin, though it may not be a crime under man-made law. A hunting expedition is an expensive pastime indulged in by persons in high position, who are not

only personally secure from all possible harm, but have all comforts and luxuries provided for them, and for their sport the poor beast is beaten out of his retreat, goaded into a temper, and is fired at from a safe distance and it is then that the killers find a pleasure in watching the death agonies of the unfortunate animal, and exhibit its stuffed skin as a trophy or memento of their bravery.

Shooting of thousands of birds by parties of pleasure-seekers, even during the Christmas week, and on a Sabbath, is also called sport ; and records are made and preserved of the thousands bagged by members of the party. This can hardly be differentiated from the sinful pleasure experienced by boys who stone to death a crawling serpent or a scorpion seeking for a hole to creep in, who enjoy the tearing up of a mouse by a cat, or who steal the eggs or young ones of a bird.

If there be any pleasure experienced in such killing, it can only be likened to the morbid feeling of satisfaction which Nadir Shah is said to have enjoyed when hordes of persons used to be brought in his presence bound all over and beheaded one after another. When asked who he was that he should enjoy such a general massacre of the innocents—for if he was a god, he should protect his creatures, if he was a god's messenger, or a founder of religion he should protect his followers, and if he was a king he should protect his subjects, he said he was 'God's Wrath' which had visited the people.

Killing for Trade in Bone and Leather

The shooting of elephants for the sake of their tusks has assumed so serious proportions that it is predicted that the elephant will be extinct in Africa within 50 years. Ivory is so valuable that people who have nothing else to do, turn to the game of elephant shooting and amass a fortune in a short time. Carried by greed, a group of aviators dropped several bombs from the sky on a herd of elephants. A number of them were killed outright, and many lay wounded. But most of the ivory was blown to bits by bombs, and the greedy aviators got much disappointment as a result of the cruel killing. Elephant must also command a high price in the local markets.

Plucking feathers of life birds and the skinning of living animals, for the sake of their feathers and skins, are facts which can not be denied. These are some of the worst forms of cruelty which can be imagined.

Kill the Killer

The doctrine “Kill the harmful before harm is caused” is very often relied upon as a justification for killing. If a serpent, a tiger, a scorpion, or a wolf, suddenly appears, the first impulse with those who believe in the doctrine of “Killing the injurer before he injures” or with the vast majority of people, who are swayed by vague fear, is to kill. Fear stupefies the intellect and drowns all thinking faculty. It is a false idea, a baseless notion, which has, like many others, become too common indeed, that such an animal or reptile is the enemy of man ; and that it is its nature to attack. In truth it never intends harm by nature or instinct. The fang of the serpent, the claws of a tiger, the jaws of a wolf or the sting of a scorpion are its protective weapons, designed for self-protection when attacked. They are undoubtedly carnivorous, and kill smaller beings for food. Like man they have not the means of obtaining food without causing injury. This is their bad *karma*, but it is not irremediable. Man-eating tigers and man-attacking serpents have been mentioned by naturalists and others ; but they have acquired these habits as the result of man’s aggression against them. They will go their own way and will not harm any person if such person has no intention of, and takes no step towards, causing them injury. They have been known to pass peacefully by the side or even over the body of a saint absorbed in concentration. The physical reaction, ordinarily caused by the touch of a serpent, scorpion, mosquito, wasp, or bee makes it apprehend harm to itself and it strikes in self-defence. Such a physical reaction does not happen in the case of a saint.

A snake would not bite even if it crosses a man’s body if man would lie motionless and not convey to the snake an idea that he would cause it harm. And if man has the courage to look on steadily at a snake, it would be speedily hypnotized and would, instead of causing harm, obey the dictates of man. If man entertains no ill-will towards other beings, none else is likely to cause him any harm whatsoever.

Sri Kuladananda Brahmachari in the book *Sri Sri Sadgurusanga*, part III, pages 125-126 writes as follows :

Mr. Anderson, a European gentleman, saw a sage in the forest of Jayadebpur, where he went out for a hunt. The elephant, on which Mr. Anderson was riding, got frightened, seeing a tiger and threw him down. Mr. Anderson fired twice or thrice at the tiger, but missed his aim. He then began to run followed by the tiger. He saw a naked sage in a copse

and ran to him. The sage asked him to sit and waving his hand forbade the tiger to advance. The tiger sat at distance, wagged its tail and growled for sometime and then went away. Mr. Anderson was astonished to see the wonderful phenomenon and asked the sage how he was able to pacify the tiger. The sage replied, "One who has no *himsā*, is never injured by tigers or snakes. Because you have a feeling of *himsā* in your mind, you are attacked by wild animals." Mr. Anderson from that day became a vegetarian and gave up shooting. He was seen by many people in Dacca and Chittagong when this change had come over him.

In the same book. Part I, pages 151-152 Brahmachari Kuladananda writes about one Nanga Baba who occupied a mud hill in Fayzabad. During the course of a target practice by soldiers, a notice was served on him, announcing the time when the practice will be held and he was told that no one would be responsible for his death if he did not go elsewhere. The practice began and bullets whistled past his body on all sides, but he merely lifted his hand in front of his face and no harm came to him. Colonel Crawley who was in charge of the operation, and who was witnessing everything from a distance through binoculars, was astonished at the indifferent and calm attitude of the sage, and when everything was over, went to Nanga Baba and saluted him with reverence.

Kill the Infidel

Another form of *himsā* is that which arises from religious or superstitious persecution. Socrates was compelled to drink the cup of hemlock poison. Joan of Arc was burnt to death as a witch. The terrors of the Inquisition are matters of history. The crucifixion of Christ and the terrible persecution of the early Christian Fathers are also matters of record. So is the tragedy enacted at Karbala on the bank of the Euphrates, where Yazid cut off all supplies and prevented the 72 followers of Hasan and Husain from even taking water from the river, all of whom were killed, and their women folk taken as prisoners. The imprisonment of Vasudeva and Devaki, and killing of their 8 babies one after another by Kansa, their uncle; the attempt of Hiranya Kasipu to murder Bhakta Prahlada, the innocent boy devotee; the cruel murder of Hakikat Rai, the tortures inflicted on Sikh Gurus, Arjun Deo and others, are matters of Hindu tradition and history. The poisoning of Swami Dayananda Saraswati, the murders of Pandit Lekh Ram, Swami Sardananda and Rajpal are recent happenings of the present times. The murderers have after a sentence of death by a Court of Law, and execution at the gallows, been applauded as martyrs.

Kill the Enemy

Political *himsā*, the killing of armies in battle, murder *en masse* is justified as a necessity for national existence. On a declaration of war, each and every one of the countries engaged in war, consider that theirs is a just cause, and the hostile party is in the wrong. All the combatants pray to the same one God, to help them in destroying the homes and hearths of the hostile people, and pray for victory, which spells destruction of the opposing armies. Such is the excitement created by the priests, the clergy, the followers of the Prince of Peace, that even churches and hospitals, schools and colleges, libraries and museums, factories and workshops, shops and granaries, are not spared, nor are friends and relations. The crime committed at Kuruksetra ruined India that was. Mahabharata devastated Bharata Varsa, the land of Bharata. The Battles of the Crusade, the Wars of the Roses, the French Revolution, the War of American Independence, the Havoc of 1857, the Revolution in Russia, the Great War in which India and the leading great Powers of the World were engaged for five long years have very largely contributed to *himsā* on a huge scale, which though justified as political necessity, is *himsā* unpardonable.

Municipal Slaughter

A very cruel slaughter and on a very extensive scale, is committed in the name of municipal and national economy, for the preservation of health and of property from pests. The wholesale destruction of stray dogs and of rats is horribly cruel. Widespread campaigns for the extermination of locusts were organised by Provincial Governments and Indian States, in which high-salaried officers, with high-sounding academic degrees, obtained from Foreign Universities, were engaged, and heavy allowances and retinues and expensive corps of subordinate officials were placed at their disposal, with costly appliances and apparatus. A local cess was imposed by Provincial Governments for this special purpose, and thus indirectly every person was made to contribute to and share in the commission of this horrible *himsā*. And it is not certain whether the value of the crops saved was less or greater than the amount of expenditure incurred in these big schemes. Again it is possible that statistics carefully made may prove to demonstration, that taking into consideration the vast extent of India as a whole, a flight of locusts, which is an occasional visitation, is not such a dire distress as it is imagined to be. The locusts are ephemeral insects, they do not live long, the period during which they cause damage of crops is limited, and the extent

of damage occasioned would not produce a famine of grain, or some such calamity in the country ; and it may also be possible that the excrement and dead bodies of locusts dying may prove fertilising agents and the next crops may more than compensate the damage. If man is careful and industrious enough, no pests will cause any such damage as is insufferable or very significant.

Himsā in the name of Science

Himsā, again, is committed on an extensive scale in the name of science for the avowed benefit of mankind. Vivisection is extolled as a virtue because it is pursued by eminent scientists, and under the patronage of the Government of many countries. But if truth had its way, it should be declared to be a crime. The preparation of vaccination lymphs cause such amount of pain and agony to a young and healthy calf that a person, whose heart retains its natural tenderness and has not been hardened by the continued callous practice, can hardly endure its sight.

The *Abolitionist* of London, says : “Let us leave no stone unturned during 1932 to abolish this horrible practice of torturing sentient creatures for our *supposed* benefit. In Austria, vivisection institutions have been permitted only in Vienna, Graz, Styrea, Innsbruck, and Tyrol. And even there, vivisection merely for the purpose of illustrating physiological processes is absolutely forbidden. And in cases where it is allowed, the lowest species of animals must be used, and only under anaesthetics. *In a Vivisection Laboratory* is a book which gives 80 instances of the horrible experiments done in the name of science, by persons held in high esteem, who have received honours and rewards. Dr. Carrel and Dr. Banting, Nobel Prize recipients, cut out the organs of the body and kept the animals alive as long as possible. Sir John Rose Bradford cut out the kidney of fox terriers piecemeal, resulting in various symptoms—diarrhoea, vomiting, emaciation, etc. and the animals lived for varying periods, days, weeks, or months. Sir Victor Horsley and Dr. Blair Bell of Liverpool, have cut out the parathyroids or pituitary glands of dogs, producing horrible deformities. Banting, in Canada in 1922, discovered Insulin (which appears to have increased the death rate from Diabetes) by cutting out the pancreas of dogs. Mantegazza, an Italian who died in 1910, performed the experiment of piercing the feet with many nails for preparing material for his book *The Physiology of Pain*. Squirt-ing poison in the brain, inoculation in the eyes, injections in the ears, inducing abscesses, and blows on the skull to create epilepsy, are experiments which have been performed by eminent scientists.

There is a note, on page 5 of *The Abolitionist* dated January 1, 1932, of the serious fact that during the last 25 years no fewer than 248 children under five years died from vaccination, and yet only 94 of the same age from small pox. The statistics given there prove to demonstration that inoculations by vaccines for diphtheria, scarlet fever, measles, whooping-cough, typhoid, cancer, diabetes, thyroid, tetanus, for phthisis by tuberculin, and for syphilis by salvarsan, have increased the death-rate, and the discontinuance of inoculation has decreased it. The unanimous decision of the Royal Commission on Vivisection was that the tuberculin discovery of Professor Koch was a '*vast failure*'. They added that an access to increased air and light, avoidance of overcrowding, and the provision of proper food will serve to diminish the incidence and the mortality of the disease.

Medical opinion is gaining ground that the inoculated and thus 'protected' animals are serious carriers of disease because of the quantities of poison put into them. So are human beings who are inoculated. We run grave risk in transferring their blood to our veins. Infinitely more serious is the risk of transferring dormant diseases from cattle to humans by vaccinating with bovine lymph. This accounts for the enormous amount of bovine '*consumption*' in humans. And consumption and cancer are intimately related.

Inoculations, and injection treatment for every sort of disease have come into fashion, and have become widespread because they inflate the bills of the surgeon and his clinical laboratory assistants, and the rich people take a pride in undergoing an expensive course of treatment. In many cases the Doctors imagine and thus create disease. Their earnings increase with the complications in treatment of diseases, and they exploit the rich who have more money than common sense. Diseases have increased in their variety, and in their extent, with the increase of the medical profession, just as litigation, false and dilatory pleas in law, have flourished with the increase of the number of law-courts and lawyers, and criminal returns have swollen up with the strengthening and encouragement of, the Police, and the improvement in prospects in that Department.

It is a matter of every day occurrence that frogs, rabbits, etc. are killed in College Laboratories to educate young men in the science of Biology. How very strange and paradoxical it is that by causing death, people wish to learn the science of Life.

Costly organizations called Research Institutes for scientific investigations established with the ostensible object of preventing diseases like malaria, leprosy, goitre, cholera, plague, tuberculosis are rather expensive experiments of doubtful utility, when the cost incurred in maintaining them is taken into consideration. Removing the economic distress of people is a surer method of prevention of disease. The *himsā* committed in the intentional, pre-arranged, determined killing of millions of living beings is certainly gross and serious.

The social and convivial custom of eating from the same dish, biting off from the same fruit, biscuit or cake, and drinking from the same cup is responsible for the spread of many contagious and infectious diseases. Kissing has by medical experts been pronounced to be a dangerous medium of dissemination of disease. The use of tinned provisions, preserved fruits, condensed milk, aerated and bottled waters, ice creams, teas and coffees, and the habit of smoking and drinking contribute in no small measure to bad health and disease.

In European countries, and in Australia the newspapers are full of accounts of ravages to agriculture by birds, beasts and insects, and of discussions of scientific methods for killing these birds, beasts, and insects. One paper says that damage by mice to wheat crops in Melbourne has been worse than what happened in 1917, 15 years ago. Another suggests a poisoning scheme for the eradication of the dingo and the fox.

The extent of damage, and the possible risk is more the creation of an active imagination than a dangerous reality. Protect your property certainly ; and peaceful means will suggest themselves to you if you do not permit yourself to be misled by pre-conceived notions of killing, which result from habitual meat-eating, shooting and hunting, and to which all schemes of wilful destruction are attributable. India has been an agricultural country. Her people have been leading a pastoral life. Every household had its cultivated land, and herd of cattle. And India never suffered from such imaginary fears as disturb the western scientist. Mice, rabbits, locusts, monkeys, crows, pigeons, and pests of sorts have been causing damage to crops and grain-stores, and yet the produce and stocks have been plentiful. This reminds one of the remarks made by a European lady when she noticed an Indian cooking, and observed that an open fire entailed much loss of firewood energy, and as every household cooked for itself, there was much loss of time and human energy which could be saved by establishing bakeries and restaurants, eating-houses, and confectionaries. The remedy suggested is worse than the disease even if the diagnosis be correct. Mass production of cooked

food is really an evil which is responsible for many of the diseases and ill-health so prevalent in the present age of expensive living and feverish activity. Simplicity of diet, simplicity in games, simplicity of amusements, simplicity of life in general were the special features of happy old India proverbially the land of Peace and Plenty, Strength and Longevity.

Notwithstanding the so-called progress in surgery, bacteriology, and vaccines, the fact remains that human longevity, human happiness, human health, human strength, and physical development have been going down from generation to generation. The description of the statures of our ancestors, as given in ancient books, may be called myths and fictions, by the learned men of the present day, but it is a fact which must be admitted that the mummified bodies of the kings of Egypt and the fossils of ancient people are no dwarfish structures of the modern times. The descriptions given in the *Illiad* and the *Odysey*, in the *Shahnama* of Firdousi, in the *Ballads of Alha and Udal*, and in the pages of *Tod's Rajasthan* prove to demonstration that our ancestors were certainly far superior to us in physical stature and prowess, in courage and endurance, in mental and spiritual power. In the *Shahnama* Rustam is called bronze-bodied ; and the warroirs of olden times used to wear an armour the mere weight of which would be difficult for us to carry. The heavy swords, some of which are exhibited in museums and armouries, would not be easily lifted up by our strong men, what to say of their being wielded with such effect as to cut the warrior and the horse in twain. The wars, battles, and fights of our times are mere butcheries and wholesale destruction without any element of personal courage and valour. Can one imagine a worse form of killing than the bombing from aeroplanes of hospitals, churches, prisons, colleges, and cities, or the cannonading from long distance of miles.

Meat-eating, wine-drinking, the habit of taking ice and aerated waters, smoking, eating too much and too often are the evils of the present day. It is a preconceived notion that strength of body comes from meat diet alone. Flesh diet may bring about brute strength and animal passions but real power proceeds from the mind and not from the body, It is the soul-force which counts, and not physical weight or muscular appearance.

Kill, Kill, Kill is the cry of the day. Millions of lives are killed every day in the name of religion as sacrifices, in the name of health, for food, in fun or sport, in the name of science, for experiments, for rejuvenation to supply glands to man and woman, in the name of sanitation, and

prevention of diseases, or with the ostensible object of protection and prosperity of agriculture, horticulture, arboriculture, and pomology. And the result is that the world is deteriorating day by day, in physical prowess, intellectual strength, and spiritual development.

Is Killing Ever An Act of Mercy ?

There is yet another form of *himsā*, however, which is commonly considered to be an act of mercy, and applauded as such, and it may well be considered here. It is a prevalent practice these days to shoot a horse, a cow, or a dog, which has been seriously injured or which has contracted a dangerous or incurable disease ; and such killing is acclaimed an act of mercy. Is not the unfortunate animal killed because it is not profitable from a mercenary or economic point of view to spend money and attention over it, and the sight of its sufferings is too painful to be tolerated. If killing under such circumstances be an act of mercy, why should not charity begin at home, and why should it not be extended to one's own relations, friends and mankind in general. We hear of suicides under such conditions, which means moral weakness. We have heard that soldiers hopelessly wounded in battle, and passengers mortally injured in railway accidents have been thrown in a hollow and buried, or hurled in a river or sea to be washed away ; but barring such exceptional cases, every possible effort is made to preserve human life as long as possible. One can understand the practical difficulty in bestowing the same care, attention, and expense on animals as in the case of human beings, and it may be pleaded in extenuation ; but to call such killing an act of mercy is to cheat one's own inner conscience. It is *himsā*, pure and simple. We have of course left out of consideration the other reason based on philosophy, the reality of things, that every soul is the maker, and the master of its destiny, its own tempter and seducer, and its own redeemer ; and it must suffer and work out the resulting effects of its own previous acts, committed whether in the present or prior births, or conditions of its existence. No other soul can suffer for it vicariously, and no other can act as its redeemer or saviour. And further the destruction of the present body, diseased or injured, does not sever the connection between the soul and the body, for ever hereafter, and the next body which the soul on leaving the present one must immediately inhabit is not likely, in the circumstances, to be better, healthier, or stronger. Man's duty clearly is to help a soul in distress, to alleviate and mitigate its suffering by attention, service, and assistance, but not to destroy the body under the false notion that such a destruction would terminate the sufferings which the embodied soul has to endure as a matter of pre-ordained certainty. The agony is thereby really, and truly

speaking, intensified and prolonged. There is always the possibility of life surviving the worst attacks of disease and the severest forms of injury in accidents ; and the possible opportunity to the soul of redemption, reformation, regeneration, or at least improvement in that condition of life is rendered impossible by killing the body.

The Survival of the Fittest

Another argument in support of *himsā*, commonly advanced, believed in, and acted upon is that 'life lives upon life', and 'the fittest must survive' ; and that the lower forms of life were created by God for the use and benefit of the higher forms, and for Man, the Lord of Creation, to be used for food and otherwise. It is further said that even the most rigid vegetarian and the strictest follower of Jainism cannot live without causing injury to some sort of life. The Jains, it is said, believe that water, air, fire, earth and vegetables have life, and it is not possible for them, however much they may profess a concern for saving life to abstain from causing injury to such forms of life, and to other life organisms such as ants, flies, worms and vermin in the ordinary affairs of life.

Persons, who argue in this strain, have no idea of the full significance of *Ahimsā*, and of the manner in which it is to be practised. Before meeting the argument, it is therefore necessary to explain the full significance of *Ahimsā*, and the course of discipline which would enable one to progress by gradual steps in the observance of its practice.

The Significance of Ahimsā

To discuss *Ahimsā* from the Jaina point of view. *Himsā* means violence, injury, harm, deprivation, pain, suffering, mutilation, disfigurement, in any shape or form. It is defined as injury to the vitalities, caused through want of care and caution. The vitalities in a living body are enumerated as ten, the three forces of thought, speech, and body, the five senses, of touch, taste, smell, hearing, and sight, respiration, and age or duration of life. Every embodied living being possesses at least four of these ten vitalities, the body, the sense of touch, respiration and age. An embodied soul which possesses this minimum number of vitalities is called irrational one-sensed, such as vegetable-bodied beings. The irrational two-sensed soul possesses six vitalities, viz., the power of speech, and the sense of taste also, such as a worm. The three-sensed soul has seven, the sense of smell being added to these, i.e. an ant. A four-sensed soul possesses eight viz, the sense of sight as well,

like a fly. The five-sensed soul has nine, the sense of hearing being added to these, *e. g.*, irrational animals. All rational animals and human beings have all the 10 vitalities.

If existing separately, by itself, neither the soul, nor the body is susceptible to any injury at all. Injury is caused to the vitalities in an embodied soul, which feels pained at such injury. The amount of injury caused, and of the pain thereby occasioned would depend upon the number of vitalities, and the scope and capacity of the vitalities to which injury is caused.

The above-numerated ten are material vitalities—*dravya prāṇa*. As distinguished from these, a soul has conscious vitalities, *bhāva prāṇa*, which are the very attributes of *Jīva*, such as consciousness, peacefulness, happiness, power. And with reference to the conscious vitalities, the *himsā* caused is called *bhāva himsā*, as distinguished from *dravya himsā* which arises from causing injury to the material vitalities.

Every evil thought every evil word, and every evil act causes *himsā*. “Do to others as you expect others to do unto you. Don’t do to others, what you do not approve for yourself”, should be the guiding principles in all affairs of life.

Bhāva himsā is caused by entertaining impure thought-activities such as anger, pride, deceit, greed, sorrow, fear, disdain, sex-desires. Such thought activities injure the real nature of the Soul, purity, perfection, direct knowledge of all substances, in all their varying conditions at one and the same moment, infinite power, unruffled peacefulness, and bliss everlasting and unmixed. *Dravya himsā* proceeds from *bhāva himsā*, which precedes it. The thought is a father to the act. An evil thought vitiates the purity of the Soul, and is followed by a sinful act varying in its degree of evil, with the vicious intensity of the thought. Equanimity, non-attachment, self absorption, self-realization would make the commission of *dravya himsā* an impossibility.

Ahimsā means abstention from *himsā*. *Ahimsā* in its full significance has been realized, preached, and practised only by, and in the Jaina religion. Jainism is synonymous with *Ahimsā*. It is *Ahimsā Dharma*, the religion of *Ahimsā*. ‘*Ahimsā Parmo Dharmah*’—*Ahimsā* is the Highest Religion—is emblazoned on the banner of Jainism. Its philosophy and conduct are broad-based on the solid foundation of *Ahimsā*, which has throughout, and consistently, been followed to its logical conclusion.

It is the first and foremost of the five vows, which a Right believer, on the path of Right-Conduct, follows. The other four are abstention from falsehood, from unpermitted possession or user of another's property, from sexual intercourse, and from possession of temporalities.

The five vows are followed in the completest form, and to their fullest extent, by saints, *viz.*, persons who have cut off all connection with temporal objects, have adopted asceticism, and are ever engaged in austerities, study, discourse, contemplation, meditation, and self-realisation.

They are followed in a lesser degree, and to an extent varying with his spiritual advancement by every Right-believer, who has entered upon the path of Liberation.

Jainism is a practical religion and ensures worldly peace, prosperity and progress. A good Jain may happen to be engaged in a worldly pursuit of any kind. He may be a king, a statesman, a military commander, a soldier, a trader, an artisan or an agriculturist, and yet he is in a position to adopt the vow of *Ahimsā* and other vows, to the extent of his limitations and capacities, situation and circumstances in life, and be a good and true Jain.

The profession and practice of *Ahimsā* is not, as has been wrongly assumed or asserted by misinformed, ill-informed, or un-informed authors, writers, and speakers, incompatible or inconsistent with social progress, municipal administration, political development, human comforts, health, hygiene, commerce and agriculture.

It has already been said that for a Jain house-holder, the practice of *Ahimsā* is a question of degree, and would vary with his capacity, and limitations, physical and spiritual. The principle, the truth, the article of faith, is "to live and let live".

When belief in the principle of *Ahimsā* is truly and firmly established, a Right-believer who has not developed his capacities so as to follow it completely, and to the fullest extent, will yet refrain from causing *himsā* as far as possible, while engaged in the usual daily pursuits of his avocation in life. He gives up the commission of *himsā*, deliberately, and he is as careful as he possibly can be, in avoiding its commission in the performance of the daily duties of life. He renounces the use of flesh and wine, which cannot be obtained without the commission of

himsā, as food. He would not knowingly and on purpose cause injury to any living being, howsoever low in the scale of vitalities. But a Jain householder, following the discipline of his order, the smaller vows, called *aṇu-vratas*, may be guilty of *himsā* unwittingly, or unavoidably caused, or caused without design or pre-meditation.

So far as a householder is concerned, *himsā* is divided, into various kinds. It is either *ārambhaja*, viz., that which arises from engagements in occupations, in spite of all care and caution, or *anārambhaja* otherwise called *samkalpī*, viz, that which is committed intentionally or knowingly e. g., hunting, offering sacrifices, killing for food, amusement, or decoration, or out of mischief, enmity, malice, or jealousy.

Intentional Hurting

Samkalpī himsā is entirely renounced by a householder and may well be avoided by every thinking person, without any injury, harm, or serious inconvenience to himself. If he is placed in circumstances. where he cannot avoid the commission of *himsā*, his act would be *himsā* all the same, but the degree of culpability would vary with the varying circumstances. Let us take a few cases by way of illustration, and leave the inquisitive disciple, or the thinking scholar to discuss the rest with persons who are their superiors in knowledge and conduct.

There is a festering wound in the body, full of maggots. One would remove the maggots as carefully as he can, wash the wound and dress it up.

While going on an urgent business, one finds a swarm of ants, or earth worms on the ground in front. He would try to avoid crushing them by deviating from the path, and if that be impracticable, he would tread gently and carefully, and avoid hurting the living beings as far as is possible.

A fly is caught in a spider's web, and he runs to sting it to death. A Jain householder would do what he can to extricate the fly by breaking the web. This act is *Ahimsā*, protection of life, though some little injury has been caused to the spider in the damage to its web, and in the loss of its food.

A person is suffering from a disease caused by bacilli. A Jain Doctor would not mind giving such medicine as he knows would kill the germs. His act would certainly be *himsā*, but *himsā* of two-sensed beings and

thus of a trifling degree when compared to the *Ahimsā*, the good, resulting from protecting a five-sensed person. Again his motive in giving the medicine is not to kill the germs but to save the patient, and that determines the resultant karmic effect.

Innumerable germs exist in the human body and they die in consequence of a fast for want of nourishment. Observance of a fast would thus be *himsā* in a way, but the avoidance of *himsā* in ways innumerable, while fasting, more than outweighs the technical *himsā*.

What is indefensible from any point of view is a host of bad habits which very many people copy quite thoughtlessly, such as crushing a fly or a mosquito to death, the use of fly-paper, or flit, throwing out a rat to a dog or a cat, stoning frogs, shooting birds with a catapult, or otherwise, stealing eggs, abusing, slapping or kicking one in an inferior or dependant position. Such are the commonest acts of *himsā* which are committed every moment, through sheer bad habit ; and these should be stopped early at home and in school.

Jain *Ahimsā* while a basic principle of religion is the foundation for all ethics, morality, good social, municipal, national, and inter-national relations, and must always be kept in view, to guide ever and anon in every word, thought, or deed. The extent to which *Ahimsā* can be practised would of course depend upon the varying circumstances of life. It leads to action, and not to inaction. The action must however be well-considered, and performed with due care and caution, without any ill-will, malice, anger, greed, deceit, pride, or passion. It would tend to an all-round progress, in all departments of life, and spheres of action. A good Jain householder, would be a good and successful citizen, soldier, or king, mindful of his duty to others, and to himself.

According to the Jaina scripture known as *Padma Purāṇa*, Sri Ramacandra, the hero of the *Rāmāyana*, attained *mokṣa*, or *nirvāṇa*, became a worshipful Arhat, and is a worshipable Siddha, because of having followed the discipline of a saint, and having thereby got rid of all karmic contact, although he killed many men in his encounter with Ravana, the king of Ceylon, and in other skirmishes. Such killing was *himsā*, but the karmic contamination was not deep because of absence of malice, and such as was neutralised by austerities, control of speech and action, meditation and concentration of mind.

Hanumana, the great General and Commander-in-Chief of Sri Ramacandra's army also attained emancipation. So did millions of others.

The five Pandava brothers who were the victorious heroes of the greatest war of epic India, a war which caused the destruction of the flower of Indian chivalry, counted in millions, were also good Jaina rulers of territories. They adopted the vows of sainthood, and after severe austerities, and deep meditation attained the highest and purest point of soul-purity—the Divinity.

The Emperor Candragupta Maurya was a good Jain monarch of historical times. He sat on the Magadha throne in 322 B.C. and conquered the North-west country up to the Hindukush. His territories extended up to Kathiawar in the west, and included Punjab, United Provinces and Bihar. He also adopted the vows of a Jain saint at the feet of Bhadrabahu Svami and performed austerities of the order. This is proved to demonstration by the rock inscriptions at Sravana Belgola in Mysore.

Camunda Raya was a brave General and a great Minister of the Jaina King, Rayamalla, who reigned in the tenth century and belonged to the Ganga dynasty ; the ancestors of which dynasty ruled at Ayodhya, and were descended from the ancient Ikshvaku family, founded by Rsabha-deva, the first Tirthankara. He belonged to the clan of Brahma Ksatriya. He won many battles, and received many titles, such as Samara Dhurandhara, 'the Leader in Battle', Vira Martanda, 'the Sun among the Brave', Ranaraja Simha, 'a Great Lion in Battles', Vairikulakaladanda, 'Sceptre of Death for the Host of Enemies', Bhuja Martanda, 'The Sun among the Powerful-armed', Samara Parasurama, 'Parasurama in Battle'. He was a great scholar also. He wrote a commentary on *Gommaṭasāra* in the Canarese language in presence of the author Sri Nemi Candra Siddhanta-Cakravarti. He also composed *Cāmuṇḍa Rāya Purāṇa* in Canarese, and *Caritra-sāra*, a treatise on the practices of ascetics, in Sanskrit. He took the vows of a layman from the Great Saint Ajitasena. The beautiful temple at Candragiri, Sravana Belgola, district Hasan, Mysore, was constructed by him. In 1983, he constructed the great and wonderful image of Sri Bahubali, called Gommata Svami or Gommatesvara which is cut out of a rock, is 57 feet high, with every limb and minor limb, in exquisite proportion.

King Kharavela of the dynasty of Maha-Megha-Vahana was also a good Jain monarch, who ascended the throne in his 16th year. His victories and his charities are recorded in the Rock Inscription at Hathi Gumpā near Bhuvanesvara, Orissa Province.

The Parmar and Solanki Rajputs of Osia, near Jodhpur were converted to Jainism some 2,400 years ago.

Maharaj Kumarapala of Anahilpur Patan, Gujarat, was also a Jain monarch, a devout disciple of Sri Hemacandra Acarya. His territories extended up to Kolhapur in the south, Kashmir in the north, Magadha in the east and Sindh in the west. In Patan, the capital of his kingdom, there were 1800 multi-millionaires. He was not only learned and bountiful, but led a controlled and regulated life. After the queen's death, he did not marry again and observed the vows of sexual purity. The Jain temples at Taranga Hill were built by him. He ruled from 1143 to 1174, having ascended the throne at the age of 50. He gave one crore of rupees annually to alleviate the distress of poverty-stricken people. In recognition of his exemplary personal merit of character he was given many titles by his subjects, such as Paranari-Sahodara, 'Brother to the Wives of Others', the Jiva-data, 'Giver of Life', Vicara-Caturmukha, 'All-round Thinker', Dinoddharaka, 'Uplifter of the Fallen', Raja-Rsi, 'Saint-king'.

The Bhandaris of Jodhpur who trace their descent from the Cauhana Rajputs of Ajmer were converted to Jainism in 992 by Yasobhadra Suri. They were learned scholars, wise administrators and brave soldiers, loyal to the Jodhpur Raj.

Raja Amoghavarsa of Malkhed, in the territory of Hyderabad Deccan, ruled from 815 to 877, and then adopted the vows of a Jaina saint.

Bacchraj, the founder of the Bacchawat clan, who came with Rao Bikaji and helped in establishing the kingdom of Bikaner in 1488, was a Jain Rajput.

Ārambhī Himsā

Ārambhaja or *Ārambhī -himsā* may again be sub-divided as *Udyamī*, *Grhārambhī* and *Virodhī*. *Udyamī* is *himsā* unavoidably committed in the exercise of one's profession. Permissible professions according to Jaina writers are (1) the profession of a soldier, *asī*, (2) of a scribe, *masī*, (3) of agriculture, *kṛṣī*, (4) trade, *vāṇijya*, (5) of an artisan, *śilpa*, (6) intellectual, *vidyā*. *Grhārambhī-himsā* is that which is unavoidably committed in the performance of necessary domestic purposes, such as preparation of food, general bodily and household cleanliness, construction of buildings, wells, gardens, and keeping cattle. *Virodhī himsā* is unavoidably committed in defence of person and property, against thieves, robbers, dacoits, assassins, assailants, and enemies, in meeting their aggression and in causing the least possible injury necessary in the circumstances in which one may find himself.

Complete *Ahimsā* in its highest aspect is practised by one who has renounced all worldly pursuits, and has adopted the discipline of a saint's life. A true believer in the householder's stage abstains from *samkalpī himsā*, but is not able to completely avoid *arambhī himsā*, although he tries his best to avoid it as far as possible, and makes a steady progress in such endeavour.

It would thus be clear that the dictates of Jainism and the practice of *Ahimsā* are not only quite consistent with, but also helpful in material progress and prosperity, social, economic and national advancement. It is an entirely mistaken notion that *Ahimsā* makes cowards of men, or that Jain *Ahimsā* has led to the weakening of the Indian nation, and to the fall of the Indian Empire.

Jainism, a Practical Religion

Jainism is a practical religion. It is a religion which can be practised while one is engaged in the daily transactions of life in this world. It helps in the everyday affairs of mundane life. It adds to the success of a businessman, of a man in power and responsible position, of an artisan, and an artist, and of a labourer in the street, and of a man who is placed in the lowest, the dirtiest, and the worst position in life. It is a religion which can not only be professed but lived. A Jain, while professing and practising Jainism, may well be a victorious king, a successful statesman, administrator, executive or judicial officer, a successful factory manager, an inventor, a scientist, a doctor, a soldier, an engineer, a tradesman, a lawyer, a farmer, a labourer, an artisan, or an artist.

Apostles of Ahimsa as already shown have been rulers of vast territories, have fought battles, have vanquished armies, and have founded empires. They have awarded merited punishment to murderers, robbers, ravishers, thieves, swindlers, and criminals of sorts. The land in their charge used to be proverbially fertile, and the people happy and prosperous.

If a country is attacked, the Government will certainly resist the invasion, will fight battles, in which many may be killed, and many more wounded, property destroyed and general peace and prosperity threatened. A citizen may also cause injury to his assailant in order to defend his person and property. And all this will be acting within the principle of *Ahimsā* as practised by a householder. The injury in such cases is not caused with the primary intention, desire or design to cause harm. The motive is the decisive factor. Some carping critics of *Ahimsā* go to the

length of saying that why should one believing in the doctrine of *Ahimsā* eat anything at all, for the procurement and preparation of food of any sort whatsoever inevitably causes some sort of injury to some living beings ; why should one take any medicine at all, for a medicine kills living moving bacteria which cause illness ; and why should one breathe at all, for with every breath one inhales a number of living germs which are destroyed on entering the body. As has been said above, a householder's vow of *Ahimsā* goes only so far as it is practicable, in the varying circumstances of each individual case. But one must always exercise his intelligence in deciding for himself, in an honest manner. He must not under-estimate his own power of endurance, he must not entertain imaginary apprehensions. In short he must not deceive himself. He must act after due care and caution. And even a saint, observing the vow of *Ahimsā*, and the other vows, to the fullest extent, has of necessity to cause some sort of *himsā*, in movements of the body, in eating and drinking, breathing ; but that is unavoidable and by gradual spiritual advancement he reaches a stage when all movements of body, speech, and mind cease to be, and when full knowledge and self-realisation is acquired.

from Introduction to *Puruṣārtha Siddhyupāya*

Ahimsa as the Key to World Peace*

CHAMPAT RAI JAIN

If I were asked to name one remedy for all forms of ills the flesh is heir to, I would at once say *ahimsā*.

Ahimsā which means not hurting, not injuring, is the principal weapon of Jainism to fight with against all kinds of evils and misfortunes. By practising it men have attained to the Divine Status, and all that is implied in that expression. It is not a mere theory that I am putting before you ; times out of number has the principle been put to the test and never been known to fail.

Jainism points out the natural antagonism between the soul and matter ; the body is the prison of the soul, and flesh its bitterest enemy. Owing to the dominion of the flesh the soul is undergoing suffering in a number of ways, and all its rank and power have been lost. Immortal by nature, it is now living terror-struck with Death ; though omniscient and blissful in its own right, it is ignorant and miserable now !

Yet its Divine nature has not been altogether destroyed ; only its Perfection in that regard has been curtailed and imposed upon, as its wings were sewn up, and it has been reduced to the condition of helplessness in consequence.

The evil influence of the flesh can, however, be destroyed, and the soul released from its power. And *ahimsā* is the one weapon which can actually bring about this devoutly wished for consummation.

Wherever *ahimsā* has been put into practice, it has speedily cut the bondage of flesh, and restored the lost Divinity and Perfection to the Soul. Jainism, therefore, rightly lays all the stress it can on the practising of *ahimsā*, that is non-violence, under all circumstances.

The significance of *ahimsā* is that you should hurt no one, by word, thought or deed ; and you must not even entertain the desire to hurt any one. For the doctrine is applicable to all the three stages of evil-doing, namely, intention, preparation and the actual commission of the wrongful deed.

* Delivered at Morrison Hotel, Chicago, under the auspices of the World Fellowship of Faiths, on 30th August, 1933.

He who practises *ahimsā* must also refrain from employing another to do the hurtful act ; and he should not encourage one who has done the deed afterwards, otherwise he would become tainted with the evil as an accessory after the fact, as they put it in the terminology of Law.

In regard to its scope *ashimsā* is not limited to humanity ; on the contrary, its application must be extended to all living beings. The Jains rejoice when they read in the scriptures of other religions statements like this ; “I require mercy and not sacrifice !” These adequately show how far the scope and the protection is to be extended. Let it be clearly understood that if you have no love for the life in the animal, you will not have it for man either. There is no such thing as a sudden rush of affection for one form of life all at once.

Show no violence to any one ; hurt no one ; injure none—not even an insect—this is the Gospel of life. For Life is dear to all, and *ahimsā* actually allows all to enjoy life, unhampered and unmolested by any one else. *Ahimsā* really means, molest no one, not even your own soul !

Those who hurt or injure others without justification hurt their own souls first. You cannot injure any one or even entertain the desire to molest him without becoming tarnished with the taint of the contemplated evil. It is even conceivable that the being whom you wish to hurt may escape scatheless ; but the action (even the thought) makes a mark on your disposition, engenders, strengthens or modifies an evil tendency in the mind, and in this way affects your own soul by *blackening* its character. Thus all actions involving *himsā* (evil-doing) leave a dark stain on the soul of the doer of inequity. The future destiny of the soul is composed of its won disposition or character. Where the character is merciful and marked with love and solicitude and sympathy, the future is excellent and joyful and glorious ; but where the heart has become hard, black, cruel, merciless and unfeeling there you have nothing but misfortune and calamity in store for its possessor.

It is not possible to go into detail in the time-limit of a short speech in a gathering like this. The philosophy of *ahimsā* can be understood only with time and labour. For this reason one of the great teachers of our race said to the enquirer—“Go and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice.” He did not explain it even at the time when he said : “If you knew what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice.” In Jainism you will find a complete and completely scientific explanation of the whole doctrine.

The operation of *ahimsā* is not confined to the unperceived Kingdom of spirit, the Kingdom within, so to speak. It extends equally to the outside world. *Ahimsā* will purify, ennoble and sweeten life in all departments and establish brotherly relations among men and communities and nations, as surely as it will purge the heart of all evil inclinations and traits. For *ahimsā* is love, and nothing but love. Those alone can be expected to live upto *ahimsā* who are actuated by pure love for others.

Love and hatred are the two principles on which people act in their dealings with others. Friendship, goodwill, mutual esteem and an abiding sense of the unity of interests result on the path of love. Fear is destroyed, along with distrust and misunderstandings.

Hatred leads to opposite kinds of results ; misunderstandings increase, and distrust is the prevailing characteristic. Hatred is the cause of all quarrels and wars.

Where love would unite, hatred would separate and antagonize. If you wish to live peacefully with the world you should follow the line of love. It may be that at times gain seems to lie in the grasp of the nation that is ready to help itself at the cost of others ; but the taint of selfishness is sure to contaminate the national conscience, and bear fruit, in due course of time, however tardily it may be.

To the nations of the world Jainism proclaims with the voice of thunder today : Come brethren forget your enmities and your hatreds ; embrace one another like brothers ; you don't need to shed each other's blood. Away with the armies and with your armaments ! Men are already groaning under the burdens of taxation, and will perish before you know where you stand. Learn to live by *ahimsā*, and love one another. You shall not need to arm yourself to the teeth any more. Do you think armies and warlike equipments can afford anything like real protection to you ? Look at the fate to the great white Czar of all the Russians ! He was slain by his own helpless peasants who only a few days before dared not stand in his august presence without trembling ; Gone is the Kaiser too, who was the lord of mighty armies !

The surest means of safety is love, and nothing but love ! But it must be an emotion of the heart—a real live sentiment that stirs us constantly to action—not a mere wordy avowal. Where love reigns, there is no room for fear. The science of modern politics is at war with the Science of Peace, and has led us into trouble and the difficulties which the statesmen are unable to solve satisfactorily because of their selfish

motives. Let the Doctrine of Love, as implied in the message of *Ahimsā Parama Dharmah*—Non-violence is the Highest Religion, as taught by the Great Tirthankaras—now replace the mad rush for power and personal self-aggrandizement, and self-glorification. Your reward will be sweet yet.

Let me add that only he will be found willing and able to practise *ahimsā* and universal love who has understood the nature of his soul and of the enmity of the flesh and of the friends and allies of the enemy. Only he will have his heart saturated with the ennobling, friend-making, peace-engendering emotion who knows that by loving others he helps his own soul to grow strong, while in hating any one, even a lowly worm, he only helps the enemy, that is the flesh, and weakens and enervates his real self !

In practical life, *ahimsā* will be found to be the one sure means of taming savage natures. It will civilize the uncivilized barbarian, and make him a good and desirable citizen. The householder, who is involved in the world and still very far away from sainthood, practises it with a little qualification. He cannot emulate the saint in this regard. For while the saint will hurt no one, on any account, the good layman will yield to the need for defending himself in the practice of *ahimsā*. But he will never be the aggressor himself ; and when compelled to defend himself he will use only just sufficient force to overpower the enemy. The king who knows how to temper justice with mercy is therefore protected by *ahimsā*. The layman also longs to enter sainthood one day, to be able to practise *ahimsā* properly.

The saint, who has renounced the world, and who wishes to make the conquest of his lower nature as speedily as he can, tries to observe the vow of *ahimsā* with absolute rigidity, in all respects so far as it is physically possible to do so. The highest saints who have attained the Ideal of Life, namely, the Supreme Status, are able to practise Universal Love without any kind of qualification. Their nature is changed in the end ; they attain to deification, and the Perfection of Divinity. All this is due to *ahimsā*, the principle of Love, the attribute of God.

From the stand-point of human psychology, also, there are two kinds of men in the world who are, or at least should be, above racial and religious distinction. These are the really saintly men who practise Universal Love as a part of their religious discipline and the enlightened laymen who are fully impressed with the brotherhood of man, and the fact that in wishing evil to any one else one actually injures one's own soul. Observation and the study of human psychology fully support the view that a true saint will ever regard all humanity as his brethren,

and will never think of hurting or harming any one in the least degree. To such a saint the practising of Universal Love comes easy. He looks upon none as his enemy. If a man abuse him, he is not displeased with him ; if one persecute him, he will be thinking of only one thing—how to serve him !

The man who does not practise Universal Love, does not love all beings alike. He will not be loving the animals, and is sure to be indifferent even to the fate of the millions and millions of human beings whom he does not love. Many who profess to follow the ideal of love in their lives do not hesitate to devour the flesh of poor unfortunate animals.

It is idle to expect from such men that they will steadfastly adhere to the nobler view under all circumstances. During the last great European War religious priests on both sides went on blessing their own armies, and maintained that they were fighting the war of righteousness. Yet both sides professed the same religion, which was surely intended to be one of love. The explanation is that the sentiment was no deeper in their case than the lining membrane of their lips ; their hearts were not affected by it. The past history of other nations also reveals the same sad truth in most cases. Probably the only exception is furnished by the followers of the Jaina Religion, who practise the rule of *ahimsā*. It is impossible for a Jaina saint to bless any offensive weapon or armies that are marching against their fellow men. There is not one instance where the Jaina saints have forgotten themselves and their religious obligation in this regard. The Jaina saint is really the one man who practises Universal Love. He will not hurt even an insect, let alone man. He has left the world behind, and will not, on any account, look back. His heart is saturated with *ahimsā* ; he even controls his bodily automatism, and will never, even in thought, wish harm to another living being, be he man or animal. Really, it is only when a man has become so far filled with universal love that we can confidently rely upon him under all circumstances. He whose ideals are no longer in or of the world will certainly not degrade himself by doing base worldly things, like setting up invidious and hateful distinctions, amongst men.

Apart from the saints, the only other class of men who are at all likely to stand firm in the belief of the brotherhood of man are those who are fully convinced of the need for practising *ahimsā* on religious grounds. You cannot expect your diplomats and politicians to fall into this class. These men are all the time actuated by greed and the lust of acquisition, and have even in sleep half an eye open to their own interest. And the pity of the thing is that while with their tongue they are uttering honeyed

speech, with their hand they are actually getting ready to strike a deadly blow at those very men to whom their words are directed.

Religious men, too, will fail and have always failed to come up to the mark, wherever superstition and misunderstood theology have been the predominant influences in the human heart. Many persons have committed inexpressibly horrible atrocities on their fellow men in the belief that they were serving their god or gods by doing so, and, therefore, he or they could not get angry with them. This is the type that will again and again flout both the moral conscience and public opinion, whenever he is able to have the upperhand. Their working formula simply is: might is right !

What is wanted is a firmly rooted belief in the doctrine that makes the soul responsible for its actions in subjection to natural laws. "As you sow, so shall you reap." There is no question of forgiveness of sin by any one ; everything is governed by the Iron Law of *Karma*. As already stated, there are two ways of behaviour in relation to our fellow beings, either on the path of love, or on that of selfishness or greed. On the path of love there are peace and joy and life everlasting for the soul ; on that of hatred, misery, and trouble and suffering and pain. Even in worldly matters hatred involves trouble for oneself and one's community, though at times we seem to thrive on the spoils and booty secured by unrighteous means. Past history, however, is there to show that never has an empire of men at any time survived a policy of selfishness. For a time, no doubt, they flourish, and then come to an abrupt end. Yet while they are flourishing they all imagine that they can for ever go on dominating others with impunity.

The fact is that the selfish are always making enemies for themselves all round, at all times. These enemies for a time are unable to combine or overthrow the foe, but whenever there is an opportunity they strike an effective blow. In hatred energy is needlessly dissipated, and some day the hater is exposed on more points than he can defend adequately and is brought low at once. The danger in the case of great empires which are founded on the foundation of selfishness and hatred is that the virus of hatred spreads in their own community in the end, surely enough, so that he who would rule other communities by trickery and diplomacy in course of time will find his own people becoming affected by these undesirable traits of character when confidence will be undermined, patriotism destroyed and good-natured co-operation replaced by unhealthy individualism. When this happens, the doom is sealed, and nothing can avert it.

The Jaina doctrine of Universal Love (*ahimsā*) which is altogether scientific and grounded on natural laws, is the one thing that is needed if we are ever sincerely to get over our prejudices. Nothing else will ever succeed. Can we not rely on the modern civilization to exclude prejudice from the hearts of men ? I do not think we can.

Shall we not be able to arrive at the era of peace on earth through materialistic training and the treaties of nations ? Most certainly not. For materialism only offers peaceful rest in the grave to the individual, and only cares for the society ; but the curbing down of passions is a matter of the individual heart, and materialism possesses no sufficient inducement for its accomplishment. It is, in reality, our materialism that is responsible for much of our greed and covetousness, and, through them, for our hateful deeds. It will be a bit of very agreeable news if materialism were to start teaching renunciation. As for the treaties of nations, did we not observe their real value during the last war ? Why compel me to say that to him who thinks for is strong enough to defy the whole world the treaties have not as much value as the scrap of paper on which they are written ?

Neither superstition nor general education on materialistic lines will, then, be found adequate to change the hearts of men. What is required is the knowledge of the Laws of Nature that come into operation in connection with our emotions, and how they affect the soul and the relations of nations and communities of men. For once it is recognized that the soul is an entity whose welfare is of paramount importance and which is affected by its emotions and beliefs—beneficially by the emotions of Love, and most harmfully by those of selfishness and hatred—men will certainly refrain from doing what is harmful, and adopt the rule of Love.

Although it is not possible to do anything like justice to the subject in the course of the present speech, some indication must be given of how the consequences of evil, and in general of all actions (*karma*), are forced on the soul. Now, it has already been stated that every action engenders or modifies, that is to say, strengthens or weakens, an existing tendency in the soul. The sum total of these tendencies is what is termed character, or disposition, which goes with the soul, and takes part in the shaping of its future destiny. The explanation of how this is brought about is this : all these tendencies are powerful active forces which during life are constantly urging and moving us for various ends. After death also they remain active, and continue to vibrate. They have no hands and feet to set in motion then ; but they work on the matter which the

soul absorbs in the shape of nourishment, as a growing embryo, and with their agitations or vibrations mould the impregnated lump into shape and form. The symmetry of the limbs and form, the excellence and even the existence of the mind and brain, are thus directly dependent on the working of the store of the tendencies which one brings with one from one's previous life. Where the agitations are too violent, for instance, it may be taken that the excellence and symmetry of the mind and bodily organs will be impaired. This is just a mere indication of how the law of *karma* is put into operation to the advantage or disadvantage of an individual.

Now my point is this that in order to impress a rational mind, like that of a modern boy or girl, you have got to convince him or her of the need for peacefulness and alter his or her emotional nature, destroying the element of savageness and barbarian greed from the heart. A rationally inclined mind can never, for all times, be impressed with dogma and ill-founded reason ; and without the training and control of the emotions, it is not possible to make a man a real lover of peace. And the test of the real love of peace is that one should cheerfully offer one's cloak also when one's coat is claimed at law.

The need for the giving away of the cloak over and above the coat will become more clearly impressed on the mind if we remember that many people and nations are now sitting tight over the properties and rights of others. Do you think you have a right to dream of Universal Peace unless these peoples and nations have that restored to them first which has been taken from them ? Do you even think that you are honest in talking of such a peace when you do not begin by handing back the spoils and the loot ? Let me tell you as a student of human nature that no amount of soft words and platitudes and pious wishes will ever mend matters. All talk of mutual understandings and all that sort of things, too, is a pure wasting of breath ?¹ There is only one thing that can be effective, and that is renunciation which will compel the robber to restore what he has taken from his victim, the grabber to refund what he has grabbed from another, and the imposer of a yoke to remove it from the neck of the people on whom he has placed it. But such renunciation is only possible for him whose heart becomes saturated with the doctrine of mercy and love, that is *ahimsā*, and who feels compelled, by an internal longing, all his own, to put it into practice at once.

¹ Do not the victimizer and the victim, the ruler and the ruled, the bleeder and the bled understand each other already more than sufficiently ?

Why certain religions failed to maintain peace even among their followers in the past was because they failed to eradicate excessive greed and pride and lust from the hearts of their followers, who repeated the scriptural text that enjoins the practising of love all right enough, but allowed it to be swept away from the mind by their rising passions, greed and pride and lust. In fact, certain religions directly fostered fanaticism itself.

Modern education is also not able to encompass the curbing down of the surging savage emotions and strong lust. They are beyond its scope and programme, as a matter of fact. The root of ethics with the moderns is only the social well-being of the community ; individual good is bound up in the social good, and may have to be sacrificed if necessary for the good of the greatest numbers. The individual and the society are therefore not always at one on the ethical side of life, and whenever a man has the prospect of making a big gain he may begin to think how he can avoid the social law or escape detection. In religion the foundation of ethics is made to rest on the ideal of Divinity which, being the embodiment of Immortal Life, Omniscience, Bliss and Infinite Power, is greater than all the world's temptations put together. It is the love of this Great Ideal and the fear of the consequences of evil acting which constitute an effective check on our savagery and lust and greed. And the greater the lucidity with which the mind comes to adhere to these two points the greater will be its faith in them. Hence the importance of scientific explanation on which Jainism insists.

As I have said already, the foundation of almost all other religions is laid on the scientific basis in reality, but it has been obscured by the employment of the allegorical script. It is possible to get at the truth even now. I now ask you to look into your scriptures once more from the allegorical standpoint, and see if you do not discover real beauties in them. My own writings will help you in this enterprise, in which I wish you good luck from the bottom of my heart.

Let me say one word more as to the difference between the modern thought and Religion when properly understood. Modern thought has confined its attention to the world of the senses, where brute nature is found to be red in tooth and claw. It knows nothing of the Kingdom of the Soul, or the Kingdom of God, which is within. It therefore from its own point of view rightly points out the main characteristic of life which is struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest. There is no question of moral fitness here ; but only of the physical and mental, that is to say, intellectual fitness. Religion, on the other hand, shows what enormous

and almost incredible possibilities lie within our reach if we would cultivate inner tranquility on the lines of the *ahimsā dharma*. And let me further add that in Jainism there is no possibility of any one's being persecuted on the ground of his being an enemy of a God. In Jainism there is no place for such a contingency, as it does not acknowledge the being and existence of any Creator or Ruler divine or manager of the world whose enmity man could possibly incur. The Perfect Souls are the only Gods in Jainism ; and none else ! Thus Jainism is the true refuge for all afflicted souls and all beings.

I might point out that materially also the probabilities are that no one who practises the *ahimsā dharma* sincerely and from his heart would be a loser in the long run ; for the law of the correspondence of emotions makes it clear that similar emotions are roused and excited in the hearts of men on almost all occasions. If I gave away my cloak also to a man who is unjustly seeking my coat, he is sure to repent of it in a majority of cases and become my friend. There are some really bad-natured men also, but their number happily is not very great, so that in the great majority of cases the rule will hold good and the evil-doer chastened and reformed by the superior kind of the emotions of love of his victim. Those of the evil-doer's friends also who come to know of the incident will generally put him to shame and reclaim him.

To sum up ; if you want to establish lasting peace on earth you must make men love one another. But you cannot change men's hearts by a mere stroke of your pen, or by preaching to them a sermon on sympathy and good-will ; you must engender the emotion of love by showing the paramount importance of its need and value in the first instance. What is needed is the broadcasting of the kind of education that will excite the sentiment in the hearts of men on natural and rational grounds, and will fill it with love and keep it filled for all times. Nothing else will ever succeed, as is manifest from a perusal of the pages of the World's History and the records of the religious persecutions in the past. Jainism to-day invites the world, through this great assemblage of its leaders, to study the Science of Love, that is the Doctrine of *Ahimsā*, to be able to put an end to all forms of hatred and prejudice and to fill the hearts of men with love for one another.

Victory to the Ahimsā Dharma !

from Jainism and World Problems

Jainism

VIRCHAND R. GANDHI

1. For this, the last lecture of the course, the subject that I have selected is Jainism, and I shall condense as much as possible the things that might be said on the subject.

Any philosophy or religion must be studied from all standpoints, and in order thoroughly to grasp the ideas of any religion or philosophy, know what it says with regard to the origin of the universe, what its idea is with regard to god, with regard to the soul and its destiny, and what it regards as the laws of the soul's life. The answers to all these questions would collectively give us a true idea of the religion or philosophy. In our country religion is not different from philosophy, and religion and philosophy do not differ from science. We do not say that there is scientific religion or religious science ; we say that the two are identical. We do not use the word religion because it implies a binding back and conveys the idea of dependence of a finite being upon an infinite, and (the idea that) in that dependence consists the happiness or bliss of the individual.¹ With the Jainas the idea is a little different. With them bliss consists not in dependence but in independence ; the dependence is in the life of the world and if that life of the world is a part of religion then we may express the idea by the English word, but the life which is the highest life is that in which we are personally independent so far as binding or disturbing influences are concerned. In the highest state the soul, which is the highest entity, is independent.

2. This is the idea of our religion. The first important idea connected with it is the idea of universe. Is it eternal or non-eternal ? Is it permanent or transitory ? Of course, there are so many different opinions on the subject, but with these opinions I am not concerned in this lecture ; I am only going to give the idea of the Jaina philosophy.

We say that we cannot study any idea unless we look upon it from all standpoints. We may express this idea by symbols or forms ; we have expressed it by the story of the elephant and the seven blind men who wanted to know what kind of animal the elephant was, and each,

¹ The sentence makes sense only as thus completed. Gandhi seems to be basing his argument on the etymological derivation of the word 'religion'.

touching a different part of the animal, understood its form in so many different ways and thereupon became dogmatic. If you wish to understand what kind of animal an elephant is, you must look upon it from all sides, and so it is with truth. Therefore we say that the universe from one standpoint is eternal and from another non-eternal. The totality of the universe taken as a whole is eternal. It is a collection of many things. That collection contains the same particles every moment, therefore as a collection it is eternal ; but there are so many parts of that collection and so many entities in it, all of which have their different states which occur at different times and each part does not retain the same state at all times. There is change, there is destruction of any particular form, and a new form comes into existence ; and therefore if we look upon the universe from this standpoint it is non-eternal. With this philosophy there is no idea, and no place for the idea, of creation out of nothing. That idea, really speaking, is not entertained by any right-thinking people. Even those who believe in creation believe from a different standpoint than this. It cannot come into existence out of nothing, but is an emanation coming out of something. The state only is created. This book in a sense is created because all its particles are put together, having been in a different state. The form of the book is created. There was a beginning of this book and there will be an end. In the same manner, with any form of matter, whether this form lasts for moments or for centuries, if there was a beginning there must be an end.

We say there are both preservation and destruction in the many forces working around us. All these forces are working every moment in the midst of us and around us, and the collection of these entities is called by the Jainas 'God'.² The Brahmanas represent it by the syllable Om (ॐ); the first sound in this word represents the idea of creation, the second of preservation and the third of destruction. All these are energies of the universe and taken as a whole they are subject to certain fixed laws. If the laws are fixed why do people bow down to these energies ? Why do they consider the collective energy as a god or as God ? There is always an idea of the power to do evil in the beginning of this conception. When railroads were first introduced into India ignorant people who did not know what they were, who had never seen in their

² This statement is anomalous for it is precisely Gandhi's argument that the material energies manifested there in the universe are not treated as 'God' in Jaina philosophy. Nor can it be said that Gandhi here means to refer to the 'spiritual energies' which, as we shall learn in the next section, are actually treated as 'God' in Jaina philosophy. For in the present section Gandhi is confining his attention to the material sector of the universe.

lives that a car or carriage could be moved without the horse or the ox, thought that there was some divinity in the engine, some god or goddess and some of them even bowed down before the car ; and even to this day you will find in some parts of India, among the pariahs or low class, that there are people who entertain this idea. So to these energies in our primitive state we are liable to attribute personality ; and after a long course of development we symbolize our thought in the form of pictures and explain them in that way to make them more intelligible to others. In the ancient times there was not rain but a rainer, not thunder but a thunderer, and in that way, personality is attributed, or living consciousness and character, to those forces. There may be conscious entities in these forces as there may be living entities on the planets, but these forces themselves are not living entities. This, however, expresses the idea in the beginning ; these energies were classed as creative, preservative and destructive, and these three entities were considered to be component parts of one entity called Brahma by the Hindus. Really, creation in this is in the sense of emanation, preservation is used in the sense of preserving the form and destruction in the sense of destroying the form, The idea of matter, is something that can be handled or perceived by the senses, and the energies must be material energies, as cohesion, magnetism, electricity, gravitation ; but to consider these God would be the most materialistic idea, and therefore the Jainas discard this idea so far as the Godhead or Godlike character is concerned. They of course admit the existence of these energies, that they are indeed to be found everywhere, but they are subject to fixed laws which cannot be interfered with by any person, not that these energies consciously influence our destinies with regard to good and evil. To say that they do so influence us is only to show our ignorance with regard to their laws. These energies collectively we call substantiality. There are innumerable qualities and attributes in matter itself, and they manifest themselves at different times and ways. We are not able without further development to know what energies are inherent in matter, and when any new thing comes to view we are surprised, and whatever is surprising is considered to be something coming from divinity ; but where we understand scientific principles the surprise is removed and it is all as simple as the daily rising and setting of the sun. Thousands of years ago the different phenomena of nature were considered in different parts of the world to be the working of different gods and goddesses, but when we understand science these phenomena become simple and the idea of these beings as characters of the highest spiritual power goes away.

3. 'What is the God of the Jainas ?' you will ask. I have only told you what he is not. I will now tell you what it is. We know that there

is something besides matter ; we know that the body exhibits many qualities and powers not to be found in ordinary material substances, and that the something which causes this departs from the body at death. We do not know where it goes ; we know that when it lives in the body the powers of the body are different from what they are when it is not there. The powers of nature can be assimilated to the body when that something is there. That entity is considered by us the highest and it is the same inherently in all living beings. This principle common to us all is called divinity. It is not fully developed in any of us as it was in the *Saviours of the World*, and therefore we call them divine beings. So the collective idea derived from observations of the divine character inherent in all beings is by us called God. While there are so many energies in the material world and in the spiritual and putting those two energies together we give them the name of Nature we separate the material energies and put them together ; but the spiritual energies we put together and call them collectively God. We make a distinction and worship only the spiritual energies. Why should we do so ? A Jaina verse says, "I bow down to that spiritual power or energy which is the cause of leading us to the path of salvation, which is supreme, which is omniscient ; I bow down to that power because I wish to become like that power." So where the form of the Jaina prayer is given the object is not to receive anything from that entity or from that spiritual nature, but to become one like that ; not that spiritual entity will make us, by a magic power, become like itself, but by following out the ideal which is before our eyes we shall be able to change our own personality ; it will be regenerated, as it were, and will be changed into a being which will have the same character as the divinity which is our idea of God. So we worship God, not as a being who is going to give us something, not because it is going to do something to please us, not because it is profitable in any way ; there is not any idea of selfishness ; it is like practising virtue for the sake of virtue and without any other motive.

4. (a) Now we come to the idea of soul. The ordinary idea of soul substance is that in order for a thing to exist it must have form, it must be perceived by the senses. This is our ordinary experience. Really speaking it is the experience only of the sensuous part of the being, the lowest part of the human entity, and from that experience we derive conclusions and think that these conclusions apply to all substance. There are substances which cannot be perceived by the senses ; there are subtler substances and entities and these can be known only by the consciousness, by the soul. Such a substance which cannot be seen, heard, tasted, smelt or touched, is a substance which need not occupy space and need not have any tangibility, but it may exist although it

may not have any form.³ Sight is an impression made on the nerves of the eye by vibrations sent forth from the object perceived and this impression which we call sight, if there are no vibrations coming out of the object, is of course not produced ; but if this substance influences us in certain ways the implication is that there is something moving or producing vibrations, and these cannot exist unless there is some material substance which is vibrating. The very fact that something is moving in some way and influences us in some peculiar way implies that there is something material about this. If there are no vibrations the substance is not material. It need not exist in a form which will give us the impression of a any colour, smell, etc. There is nothing which can partake both of the attributes of soul and of matter ; the attributes of matter are directly contrary to those of the soul. While one has its life in the other, it does not become the other.

How can that soul live in matter when its attributes are of a different nature ? By our own experience we know that we are obliged to live in surroundings which are not congenial to us, which are not of our own nature. People feel that they are not related to their surroundings, there must be some reason for their being obliged to live in those surroundings, but there must be a reason in the intelligence itself ; it cannot be in the material substance. We know that this is a fact, because intelligence cannot proceed from any thing which is purely material. No material substance has given any evidence of having possessed intelligence ; it might have done so when there was life in it, but without this it has no intelligence.⁴ That intelligence is, we are quite sure, influenced by material things, but it does not arise from the material things. Persons of sound intelligence take a large dose of some intoxicating drink and the intelligence will not work at all. Why should this material thing influence the immaterial, the soul ? The soul thinks that the body is itself and therefore anything which is done to the material self is supposed by the real self to be done to itself. That is where the Christian scientists and the Jaina philosophy will agree ; that if the soul thinks that the body is real self anything done to the body will be considered by the soul to be done to the soul, and therefore what happens to the body will be felt by the

³ That soul does not occupy space only means that it is not something physical ; for strictly speaking, the Jaina does maintain that there obtains some sort of relationship between the substance called 'soul' and that called 'space'. The printed text here contains some bracketed material but that is redundant.

⁴ This statement is worded somewhat loosely ; for according to the Jaina, even when occupied by soul the body does not come to possess intelligence ; what it becomes then is an 'instrument of the intelligent activities undertaken by soul'.

soul ; but if the soul for a moment thinks that the body is not the self but altogether different and a stranger to the soul, for that reason no feeling of pain will exist ; our attention is taken away in some other direction and we do not know what is passing before us.⁵ This shows that the self is something higher than the body. Still under ordinary circumstances the soul is influenced by the body, and therefore we are to study the laws of the body and soul so as to rise above these little things and proceed on our path to salvation or liberation which is the real aspiration of the soul. There is power of matter itself, but that power is lower than the power of the soul. If there was no power at all in the body or in matter the soul would never be influenced by it, for mere non-existence will never influence anything ; but because there is such a thing as matter, when the soul thinks that there is a power of the body and a power of the matter, these powers will influence it. Bodily power as we see it is on account of the presence of the soul. There is a power in matter, as cohesion etc., and this will work although the soul does not think anything about it. If the moon revolves around the earth there are some forces inherent in the earth and moon. What I mean to say is that the influence of these material powers on soul powers depends on the soul's readiness or willingness to submit to these powers. If the soul takes the view that it will not be influenced by anything it cannot be so influenced.

(b) This being the soul's nature, what is its origin ? Everything can be looked upon from two standpoints, the substance and the manifestation. If the state of the soul itself is to be taken into consideration that state has its beginning and its end. The state of the soul as living in the human body had a beginning at birth and will have an end at death, but it is a beginning and an end of the state, not of the thing itself. The soul taken as a substance is eternal, taken as a state every state has its beginning and end. So this beginning of a state implies that before this beginning there was another state of the soul. Nothing can exist unless it exists in some state. The state may not be permanent, but the thing must have a state at all times. If therefore the present state of the soul had a beginning, it had another state before the beginning of this state, and after the end of this state it will have another state. So the future state is something that comes out of or is the result of the present state. As the future

⁵ 'Christian Science' was a prevalent Western cult of Gandhi's days. According to it, the physical bodies possess no real reality, the only real realities being the souls. Gandhi agrees with this view only to the extent that according to him too the physical body does not influence that soul which refuses to be influenced by this body but not to the extent of denying the very reality of the physical body.

is to the present so the present is to the past. The present is only the future of the past. What is true with regard to the future state is true with regard to the past and present state. The acts of the past have determined our present state, and if this is true the acts of the present state must determine the future state.

This brings us to the doctrine of rebirth, transmigration of souls, metempsychosis, reincarnation, etc. as they are variously known. First take incarnation. which means literally becoming flesh ; and really speaking, that which is matter is always matter and that which is spirit is always spirit or soul. The spirit does not become flesh. If reincarnation means to become flesh there can be no reincarnation, but if it means simply the life in flesh for a short time, then there is reincarnation. Reincarnation means also to be born in some state again and again. Metempsychosis means in Greek only change ; that the animal itself, body and soul, everything together, it changed into the human being, and that is altogether changed into some other thing and so on. That is the idea of metempsychosis. Transmigration of souls is, specially in the idea of the Christians, the idea of the human soul going into the animal body, as if this were a necessity. But that is not the real idea ; the real idea is simply going from one place to another or from one body to another, but not necessarily going from the human body to the animal body, but simply travelling. It implies the idea of form. Nothing can travel unless it has form and occupies space and is material ; so in our philosophy we reject all these terms if that is the idea connected with these terms, and use the idea of rebirth ; that is, the soul is born in some other body, and the birth does not imply the same conditions (as those) applying to the human birth.⁶ There are certain conditions in which human beings are born ; the seed itself takes several months to ripen and then there is the birth. This may be due to certain acts or forces which are generated by human beings.⁷ These are in a condition to be observed by beings whose forces will take them to some other planet, and we say that there is another condition of birth there. There is no necessity for gestation and fecundation. The karmic body has in itself many powers and has a force to take to itself another body, which is in the case of the human beings a gross body, but in the case of other beings a subtle body is generated and this body is changeable so far as its form and dimensions are concerned. Therefore, if the forces generated while we live any kind

⁶ This sentence needs some correction of the type here suggested.

⁷ Here the phrase 'generated by human beings' means 'generated by those karmic bodies which are going to take to themselves a human body'. This becomes clear from the immediately forthcoming part of Gandhi's argument.

of life are of different kinds then in the case of some being it may be necessary that he should be born in the human condition and pass through the actual conditions which must be obeyed if the human being is to be born, while if the forces generated are different in their character he may be born on some other planet where birth manifested in a different way, without any necessity of the combination of the male and the female principle. There are so many different planes of life that the mere study of the human life ought not to be made to apply to all the affairs of life. We have studied only a few forms of the life of animals, human beings, etc. but that is only the part which under the present development of our science, of our eyesight even, we are able to study. We are not able to study other forms of life, innumerable in the universe, and therefore we ought not to apply the laws thus discovered to all forms of life.

Our study is introspective because our idea is that the soul is able to know everything under the right circumstances. The knowledge acquired under these conditions is of a sounder nature and a more correct kind because the obstacles which come in the way of science are not there. Science has to commit mistakes and think that they do not,⁸ still knowledge is derived from inferences which we draw from certain premises which may not be right or if the premises are right the inference may be wrong. We do not mean to say that there are always mistakes in the knowledge which is acquired through sensation or through matter, but sometimes it is possible, and while it may be correct knowledge in many cases we cannot rely on that. The highest knowledge is immediate knowledge, derived by the soul without the assistance of any external thing, and the knowledge of liberated souls, and also the knowledge of human beings who are just on the point of being liberated, or have passed through the course of discipline, mental, moral and spiritual, and have nearly exhausted past forces, at the same time generating spiritual forces, and on account of discipline and spiritual evolution have become receptive. The soul sees everything when this state is arrived at ; it knows everything, is fully conscious and consciousness itself means first of all that it knows itself, and to know one's self means that it is something, some reality, and there can be no reality unless it can distinguish itself from other realities. Only the one universal thing could not know itself, because knowledge implies comparing one with another, and if that is not done there is no individuality. We say therefore that the soul in its highest existence knows that it is perfectly separate from other things so

* It is not possible to correct this part of the sentence, but it must be pointing out something that Gandhi considers to be a shortcoming of scientific knowledge.



Virchand R. Gandhi



Puran Chand Nahar

far as experience and knowledge are concerned, but in so far as its nature is concerned, so long as there is a sense of separateness, there is no occasion or opportunity for the soul to rise higher because when the soul thinks that it is living a different existence for its own sake it is considering its own self to be different from another person and thinks that this is its own and a part of its nature, its own being, and therefore anything done in regard to these surroundings will benefit or injure its own.⁹ It even thinks that its very life consists in doing good and in loving other souls and taking active measures for carrying into effect the very plan of that soul (those souls ?). Then it comes higher, and ultimately reaches the highest condition. The condition of the soul, as I have said, is the highest in which there is perfect consciousness, there is infinite knowledge and infinite bliss ; we express these three ideas in Sanskrit as existence infinite, bliss infinite and knowledge infinite. That condition of the soul cannot be described by us because description is something which proceeds from a finite mind and when the soul becomes infinite no finite mind can fully express the conditions of that infinite state. The attributes we give therefore to that condition of the soul are always full of comprehension.¹⁰ We shall always leave out many things ; we have not the power to express all our thoughts. How can we express, then, this state of a soul which so far as its power and knowledge are concerned is infinite ?

The Jainas have studied the nature of the soul and the universe from these standpoints and have derived a beautiful principle, and so far as this is concerned ; there is this difference between this country and other countries and other religions ; they can understand all these from these standpoints.¹¹ The Bible says, "Thou shalt not kill", and Jainas practise universal love so that this also means that we should not kill any beings. If we say that the Bible does not mean that, we take away a part of the Bible. Why should we interpret the laws of any religion from the narrowest standpoint ? We should take into consideration the nature, attributes and working of all things. We cannot derive laws which are to be applied to the whole universe simply by our observation of a part of the conscious nature of the universe. If you wish to state correctly the

⁹ The exact import of the argument Gandhi adduces in this sentence and the next is not quite clear. May be he is distinguishing between the 'sense of separateness' felt by one who is enlightened and that felt by one who is not, further subdividing the latter into the 'sense of separateness' felt by one who is of a 'self-regarding' disposition and that felt by one who is of an 'other-regarding' disposition.

¹⁰ The phrase 'full of comprehension' means 'full of implied meanings'.

¹¹ Here 'they' might stand for 'Jainas' or for 'this country (i.e. India) and its religions'. May be some words are missing in this sentence.

nature of the universe you will study the nature of all the different parts of the universe and then the laws will be applicable to all parts of it. We think that we are superior to other beings because our tenants who live on the ground floor are inferior to us, but we have no right therefore to crush those tenants, who later on will acquire the right to inhabit the second and third floors and finally the highest floor. One living on the highest plane has no right to crush those who live on the lowest plane. If one thinks that he has a right to do this, that he has not sufficient strength to live without destroying life, our philosophy says that it is still sin to destroy life, and it remains only to choose the lowest form, the less evil. We will in business take such a kind of business as will yield the most profit and will cause us to lose the least, in which we have the less liabilities, and the highest condition will be that in which we have no liabilities and no creditors, the state in which we may live without any creditors or in a perfectly free condition. That is the liberated condition.

5. The idea of *Karma* is very complicated. I have told you something of it in my former lectures. The one chief point is that that theory is not the theory of fatalism, not a theory in which the human being is tied down to some one, bound down by the force of something outside itself. In one sense only will there be fatalism ; if we are free to do many things, we are also not free to do other things, and we cannot be freed from the results of our acts. Some results may be manifested in great strength, others very weakly ; some may take a very long time and others a very short time ; some are of such nature that they take a long time to work out, while the influence of others may be removed by simply washing with water and that will be the case in the matter of acts done incidentally without any settled purpose or any fixed desire. In such a case with reference to many acts we may counteract their effects by willing to do so. So the theory of *Karma* is not in any sense a theory of fatalism, but we say that all of us are not going to one goal without any desire on our part, not that we are to reach that state without any effort on our part, but that our present condition is the effect of our acts, thoughts and words in the past state.¹² To say that all will reach the perfect state merely because someone has died that they might be saved, merely from a belief in this person, would be a theory of fatalism because those who have lived a pure and virtuous state and have not accepted a certain theory will not reach the perfected state simply for that reason and no other. The faith in Saviours is simply this, that by following out the divine

¹² This sentence will give a clearer meaning if "we say that all of us are not going" is read as "we do not say that all of us are going."

principle which is in ourselves when this is fully developed, we also shall become Christs, by the crucifixion of the lower nature on the altar of the higher. We also use the cross as a symbol. All living beings have to pass through or evolve from the lowest, the monadic condition to the highest state of existence and cannot reach this unless they obtain possession of the three things necessary ; *right belief, right knowledge and right conduct*. The right belief, really speaking, is not that there is no passing through forms after death, but the soul keeps progressing always in its won nature without any backward direction at all.¹³ We have expressed this in clear language without any parables or metaphors, but when we preach these truths to the ignorant masses some story or picture might be necessary for them and after that the explanation of the real meaning ; as we have an allegory in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. It is just like reaching the Celestial City in that book, but we must all understand that these things are parables. Others may need music to assist their religion, but when we understand the esoteric meaning which underlies all religion there will be no quarreling and no need of names or of forms ; and this is really the object of all religions.

from *The Systems of Indian Philosophy*

¹³ The meaning of this sentence is not quite clear. May be Gandhi is saying that the possession of 'right belief' does not rule out the possibility of a future birth but that it does rule out the possibility of a future degeneration.

The Jain Tradition of the Origin of Pataliputra

PURAN CHAND NAHAR

Like many other ancient cities of India, Pataliputra has also a tradition of its own, about its origin. It is beyond any shadow of doubt that at one period, this city was in its most flourishing condition like Paris or New York of today with all its splendours. Much has been written by various scholars of the East and West about several traditions, Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain, associated with this great city. Here I am giving only the Jain version of the origin in a few words and hope the same will not be out of place at this present happy moment, when the All-India Conference of Oriental Scholars from different parts of the country meet here in this ancient site of Pataliputra, the Palibothra of the Greeks.

Origin of the City of Pataliputra

King Srenika was reigning at Rajagrha. He was also known as Bimbisara and was succeeded by his son Kunika or Asokachandra better known as Ajatasatru. He removed his capital from Rajagrha to Campa and was followed by his son Udayi. After the death of Kunika, Udayi was ruling in Campa ; he did not like the city owing to several deaths in his family and was therefore advised by his ministers to found another city ; his own father had given up Rajagrha and had founded Campa for the same reason.

Udayi then sent round some *Naimittikas* (omen-readers) to discover an ideal place where he could lay the foundation of a new city. They selected a place on the shores of the Ganges, where a Patala tree stood majestically with a number of protruding branches. Worms flying themselves into the mouth of a Cas bird on the tree indicated the place as the most auspicious. In due course the *Naimittikas* informed the king of their selection of the place, when an aged *Naimittika* recited the following story about the Patala tree :

Formerly there were two cities, one Southern Mathura and the other Northern Mathura. One Devadatta a trader of Northern Mathura went to Southern Mathura and became a friend of one Jayasimha of that city. Once Devadatta was dining with his friend where he saw Annika, a sister of Jayasimha and fell in love with her. Ultimately he married her, promising her brother that he would not leave the city until he had a son by Annika. Years passed by but no child was born to her ; meanwhile, Devadatta received a letter from his parents requesting him to return to Northern Mathura to see them. The conflict between his promise to stay and his desire to see his parents brought tears to his eyes ; however his wife Annika got him relieved of his promise and they both started for the place. In course of their journey Annika gave birth to a son named Sandhirana but better known as Annikaputra. Some years after Annikaputra renounced the world and became a Jain Sadhu (monk). Later this Annikaputra Muni came to a city, on the banks of the Ganges, called Puspabhadra. Puspaketu was the king and the beautiful Puspavati was the queen there. She gave birth simultaneously to one son and one daughter called Puspacula and Puspacula. When they grew up, they were married to each other by the king entirely against the will of her queen Puspavati, who was a Jain. Later Puspavati, by her austere penance and meritorious actions was reborn as a Deva and decided to save her daughter from future hell-life. She showed her in dreams the misery and pain of hell and the blessings of heaven. None could read her dreams aright but Annikaputra Muni wonderfully depicted her dreams and explained them satisfactorily. Consequent upon this explanation, she renounced the world and became a Sadhvi (Nun), after promising her husband that she would accept food only from his house.

Years after Annikaputra Muni foresaw a long and disastrous famine and sent away his disciples but himself stayed there with Puspacula Sadhvi. Shortly after by her austere penance, she obtained *kevalajñāna* (absolute knowledge). Annikaputra Muni inquired of her when he would have his final emancipation. She informed him that he would attain it immediately in course of his crossing the Ganges. Being eager for the purpose, the Muni started at once to cross the river. While he was thus crossing it by a ferry boat, it began to sink; therefore, his co-passengers pushed him off the boat. While thus being drowned, he only thought of the *apkāya*-(water)-lives he was harming and thus obtained his final emancipation. Later the skull of the material body of that Muni drifted ashore to a certain place and there a Patala tree grew from his skull.

King Udayi thereupon founded a city on the spot and called it Pataliputra.

The references to the above story of the origin of the city of Pataliputra according to Jain tradition, may be found in :

1. Hemacandra, *Parīṣiṣṭa Paryā*, Canto VI, v. 22-180
2. *Avaśyaka Nirvyukti*, XVII. 11.27
3. *Abhidhāna Rājendra*, Vol. V, p. 823 'Padaliutta'

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