

# THE BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY OF THE REAL.—(contd.)

## PART II.

### OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE REAL.

#### (a) Various Kinds of Knowledge.

The reality, as succinctly explained and briefly described in Part I, is perceivable by SAÑÑĀ as an object of consciousness (VIÑÑĀṄA). That is, it is given to us as a sense-datum. This datum is also understandable by PAÑÑĀ.

SAÑÑĀ has the characteristic of *noting* an object. Like a carpenter who marks his pieces of wood for joining, its function is to make a mark for future recognition of the object as the same which was previously perceived. It appears as a phenomenon of perception by means of marks made by itself. In this respect it is comparable to a blind man who, feeling an elephant by its legs perceives it to be like four mortar-blocks, or to another blind man who, feeling it by the ears, conceives it to be like two circular baskets, or to a third who, feeling it by the tail, takes it to be like a broom. This will remind English readers of Bishop Watson's 'gnat mounted on an elephant, and laying down theories as to the whole internal structure of the vast animal from the phenomena of the hide.' It may also be likened to the perception of a young deer which, on seeing a human figure made of grass, mistakes it to be a living man. Any sense-datum may be its proximate cause.

PAÑÑĀ, on the other hand, has the mark of (a) understanding common and individual characteristic features of a thing, or, (b) penetrating right into the inside of it, like the piercing of an arrow shot by a clever archer. Its function is to light up objects, as a lamp. It appears to us as intelligence (asammoha) and may be compared to an expert forest guide.<sup>1</sup>

Now, PAÑÑĀ<sup>2</sup> is a generic term which may be rendered by 'understanding.' It includes all kinds of ÑĀNA's—intellect, intelligence, insight—in all phases of its development ranging from scientific knowledge to spiritual insight.

Insight may be analytic (paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa) or intuitive (paṭi-vedhā-ñāṇa). The latter corresponds to Bergson's intuition. Therefore, the rest of our knowledge, including analytic knowledge, go to make up his first<sup>3</sup> kind of knowing a thing.

Buddhaghosa said that the real is not to be known through tradition, report, etc.<sup>4</sup> But he distinguished three kinds of knowing a thing through

<sup>1</sup> See the *Aṭṭhasālīnī*.

<sup>2</sup> Pa-ñāṇam. The prefix 'pa' has the sense of 'pabheda' or 'pakāra'—'different divisions.' So the word Paññā has to be construed according to the context.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 'Philosophers agree in distinguishing two profoundly different ways of knowing a thing. The first implies that we move round the object; the second, that we enter it.' Bergson's *Intro. to Metaph.*, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Anussavādi. Any modern commentator may include under the useful 'etc.' history, geography, description, explanation, notation, representation and analysis. Cf. 'Description, history and analysis leaves me here in the relative.' *Op. cit.*, p. 4. Contrast: 'What depends on testimony, like the facts of history and geography which are learnt from books, has varying degrees of certainty according to the nature and extent of the testimony.' Russell's *Low. Lec.* 1914, p. 67. Macaulay considered Bishop Watson's comparison of geologists to his gnat unjust, but thought it applicable to superficial historians. But in our view even Macaulay's ideal historian is no better than geologists who dive deeper below the surface of the earth.

perception, consciousness and understanding. Both Sumaṅgala of Ceylon and Ariyavaṁsa of Sagaing (15th century) followed the divine in this scholastic distinction. Their stock illustration is that of a gold coin.<sup>1</sup> A boy merely *notes* its colour, but he does not know that it is gold; an adult villager, however, knows it to be gold, though he does not understand whether it is counterfeit or alloyed, that it was done by a certain mint master and how much its true value is; but a goldsmith or metal expert understands them all. Here the boy is comparable to SAÑÑĀ which takes mere notes of marks; the adult, to VINÑĀṆA which is capable of knowing common and individual characteristics of things; and the metal expert, to PAÑÑĀ which is capable of reaching the intuition.<sup>2</sup>

Strictly speaking however, SAÑÑĀ and VINÑĀṆA are inseparable in any psychic state or act. This act is sometimes accompanied by PAÑÑĀ and sometimes not. Hence there are really two modes of knowing a thing, that is, with or without PAÑÑĀ. Whenever SAÑÑĀ is predominant as in the case of a boy, the accompanying VINÑĀṆA drops out of popular language (abhoḥārika). In the case of understanding common and individual characteristics of things by VINÑĀṆA through PAÑÑĀ, the latter is ignored in common usage. But when PAÑÑĀ reaches the intuition both SAÑÑĀ and VINÑĀṆA, which follow its lead, are neglected in ordinary parlance.<sup>3</sup> Thus it is clear that the scholastic distinction merely follows the popular one.

But Dr. Ledi takes a different line. According to him VINÑĀṆA is knowing in divers modes. Among these different modes SAÑÑĀ is an important element as it contains the germ of our memory. As regards PAÑÑĀ he writes:—

“It (i. e. PAÑÑĀ) is knowing everything knowable about anything. \* \* By ‘understanding’ is meant an exhaustive knowledge of all this, for it is said: ‘The limit of knowledge is the knowable; the limit of the knowable is the knowledge.’ This is said touching omniscience, and it is to be understood as referring to...the Abhidhamma, more especially the seventh, the great book of the Patthāna. \* \* \* Omniscient knowledge may be illustrated by the chapter in the Patisambhida-magga,<sup>4</sup> containing an exposition of unobstructed knowledge. The knowledge of the learner may be illustrated by the chapter on the exposition of terms. The knowledge of the great majority may be illustrated by various knowledges in work, arts and science, in...method,...”<sup>5</sup>

In another place<sup>6</sup> he writes:—

“But knowledge is twofold—inferential and intuitive. When ordinary persons are investigating abstruse, subtle, recondite matters, their knowledge is inferential. When they attain to intuition in such matters, they have trained their mind, trained their understanding, and so have reached to intuition. Their know-

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting that Bergson has also adopted the gold coin illustration but in a different way. Cf. ‘Viewed from inside, then, an absolute is a simple thing; but looked at from outside, that is to say, relatively to other things, it becomes in relation to these signs which express it the gold coin for which we never seem able to finish giving small change.’ *Op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> P. 298, Vol. II. Pye’s combined ed. of *Tikāyaw and Manisāramañjūsā*. Intuition stands for Magga-nāna which alone penetrates the real.

<sup>3</sup> See *Tikāyaw* Pye’s ed. of *Three Tikās*, p. 93.

<sup>4</sup> Institution plus analysis.

<sup>5</sup> Ledi, pp. 142, 143. *J. P. T. S.*, 1913-14.

<sup>6</sup> Ledi. *op. cit.* pp. 154, 155.

ledge being intuitive—that is to say, they having discarded the notion ‘person,’ ‘being,’ ‘self,’ ‘living thing’—they cognise under the aspect of the purely phenomenal, of the purely elemental.

Now mind, mental factors, material quality, Nibbana are such abstruse... matters. For the trained... who are unable to suspend even for a moment the notion of ‘person,’ ‘being,’ ‘self’ (soul), ‘living thing,’ the real nature of these phenomena are beyond the average range of their ken. But these matters are within the range of the intelligence which knows by way of intuition. For those whose knowledge has been abundantly trained in the doctrine of the intuitively wise Ariyan philosophers, even their inferential knowledge may be said to partake of the nature of intuitive knowledge, since it *invariably leads* to the latter kind. By persistent cultivation that inferential knowledge is changed into intuitive knowledge.<sup>1</sup> With others, inferential knowledge ever follows after the ‘person,’ the ‘entity.’ Such people may freely talk about philosophical subjects, but their knowledge is running along person-cum-entity lines.<sup>2</sup> ... For they whose knowledge has not *penetrated* the fact of the arising and ceasing... are blind.”

The *Kathāvatthu* distinguishes popular knowledge, analytic knowledge and intuitive knowledge. Popular knowledge concerns conventional truths based on concepts; analytic knowledge is higher.<sup>3</sup> But analysis is contrasted with intuition.<sup>4</sup>

Buddhists recognise four kinds of analysis<sup>5</sup> :—

- (a) Analysis of things;
- (b) Analysis of causes;
- (c) Analysis of language; and
- (d) Analysis of analysing intellects.

For example, a chemist may analyse common salt into sodium and chlorine and a metaphysician may go further and logically analyse the indivisible atoms, ions or electrons of these chemical elements into mutually inseparable, ultimate data. A physicist may observe their properties, functions, effects and proximate causes. But a metaphysician may analyse these causes. A natural philosopher may define ‘salt,’ ‘sodium,’ ‘chlorine,’ ‘element,’ ‘ultimate,’ ‘data’ and any other terms involved. A metaphysical logician may analyse the language of these definitions. Each one of them may review the various stages of their intellectual process of analysis or we may analyse their analysing intellects themselves.

But no amount of analysis, no amount of explanations, no amount of definitions will, as we Buddhists say, give us any real knowledge of salt until we taste it.

A further example of how descriptions are misleading may be given here. A person was trying to describe the white colour of milk to a born-blind. He first compared the colour of milk to that of a paddy-bird and then described the paddy-bird by its crooked neck and finally compared the crooked

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ‘Even in the simple and privileged case which we have used as an example, even for the direct contact of self with the self, the final effort of distinct intuition would be impossible to any one who had not combined and compared with each other a very large number of psychological analyses.’ Berg, *Intro. to Metaph.*, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ‘Our intellect, when it follows its natural bent, proceeds on the one hand by solid perceptions, and on the other by stable conceptions.’ *Op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> See *Points of Controversy*, p. 179.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 133.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 373.

neck to an elbow. And the blind man conceived the white colour to be something like the elbow.

(b) *Preliminary Analysis of The Real.*

The irreducible minimum of analysis demanded of Ariyan candidates is with reference to the four Ariyan facts which may be stated in the form of what Bertrand Russell calls atomic propositions.<sup>1</sup>—

- I. This is ill (*Idaṃ dukkhaṃ*).
- II. This the cause of ills.
- III. This is the cessation of ills.
- IV. This is the way thereto.

The candidate must distinguish the 'this' in each of these propositions. In the general proposition—'All things in the making are ills' (*Sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā*)—things include personalities. But of all personalities in the world he must single out his own. In the *Yamaka* which was intended to solve doubts of new converts, physical and mental sufferings, which are ills proper, were mentioned in the saving clause,<sup>2</sup> not because they do not constitute ills but because there was no doubt of their being ill. The rest of our personality are not recognised as ills except by Buddhists. This distinguishes a Buddhist from a non-Buddhist. But an Ariyan goes a step further in abstracting *craving* from our personality not as a fact of ill but as the cause of ills. Therefore the fact of ill is our personality *minus* craving. But as it is inseparable from personality, to mentally separate is a work of analysis. and to analyse is to discriminate the ill as 'so much, neither more nor less.'<sup>3</sup> Again, the eight factors of the path-intuition, which constitute the fourth Ariyan fact, must be mentally separated from the rest of their concomitants which may be placed under the category of ill by concession. By concession, because the path-intuition and its fruit are by definition 'out of the world' (*lokuttarā*). The fact involved in the third proposition is the cessation of the fact of ill. Therefore, there is but one reality in the form of our flowing personality for penetration by the path-intuition. By intuition we do not mean the knowledge of the abstract truths of these four atomic propositions, much less of all universal or general<sup>4</sup> propositions.

The 'is' in these singular propositions is not the copula 'is' of traditional logic, but it is the 'is' of identity of what we may call natural logic.<sup>5</sup> In Buddhism a thing is identical with itself only at a single moment of its existence.<sup>6</sup> We may change the first atomic proposition into 'This ill *is*.' Applying 'this' and 'ill' to one and the same personality that *is*, that *exists*, or that *is existing*, at the given moment, we may say that the two terms are

<sup>1</sup> *Pts. of Controv.*, p. 189. Cf. Russell's *Low. Lect.*, p. 53. Also cf. the proposition—This is what is.' *Berg. Crea. Evol.*, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> The *Yamaka*, Vol. I, p. 174.

<sup>3</sup> *Parijānanto'ti ettakaṃ dukkhāṃ, na ito unādhikanti parichijja jānanto.* P. 299, Pye's combined ed. of *Tikāgyaw and Mañisāra*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 'In this sense metaphysics has nothing in common with the generalisation of facts.' *Berg. Intro. to Metaph.*, p. 79.

<sup>5</sup> On the confusion between the two, see note on p. 39, Russell's *Low. Lec.* 1914.

<sup>6</sup> On the difference between logical identity and natural identity, see pp. 131, 132, Mrs. Rhys Davids' *Buddhism*.

<sup>7</sup> On the meaning of 'is.' see n. i., p. 22, *Pts. of Controv.*

identical in meaning, the same in connotation and denotation.<sup>1</sup> We regard the original thing, to which both terms are referred, as a simple, indivisible whole or unit.<sup>2</sup> And we regard it as real only while existing at the present moment<sup>3</sup> in its duration through time.

This analysis throws light on the question of reality, but even as in the case of the salt illustration, we know not the nature of the real without penetration.

(c) *How To Know The Real.*

As analysis fails us, we must, as Bergson says, 'make efforts to gradually accustom our mind to a certain definite disposition which would direct our consciousness to the precise point where the reality is to be seized by intuition.' For this exercise a graduated course of successive insights (*vipassanā's*) is laid down in Buddhism and is summarised in Part IX of the *Compendium*<sup>4</sup> as follows:—

To have a clear idea of a thing is to understand first its individual characteristics (*sabhāva-lakkhaṇa*) and then its common characteristics (*sāmañña-lakkhaṇa*). For the purpose of understanding the former, its properties and functions must be studied; its resulting phenomena and effects must be observed and its proximate causes, traced. The last presupposes a recognition, on our part, of the causal law—'B happens because of A'—after the *Paṭicca-samuppāda* method. Its recognition as universal is based on our belief in the uniformity of Nature. Having understood the individual characteristics, we compare one thing with the other and abstract those characteristics common to as many instances as we have observed and finally generalise them into concepts. Among the common features are noticed three universally common characteristics of impermanence or change, ill and soullessness. Then only can an Ariyan candidate be said to have sound scientific views or, as we Buddhists say, 'the purity of views' about a thing or things.<sup>5</sup> When he knows its causes, he transcends doubt,<sup>6</sup> since to know the cause of a thing is to explain it.

<sup>1</sup> Es'ese ekaṭṭhe same samabhāge tajaṭe. See *Pts. of Controv.*, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Appipam karitvā—'making it indivisible'—occurs in three places in the *Kathāvatthu* and is explained by Buddhaghosa according to the context. In the note on p. 24 of the *Pts. of Controv.* the comment is better translated into—'making the body as a simple, inseparable and indivisible unit.' Cf. n. 2, p. 87, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 87, n. 1; p. 94, n. 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 65—68, 212—216.

<sup>5</sup> Bergson does not despise intellect and science. He merely distinguishes them from intuition and philosophy. According to him, philosophy ought to follow science and superpose on scientific truth a knowledge of the absolute in which we live, move and have our being.

<sup>6</sup> It is reality itself that we reach by continued and progressive development of science and philosophy. Only we get into this reality more and more completely in proportion as we transcend pure intelligence.' *Crea. Evol.*, pp. 209, 210. Cf. 'In principle, positive science bears on reality itself, provided it does not overstep the limits of its own domain which is inert matter.' *Op. cit.*, p. 218. Cf. also '....., it (i.e. philosophy) is true evolutionism and consequently the true continuation of science.' *Op. cit.*, p. 391. In this connection the difference between philosophical and scientific methods will be interesting. 'The distinctive character of this philosophical method is that it apprehends the whole before it apprehends the part and that it interprets the parts as a dissociation within a whole. Science, on the other hand, conceives the whole as an association of its parts.' *Carr's Phil. of Change*, p. 19.

<sup>6</sup> It is said that philosophy began with doubt. But it is necessary that the Cartesian doubt or the 'methodological doubt' of Russell must be transcended.

He now selects his own personality as the representative or, as Bergson would say, the model of all the rest in the universe for contemplation because it is the best thing that can be seized from within.<sup>1</sup> Ledi writes on SACCĀ in his *Paramattha-dīpanī*:—

“But of all true facts of ill in the whole of the universe only subjective or internal organism as included in our own personality is recognised as an Ariyan fact of ill.<sup>2</sup> True, it alone forms the basis of the soul theory which gives rise to all sorts of ills. Therefore, our personality must be understood after discrimination<sup>3</sup> (from other facts of ill).”

(1) The candidate, then, contemplates his personality by the three universally common characteristics—impermanence by reason of change, ill by reason of danger and soullessness by reason of non-entity. And he does so by way of duration, continuity<sup>4</sup> and moments. That is, he regards his personality as a *continuous duration from moment to moment*.

(2) Next, his contemplation follows<sup>5</sup> it in its continual waxing and waning,<sup>6</sup> i. e. being and non-being which constitute becoming or, as Bergson would say, in its duration, from moment to moment. When he finds the cause of this ceaseless flux, he is apt to think that he has reached the intuition. The error is inimical to further progress. But should he overcome the obstacle, he is said to have ‘the purity of vision’ in being able to discern non-intuition as distinguished from what is really intuition.

Then, there is a regular progression of insights upward through insights into things as—

- (3) dissolving,
- (4) fearful,
- (5) dangerous,
- (6) disgusting,
- (7) something from which to escape,
- (8) something about which to philosophise for such escape,

<sup>1</sup> The motto ‘Know thyself’ of the Greek philosopher is no less Buddhist. Cf. ‘There is one reality, at least, which we all seize from within by intuition and not by simple analysis. It is our personality in its flowing through time—our self which endures.’ Berg. *Intro. to Metaph.*, p. 8. Cf. also ‘...but there is one of these objects which we know in a way in which we know nothing else, this is our body.’ Carr’s *Phil. of Change*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Dukkhasacce sakkāyapariyāpanā ajjhattadhammā eva ariyasaccath nāma.’ Ledi’s *Paramatthadīpanī* p. 325. Cf. also ‘Attano attano attabhāvapariyāpanā tebhūmakadharmā’ va attano ekantadukkhā nāma.’ *Op. cit.*, p. 320.

<sup>3</sup> *Pariññā* is usually rendered by ‘comprehension.’ It is knowing by discrimination, separation, complete cutting off (*parichijja jānāti*). Our personality must be discriminated from other personalities and craving must be separated from it and placed in the category of cause to be removed.

<sup>4</sup> This sounds Bergsonian. But cf. ‘...he contemplates by way of duration, continuity or moments.’ *The Compdn.*, p. 213.

<sup>5</sup> *Samanupassati*. *Sati*—well + *anu*—after + *passati*—views.

<sup>6</sup> According to Bergson, unless reality be followed in its generation and its growth, no true evolutionism would be reached. See p. xiv, Introduction to *Crea. Evol.*

(9) something to which to be philosophically indifferent, i. e. something by which not to be moved through fear or favour or through fear of blame or love of praise<sup>1</sup>

to (10) the intellectual stage of qualification for intuition.

The dual stage of philosophical equanimity and intellectual qualification is termed in Buddhism 'Insight leading to intuition,' because philosophical calmness fits him for acquiring knowledge for the sake of knowledge. When an aspirant for Ariyanship reaches the climax of this mature stage, he is inspired with a thought—'Now will the intuition arise.'<sup>2</sup>

The transitional stage of (a) preparation for, (b) approximation to, (c) adaption for, the intuition now supervenes before it is succeeded by (d) the stage of adoption in which the candidate is initiated into the mysteries of Ariyanship by Nibbana dawning upon him. The initiate is now inspired with the thought: 'I shall know the Unknown.'<sup>3</sup> The Unknown here is not the Unknowledge but the reality that has not been known hitherto. Finally, he penetrates his personality by intuition. The intuitive flash, occupying but for a rare moment, 'introduces us into life's own domain' to use a Bergsonian phrase, and reveals the interior of the personality as without an abiding entity (anatta). In this brief Buddhist account of the creative evolution of intuition, purified and glorified instinct of Bergson, we see that it has received an impulse from normal intellect which it transcends.<sup>4</sup>

The winner now abides in the fruit of his intuition for two or three moments before normal intellect returns to 'review' the intuition that has just

<sup>1</sup> Sankhārānaṃ vipatti-sampattiye nissāya yathākkamaṃ bhaya-nandīnaṃ abhāvena majjhataṭṭa. P. 300, Pye's combnd. ed. of *Tikāgyaw and Manisāra*. Cf. 'But it must be remembered that the normal work of the intellect is far from being disinterested. We do not aim generally at knowledge for the sake of knowledge, but in order to take sides, to draw profit—in short, to satisfy an interest. We inquire up to what point we seek to know is this or that, to what known class it belongs and what kind of action, bearing or attitude it should suggest to us.' Berg. *Intro. to Metaph.*, p. 35. On the philosophical habit of mind, cf. 'In order to become a scientific philosopher, a certain peculiar mental discipline is required. There must be present, first of all, the desire to know philosophical truth,.... it is not often found even among philosophers. No doubt it is commoner to wish to arrive at an agreeable result than to wish to arrive at a true result.' Russell's *Low. Lec.*, pp. 237, 238. Also cf. 'In philosophy, hitherto, ethical neutrality has been seldom sought and hardly ever achieved.... In thought at any rate those who forget good and evil and seek only to know the facts are more likely to achieve good than those who view the world through the distorting medium of their own desires.' *Op. cit.*, pp. 27, 28. Buddhists illustrate this attitude by a man who first loves his wife, next hates her and then becomes indifferent to her when he understands her truly. We are told by Matthew Arnold that even Professor Dowden admits 'that the real Miss Hitchener was not seen by Shelley, either when he adored or when he detested.'

<sup>2</sup> Intuition here is expressed by 'appanā.' It is 'the sinking of the mind into the inside of an object.' The *Compnd.*, p. 120, n. 1. It is the penetration into the inwardness of the object, while normal intellect is but thrown on to the surface. Appanā is like a solid body which sinks to the bottom of water and normal intellect is like a hollow case buoyed up to the surface. Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 57.

Cf. 'It (i. e., intellect) goes all round life taking from outside the greatest possible number of views of it, drawing it into itself instead of entering into it. But it is to the very inwardness of life that intuition leads us,—by intuition I mean instinct that has become disinterested, self-conscious,....' *Crea. Evol.*, p. 186.

<sup>3</sup> Anamatagge saṃsāre anaññātaṃ amatam paḍaṃ, catusaccadhamme'va vā ñassāmiti evaṃ ajjhāsayena paṭipannassa indriyaṃ anaññātaññāsāmit'indriyaṃ. Pye's *Tikāgyaw*, p. 191.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 'But though it (i. e., intuition) thereby transcends intelligence, it is from the intelligence that has come the push that has made it rise to the point it has reached. Without intelligence, it would have remained in the form of instinct rivetted to the special object of its practical interest,....' *Crea. Evol.*, p. 187.

passed.<sup>1</sup> That is, he reviews either (a) the act of intuition itself, (b) the fruit thereof, (c) Nibbana intuited, (d) the corruptions already put away, or (e) those corruptions as yet to be got rid of, by the three next higher stages of intuition.<sup>2</sup>

(d) *Intuition.*

The *Kathāvatthu* opens with the 'gettability as closely as possible' of the real. And Buddhaghosa explained 'gettability' by 'knowing.' This is effected by understanding approaching the reality.<sup>3</sup> Naturally, the best position that understanding can take up is inside the object with which it identifies itself by a sort of intellectual sympathy, as Bergson says.<sup>4</sup> When understanding penetrates an object in this way, it is no longer intelligence but intuition.<sup>5</sup>

The penetration into our personality by intuition is a comparatively simple act, occupying but a moment as already observed. It is not divisible into separate insights into four distinct Ariyan facts.<sup>6</sup> It is described in the *Kathāvatthu* and other books as instantaneous penetration (*ekābhisamaya*).<sup>7</sup> By this we mean that the fourfold function of intuition is accomplished simultaneously by a momentary flash, or by a stroke of genius as Russell would say.<sup>8</sup> This finishing stroke is illustrated in Buddhist books by more than one figure:—

Intuition is compared to the movement of a boat carrying personality across a stream. Imagine the act of crossing as consisting of leaving one bank and reaching the other simultaneously. Here the bank left behind represents the ill that has ceased; the stream crossed, the craving that is cut

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'Now our intellect does undoubtedly grasp the real moments of real duration after they are past; we do so by reconstituting the new state of consciousness out of a series of views taken of it from the outside....' *Crea. Evol.*, p. 211. The italics are ours.

<sup>2</sup> We have four principal degrees of Ariyanship culminating in Arahantship. Intuition in each degree is momentary. No sooner it occurs than it passes into its fruition of that degree. Therefore a person, strictly speaking, is permitted only four rare moments of intuition in his evolution. Cf. 'Rare, indeed, are the moments when we are self-possessed to this extent; it is then that our actions are truly free. Even at these moments we do not completely possess ourselves. Our feeling of duration, I should say the actual coinciding of our self with itself, admits of degrees. But the more the feeling is deep and the coincidence complete, the more the life in which it replaces us absorbs intellectually by transcending it.' *Op. et loc. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> *Upalabbhatti paññāya upagantvā labbhati; nāyatīti artho.* P. 8, *J. P. T. S.*, 1889 Cf. 'But a true empiricism is that which proposes to get as near to the original itself as possible, to search deeply into the life, and so by a kind of *intellectual auscultation*, to feel the throbbings of its soul; and this empiricism is the true metaphysics.' *Intro. to Metaph.*, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> 'By intuition is meant the kind of intellectual sympathy by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible.' *Op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. 'Intuition is instinct, sympathy, an apprehension of reality from within.' Carr's *Phil. of Change*, p. 163. Intuition, according to Buddhism, understands the real without the intervention of concepts. Cf. 'Intuition, then, is a direct apprehension of reality which is non-intellectual and non-intellectual means that it is neither a perception, nor a conception, nor an object of reason, all of which are intellectual forms, or... intellectual views, of reality.' *Op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>6</sup> See *Pls. of Controv.*, p. 132.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. '...if we turn back suddenly upon the impulse, and try to seize it, it is gone; for it is not a thing but a direction of movement... it is infinitely simple. The metaphysical intuition seems to be something of the same kind.' *Intro. to Metaph.*, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. '...when everything has been done that can be done by method, a stage is reached when only direct philosophic vision can carry matters further. Here only genius will prevail.' Russell's *Low. Lec.*, p. 241.



off; and the opposite bank reached, Nibbana—the cessation of ills. This illustration has the advantage of showing the moving nature of the reality. The stationary banks are as stationary points in space. We have pointed out in Part I, that space is empty and void, without objective reality. Therefore, the banks themselves are not real; it is the moving boat at each of these positions that is real. Hence the ill that has ceased is no longer real and Nibbana not yet reached is not yet real either.<sup>1</sup> This follows from the fact that reality is confined to the present moment, as observed before.

Another illustration is that of a lamp which dispels darkness at the same time as it gives out light. Suppose that the lamp goes out simultaneously with a flash after it has burnt its wick out and exhausted the oil. Here the wick burnt out represents the ill that has ceased; the darkness dispelled, the craving put away; the light that dispels the darkness and shows itself as well as the flame burning out the wick, the intuition; and the blowing out of the lamp on the exhaustion of the oil, etc., Nibbāna—the cessation of ills. This figure has the advantage of showing the nature of the intuition which reveals the reality. For this reason, intuition is also compared to the Sun<sup>2</sup> which lights up everything. Through a process of creative evolution, it comes into existence like the fire that is produced by the friction of the two pieces of wood or bamboo representing mind and matter.—The fire reveals itself as well as the nature of the two stuffs of life, consumes both and itself goes out when the combustible matter has been consumed.

Even as we have the contraries in the boat and light illustrations, so we have thesis and antithesis,<sup>3</sup> indefinitely combined in what Bergson has aptly called *integral experience* of the reality—our own personality—as a simple indivisible whole:—

Thesis: Reality is conditioned.

Antithesis: Reality is unconditioned.

The reality penetrated by intuition is absolute. That is to say, it is 'released' from all relations at the moment of intuition. At this moment, then, conditioned reality, namely personality, becomes unconditioned reality. And unconditioned reality is Nibbana.

Now, consciousness is ordinarily understood as a relation between subject and object. But there is no conscious subject behind consciousness and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'If it were past and gone, or not yet, you could not think of it, for you cannot think of what does not exist.' Mrs. Rhys Davids' *Buddhism*, p. 84. It would be more correct to say that we can merely think of it but cannot truly understand it.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Visuddhimagga*. Also p. 301, Vol. III, Pye's combined ed. of *Tikāyavav and Manisāra*. Buddhism always looks upon consciousness as a light (Idaṃ cittaṃ pabhassaraṃ). This, together with its comparison of the intuition to the Sun, reminds us again of Bergson who compares our intellect to a flame which lights up the coming and going of living beings in a narrow passage—a lantern glimmering in a tunnel, or as we Buddhists would say, a firefly which lights up the inside of a bamboo—and compares intuition to a Sun which can illuminate the world. P. xi, Introduction to *Crea. Evol.* Also cf. 'These fleeting intuitions, which light up their object only at distant intervals, philosophy ought to seize, first to sustain them, then to expand them, and so unite them together.' *Op. cit.*, p. 282.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 'But from the object seized by intuition, we pass easily in many cases to the two contrary concepts; and as in that way thesis and antithesis can be seen to spring from reality, we grasp at the same time that the two are opposed and now they are reconciled.' *Intro. to Metaph.*, p. 34. Cf. also 'I could never imagine how black and white interpenetrate if I had never seen grey; but once I have seen grey, I easily understand how it can be considered from two points of view, that of white and that of black.' *Op. cit.*, p. 75.

there can be no relation whatsoever with a single term. Moreover, object, being part and parcel of consciousness, is inseparable from consciousness. Hence consciousness-of-an-object is an indivisible unit.<sup>1</sup> This unit of consciousness at any given moment is shown in the *Kathāvatthu*<sup>2</sup> as incapable of being conscious of itself. That is, it cannot be given as subject and object at the same time. Self-consciousness, as usually understood, is therefore impossible. This is true of normal, nay supernormal, consciousness; for self-introspection is really self-retrospection or, in the Bergsonian language, our intellect always 'turns to the rear and looks behind.' What is posited in the phenomenon of self-consciousness as object is never the present self but the past self which has gone and is therefore no longer real.<sup>3</sup>

Intuition transcends both normal and supernormal consciousness. It is unique because it has Nibbana for its object. The object here is the real and is therefore existing. Both the subject and the object are given at the same time. The object is not something outside our system, external to our personality. It is identified with our very personality freed or released from conditions. Witness the Nibbana of an Arahant with his purged residua of the stuff of life, the stuff of reality, before final passing away.

Intuition is, therefore, in direct and immediate contact<sup>4</sup> with the real. It is consciousness in which the subject and the object are completely merged into one or in which, to borrow from Bergson, self coincides with self. In this identification of self with self, we instal ourselves right within becoming. That is to say, the real is *lived* rather than *thought*, as already remarked in Part I. In other words, it is realised.

We have observed before that moments of intuition are rare. But the enjoyment of integral experience may be prolonged at will by an Ariyan 'established in its fruit' (*Phalaṭṭhāno*). This unique experience is inexpressible by solidifying language and the fluid real cannot be adequately represented by stable and static concepts even as, to borrow once more from Bergson, 'the flowing water beneath cannot be described by means of a system of fixed bridges thrown across a stream.'

Personality is now detached from the idea 'ego' and the idea of 'no soul' (*anatta*) is realised. And if an Ariyan now uses the term 'I,' as he 'calls the grains powder,' he no longer abuses the term. He merely uses it as a label to effect economy in speech and thought, but does not look for the corresponding thing or ego behind that word.<sup>5</sup> In short, he does not exceed the legitimate scope of terms and concepts.<sup>6</sup> He finds the word 'soul' empty

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'The important thing is, then that the relation we call knowledge supposes two things, and the discernment of one by the other and knowledge does not suppose one thing different from both....' Carr's *Phil. of Change*, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> P. 183, *Pts. of Controv.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. '....we are not aware of it immediately while it is functioning, but reflectively in explaining to ourselves the function of the brain as an object independent of our consciousness.' Carr's *Phil. of Change*, p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> *Sacchikaroti*—'to be face to face.'

<sup>5</sup> Cf. 'At the most he may put the label 'ego' on these states....; it is only a word, and the great error here lies in believing....we can find behind the word a thing.' *Intro. to Metaph.*, p. 26. On ego as an artificial bond threading the psychic states as independent entities, like the beads of a necklace, see *Crea. Evol.*, pp. 3, 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Iedi*, p. 125, *J. P. T. S.*, 1913-14.

of its content. In the Bergsonian phraseology, he no longer 'fills a void and goes from the empty to the full'; he does not 'make use of the void in order to think the full';<sup>1</sup> the full is no longer an embroidery on the canvas of nothing.<sup>2</sup> All this is spoken of in Buddhism as 'Emancipation from Soul'.<sup>3</sup>

A person who is thus liberated is no longer subject to hallucinations of perception, ideas and views regarding change. He no longer mistakes change for permanence.<sup>4</sup> Again in the Bergsonian language, he no longer 'starts from immobility, as if this were the ultimate reality'.<sup>5</sup> It cannot be said of him that of becoming he perceives only states and of duration, only instants.<sup>6</sup> In fact, he no longer 'thinks the moving by means of the movable'<sup>7</sup> and does not 'in vain seek beneath the change the thing which changes'.<sup>8</sup> His perception will no longer 'solidify into discontinuous images of the fluid continuity of the real'.<sup>9</sup> In short, the mind no longer takes 'the stable views of the unstability'.<sup>10</sup> All this, and more, is summed up in Buddhism as 'Emancipation from Illusion'.<sup>11</sup>

A person who is thus freed becomes disinterested and renouncing his most cherished passions, gives up the craving. In the words of Bergson, intuitive knowledge 'would have called upon the mind to renounce its most cherished habits'.<sup>12</sup> This is described in Buddhism as 'Emancipation from Desire.'

We have already observed that the reality penetrated by intuition is inexpressible by symbols—concepts and language.<sup>13</sup> And we may now well understand why the Buddha at first hesitated to enlighten others. He was, however, persuaded to attempt the task. For this purpose, he divided his hearers into four classes of individuals:—

(a) Padaparama class of persons to whom 'the language is the measure of knowledge;'

(b) Neyya class of persons who 'may be led to knowledge by logic, inductive and deductive reasoning, arguments and inference from examples and analogies and representations by figures and images;'

(c) Vibhajjitaññū class of persons who 'are capable of understanding the philosophy by analysis;'

(d) Ugghātitaññū class of persons who 'are capable of penetrating the real by revelation in intuition;'

From this classification we may see that concrete images have an advantage over abstract concepts and that intuition is placed by the Buddha above analysis.

<sup>1</sup> *Crea. Evol.*, pp. 288, 289.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 291.

<sup>3</sup> *Compnd.*, p. 216.

<sup>4</sup> *Compnd.*, p. 216.

<sup>5</sup> *Crea. Evol.*, p. 163.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 288.

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 315.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 317.

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 319.

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 320.

<sup>11</sup> *Compnd.*, p. 216.

<sup>12</sup> *Crea. Evol.*, p. 362.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. 'The history of philosophy... shows us the eternal conflict of systems, the impossibility of satisfactorily getting the real into the ready-made garments of our ready-made concepts....' *Crea. Evol.*, p. 51.

Bergson, too, does not stop at his intuition. He defines<sup>1</sup> intuition 'as insinct capable of *reflecting* upon its object and enlarging it indefinitely.' In this self-inconsistent definition, Bergson's intuition overlaps intellect. And whether it enlarges its object from the actual any to the potential many or from the different rills of life to his 'great river of life,' he oversteps himself into the province of concepts.

Again, both according to Buddhism, as we have seen, and according to Bergsonism, our own personality intuited serves as a model<sup>2</sup> for the rest of personalities in the universe. This is the domain of logic, since it is inference drawn from a comparison of other personalities with a specimen. In matters of conventional truths dealing with concepts, inductive method of reasoning, to be valid, demands the greatest number of particular truths to arrive at general propositions. But in matters of philosophical truths dealing with realities, a single, reliable, infallible instance may suffice to establish the highest generalisation,<sup>3</sup> such as the most universal Buddhist proposition—'All realities, conditioned and unconditioned, are soulless' (*Sabbe dhammā anattā*), just as the presence of sea may be inferred from the taste of a drop of sea water.<sup>4</sup>

Thus far the Bergsonian side of the shield with Russellian fringes. In the next issue we shall reverse the shield and present the Russellian face with Bergsonian fringes.

SHWE ZAN AUNG.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> *Cf.* 'The consciousness we have of our own self in its continual flux introduces us to the interior of a reality, on the model of which we must represent other realities.' *Intro. to Metaph.*, pp. 55, 56.

<sup>3</sup> Bergson is inconsistent with his views of true evolutionism, with his own position and stand-point when he defines philosophy as 'the study of becoming in general' (*Crea. Evol.*, p. 391) which, in his own words, is not the becoming of any particular thing.

<sup>4</sup> *Pts. of Controv.*, n. i. p. 132.