CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

(1) The Ever-Standing problem of the relation between the two Independent Substances stands unresolved.

We have said in the beginning that the dualism may be of various types. We have seen the two most outstanding types of dualism in this thesis. On the basis of our observations, we may maintain that dualism has failed to explain this universe in a proper way. Frankly speaking, (mystery) to solve the mystery of this cosmos on the basis of two independent substances, seems to be difficult. It presents us with different naughty problems which remain unsolved even with our best efforts. The two independent substances may be either of the same nature or they may be of a different nature. If they are of the same nature, then it is hardly a dualism. And if the two substances in question are supposed to be of a different nature, then the everlasting problem of the relation between the two substances can hardly be solved. Though different efforts have, no doubt, been made by various thinkers to solve this problem, yet no effort satisfies the demands of our reason. In modern western thought Interactionism, Occasionalism and Parall elism are the main theories which try to explain this relation in their own way. But no one of these theories
is capable enough to solve this problem. If interactionism is defective, the same can be said of both occasionalism and parallelism. If one cannot affect the other, how can they go together? And to bring in the will of God to explain this relation seems to be an unnecessary postulate. So many other defects may be pointed out in these theories. But it is neither feasible nor desirable to discuss all those defects which vitiate these different theories, in such a short space which we have at our disposal. Here it suffices to say that modern western thinkers could not give a satisfactory solution of this fundamental problem of Dualism. The same is true about Indian Dualists also. If the single reflection theory of Vācaspati is defective, then the double-reflection theory of Viṣṇubhaṭṭa, as we have seen, also does not seem to be a sound explanation. And the problem which came in with the postulation of puruṣaṣ and prakṛti, as the two independent substances, still demands an explanation from the champions of Śājñākhya philosophy. Thus both Indian and western dualists could not solve this problem of the relation of the two independent substances to our satisfaction. It still stands as a challenge to present and future dualists. Its final solution is keenly awaited.

(i) The Untenability of Dualism in General: Dualism has failed to establish relation between
mind and body. It has so separated them that they cannot be brought together. This is a glaring defect, and is contrary to our life-long experience. We all believe that mind and body are so fused together in each person's individuality, that we cannot think them apart. Aristotle used to say that the soul is not something else than the body, it is the very form of the body, the inner life of the body.\(^1\) To separate things so closely bound together," as Santyana says, "is a violent and artificial divorce!\(^2\) If we separate mind and body, and try to study each of them apart from the other, we can neither know their internal implications nor their mutual relations. "If body is an instrument", as Santyana says, "mind is its function."\(^3\) One cannot exist without the other. If we can imagine that matter can exist alone, it makes consciousness superfluous, if consciousness is supposed to exist all alone, then matter is not needed at all. Either we give up the idea of dualism, as no satisfactory relation between mind and matter can be established on its assumptions or else we allow matter and mind to go their own ways. Matter without mind will lead to materialism; mind working apart from matter, would nullify

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1. Aristotle.
3. Ibid.
it and take us to some form of idealism. Anyway dualism is unworkable.

The dualism of mind and body suffers from the ambiguities of language also. Gilbert Ryle has pointed out that it is really a mistake to consider minds and bodies as two distinct species of existence. Existence or being is homogeneous and cannot be bifurcated into parts. Prof. D.M. Dutta says that existence is no genus of which minds and bodies are species. They are only two different aspects of existence, not the parts of it.

Professor Gilbert Ryle has denounced this Cartesian dichotomy of the world. He has pointed out that the dualistic theory, is entirely false and untenable. Commenting on this point, he says, "It is perfectly proper to say in one logical tone of voice that their exist minds and to say in another logical voice that there are bodies. These two expressions do not indicate two different, species of existence, for existence is not a generic word." Mind and body only indicate two different aspects or senses of existence. Gilbert Ryle further points out that dualism,

by treating mind and matter as two distinct and exclusive substances of a man's life, has made a grave "Category mistake." For example, it represents the facts of mental life as if they belonged to one logical type or category when they actually belong to another. Instances of such 'Category mistakes' are fairly common in our daily life. An illness sometimes casts a gloom in our minds, and we are disposed to think that it is a mental ailment, although it has originated from the ailing body.

We will not be wrong to say that these defects of dualistic philosophy have forced intellectuals of all times to think that there can be no link between mind and matter. May, they have abandoned their faith in this type of philosophy and have gone further to explain this universe with one single principle, may it be material or mental. Similar difficulties are felt also in the Sāmkhya system of dualism. No real contact between prakṛti and puruṣa, as we have already seen, could be established.

So, dualism seems to be untenable in solving the problem of the universe. Let us now try to tackle the metaphysical problem by supposing that perhaps only one substance may serve the purpose.
(iii) Dualism as an attempt to solve the riddle of the Universe:

But all this does not mean that dualism is altogether a useless philosophy. We cannot lessen its importance by pointing out its defects only. Such a system of philosophy is yet to come as will do away with the mystery of this universe. All the philosophical systems available so far are defective in this or that way. In this respect they differ in degree and not in kind. What Woodworth has said about the schools of Psychology, holds good about various systems of philosophy also. In his own words "Every school is good, though no one is good enough. We one of them has the full vision of the psychology of future. One points to one alluring prospect, another to another. Every one has elements of vitality and is probably here to stay for a long time." In this way we can say that all the philosophical systems propounded till now are mere attempts to satisfy human curiosity about man and the universe. So dualism is an attempt among a few other philosophical attempts. No doubt it may be superior or inferior to some other attempts. And its inferiority to a few philosophical attempts does not disqualify it to become a sincere and genuine philosophical endeavour. We may agree or disagree

1. Woodworth -Contemporary Schools of Psychology 'P. 255.
with it, yet it was, it is, and it remains one of the potent hypotheses about cosmological explanation.

Here it is not out of point to mention that dualism is a system which appeals to our head and heart, both equally. Pluralism appeals to our hearts more than to our minds. Monism, on the other hand, satisfies the demands of our minds more than those of our hearts. In this respect dualism represents a mean between the two extremes. And the mean is, certainly, a virtue according to some thinkers, nay, it may be a virtue for all those who have both head and heart and not only head or heart.

(iv) Dualism as a Prelude to Monism:

Dualism definitely represents an advancement over our primitive pluralistic thought. It presents us with less difficulties than pluralism. It is easier to solve the problem of the relation between two independent substances rather than that of more than two. It seems more reasonable to divide the world into conscious and unconscious substances rather than to divide it in many independent entities. Hence if history of philosophy is a growth of speculation human speculation, then dualism certainly falls in the middle of it. So it does not matter whether dualism has been successful or unsuccessful in its attempt to solve the riddle of the universe, it is never a waste. If it does not give us final solution of the world, it is also not an
insignificant effort. Its significance lies, at least, in speculation promoting philosophical speculation from two ultimate substances to one all pervading ultimate substance. It is Cartesian dualism, for example, which becomes the foundation stone of the monistic system of Spinoza. In the words of Tilley "Dualism gives way to monism, theism to pantheism, interactionism to parallelism." In India also Śaṅkara, a great monist has criticized the dualistic philosophy of Saṁkhya and called this system a Pradhāna Malla (chief enemy). It seems that Śaṅkara has tried to reduce the dualism of Saṁkhya into monism of his own kind. Śaṅkara in a way, represents a reaction against the dualistic philosophy of Saṁkhya. Thus dualism may be taken as a prelude to monism.

(v) A Plea for Monism:

We have seen how pluralism and dualism have failed to give a satisfactory solution to the cosmic problem. We are convinced that reality cannot be reduced to fragments. So, we feel that some form of monism may perhaps give a better view of the world.

Human mind sees confusion everywhere, due to the diversity of objects and the seeming lack of unity in them.

2. Śaṅkara Bhāṣya, Brahman Sūtras. 2. 1
It seeks to find its way out of this confusion with the help of some idea or principle which may reduce this chaos to an orderly and well-planned universe. Monism appeals to us as a way out of this confusion for certain specific reasons.

On metaphysical grounds, monism is superior to both pluralism and dualism. Pluralism believes that the world is composed of different entities. How is it possible to think of unity and coherence in the face of such diversity? All seems to be in a disorganised condition. Similarly, dualism also has its drawbacks. The most important of them is the difficulty of the relation between the two opposite substances. On the other hand, monism has no such difficulty to face. It believes only in one substance, be it matter, mind or spirit.

Apparently the world is composed of different objects, but there seems to be unity behind it. The unity of the world is the demand of our mind, without which we cannot explain harmony and coherence. The diversity is only manifestation of that unity. All things are inter-related.

To understand this unity, true knowledge is needed, not of the parts, but of the whole. So knowledge,
too, presupposes system and unity. It cannot be divided into water-tight compartments. As our knowledge grows from one stage to another, we construct some bonds of unity between the old knowledge and new, and thus proceed towards the conception of a unified world. Each advancement in civilization tends to the unification of this universe. Each stage in it distinguishes the civilised man from the savage whose world is chaotic and whose knowledge is confined to a few disconnected facts picked up from here and there.

A study of knowledge reveals to us that it grows both in the individual mind as well as the collective mind of the race, not by addition alone but also by transformation and integration.

Monistic conception thus presents the knowledge of the world as a complex unity in which nothing is loose and independent and everything is interconnected with other things. Further, the monist claims that the postulate which lies at the root of all knowledge is that the world is a unified, homogeneous whole. There are no sudden breaks and interruptions in the unitary conception and all things seem to move in an orderly way. Unless the world is a unity, there can be no correlation or even coherence
between different branches of knowledge. Fragmentary knowledge can tell us only that this fact is true and that fact is true, but not whether both the facts together are true.

If knowledge is the primary aim of life, we cannot realise it without recognising the presence of the Universal Spirit in us and our unity with it. The feeling of unity with the supreme dispels all doubts as it gives us divine knowledge.

Modern science also leads towards monism. There are quite a large number of scientists who believe in the single evolutionary theory. They consider this world as a 'block universe!' It has evolved into one homogeneous whole on the basis of a single story of evolution. The so-called different types of evolution are only its aspects each causally connected with the others, thus forming a comprehensive causal order. In their support, they quote Frederick Paulsen who believes in the theory of single evolution. Paulsen says, "This animal kingdom cannot exist without the vegetable kingdom, this again cannot arise before the stony crust of the earth has been disintegrated into loose soil by physical and chemical influences. We must further suppose that this soil is watered by rains from time to time and so on. Hence the smallest blade of grass really calls in-to play the entire planetary
system with all its arrangements and movements and all the laws of nature."

Further, some laws of Physics, such as laws of motion, gravitation and Conservation of Energy all lead to the conception of a unified world. All objects are governed by these laws. The latest progress in science reveals that there is one single principle of Energy which explains the entire working in the cosmos. So science also gives us the idea of unity.

There is also unity in all branches of science. They are inter-related. If we treat these sciences and the facts concerning them as quite separate and distinct from each other, we can have no unified knowledge.

All kinds of art observe the rule of unity as its basic conception. No engineer designs a house in all its details without having a complete idea about the whole house as a unit. No bridge is designed in parts. Monism leads to refinement of tastes and feelings. It promotes the aesthetic sense in us. Appreciation of beauty is not possible unless we see beauty in the whole. Is it possible for us to enjoy a beautiful picture, piecemeal?

that is, by dividing it into parts, and then studying each part in detail? What beauty do the eyes or the nose of a person possess apart from the face to which they belong? Similarly, a beautiful flower cannot retain its beauty, if its petals have been separated, one from the other in order to enjoy its beauty. We are reminded here of a line from Wordsworth in which he laments that the scientist murders to dissect. "Aesthetic perception is not possible unless our perspective includes the entire configuration of an object. We see beauty in the whole rather than merely in the parts. Professor Adhikari is of the opinion that in monism there is aesthetic value. He finds in it a neatness, a beauty, a special sanctity, a singleness of purpose—all appealing to the heart.

Monism opens before us new channels of religious experience. This is the essence and value of monistic thought. Monism has a great charm in it, this is why we treat it as a religious creed. The Universal spirit pervades everywhere, in us as well as the outer world. Kabir has given us the gem of a thought in his well-known couplet,

1. Wordsworth.

2. From an article read by Prof. Adhikari at a session of Philosophical Congress held at Calcutta in 1926.
"By saying that the Supreme Reality only dwells in the inner realm of spirit, we shame the outer world of matter, and also when we say that He is only in the outside, we do not speak the truth."¹

We should therefore see the manifestation of the Absolute, both in the material world as well as in our inner consciousness, for without this unity, between the All-Pervading Soul and the soul of man, there can be no true knowledge of Reality.

The religious history of our race, our old traditions, our beliefs and convictions all pre-dispose us to monism. The sentiment of unity has its seat not in the mind but in the heart that loves peace and order. Monism is not merely a solution of the cosmic problems, but it is the bed-rock on which almost all the religions of the civilised world are based. The spirit of man always tends towards coherence and harmony, which it can find only in a unified world.

Great saints and seers have favoured the idea of monism in religion. It is an admitted fact that if we are inclined towards polytheism there will arise the

¹: L. Kabir.
difficulty of superiority and inferiority among the gods themselves. So it is proper to believe in one God.

Sophisticated religion believes in monotheism. A higher step is the belief in the Absolute. In the words of George Patrick, "The human spirit seeks, back of all minds, the Absolute Mind, back of all spirits, the Absolute Spirit, back of all wills, the Absolute Will back of all experience the Absolute Experience."  