AN EVALUATION
In the course of our exposition we have considered in detail the various arguments for and against anupalabdhi as a distinct source of knowledge or as an independent pramāṇa and it is needless to repeat those arguments here. The present researcher is convinced that anupalabdhi may be accepted as a distinct form of knowledge. The foregoing scrutiny of the Nyāya position makes it plain that the validity of anupalabdhi as a distinct means of knowledge remains unaffected inspite of the unsparing attack from the Nyāya side. The vehement opposition to anupalabdhi is not founded on valid grounds. Probably it is based on a firm conviction that the number of pramāṇas cannot be in excess of the four enumerated by Nyāya and rooted on a spirit of unwillingness to admit what comes from rival camps.

1. We frequently use sentences containing the word 'not'. In logic the distinction of affirmative and negative judgments is well known. A judgment may be true or false. It is said to be true or false according as there is or is not a fact corresponding to it. A fact is a thing or a thing having a property or a thing having a certain relation with some other thing. It is a mode of existence. Now so far as a true affirmative judgment is concerned there is some positive fact corresponding to it. But a true negative judgment creates a problem. It would be seen proper to assert that as in the case of a true affirmative judgment so in the case of a true affirmative judgment so in corresponding negative fact. But the term 'negative fact' appears to be self-contradictory. Negation is non-
existence. 'There is no book on the table' means the non-existence of a book on the table. But a fact is form of existence. Thus a negative fact would mean that non-existence is a form of existence. The problem of negation has provoked much thought in modern philosophy, and in view of the solutions so far offered it seems to be a hard nut to crack. The problem may be stated in the following forms: Are there negative facts? If there are, what is the source of our knowledge of them? If there are not, what is the explanation of negative judgment? An affirmative answer to the first question will give an objective view of negation and a negative answer will give a subjective view. Modern philosophers are generally inclined to favour the subjective view. Bradley and Bergson are some of the important names. Russell is another. According to Russell the word 'not' can safely be eliminated from language. He says "..... the question whether there are negative facts ..... raise difficulties. These niceties, however, are largely linguistic".

From the considerations discussed in the previous chapters, it is quite evident that according to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, abhāva or non-existence is as primary a fact as bhāva or existence is, and then perception is a pramāṇa by which abhāva is known. In a sense, it might be said that abhāva is the reality of the greater moment in the pluralistic universe of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. Final emancipation (mukti or apavarga) is the highest aim of spiritual life in Nyāya as well as in other systems of Indian Philosophy. In Nyāya, mukti consists in
the annihilation of all evils (duḥkhas), the term ‘duḥkha’ in this context comprising every thing connected with voluntary activity and leading directly or indirectly to the cycle of death and birth (pretya-bhava) and including in this manner every form of pleasure (sukha). In the language of Nyāya, mukti is atyantika-duḥkha-dhvamsa. It would be a mistake to suppose that the Naiyāyikas are pessimists. In fact, no system of Indian Philosophy can be said to be pessimistic; for pessimism: in a strict sense, affords no hope or solace, but every system of Indian Philosophy aims at the attainment of what it believes to be the highest good and expects its adherents to find comfort in the summum bonum it offers to them. One can easily see why Naiyāyikas attach so much importance to abhāva, having due regard to its close relation to the Nyāya conception of mukti.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya and others controvert the view that anupalabdhi is an independent source of the knowledge of non-existence. According to them, such knowledge does no require anupalabdhi as a separate source of knowledge, but is a special case of perception. Just as we perceive the existence of objects, so also we can perceive their non-existence under certain conditions. When there is a jar on the table before me I perceive its existence through a direct contact between my senses and the object jar. Hence, the existence of the jar is directly perceived by me. But when there is no jar on the same table, I perceive its absence or non-existence as a
characteristic of the table. The table is characterised by the absence of the jar. Hence the absence of the jar comes, in contact with by the senses through being adjectival (viṣeṣaṇa) to the table which is in direct contact with the senses. So, when I directly perceive the table, I indirectly perceive the absence of the jar on it. This perception of the absence or non-existence of a thing, however, requires two negative conditions, namely, the non-perception (anupalabdhi) of that thing and the hypothetical reasoning (tarka) that if it existed it would have been perceived like the table. Before we come to know the absence of the jar on the table we must be sure of the fact that we do not perceive it there. Further, we must be sure that all the conditions that are necessary for its perception are present at the time when it is not perceived. The absence of the jar is perceived by me when I do not perceive it on the table but know that it would have been perceived if it existed there. The non-existence of the jar is thus known by means of perception when it is combined with the non-perception of the jar and the hypothetical reasoning about its existence. That this knowledge of non-existence is a form of perception is directly felt by us. We are immediately aware of the fact that the non-existence of a jar on the table is directly known or perceived by us. Anupalabdhi or non-perception of the jar is a negative condition of the perception, and not the source of our knowledge of its non-existence. If non-perception be taken as a source of knowledge, then it must be either cognition.
by some other non-perception or not cognised at all. On the first alternative we are landed in the fallacy of argumentum ad infinitum. On the second, non-perception becomes identical with perception, since, like perception, it is knowledge which is not produced by any other knowledge. Hence the Naiyāyikas conclude that non-perception is not a separate source of knowledge, but a special case of perception.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory of the perception of abhāva bears sharp contrast to that of Kumārila Bhāṭṭa of Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā who accepts the objective reality of abhāva but rules out its comprehension by perception and instead holds non-comprehension (amupalabdhi) as a special way of knowing it. Kumārila is of the view that abhāva is negative in nature, so it can only be apprehended by a negative means of knowledge. Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika objects to this view remarks that it is not necessary that can object and the means of its knowledge should be similar in nature. The main argument that Jayanta extend to prove the perceptibility of negation is that when we open our eyes we perceive the ground as well as the non-existence of the jar but when we close them we do not see any of the two. So there is no justification what so ever to maintain that the cognition of the ground is sense perception and the cognition of the non-existence, for instance of a jar on the ground, is other than sense perception. Jayanta, like other Naiyāyikas, is of the view that the form of the contact subsisting between sense and non-existence is viśeṣa -viśeṣyabhāva.
According to the Buddhist ‘existence’, as Stcherbatsky puts it, refers to
the ultimate reality of a point instant and its cognition is the corresponding
pure sensation. A non-existent or absent thing is imagination; it can produce
no sensation directly. Negation is therefore, never a direct or original attitude
of mind as pure sensation always is. It is always the work of an understanding
which calling in menomonic representation, interprets a given sensation on its
negative side. If we have a cognition of the type ‘there is here no jar’ or ‘the
jar is absent’, the visual sensation is produced by the empty place and not by
the absent jar. The absent jar is a representation called forth by the memory
and constructed by the intellect; it is not perceived by the senses. It is
imagination. The cognition of an absent thing means its presence in
imagination. It would be necessary perceived if it were present but it is absent
and therefore, it is imagined.

The Buddhists maintain that reality is not split into existence and non-
existence, but consists of existence only and that negation is not a direct way of
cognising reality. it is rather, a round about way and therefore, include in
inference. The assertion ‘There is no jar’ is preceded by an inferential process
of which it is the conclusion. Non-apprehension is the reason in this process.
The inference can be stated in the following manner. The existence of a
perceptible thing is invariably accompanied by its perception: the jar which is a
perceptible thing is perceived.
According to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika the Buddhist thesis that abhāva is not objectively real is not based on sound considerations. Moreover, negation cannot be included in svabhāva inference. The non-perception of a cause, etc., may be regarded as a mark which may lead to inferential knowledge, but the negation of the perceptible thing in itself is one of the conditions of the perception of negation. Refuting the Buddhists point by point, Jayanta states that even if these red-clothed logicians choose to ignore the path of reason and stick to their own faulty contentions, they should at least protect the honour of those ladies who have been brought into the harem of the Buddhist logic in the shape of eleven fold non-perception. The protection of these damsels, he points out, is impossible without accepting the objective reality of abhāva.

The Sāṁkhya view is identical with that of the Prābhākaras. They maintain that the non-existence of a jar on the ground is nothing but the ground that is devoid of any content. And the bare ground is nothing but the ground itself. Thus the cognition of the non-existence of the jar on the ground is the cognition of the ground. Therefore, the Sāṁkhyaas conclude that the non-existence of the jar on the ground can be cognised through perception. Mere non-perception cannot prove non-existence, since it may be due to other causes. Such as excessive distance or proximity, disturbance of sense organs, absent-mindedness, etc. The Yoga also does not accept negation.
(anupalabdhi) as a distinct means on the same ground on which the Sāṁkhya rejects it.

II. The important question who have mainly considered is whether anupalabdhi or non-perception can really the regarded as an independent pramāṇa. To arrive at a differently affirmative answer to this question, a student of comparative philosophy would like to confirm whether anupalabdhi is irreducible to prayākṣa, or perception, smṛti or memory, anumāna or inference and so on. Speaking broadly, the problem of anupalabdhi is really the problem of the origin of primary negative judgment. A primary affirmative judgment like “This is green”, “There is a jar here”, “This is a man”, etc., is derived, through perception; the predicate is affirmed on the basis of some positive characteristic directly presented by reality. But a negative primary judgment like “This is not green”, “There is no jar here”, “This is not a man”, derived exactly in the same way? The apparent answer would naturally be in the affirmative. For it would be said that the negative judgment is as much based on direct experience as the affirmative one, and consequently there can be no distinction between the two as regards their source or origin. It may be further argued: If it be a fact, as Bradley says, that “the basis of negation is really the assertion of a quality that excludes” the predicate, how can we help saying that the negative judgment “This is not green” is also based on the perception of a positive quality, say white, characterising the subject?
This answer may be compared to that of the Sāṃkhya's, who also, hold that the denial of the existence of a jar on the ground is based on nothing more than the perception of a positive form of the ground, i.e. the ground per se. Against this it may be urged on behalf of the Advaitins that though the denial of the predicate in such a judgment may start from the perception of some positive object, and though perception may be necessary for negation, it cannot be considered to be the all-sufficient factor which can by itself lead to the negative judgment. From the perception of the white colour the only judgment that can directly follow is the affirmative judgment, "This is white". But no such equally simple and direct step can be taken from the perception of the white to the negation of the green. For that we must pass through two peculiar moments of thought, absent in the case of the affirmative judgment; (1) an ideal reproduction of the green, and (2) the feeling of an opposition between the reproduced and the presented. This process has been described by Kumārila Bhāṭṭa as follows: "On the perception of the existing object and recollection of the absent one, there arises the subjective knowledge (mānasam jñānam) of non-existence". This subjective nature of a negative judgment, as contrasted with an affirmative one, has been admitted by Bradley as well. "For logical negation", he says, "cannot be so directly related to fact as logical assertion. We might say that as such and in its own strict character it is simply 'subjective': it does not hold good outside my thinking". Bosanquet also says,
'An affirmation can be, comparatively speaking, given as a fact; a negation cannot, except in quite another sense, be given. It has to be made, and made by setting an ideal reality over against real reality and finding them incongruous'.

If this distinction between an affirmative and a negative judgment be granted, we cannot say that the primary negative judgment is derived from perception just as is the affirmative. Though based on perception, our belief in the negative judgment, "This is not green", may be immediate like that in the affirmative; the process which culminates in the negative judgment is so unique and so different from that of the affirmative that we cannot reasonably hold that both these judgments are obtained through the same source or method of knowledge. In this light we can better realise the meaning of the Advaitin's statement that though knowledge of non-existence may be felt to be immediate (pratyakṣa), it is to be classed apart from an immediate knowledge obtained through sense-perception, on the strength of the distinction that exists between the two as regards the processes through which they are derived.

Now if the negative judgment involves a process that is not the same as the simple sense-perception through which the affirmative is obtained, it is reasonable to give this peculiar process a special name that will convey an idea of its unique characteristic. In the process involved in a primary affirmative judgment an ideal content, the predicate, is applied, as Bradley would put it, to the presented reality, the subject, and this application leading to the
coalescence of the two is called perception. In the process involved in the corresponding negative judgment, on the other hand, there is the attempt at the application of suggested ideal content (to allow again the analysis of Bradley) to the presented subject; but the two are immediately felt to repel each other. If the application in the previous case has been called perception, the non-application in this latter case should be called non-perception. And as this baffled attempt is the very nerve of the process, we may say that the negative judgment is derived through non-perception, just as the affirmative is obtained through perception. In other words, the means by which non-existence is known may be characterised as non-perception. The judgment of the non-existence of the green in the presented subject cannot be said to be due to the perception of the white (which as such can lead only to the judgment of the existence of the white), but to the failure of the will to perceive the green, which failure is immediately felt as the opposition that constitutes the very core of the negative judgment, and should be termed the non-perception of the green.

The statement that non-existence can be known through non-perception would seem a paradox, being almost equivalent to saying that knowledge can be had through ignorance. But this contradiction appears to exist only so long as we think non-perception to be a blank state of mind. Understood in the sense in which it has been technically used, as just shown, it is not however a
blank state, but only a baffled state of the mind that is expressed in a definite judgment like "There is no pot on this ground".

If non-perception be understood in this light it may not be difficult for a student of Western Philosophy to understand that it can be regarded, like perception, as a source of knowledge. It may also be clear that the process of knowledge that is involved in it distinguishes it from perception, memory and inference, and consequently that it cannot be reduced to any of these. But a searching critic may not be completely satisfied with the foregoing accounts, which may be considered to hide a difficulty. In the above interpretation, it may be said, it has been implicitly assumed that every non-perception can lead to the knowledge of non-existence, just as every perception can yield the knowledge of the existence of its object. In fact however it is, as the Advaitin himself admits, only an appropriate non-perception that can be the source of any knowledge of non-existence. We cannot, therefore, pass directly from a non-perception to the knowledge of non-existence: we have to ascertain, before we can do so, that the particular non-perception is also appropriate. To test this appropriateness we have to ascertain, as the Advaitin tells us, that in that particular case, if the unperceived object were present, it would have been perceived. Is it not legitimate to conclude from the Advaitin's own statements, therefore, that non-existence is known not through non-perception alone, but non-perception, together with the evidence for its appropriateness? If that be
so, it follows easily that the knowledge of non-existence is obtained through the synthetic construction of two premises, one expressing the fact of non-perception, the other its appropriateness — which is obviously a process of inference that can be put in the form of the following hypothetical-categorical syllogism: "If A were present it would have been perceived. A is not perceived. Therefore A is not present.

Evidently this is an objection that cannot be lightly passed over; for it is fatal to the view that non-perception is an independent and ultimate source of knowledge. Though we have stated already one reason why anupalabdhi cannot be reduced to inference, it is necessary to see whether it is strong enough to dispel this doubt and whether there are any other grounds to support it.

Before re-examining the reason previously adduced, let us consider what the admission of the Advaitin exactly amounts to. That the appropriateness of a non-perception has to be known before the non-perception can yield any knowledge is explicitly admitted by Bhâṭṭas and Advaitins alike. Thus we find the author of the Vedânta-Paribhāṣa saying that the appropriateness of a non-perception has to be determined with the help of the hypothetical argument (tarka): "If the object existed it would have been perceived." But in spite of this, the supporter of the theory of anupalabdhi may try to evade this charge by quoting the opinion of the Naiyāyikas and the
Vaiśeṣikas, according to whom a hypothetical argument is not an inference. The employment of the hypothetical argument, "If the object etc....", in order to prove the absurdity of the denial of a desired conclusion, is called by these logicians a tarka; and it is distinguished by them from an anumāna (inference) on the ground that it contains not a categorical proposition but a hypothetical. According to these thinkers, the premises of an anumāna (inference) must be of the categorical type. But a tarka, as containing an "if," shows that the premise does not represent definite knowledge, but a doubt. Only the doubt here is of such a nature that one of the many alternatives which constitute it is strongly emphasised, so that it approaches the nature of a decision. A tarka therefore, cannot by itself constitute knowledge; it only paves the way for it by helping forward the work of other definite evidence. In this particular case it helps anupalabdhi (non-perception) to yield the knowledge of non-existence. The admission that the appropriateness of an anupalabdhi has to be ascertained with the help of a hypothetical argument cannot, therefore, force the Advaitin to accept the conclusion that non-existence is known through an inferential process.

This defence, though quite capable of protecting an Advaitin against the attack of an Indian critic, would evidently be of little avail to him in fighting against a Western opponent. For to the latter the defence would appear as nothing but an arbitrary limitation of the scope of inference, based on the
rejection of all inferences containing hypothetical premises. In other words, though the Western critic may concede that the process in question cannot be called an anumāna, as conceived by the Indian thinker, he would conclude that there is no reason why it should not be called an inference which, as conceived by Western logicians, can very well contain a hypothetical premise.

It can be said, however, on behalf of the Advaitins that the so-called hypothetical syllogism of Western logic is, as Western logicians themselves admit, nothing but a categorical syllogism expressed in another form. It is therefore reducible to a categorical form; and thus the conclusion of hypothetical syllogism has as much force and validity as that of a categorical. There cannot be any categorical conclusion drawn from a really doubtful premise i.e. from a proposition that contains a hypothesis or a tentative supposition and not an established truth, though it is possible to draw one from a hypothetical premise which expresses an accepted truth in the form of conditional relation. But it may be said against this that if the proposition, “If there were a jar it would have been perceived,” presents only a provisional supposition from which no categorical truth can be inferred, it cannot help non-perception to yield the knowledge of non-existence. We do not know how the Advaitin would escape this difficulty. The only course for him is to part company with the general run of thinkers who hold “tarka” to be a form of doubt, and say that a “tarka” is a kind of genuine knowledge. But to admit it is
to give up this line of defence altogether. How is it possible to hold, then, that
the non-existence in question is not known through inference?

Let us see if the other argument briefly mentioned previously in this
chapter can really meet the objection. The argument has been used by the
Bhāṭṭas, by Kumārīla himself and his followers. According to it the non-
existence of a jar on the floor cannot be said to be known through inference for
the following reason: The major term, the sādhyā (or that which is to be proved
to be present in the minor term, the pūkṣa, the floor), is here the non-existence
of the jar, because the conclusion, in any case is to be “The floor has non-
existence etc.” Now for every inference there must be the previous knowledge
of an invariable relation between the middle and the major term. So in this
particular case we require to know the existence of such a relation between the
non-existence (to be inferred) and some thing that would be the middle term.
But this requires non-existence and its relation with the middle term (non-
perception) to be known previously. This knowledge also cannot be said to be
derived through another inference, for ultimately the premises of an inference
have to be non-inferentially acquired. So ultimately we are forced to admit
that non-existence is known through a non-inferential method.

Does this argument remove the doubt that the non-existence of the jar
on the floor can be known through the hypothetical-categorial syllogism
previously spoken of.? Obviously the answer should be in the negative. This
argument might remove the doubt if the form of inference were "What is not perceived in locus (where it should be perceived if existing) is non-existent there. The jar is not perceived on the floor (where it should be perceived if existing). Therefore the jar is non-existent there"; which really is the form of the inference the Bhāṭṭas mean to refute. For here the major premise represents the knowledge of a universal relation between non-existence and non-perception. But in the suggested hypothetical-categorial syllogism: "If the jar exists it is perceived. It is not perceived. Therefore it does not exist", the major premise is affirmative, and the universal relation presupposed is not between non-existence and something else, but between two positive contents, existence and perception. How can it be said then, with regard to this form of inference, that the knowledge of non-existence in the conclusion presupposes the knowledge of an invariable relation between non-existence and something else, and therefore a previous knowledge of non-existence itself in the major premise? The Bhāṭṭas' objection to the inferential knowledge of the non-existence in question does not therefore seem to tell against the above form of inference and the doubt is not removed.

But the Bhāṭṭas, and for that matter any other School in Indian thinkers for whom the first figure is the only logical figure, would reduce the above inference (granting for the moment that they do not object to its hypothetical form) to its logical form by taking the contrapositive of the major, "If the jar is
not perceived it is non-existent", as the real major of the inference. As a consequence they would argue that the major does really contain a previous knowledge of non-existence (in the form of a knowledge of a universal relation between non-perception and non-existence).

The validity of this defence would rest chiefly on the question whether the first figure is really the only figure, while every other figure has to be reduced to it for logical demonstration. As is well known, Aristotle, though admitting three figures, conceives the first as the perfect figure, and his *dictum de omni et nullo* and his theory of reduction do suggest that all figures are to be reduced to the first for the sake of clear demonstration. It is impossible for us in the present connection to enter into a thorough and independent enquiry into the merits of this question. But we can say this much, that in this particular case the inference is undoubtedly more evident and more easily acceptable in the first figure than in any of the rest.

But even granting that the affirmative major, "If the jar exists it is perceived", is equally good for the conclusion, it can be said that the attainment of this affirmative premise could scarcely be possible except through some knowledge of non-existence, because to establish this premise itself with certainty it is necessary to observe both positive and negative instances. We must know not only that the jar exists whenever it is perceived, but also that it does not exist whenever it is not perceived.
But there is a still stronger argument in favour of the Advaitins. If the major be affirmative, the minor at least must be negative, otherwise we cannot have the negative conclusion, “The jar does not exist”. And as a negative proposition connotes some non-existence the old question would still dog us: “How is this non-existence known?” This non-existence cannot be said to have been derived through perception, for it has been already proved that non-existence cannot be perceptually known. Neither can it be said to have been derived through inference, because such inference again having a negative conclusion must have a negative premise, and the same question would again arise as to how that premise is derived. So it must ultimately be confessed that non-existence is known through some method other than inference. We have therefore sufficient grounds on which to conclude that non-existence cannot be primarily known through inference. Every attempt to derive such knowledge inferentially requires at least one negative premise (i.e. the knowledge of non-existence in some form), and is thus hopelessly entangled in a *petitio principii*.

Considering this result along with what has been shown before, we can say that a negative judgment cannot be primarily derived either through perception or through inference. In other words, non-existence cannot be primarily known through perception or inference. It is known through a peculiar method of knowledge that is not reducible to any other method ordinarily known. If perception be the name for the method through which
existence is primarily known, the method through which non-existence is
primarily known can be called non-perception or *anupalabdhi.*