CHAPTER IV

OTHER ASPECTS:

1. After dwelling at some length on the most important aspect of the Ultimate Reality, namely, that it is one and without a second, we may with advantage consider the following few aspects thereof:

(i) This Ultimate Reality is infinite and all-comprehensive.

(ii) The diverse names and forms to be found in this universe are but the manifestations of the self-same Ultimate Entity. In other words, that One Ultimate Entity has become Many.

(iii) The powers of this Ultimate Reality are simply incomprehensible. And one very peculiar characteristic of this aspect is the fact that even the mutually conflicting qualities can reside together in it.

(iv) This Ultimate Reality is endowed with all divine qualities. In other words, it is not attribute-less as some other philosophers are disposed to think.
(v) The Ultimate Reality is both personal and impersonal. And the personal aspect repeatedly incarnates itself.

(vi) All this activity is only a sport on the part of this Ultimate Reality.

2. Let us start with the first aspect, according to which, the Ultimate Reality is infinite and all-comprehensive. Śrī-Vallabhācārya in his Tattva-dīpa-Nibandha describes the Ultimate Reality in the following manner. And it will give us a good idea of its infinite and all-comprehensive nature:

"The Ultimate Reality is Eternal Truth, Infinite knowledge, and Infinite Joy. It is the greatest, i.e., greater than any thing however great that we can think of. It is everywhere. It is unchanging. It is omnipotent. It is quite independent, i.e., though everything in this universe depends on it, it itself is dependent on none. It is omniscient. It is independent of the Prakṛti-Guṇas, namely, Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. On the other hand, these Guṇas themselves depend on it. In other words, these three Guṇas govern the universe, but they in turn are governed by this Ultimate Reality. It is one admitting of no difference, whether it be Sajātīya, Vijātīya, or Svagata. The difference between one male and another is Sajātīya, i.e., one between the two members of the same
class. That between a male and a female is Vijātiya, i.e., one between two individuals belonging to two different classes. And that between the various limbs of the same body is Svagata, i.e., one between the different parts of one organism. The Ultimate Reality in its essence admits of none of these differences. It is eternally and inherently endowed with an infinite number of virtues. It sustains everything. The limitless power is ever ready at its back and call. Maya, in the System of Śrī-Vallabhacārya, is this limitless power of the Ultimate Reality, wherewith it accomplishes anything whatsoever without the least exertion on its part. It is all Bliss. It is the Best, the Highest both materially as well as spiritually. It can very easily be distinguished from all the objects to be found in this universe. It is the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe. At times it carries its sport inside itself; at others it does so outside itself in the universe. Every such sport delights it. This Ultimate Reality controls both the sentient souls as well as the non-sentient objects in this universe. It is endowed with powers which are infinite and incomprehensible. The space, the time, the manner, the matter, the instrument, the reason, the owner, the receiver, and what not? Every one of these is the manifestation of this Ultimate Reality. It is everywhere. It is at the heart of everything. It controls everything; and that too
automatically without even touching it. It is the soul of all. Everything constitutes its body, yet nothing knows it. It is from within everything that it shines forth. Put all the systems of philosophy together, whether past, present, or future. They will not comprehend it completely. None is, however, wrong, as it correctly comprehends some one or more of the different aspects of this Ultimate Reality. Its forms are infinite. It is changeless and also changing at the same time. It is the only repository of all conflicting qualities. It is intellectually incomprehensible. It indulges in revealing and concealing itself from time to time. In this way, it manifests and again takes back into itself a number of forms in so rapid a succession that our intellect trying to know it simply gets confounded. It cannot ordinarily be grasped by means of sense-organs. Nevertheless, if it but wills so, it can be so grasped." (1)

Herein we find a very clear picture of the Ultimate Reality as conceived by Śrī-Vallabhācārya. And it does ample justice to the infinite and incomprehensible nature of the Ultimate Reality.

3. Next we may turn to the rational consideration thereof. And for this we have to dive deep into the enlightened human nature itself. We are conscious of our ignorance. There is a deep-seated urge within us to know more. We are not satisfied with half-knowledge. As far as.
we can, we want to have an exact knowledge and that too fully. This full and exact knowledge of various things, even when we have it to our satisfaction, presents a very diversified picture of the universe. Not that this diversity does not delight us. Nevertheless, we yearn for some simple principle unifying all these diverse phenomena. We want to have a very simple yet at the same time a very comprehensive principle that can explain all these diverse phenomena. The beauty of the theory of Albert Einstein, of course in the field of physics, lies just in this. Such a theory is an approximate description of the Ultimate Reality which governs all. Any intellectual pursuit whether scientific or philosophical is an attempt to get nearer and nearer to it. The nearer and nearer we get to it, the greater and greater is our progress. And in the following lines we get a very beautiful picture of this progress:

"When we at the present time first begin to think about the world in a conscious and systematic way, we discover that our thought already has a tendency to follow certain general lines, which seem to us natural, and sometimes almost inevitable. We find ourselves familiar, e.g., with the conception of a world of nature - a world wherein lifeless and unconscious bits of matter group themselves according to unvarying laws. There are a multitude of words which we use in speaking of this material world -
thing or substance, cause and effect, force, law, mechanism, necessity; and we suppose, ordinarily, that these words convey a well-defined and obvious meaning. In like manner, there is the very different world of the mental or conscious life, described by such terms as will, intellect, feeling, sensation. This also has laws which it follows; only they are what we call psychological, or logical, or ethical laws, in opposition to the physical laws of the outer world. Finally, while there is no general agreement in our ultimate religious or philosophical attempts to sum up the facts of reality, here too there are a few main attitudes, or types of theory, within which our choice is confined, and which go by such names as dualism, theism, idealism, materialism, pantheism, agnosticism. We do not find it very difficult to understand in a general way what these words mean, even if we do not accept the theories for which they stand.

"These concepts, then, or notions which we frame to serve as short-hand expressions for certain facts, or aspects of reality, come to us with so little labor on our part, that we often are tempted to regard them as self-evident and certain to present themselves as the manifest points of view whenever men stop to think. But a little examination will show that this is a mistake. We are the heir of all the ages in our intellectual life,
and so can utilize the results of those who have gone before us.

"The History of Philosophy attempts to give an account of the more important and comprehensive of these conceptions, in terms of which we are accustomed to think of the world, and to trace the mental and social conditions out of which they took their rise. It is an account of the growth of man's power to formulate the universe. ... When the subject-matter of investigation is so enormous, we can only expect to approach the goal by zigzag courses, hitting now upon the one aspect of the world, no upon another. In two obvious ways, nevertheless, we may look for an advance. It may consist simply in bringing to light some new point of view which before had been neglected, in abstracting some aspect of things which had not hitherto been clearly isolated from the rest of experience. Or, instead of striking out such a new conception, we may try to combine more organically those which the past history of philosophy has already succeeded in elaborating. ... Each of these standpoints represents some significant feature which the world presents; and it is not till all the manifoldness of the world has been distinguished, and grasped in an intellectual form, that we are in a position to sum up our knowledge so that it shall fairly represent the truth." (2)
Now, compare the underlined portion above with that in Śrī-Vallabhācārya's description of the Ultimate Reality, which is as follows:

"Put all the systems of philosophy together, whether past, present, or future. They will not comprehend it (i.e., the Ultimate Reality) completely. None is, however, wrong as it correctly comprehends some one or more of the different aspects of this Ultimate Reality." (3)

Do they not practically say the same thing? We can also with advantage compare the above lines with the following ones:

"... each religion has its own special note, makes its own special contribution to the forces working for the evolution of man. As we notice their differences, in addition to their similarities, we feel that they reveal a plan of human education, just as when we hear a splendid chord we feel that a master-musician has combined the notes, with a full knowledge of the value of each. ... Surely the world is the richer for each, and we cannot spare one jewel from our chaplet of the world's religions." (4)

Variety is the spice of life. The various aspects of the Ultimate Reality serve to enhance its beauty. They are as much real as the Ultimate Reality itself. Śrī-Vallabhācārya respects all and rejects none. He simply seeks to assign
every aspect its proper place in the master-plan. Ignorance, limited view, and pride prevent us from appreciating this rich variety. Humility combined with the openness of mind alone will enable one to fully appreciate the rich beauty of the various manifestations of One and the Same Ultimate Reality, which though One can become Many because of its intrinsic capacity to do so. And there is no end to this Many. The infinite nature of the Ultimate Reality is on close consideration found to be three-fold. This Ultimate Reality is found to be infinite in time, space, and substance. By saying that the Ultimate Reality (usually called Brahman) though One becomes Many, and that this Many has no end, we mean to say that the Ultimate Reality is infinite in substance. This means that it will go on becoming many, and go on and on doing so till the very end of time if there is such an end, but the substance of the Ultimate Reality will never get exhausted. And it is this fact that has been mentioned in the famous Upaniṣadic dictum.

"Pūnasya Pūrṇam ādāya Pūrṇam evāvasisyate" (5)

meaning "Even though the Ultimate Reality has multiplied itself infinitely, yet its capacity to do so is not exhausted, this capacity has remained intact." That it is infinite in time is saying the same thing that it is eternal, that it did exist at all times in the past, it does exist at present and it will continue to do so at all times in the future.
In other words, it exists at all times and even beyond. In still other words, it is never non-existent. Of destruction it knows nothing. And to say that this Ultimate Reality is infinite in space means that it is inside space, it is outside space, and that it is even beyond space. In other words, there is no place either spiritual or material where this Ultimate Reality is not already there. This fact of the infinite nature of the Ultimate Reality finds a very eloquent expression in the following lines giving the outlines of Śrī-Aurobindo Ghosh's Vedāntic Philosophy, who is a devotee of the Ultimate Reality in its feminine aspect:

"There are three ways of Her being in which it is possible to be aware of Her. She has three statuses:

"Transcendent, She is above all the worlds, linking the Supreme Being to all creation. She it is who bears the Supreme in Her consciousness, calls and holds the truths to be manifested and casts them into form. ...

"Universal, she spreads herself out as the substance and the soul of each universe of Her creation. It is Her presence that gives life and meaning to All, Her movement that gives the direction.

"Individual, She embodies in Herself both the transcendent and the universal ways of Her existence and makes their Power operative here for the manifestation of
the Divine in each individual form. She descends in person into the world of Ignorance in order to uplift and release it from the Falsehood and obscurity into which it has sunk.

"The Divine Mother has many aspects, many personalities that severally express the plenitude of Her oceanic Being." (6)

The above lines eloquently express the infinite and all-comprehensive nature of the Ultimate Reality as directly visualised by a Mighty Soul, Śrī Aurobindo Ghosh, on this very earth in this very life. And does this picture in any way differ from that given by Śrī-Vallabhācārya? Thus, according to him, the Ultimate Reality, though One, is nevertheless capable of becoming infinitely Many. Any view of this Ultimate Reality falls short of it because whereas this Ultimate Reality is infinite, any such view is bound to be finite, because the mind that conceives it is limited and the language which describes it is still more limited. That does not mean that any such view is wrong. No finite thing is unreal because of its finitude. The finitude of anything is due more to the faulty nature of our own perceiving apparatus, our limited mind. We think such a thing to be unreal because it slips away from before us. Such a thing appears to be unreal not because it is unreal but because we are unable to hold it on. This is because we are ordinarily so constituted that we ascribe our faults to
others. While travelling in a train we think that the things around us are moving. But what is moving in reality? The things around us or we ourselves? We see the Sun go from East to West? But do we ever see that the earth on which we live goes from West to East? To cite an illustration from psychology, let us take the following instance:

Suppose after a lot of mental effort we arrive at the solution of a very difficult mathematical or philosophical problem, and we forget it the next day. Whose fault is it? Ours or of the problem? The same is the case when we think that the objects of our experience are finite or unreal. When the spiritual powers are developed, we begin to have a wider and wider vision. And thereafter our ordinary views are completely changed. Thus we see how Sri-Vallabhaçārya views the Ultimate Reality.

4. Now, let us take up the next aspect. According to this; the diverse names and forms are but the different manifestations of the self-same One Ultimate Reality. For the clear description of this aspect also, we can very well have a recourse to the following lines outlining the Vedāntic Philosophy of Sri-Aurobindo Ghosh:

"The Divine has projected the universe out of His own Being with a purpose. That purpose is to manifest Himself His inalienable nature of Existence, Consciousness, and Bliss, sac-cid-ananda..."
"... He is there in every creature, in every point of Space and in every moment of Time, supporting all as the sadatman, an impersonal Self. All are Names and Forms on the bosom of this Self.

"... Not only are all things in the Self, but the Self too is in all of them. It is That which makes the Names and Forms live and real.

"... It is He who has put out this universe from the infinitude of His being." (7)

The view of Srī-Vallabhācārya is also just the same. Now, let it be humbly admitted at the outset, that it is not possible to demonstrate all this. And the very Revelation, the Veda itself, humbly admits its inability to do so:

"Yato vāco nivartante Aprāpya manasā saha." (8)

Neither the words nor the mind can reach it. It is, like the health of the body, something to be felt; and not something to be seen by ourselves or to be shown to others. At best it can be described but not demonstrated. But in order to dilute the dogmatic character thereof, the matter may be presented as rationally as possible.

5. To do so let us consider the following: Let us suppose that there are four objects A, B, C, D all different from one another. That all of them are different is a fact.
But does the thing end there? Is there not anything common to all of them? Let us examine them much more closely. We know that A is, B is, C is, and D is. Is not the fact of this is-ness common to all? If it is so, it comprehends all the four. Thus this is-ness becomes comprehensive. Again, does the matter end with this is-ness? Where is this is-ness if we have no knowledge thereof? Then this knowledge becomes still more comprehensive. It comprehends the is-ness over and above A, B, C and D. But the thing does not end even here. After knowing a thing, either we like or dislike it. And these likes and dislikes constitute the very dynamics of all activity whether physical or mental. If the all-comprehensive Reality has to be sought in this world of our experience, it is to be sought in these three directions. That is why the Śruti describes Brahman or the Ultimate Reality as sac-cid-ānanda, Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss. These to a limited extent are to be found even in the universe. But in Brahman they are infinite. And incidentally it may be mentioned that it is because of this very wide and rational conception of the Ultimate Reality or God that the Indian Religion has become most tolerant. In every finite object, these three are always present. And the degree thereof in each will decide which is a greater and which is a lesser manifestation of the Ultimate Reality. But one fact emerges very clearly that all objects are the manifestations of the Ultimate
Reality. And this fact admits of no exception. It is just because of this that the Indian Religion respects all alike. The famous Gīta dictum

"Vāsudevah sarvam iti
Sa mahātmā sudurlabhah" (9)

boldly declares that God is everything and everything is God, stating at the same time that persons having so lofty a vision are very very rare. Moreover this spirit of veneration and worship is much more important than the object of such veneration and worship. A person may worship any object he likes. For him that object is all right. But the belief that that object alone will liberate, and the others will not, is foreign to the Spirit of Indian Religion. It is the worship that liberates and not the object. This is the cardinal principle of the Indian Religion. The well-known stanza:

"Kāṣthe na vidyate devo,
Na śilāyām na mrṃmaye;
Bhāvena vidyate devo,
Tasmād bhāvo hi Kāraṇam." (10)

meaning "God resides neither in wood, nor in stone, nor in clay. But he resides there because of the spirit of veneration which a devotee has towards it. So this spirit of veneration alone counts and nothing else." very beautifully enunciates this principle. Worship any object you like.
But worship it or follow it wholeheartedly, i.e., surrendering yourself unconditionally. The Indian Religion does not believe in Religious conversion as generally understood. It aims at only one thing: Be better. Let Hindus be better Hindus, Mohammedans better Mohammedans, and Christians better Christians. The Indian Religion reveres a sincere Mohammedan or Christian more than an insincere Hindu. According to the Indian Religion it is the sincerity which matters and not the form of belief. Behaviour and not belief constitutes the very core of Real Religion. Such a Religion ALONE can be truly democratic.

6. The point to be considered next is how this One Ultimate Reality becomes Many. As has already been stated no demonstration is here possible. But a rational explanation based on analogies can be held forth, admitting of course that an analogy is no argument, as there is no guarantee that what happens in one case also happens in another. Nevertheless it will dispel the idea that a particular happening is impossible, which we are disposed to think when that particular happening happens to be unusual. Moreover it should not be forgotten that whatever is here stated with regard to the Ultimate Reality derives its strength from the Revelation and not from Reason. Here the Reason is merely a hand-maid of Revelation. It merely shows that the matters mentioned in the Revelation which in our ignorance we are disposed to think as impossible are not
altogether impossible in the universe. Coming to the point, take first the instance of air. It is chemically one and the same. But, physically, vibrations of different frequencies do arise in it, which give rise to different notes. Further the different permutations and combinations of these notes give rise to an infinite variety of chords either full of harmony or of discord. The former constitute the sweetest music but the latter happen to be jarring to our ears. How and why all this? Is there any satisfactory answer to this? We accept the thing as it is. Next, let us consider the case of electricity. Electrons and protons are its ultimate constituents. They are physically the same everywhere. They combine in different proportions; and the elements of Chemistry arise. These elements in turn combine in different proportions; and the chemical compounds arise. Moreover electricity is a form of energy. Does it not give rise to matter in this way? And does matter not exhibit properties which are quite distinct from those of energy? Moreover, does the energy in the form of matter not become a receptacle of the energy in the form of energy, something like water in a cup of ice? How and why all this? Next, let us turn to biology. Take for instance the egg of a peacock. The juice inside it has one and the same colour. But, does not a few days' hatching turn this liquid into a solid young peacock having a plumage of the richest and the most variegated physical colours? How and why all this? To take another instance from the same science, let us
consider how a human body is formed. The male sperm and the female ovum combine giving rise to a protoplasm. This protoplasm becomes transformed into different cells, some of which can build only bones and others only blood. Why so? Further, all these give rise to the brain, the seat of the human mind, one of the most wonderful objects in the universe. This mind in its turn is a store-house of an infinite variety of ideas. These ideas again are both dependent on and independent of the objects outside. In the waking state, we see a book; and the idea of a book arises in our mind; but in a dream, there is no such book; nevertheless sometimes there does arise the idea of a book which in no way differs from that of the waking state. From all these instances it becomes amply clear that the fact of one becoming many together with the fact of that many having properties different from those of that one is not something impossible in Nature. It is in some such way that the Ultimate Reality which is One becomes Many. And, in this connection, it will be well to quote the following words of J.B.S. Haldane, eminent British Scientist:

"However life originated in the remote past, more than a thousand million years ago, nowadays one living creature is always derived from another, or, in the case of sexual reproduction, from two others. And there are good reasons to think that all or almost all living things were derived from a single original." (11)
7. Now let us turn to the third aspect. According to this, the powers of the Ultimate Reality are simply miraculous, i.e., such as cannot be comprehended by human intellect. And one very peculiar characteristic of this aspect is the fact that even the mutually conflicting qualities are to be found residing together therein. For the full grasp of this aspect, let us first turn to the nature of the Ultimate Reality as it is to be had from the Vedic Scriptures, not only every part but even every letter of which is equally authoritative according to the Orthodox Belief. Now, one Scriptural Passage

"Na caksuṣā grhyate" (12)

states that no eye can see this Ultimate Reality. But another

"Kascid dhīraḥ pratyagātmānam aikṣat" (13)

states that some wise man did see it. A third passage

"Nāpi vāca" (14)

states that the words cannot describe it. But a fourth passage

"Sarve Vedaḥ yat padam āmananti" (15)

states that all the Vedas describe it. And these Vedas are nothing but words. A fifth passage

"Aprāpya manasaḥ saha" (16)

states that even mind cannot reach it. But a sixth passage
"Manasaivedam āptavyam" (17) states that it is with the help of the mind alone that this Ultimate Reality has to be reached. A seventh passage "Agandham arasam" (18) describes it as having neither smell nor taste. But an eighth passage "Sarvagandhah sarvarasah" (19) speaks of it as having all smells and all tastes. And a number of similar passages can be added to the list. Here we find conflicting qualities mentioned in different passages. But there are other passages where the conflicting qualities are to be found together in one and the same passage. Take, for instance, the passage "Anoranīyan mahato mahīyan" (20) meaning that this Ultimate Reality is smaller than the small and bigger than the big. Or the passage "Tad dūre tad u antike" (21) meaning that this Ultimate Reality is both far as well as near. Innocent child-like faith may accept such conflicting statements no doubt. But can honest intelligence do so? To grasp well the difficulties of honest intelligence, let us take the following Laws of Thought into consideration.
We shall find a very fine presentation thereof in the following lines:

"Laws of Thought are certain fundamental and necessary principles which lie at the basis of reasoning. They are fundamental and necessary because they are assumed in all processes of reasoning exercised upon the facts of the real world, and because we cannot conceive them reverse or knowingly violate them. ...

"Since the time of Aristotle, three such principles or laws have been recognised: the principle of identity, the principle of contradiction, and the principle of excluded middle.

"The Principle of Identity - The simplest statement of this law is the formula \( A \text{ is } A \). ...

"The Principle of Contradiction - This principle, which would be better named the principle of non-contradiction, is most simply expressed by the formula \( A \text{ cannot both be } B \text{ and not be } B \).

"..... It denies that the same thing can, at the same time, both possess a certain attribute and not possess it; and, as thought must be self-consistent, that we can conceive a thing as at once both possessing and not possessing the same attribute. .....
"The Principle of Excluded Middle - The principle of excluded middle between two contradictory propositions is most clearly expressed by saying A either is, or is not, B." (22)

Now, if the Scriptural Passages quoted above are all taken to be literally true, the Second Law of Thought is evidently violated. For, according to this law Brahman, i.e., the Ultimate Reality, is either such as can be seen or such as cannot be seen, it can never be both. But the Sruti, i.e., the Vedic Scripture, asserts that it is both. In such a contingency, either we have to disregard logic in order to respect both the sets of passages by accepting their literal meaning or to reject the literal meaning of one set of passages in order to be faithful to logic and thus to disregard that particular set of passages. Then let us see what the different exponents of the Sruti have done in the matter.

8. Let us start with Śrī-Saṅkarācārya. He bases his Vedāntic doctrine on the Sruti-passage

"Sad eva, Somya, idam agré āsīd, ekam eva advitiyam" (23)

meaning "Oh gentle lad, in the beginning, i.e., at the time when this universe had not come into perceptible existence as yet, the Sat, i.e., the Ultimate Reality, alone existed, the only one and that too without a second."
He has followed the meaning of this Śruti-passage too literally. The best exposition of his Vedāntic doctrine is to be found in his following stanza:

"Na caikam tadanyad dvitiyam kutaḥ syāt,
Na vā kevalatvam na cākevalatvam;
Na śūnyam na cāśūnyam advaitakatvāt,
Katham ? Sarva-Vedānta-siddham bravīmi." (24)

meaning "As regards the Ultimate Reality, we cannot even say that it is one. How then can we say that there is something other besides it? We cannot even say that it is absolutely one. How then can we say that it is otherwise, i.e., not absolutely one? We cannot even say that it is completely non-existent. How then can we say that it is not completely non-existent? How all this? Such a question need not be raised as what I have said has full support of all the Upaniṣads." Śrī-Saṅkarācārya's Ultimate Principle is One Knowledge or Consciousness, pure and simple. There is not even the mental bifurcation of the knower and the thing known. For such a bifurcation is bound to destroy absolute oneness. And the Śruti-passage means just such absolute oneness. To convey the oneness of the Ultimate Reality the word "eva" meaning "only" after "sat" was quite sufficient. Why should it pile up, otherwise, such words as "ekam eva, advitiyam" meaning "only one and that too without a second"? The literal meaning of this Scriptural
Passage and the Logical Second Law of Thought constitute the two columns on which Śrī-Śaṁkarācārya's Philosophical Arch stands. The Śrutipassage says that the Ultimate Reality is one and the Logical Second Law of Thought says that if the Ultimate Reality is one, it is always one and never many. So the idea of Many is an illusion. The direct corollary of this doctrine is that this universe where we find a lot of diversity is an illusion. And Śrī-Śaṁkarācārya is so very staunch in this belief of his that he boldly defies even the Śutrakāra. The occasion where he does so is as follows: The Śutrakāra defines Brahman or Ultimate Reality as one that has created this universe. But this fact is assailed by the opponent in this way: Granted that Brahman has created this universe. Further, granted that this very Brahman has transformed itself into the form of this universe. Now, a crucial question arises: Has Brahman completely transformed itself into the form of this universe? If so, nothing of Brahman remains behind. Then if liberation is the fruit of knowing Brahman, as nothing of Brahman has remained, how to know it and how to get consequent liberation pose a serious problem. And if liberation becomes impossible, good-bye to that Vedāntic doctrine which, instead of securing, directly destroys its goal. To escape such a contingency, if we believe that a part of Brahman has remained as Brahman in its perfect purity, and only the remaining part has transformed itself
into the form of the universe, this will make Brahman to be made of parts. But such a position will create two other difficulties. First, this will go against the Sruti-passage

"Niṣkalam niskriyam sāntam niravadyam niraṇjām" (25)
saying that this Ultimate Reality is impartite, i.e., not made up of parts. And, secondly, what is made up of parts is bound to disintegrate and get destroyed like our houses, clothes, and even our bodies. To meet such a challenge the Sūtrakāra hurls his last weapon on the opponent's head by saying that the Scriptures are his sheet-anchor. If they say 'day' it is day; 'night' it is night. "There's not to reason why, There's but to do and die." (26) The spiritual discipline is as strict as or perhaps stricter than the military discipline. I am again tempted to quote the following lines from Śrī Aurobindo Ghosh:

"I give this example to show how these things work; it is not in the calculated way the human reason wants to lay down, but by a more mysterious and greater law." (27)
All this the Sūtrakāra says in his famous Sūtra

"Srutes tu Sabda-mūlatvāt" (28)
meaning "Our belief proceeds from what is laid down in scriptures; and the scriptures are our first and our last resort." Śrī-Sāmkarācārya while commenting upon this
Sūtra, first, very faithfully explains the Sutrakāra's viewpoint as follows:

Brahman or the Ultimate Reality can be known through the Scriptures and Scriptures alone. The sense-organs together with the mind are of no help whatsoever in this matter. Hence the nature of the Ultimate Reality has to be ascertained with the help of the Scriptures alone. In doing so, if something goes against logic, logic has to be set aside. For, after all, logic is the product of the limited mind, whereas the Ultimate Reality transcends all limits. The Scriptures speak of Brahman as having parts and having no parts. And we have to accept Brahman as being both, disregarding of course the logical inconsistency involved therein. To cite analogies from our own experience let us turn to miraculous gems, sacred formulas, Wonder-working herbs, and similar other objects. At different times and at different places they exhibit efficacies which bring about results which are mutually incongruous. Such things, though extremely rare nowadays, were not so in the days of Śrī-Saṅkaracārya, who himself was one of such Wonderworkers. To know of such efficacies, of their invariable concomitants, and of the conditions under which they work, one has to approach an instructor. For, no amount of rational thinking will enable one to do so. Will it, then be possible to know about the Ultimate Reality, which lies beyond human speech and thought, without instruction and
simply with the help of logical reasoning? That is why the repositories of ancient lores aver: "Where the objects lie beyond the ken of human intelligence, one should not resort to logical reasoning. For, the very meaning of 'lying beyond the ken of human intelligence' is that no amount of logical reasoning will enable one to know about such objects." So, the Scriptures alone will enable one to ascertain correctly the nature of the Ultimate Reality. But immediately thereafter, he proceeds his own way and adds as follows:

By saying that in matters lying beyond the ken of human intelligence, the Scriptures are final, and as such what they say has to be accepted as it is regardless of the fact whether what they say is logically consistent or inconsistent, one can silence the opponent, no doubt. But that does not mean that the Scriptures are entitled to make even illogical and inconsistent statements like a mad man. If they did so, who would have held them in so high an esteem? So, some sensible way has to be found out to remove this logical inconsistency. And there does exist one such way. Thereby no injustice will be done either to the Scriptures or to the Logic. And that way is as follows:

An imaginary problem is no problem at all. There is no need seriously to mind the mental condition of a person who is afraid of a rope-snake (a rope believed to be a serpent in the dark). Nor is there any serious need to make strenuous efforts to kill such a serpent. The same is the case with
the problem under consideration. If the world is real and Brahman has really transformed itself into the form of this universe, then the problem under consideration arises. But in reality, there is no real transformation, and there is no real world. The world is merely an appearance like a rope-snake. For the Sruti-passage has declared Brahman or the Ultimate Reality not only to be one but that too without a second. And logically what is one is always one and never many. So what appears as many has no existence whatsoever. Moreover, the one without-a-second Brahman has not even real attributes. For the existence of real attributes would curtail the secondlessness of the substance. So the question whether Brahman has parts or is partless also does not arise. Hence the present problem is entirely baseless. This will make it absolutely clear that Śrī-Śāmkarācārya attaches greater importance to logical consistency than to the literal meaning of all the passages of the Scriptures. He accepts the literal meaning of the passage,

"Sad eva, Somya, idam agre āśīd, ekam eva advitiyam" (29)

meaning "Oh gentle lad, the Ultimate Reality alone, only one and that too without a second, existed in the beginning." and that of others having the same import, rejecting at the same time the literal meaning of all the remaining passages. It is in this way that he resolves the conflict of the various Sruti-passages. And in doing so, as has been shown
above, he goes to the length of defying even the Sūtrakāra.

9. Next, we may see how Śrī-Rāmānujacārya, an equally great personality, resolves this problem. The close observation of what has been discussed above reveals that the conflict can take two distinct forms: (1) That raised by the Sūtrakāra himself, namely, whether the whole of the Ultimate Reality has transformed itself into the form of the universe or only a part thereof has done so. This together with the consequent difficulties is one form of this conflict. And (2) whether the Ultimate Reality has or has no attributes. This is the second form of the conflict. The first form of the conflict has little scope in the Vedāntic System of Śrī-Rāmānujacārya. In his System, it is not God that transforms himself into the form of the universe; rather it is God's body alone that undergoes such transformation. So even after transformation the substance of God remains intact. So it is the second form of the conflict that needs consideration in detail. There are certain Scriptural Passages which say that the Ultimate Reality has got attributes. There are others which say that it has got no attributes. If both the sets of passages are taken literally, the logical inconsistency is evident. For a thing cannot both have attributes and no attributes at the same time. A person cannot be both present and absent at the same time. To remove this logical inconsistency Śrī-Rāmānujacārya suggests a very intelligent way. He says that in the passages where the Ultimate Reality
is said to have attributes, we have to understand divine attributes; and in the passages where it is said to have no attributes, we have to understand mundane ones. Thus what the Śruti wants to say is that the Ultimate Reality has divine attributes only and not mundane ones. And then there remains no logical difficulty. A person may be present physically and at the same time can be absent mentally. And let it be said incidentally that if the Śūtrakāra and Śrī-Vallabhācārya were asked to choose between the respective ways of Śrī-Saṁkarāchārya and Śrī-Rāmānujacārya, they would certainly prefer that of the latter. For, in the former, with the exception of a few, practically all the scriptural passages are deprived of their literal meaning; whereas in the latter the literal sense of all the passages remains intact.

10. What has been stated in the few foregoing sections will serve as an excellent introduction for grasping the somewhat unusual views of Śrī-Vallabhācārya in the matter. In order to grasp these views of Śrī-Vallabhācārya fully and clearly one ought always to keep before one’s mind his extreme regard for the Vedic Scriptures and his extreme faith in the omnipotence of the Almighty. For him even every letter of the Vedas is sacred. The meaning that is yielded by all these passages after taking all of them in their literal sense constitutes his Vedāntic Philosophy. If there appears any logical inconsistency in the doctrines arrived at in this
way, his Almighty Lord is there with all his omnipotence to remove it in his most mysterious being. His dicta in this connection are:

"Acintyananta-saktimati sarvabhavana-samarthe Brahmani virodhâbhâvâc ca" (30)

and

"Sarvabhâva-samarthatvâd acintyasvâryavad Brhat"(31)

wherein it is stated that the Omnipotent Almighty can be anything whatsoever, even the repository of mutually inconsistent attributes. His powers are simply miraculous. They cannot be comprehended by means of our minds. For our minds are limited whereas his powers are unlimited. And, after all, what is Logic? It is a construction of our limited minds. How can it limit the limitless? Faith alone can grasp this limitless substance. Mathematics is the most exact of all sciences. Does its conception of Infinity rest on intellectual grasp? Can this Infinity be reached? Has it not been taken on trust then? Not only Śrī-Vallabhācārya, but the Sūtrakāra also has rejected it in matters extra-mundane in his famous Sutra

"Srutes tu Sabda-mūlatvāt" (32)

meaning that Sruti or Revelation is the sheet-anchor. Śrī-Vallabhācārya's respect for the Sruti has already been referred to. He cannot disrespect a single letter thereof. Not only/
he believes the Śruti to be perfect besides this. He does not only like to subtract anything from the Śruti, he cannot brook any addition to it also. This is the reason why he does not whole-heartedly subscribe to the view of Śrī- RāmānujaŚārya. For the latter, when he says that in the Śruti-passages where the Ultimate Reality is spoken of as having attributes, we have to understand them as divine attributes, adds the word 'divine'. Śrī-Vallabhācārya does not brook this addition even; for such an addition means that the Śruti is lacking to that extent. According to him, if we at all want to trust the Scriptures, let us do so whole-heartedly. When a true devotee sets up an idol, he whole-heartedly believes it to be God in spite of its apparent limitations. The same should be our attitude towards the Scriptures. Idols and Scriptures may have limitations. But that does not mean that our Faith too should have limitations. And just as the absolute faith of a devotee draws the divinity out of the idol, in the same way the absolute faith in these Scriptures will draw the essential truth out of them. And such a belief is not merely an idle piece of imagination. It is a solid fact on the other hand. Svāmī Śrī-Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahamsa had demonstrated it in his own life; and Svāmī Vivekananda had boldly proclaimed it to the whole world. And this too not in a distant past, but in the very century preceding the present one. If at all we want to trust, let us do so
whole-heartedly. Half-measures never succeed. And it is with such absolute faith that Śrī-Vallabhācārya approaches the Scriptures. If this point is grasped clearly, it will not at all be difficult to either understand or appreciate his views.

11. Now, we can very well proceed to consider the way in which Śrī-Vallabhācārya has arrived at the very unusual view as regards the nature of the Ultimate Reality, technically known as Viruddhadharmāśraya-Vāda, the Doctrine of Mutually Conflicting Qualities residing in One and the Same Substance. And this way is as follows: While interpreting the Scriptures, Śrī-Vallabhācārya wants to show equal respect to all the passages. To attach very great importance to some one passage and then to subordinate all the remaining ones to that is quite alien to his nature. And this is just what Śrī-Sāmkarācārya does. And that is just why Śrī-Vallabhācārya unreservedly criticises the latter. But as for the latter's personality he has a very high regard. For this latter is, by him, believed to be an incarnation of Lord Sāmkara, the last member of the Divine Trinity, Śrī-Sāmkarācārya attaches the greatest importance to the Scriptural Passage:

"Sad eva, Somya, idam agre āśīd, ekam eva advitiyam" (j3)

meaning "Oh gentle lad, in the beginning there was the
Ultimate Reality alone, only One and that too without a second." But he neglects the passage:

"Tad aikṣata 'Bahu syām, prajāyeya' iti" (34)

meaning that that Ultimate Reality wished to become Many, to multiply itself" which immediately follows this first passage. The other passages that follow them and describe how this One Ultimate Reality became Many share the same fate at his hand. Had he attached equal importance to all these latter passages, as has been done by Śrī-Vallabhācārya, no trouble would have arisen at all. The fact that that One without-a-second Ultimate Reality has also the inherent capacity of becoming Many at the same time would have immediately followed and the way would have been smooth throughout. Logic limits our thinking process only. It does not limit the inherent capacity of a thing. Where there are a husband and a wife, Logic will prevent us from taking them to be three instead of two. But it does not say that they will always remain two and not become three by an addition to the family. But Śrī-Sāṁkarācārya's excessive adherence to Logical consistency ties him up to this One without-a-second Ultimate Reality, with the ultimate result that he not only has to disregard a major portion of Scriptural Passages but has also to declare this universe to have no reality at all. Thus it is his excessive adherence to logical consistency which has dragged him into the
mire of Illusionism. Śrī-Vallabhaścārya on the other hand, respecting all the passages concerned, endows his Ultimate Reality, which is only One and that too without a second, with the inherent capacity of becoming Many not in appearance only but in reality. And thus, the world for him becomes a solid reality. He too believes in Māyā no doubt. For the Scriptural Passage:

"Indro māyābhiḥ puru-rūpa śyate" (35)

meaning that "God, who is one, appears to have many forms because of many Māyas", expressly speaks not of only one Māya, but of many Māyas. But this Māya of Śrī-Vallabhaścārya is not one which covers reality and sets up an unreality in its place. It is, according to him, the inherent capacity of that One Ultimate Reality, whereby it becomes Many in reality. Thus, according to him the world with all its diversity is as much real as the Ultimate Reality which is One and without a second. Thus, according to him, there is no difference between the present world and the past Ultimate Reality. The gold of the ingot and that of the ornament are one and the same. All the forms into which the gold can be cast are as much real as the gold. All these forms are already present in the gold. They inhere it. Had they not been there, it would lead us to a doctrine of the creation ex nihilo, i.e., creating something out of nothing. But the Upaniṣadic dictum:

"Katham asataḥ sat jāyeta" (36)
meaning "How can anything come out of nothing?" directly repudiates it. So, according to Śrī-Vallabhācārya, the present universe was already there in the Ultimate Reality. It is not something new. Thus, just as his respect for all the Scriptural Passages has enabled him to arrive at this bold Realism, in the same way this very respect of his for all the Scriptural Passages enables him to arrive at his extra-ordinary doctrine of Viruddha-dharmāśraya, in other words, the doctrine of the Mutually Conflicting Qualities residing side by side in One and the same substance. As cited above one Scriptural passage speaks of Brahman as devoid of all smells and all tastes, whereas another speaks of it as having all smells and all tastes. According to the Second Law of Thought, technically known as the Law of Contradiction, this is not possible. We cannot mentally conceive any such thing. But by equally respecting these two passages, i.e. taking them to be literally true, Śrī-Vallabhācārya both boldly believes and even declares that Brahman is both having and not having these qualities. Why? Because the Śrutī says so. If we fail to grasp this intellectually, it is rather the fault of our intellect. To set limitations to the incomprehensibly miraculous power of the Ultimate Reality simply because our intellectual powers are limited, will never bring about liberation, the ultimate goal of all the philosophical systems. To learn to swim requires to leave the firm ground below our feet, and to take a head-long
plunge. The same is true of liberation. We have to leave the logical certainty. And it is just here that the Faith is needed. Faith can comprehend anything and everything. Its powers are sweeping. Its range is limitless. Faith is needed even in Mathematics, the most exact of all sciences. Will our imagination ever find out the point where the two parallel straight lines meet? Will our intellect ever find the quotient when a number is divided by zero? Why does Mathematics, the most rational and exacting of all Sciences, believe in the point at infinity in one case, and infinity itself in the other? Can this infinity be demonstrated? Nevertheless, the Mathematics has to believe in it. This is nothing but Faith. At best we can call this an Intelligent Faith. It is resorted to only when we realise the limitations of our intellect. Mahātmā Gāndhī means the same thing when he writes "My life is largely governed by reason, and when it fails, it is governed by a superior force, that is faith." (37). Śrī-Vallabhācārya's Faith also is an Intelligent Faith and not a Blind Faith. He believes in human efforts, both physical and mental. His famous dictum:

"Prayatna-paryantam Jīva-kṛtyam" (38)

meaning "One has to try one's utmost" categorically lays this down. "Where human efforts end, there divine efforts begin." This is a very important truth. Human efforts are a vital link in the chain. Without them the chain will sap asunder. It is only after all the human energy has been spent that the
divine energy will begin to flow in. When a seed has once been sown by human hands, then alone all the natural forces necessary to multiply it are set free. Without the seed being sown, all these latent forces are helpless. The human efforts alone will open the doors for the divine efforts to come in. Faith in the divine is the continuation of the faith in the human. God helps the helpless. But this helplessness is of a sternier stuff. It arises after all the available help in the form of all possible human efforts is totally expended. Idle faith is no faith according to Śrī-Vallabhācārya. It is another form of mental inertia. It hinders rather than helps. Sevā or selfless service is his ideal of life. This Sevā means incessant activity. It is traditionally reported that Śrī-Vallabhācārya slept only for two hours. And at times he had to deny even this little luxury to himself. "I have done my little duty with my limited strength. Now God out of his infinite Grace is sure to do his duty with his unlimited strength." Such is the nature of Śrī-Vallabhācārya's Faith. And it is this faith that has led him to respect every letter of the Vedas and to believe in the Omnipotence and the Infinite Grace of God. Of course, this Faith of his was instinctive as all genuine Faiths are. Faith is the very substance of a soul, according to the Bhagavadgītā. It says:

"Sraddhāmayo'yaṁ puruṣah" (39)

meaning "The soul is made up of faith". Faith is just
reliance on something. It is something like sinking a well. You have to select a spot and start digging just there, and go on doing so till the water is reached. Changing spots from time to time will result in sheer waste of time and energy. No water will ever be reached. The same is the case with the realisation of God. He is like water. Just as many layers of earth intervene between the sinker of the well and the water, in the same way many factors intervene between the aspirant and God. He has to base his faith somewhere and has to stick to it till he finds God. Now, if Śrī-Vallabhācārya had to base his faith somewhere, where else was he to base it except on the Scriptures which, though interpreted differently, were equally respected by all his noble contemporaries as well as predecessors? And when once it was based, it had to be thorough. This is the only thing that can be said in justification of Śrī-Vallabhācārya's faith in Scriptures. His great predecessors, Śrī-Śaṅkarācārya and Śrī-Rāmānujācārya had the same faith in Scriptures. The difference lay only in their attitudes, which were due to the different times in which they flourished. The times of Śrī-Śaṅkarācārya were those of Buddhist dialecticians. Had he talked like Śrī-Vallabhācārya, nobody would have heard him. Śrī-Rāmānujācārya was better-placed in this respect. His atmosphere was sanctified by the Votaries of the Veda and the Ālvars. Coming to the point, we can see how Śrī-
Vallabhaçārya's unalloyed Faith in the Scriptures has enabled him to stem the tide of logical inconsistency involved in believing that Brahman or the Ultimate Reality has both attributes and no attributes and in how One can become many. Now what remains to be done is to find some rational justification for this peculiar attitude which openly flouts logic and believes what is ordinarily unbelievable. And in this connection, I can do nothing better than quote the following lines by J.B.S. Haldane, an eminent British scientist:

"Life, then, seems to be a synthesis of two opposites, mechanism and individuality. A man is a machine, and at the same time an individual. There is nothing really surprising in this. We find the same union of opposites everywhere. Wood is both hard and soft. If it were not hard, we could not use it for furniture. If it were not soft, we could not cut it. ...

"We see then that life is an extra-ordinary bundle of contradictions. It is something between mechanism and individuality, between chance and purpose, between happy but stagnant perfection, and struggling but evolving imperfection. ... It is a constant struggle against death, yet without death it could not progress.

"The philosopher tries to define it, but no definition will cover its infinite and self-contradictory variety."
The biologist studies it, well aware that he can never hope to fathom its complexity." (40)

Scientists, like J.B.S. Haldane, have through keen observation and strictly scientific methods, come to such conclusions. In what way do these conclusions differ from those to which Śrī-Vallabhācārya has arrived at through instinctive faith in the Scriptures and through a uniform respect for all the passages thereof?

12. Now we may take up the fourth aspect. According to this aspect the Ultimate Reality is endowed with all divine qualities. In other words, it is not attribute-less as some other philosophers are disposed to think. In foregoing sections it has been repeatedly told that with our limited mental apparatus it is not possible for us to fathom the mysteries surrounding the nature of the Ultimate Reality. For that we have to turn to the words of those who had been face to face with God, the Ultimate Reality, through his Grace. And our Scriptures are such words. They say:

"Sad eva, Somya, idam agre āsīd, ekam eva advitiyam" (41)

meaning "Oh gentle lad, in the beginning there existed the Ultimate Reality alone, only one without a second." Here it would have been quite sufficient to say that there was in the beginning this Ultimate Reality alone. Then why the words "ekam eva advitiyam" meaning "only one and that too
without a second?" The Scriptures being divine are perfectly immaculate. They would not repeat anything unnecessarily. So these additional words have got some additional significance. And that significance appears to be this: The substance is fundamental. Without that our thought does not proceed at all. Now, when we begin to think about a substance its attributes begin to attract our attention. They are different from the substance. For the substance is one, whereas these attributes are many. Moreover the substance is a whole, whereas these attributes are parts. And thus being different they become second to it. So when the Sruti says that the Ultimate Reality was One without a second, by the word "second" they mean "an attribute". So the Passage under consideration wants to state that the Ultimate Reality has in the beginning not even attributes. And it was only when this Ultimate Reality became many and multiplied itself that these attributes came into being. And, according to Śrī- Vallabhācārya, there was in the days of the Sutrakāra, a school of Vedic Exponents who did hold such a view. Incidentally, we may mention here that Śrī-Sāṅkarācārya being an absolute monist, believes that the Ultimate Reality has no attributes whatsoever. If they appear, they are illusory. Coming to the point, according to Śrī-Vallabhācārya, Brahman, because of its miraculous nature, is both with and without attributes; and these attributes are both different and non-different from the substance. This he has tried to explain
rationally while explaining the Sūtra

"Prakāśasārāya-vad, vā, tejastvāt" (42)

which tries to explain the nature of attributes on the analogy of the light of the Sun. There he says that the light of the Sun is an attribute of the Sun which is the substance. This light is different from the Sun. We say that the Sun rises and the Sun sets. We never say that the light rises and the light sets. Moreover, the light is here, whereas the Sun is far, far away. These two, the Sun and its light, though different are not as different as the tree and the monkey which is on it or as the cage and the bird which is in it. These latter can remain without each other; but not so the Sun and its light. Something more. This light itself appears as a substance when we say that the light is intense and the light is dim. Here intensity and dimness become the attributes of light thus making it to be a substance. Thus the light of the Sun is not only an attribute but is also a substance. Now, after this much of close observation, a very material question arises: Should perception decide the nature of our conception? Or should conception decide the nature of our perception? Which course are we to adopt? Which course will enrich our knowledge and liberate our thought? Like all sane people Śrī-Vallabhācārya says that our perception should decide our conception and not vice versa. We have to accept the
things as they are and as they unmistakably present themselves to our healthy senses. Why should we shackle ourselves with our pre-conceptions? If we want to do so, let us bid good-bye to our ideas about progress, evolution, and liberation. Coming to the point according to Śrī-Vallabhācārya, the Ultimate Reality has not only attributes, but these attributes on the analogy of the light of the Sun, are both different and non-different from it. Moreover they are real and not illusory. As we are concerned here with only the general nature of the attributes of the Ultimate Reality, we need not concern ourselves with what they are and how many.

13. Now, we may turn to the fifth aspect. According to this aspect, the Ultimate Reality is both personal as well as impersonal and the personal aspect thereof repeatedly incarnates itself. Before considering this aspect at some length, it will be well if our notions about "personal" and "impersonal" are cleared up. To do so, take a simple instance of a king and his laws. The king is a person, but his laws are not. In order to grasp well the difference between what is personal and what is impersonal, the consideration of the following instance from the life of Abraham Lincoln will help us a lot. During the Civil War, when he was the President, a soldier fell asleep during watch, was caught red-handed, and, according to the strict military rules, was condemned to death. But before his execution, the matter came before Lincoln, who having enquired into the circumstances pardoned him.
The circumstances were as follows: For the last twenty-four hours he had to march continuously, so he had no sleep. The person whose turn it was to be on the watch happened to be sick. The condemned soldier took pity on him, stood on the watch in his stead, and sent him away to take rest. Having had no sleep during the last twenty-four hours, and having had to march continuously during that period, he was completely exhausted, and so fell asleep. According to the strict military rules this was a serious fault; and execution was the only punishment for such a serious default. And, but for Lincoln's intervention, this defaulter would have met his death. The impersonal laws condemned him. Lincoln a person pardoned him. The impersonal laws were mighty. All the others except the President were quite helpless before them. Thus these laws though mighty had no mind and no consequent discrimination, which Lincoln, a person, had. They punished the act without entering into the exonerating circumstances. Physical laws governing the universe are as impersonal as the military rules. Fire burns all alike whether they are adults having knowledge or infants having no knowledge. That such mighty laws ruthlessly govern the universe cannot be denied. Now, we may seriously ask a question: Is the Ultimate Reality impersonal like military laws or personal like Lincoln, the President? If it is impersonal like the military laws, the prayers, the sacrifices, and all such devotional practices that have existed from times immemorial become altogether
meaningless. And it is not mere foolish blind faith that have sustained them throughout. The efficacy of such practices has been proverbial.

"More things are wrought by prayer." (43)

So says saintly Tennyson.

"Sunerī maine nirbalake bāla Rāma:
Pichalī sākha bharūm santanakī, āde
sambhāre kāma." (44)

So declares the great poet-devotee Sūradāsa. He here states that God helps the helpless and adds that he can cite a number of instances where God has helped persons in dire needs. "Pray and your prayer will be granted" is the cardinal doctrine of Christianity. Why go to the distant past? Mahātma Gāndhī was the living example of such faith. The combination of the physical laws before which men are helpless and this efficacy of prayers yields us an Ultimate Reality which is both impersonal and personal. Now, the existence of the impersonal laws in the universe is accepted by all, whether they believe or do not believe in God. For such, the knowledge of these laws and their non-violation are the only means to escape punishment. But for the believers in God, God's Grace is an additional means to do so. Śrī-Vallabhācārya and, according to him, the Sūtrakāra also both believe in the Personal God. In the Sūtra:

"Īkṣater nāsabdham" (45)
The Sutrakara says that the Ultimate Reality has a desire. Again in the Sutra:

"Racanānupapteta nānumānam" (46)

he says that the Ultimate Reality is not devoid of consciousness because there is so much of law, order, and design in the universe.

As for the Sruti, it clearly declares the Ultimate Reality to be personal in a number of passages, out of which I cite only two as follows:

"Tad aikṣata, 'Bahu syām, prajāyeya' iti." (47)

meaning "The Ultimate Reality wished: Let myself be many, let me multiply myself."

"Yam eva esa vrṇute tenā labhyah" (48)

meaning "He alone whom God chooses reaches God." As for the Bhagavadgītā, its Principal Actor, the very preacher is Personal God himself. The citation of the two passages where his Gracious nature is quite visible will suffice. They are as follows:

"Sarva-dharmān parityajya
Mām ekam śāraṇām vṛaja :
Aham tvā sarva-pāpebhoto
Mokṣayisyāmi mā sūcaḥ." (49)
meaning "Leave all talk of religion. Surrender yourself to Me. I shall relieve you from all sins."

"Yadā yadā hi dharmaṁ
glānir bhavati, Bhārata;
Abhyutthānām adharmasya
tadātmānam arjāmyaham.
Paritrāṇāya sādhunāṁ,
vināśāya ca duṣkṛtāṁ;
Dharmasāmsthāpanārthāya
Saṁbhavāmi yuge yuge." (50)

meaning "Whenever justice is in peril and injustice strong, I incarnate myself to protect the virtuous and to destroy the wicked. For the sake of restoring justice I incarnate myself from time to time." This last passage clearly mentions the repeated incarnation of the Personal God.

14. Now, we may take up the sixth, and as far as this chapter is concerned, the last aspect. According to this aspect, all the activity involved in creating this universe and sustaining it is for this Ultimate Reality a mere sport. The Scriptures in unmistakable terms declare that God, i.e., the Ultimate Reality, has created this universe. Now the act of creation is an activity on the part of God. But, generally any activity has these two essential features: (1) It is to meet some want, to fulfil some desire that an activity is undertaken. (2) Every activity involves some hardship. A
person having no water in his house goes to a well. He wants water. And it is to meet this want that he takes the trouble of going to the well. Turning to God we may legitimately ask: To meet which want of his, does God create the universe? Secondly, if even an ordinary activity entails some trouble, what a tremendous amount of trouble would God have had to undergo in creating so vast and so complex a universe? The first question arises because God being perfect can have no want; and the second because the trouble entailed by the activity would curtail the amount of his joy. To both these questions, the Sūtrakāra and following him Śrī-Vallabhācārya has but one answer: namely, "Lokavat tu līlā-kaivalyam" (51) meaning "It is merely a sport on the part of God, like any other sport to be met with in this world." A sport is something spontaneous, a direct result of overflowing joy. A baby smiles. Why does it do so? To meet which want does it do so? A baby's smile is the outward result of the inward overflowing joy. The same is true of God. God is all-joy, all overflowing joy. And this creation is the outward expression of the inward overflowing joy. And when an activity results from the overflowing joy, the trouble involved is no trouble at all because it is not felt as such. It is in this way that the act of creation becomes merely a matter of sport on the part of the Ultimate Reality.
15. Thus in the two chapters we have seen that the Ultimate Reality is not only One without a second, but moreover it has an inherent capacity of becoming Many in all its rich and infinite variety, that it has actually become Many out of its overflowing joy, that all this has taken place automatically and without the least inconvenience to the actor, that this Ultimate Reality has all the divine attributes which are non-different from its substance, and above all it is endowed with an incomprehensibly great and mysterious power whereby it can become anything and it can achieve anything automatically. Now, what remains to be done is to view it in its relation to the two other sub-categories, the animate souls and the inanimate objects, the two basic components of this universe of our experience.