

This age is precisely an age of critical judgement. Religion, however old it may be, has to pass through the ordeal of critical judgement. In the discussion made so far attempted to make religion victorious and now we have to stand at the alter of some doubts which have been raised against religion to crown religion.

In this complicated age of Science some doubts have crept into the domain of religion. The positivist raised the objection against religion that religion can not be understood in terms of sense experience.

Scientist's Kaleidoscope is titled as because of the birth of the new century. The picture before him has undergone a miraculous change. Indivisible and indestructible atoms of the physical universe refuse to remain in the category of matter. These atoms, exceeding the category of matter, can very well be looked upon as the field of force. These atoms, are in no sense, particles of matter. According to some important Scientists there is a principle of indeterminateness which is involved in the very constitution of nature. Some noted Scientists hold the view that the reality behind electrons and protons belongs to higher dimensions and all our knowledge of the world of physics becomes a world of shadows. The quantum theory has shaken the foundation of determinism. For the twentieth century science, the shadows are declared to have an ultra shadowy character.

And in his search for Reality the Physicist has found that his quest for Reality has led right through the physical realm into the metaphysical realm. It is interesting to note that some of the disclosures made by the Vedantic process of self analysis are being corroborated by the findings of modern science. The Vedantic message of the spiritual coherence and psychological unity is the prime goal of science.

Herbert Spencer<sup>1</sup> appears to be perfectly right when he views the ultimate scientific ideas as the representation of realities which exceeds our comprehension. In all directions, the scientific investigations face with an insoluble enigma. The theories and hypotheses of science do not bear the label of finality as these are liable to correction by further discovery.

There are many who are apt to discard religion simply because it is old. For them, the source of religion is ignorance and fear. They think that religion convert man into dreamers who are concerned with the superworld than with the present world. The ideas of evolution however, suggest that survival presupposes fitness. Religion has the fitness to survive. From the prehistorical age down to the modern era, it has survived. Religion has the fitness to survive the onslaught of reason. It meets the challenge of reason. It had to meet the challenges of reason that Socrates, Plato, had given Spinoza, Berkelay, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer and many others enunciated their theistic views.

In the present, we have our Realists, Behaviourists,

Marxists and yet to meet this very situation we have in some sense the Vedantists.

We feel the inner disorder which is deep down. We share the religious instinct which we deny on the superficial level of reason. Our scientific achievements are of a staggering character for which we are able to touch the stars and the moon, yet we are clinging to find the meaning of our life to satisfy our feeling of meaninglessness.

In this situation we realise that religion is stepping towards shouldering the responsibility of the task to find out the meaning of our life. The history of religion and the critical study of other religions lead to a re-examination of the sources and the validity of views accepted so far.

Now the complex ideas of modern science and history seemed to have caused a complete inner crisis. The person with the intellectual integrity and courage finds it difficult to accept the traditional religion since traditional views have lost their authority and psychological justification. We are now in a mood to question the conventional religion. The positivist movement represents a reaction which is scientific in its nature. The idea of positivism was inaugurated by Comte with his law of three stages of cultural development of which the first is that every culture is theological which is another name of superstition and the second stage is the metaphysical stage which substitutes Principle and the

third stage is positivism which deals with scientific knowledge. Logical positivism conceives that nothing can be true or even meaningful if it can not be understood in terms of sense-experience. It might be noted that Protagoras, the ancient Greek thinker shared the same view.

Hume<sup>2</sup> maintains the view that there can be no true or meaningful assertions about god, soul or immortality or objective standards. For him, the statements which are capable of being verified or, falsified by empirical observation are the statements of logic and mathematics.

Thus Logical positivism has the credit for being corrective against the revelations and mysticism. Individual experience of truth of a man can not according to this view, give an account of reality since his state of experience does not amount to knowledge.

If it be the case then on this positivist view, life ceases to have any meaning, and becomes unsupportable. For as it has been stated in the last chapter we have to live by faith otherwise we will be perished. The authority overlooks the moral obligation and go back to dogmas.

The greatest inhibition to religion as spiritual adventure, is the claim of a faith which offers a final solution.

It is impossible to deny the great services which

religion have rendered to humanity, by sustaining the sense of the spiritual.

Religions in its traditional and institutional sense tend to crush the individuality and moral responsibility of man which can corrupt the conscience of the community. The dogmatic religions foster the closed mechanistic society by which the individual man ceases to be an individual.

Though Karl Marx,<sup>3</sup> revolted against religion on behalf of the humanity of man by asserting that the existence of God threatens the freedom and dignity of man yet we must admit that .

If any religion crushes the freedom of the spirit then it would hit the vital core of civilization. For free and disinterested spirit is a necessary condition for religion. True religion asks us to meet hatred and violence with calmness and dignity with a free and disinterested spirit .

The world is in search of a new morality. In religion can be only one objective for human endeavours that is perfect service and love for fellow men. Philosophy is love of wisdom and religion should be the wisdom of love. This is possible only when religion becomes a burning conviction. True religious beliefs should be reconciled with the spirit of science and the ethics of humanism and in this domain of religious beliefs moral conscience and the universalist spirit will reign supreme. but to achieve such a state of

mind we have to purify our minds for the integration of our internal chaos. And then nobody would cry like Nietzsche announcing 'God is Dead'.

What we need now is a recovery of the spirit of religion to save the world from utter ruin. The faith of yesterday is riddled with scepticism and we have to gain the faith for tomorrow. In spite of the total secularization of the world, man will surely be capable to recapture an understanding of something sacred. We are now in a search for the living spirit and this search will not be in vain.

The prophetic revolts reformed the traditional faiths and made new beginning. We urgently need a way-back to the living spirit which is capable of combining the two opposites of faith and rational thought. The recovery of the spirit of religion has the potentiality to save the world from utter ruin. This spirit of religion reformed the traditional faith and paves the path for the beginning of a new era. We the men of the present, are on the threshold of a new age of spirit.

In this juncture we urgently need to have a glimpse about the relation between science and religion to justify the case of religion. The vision of the modern scientists has undergone a revolutionary change as the atoms - can very well be looked upon as "fields of force rather than as a particle of matter. The vision before him has then undergone miraculous change. Indivisible and indestructible

atoms of the physical world refuse to remain in the category of matter. There is nothing substantial about it. For this reason, some scientists prefer to call them "wavicles". For James Jeans, the tendencies of modern physics is to resolve the whole materials of the universe only into waves.

As it has been just stated the most outstanding feature of the structure of the material universe is that there is a principle of indeterminateness which is involved in the very constitution of nature. This principle of indeterminateness can not hide itself as it is discovered by Heisenburg . He finds that position and velocity of a particle at a particular moment can never be determined accurately. Any particular may have position or it may have velocity but it can not in any exact sense have both. If its position be accurately determined, its velocity will simply go beyond the range of precise measurement. So a proton or an electron, be it a particle, or wave, or wavicle, is something of super-physical nature. Its position and velocity appear to lie on two different planes. It is evident then that protons and electrons appear to be outside the domain of even scientific comprehension. For some scientists the reality behind electrons and protons belong to a higher dimensions and knowledge of them is nothing but the behaviour of shadows. According to Arthur Eddington, the world of physics now becomes a world of shadows. The quantum theory has shaken the foundation of determination as it says that energy is absorbed in lumps or quants. Nowadays the scientists have to grasp absolutely new conception undreamt of in the classical scheme of physics.

Time and space have also somehow melted into an obscure mathematical figure of 'time and space'. According to this theory, energy is absorbed in distinct lumps or quanta. So continuous motion is not a feature of the process of Nature. Nature moves rather discontinuously by sudden jerks. Then again when a quantum of energy reaches a body, only one of them absorbs the whole quantum. Now the question is who determines which atoms should go in for the quantum. The exact answer is not found.

So we may admit that the element of fate or will is involved in the choice of the atoms, The next blow to the deterministic theory comes from radio-activity. The disintegration of the atoms is said to be discontinuous as long as no cause of this disintegration be forth coming. The fate of the deterministic theory must remain hanging in the balance as long as the cause of the disintegration be forth coming.

Then again it has been calculated that out of every 2,000 electrons some particular electrons flies off from a radio-active atom in a course of a year. So we get puzzled to seek an answer to the question viz., what sort of thing is that which determines which particular electrons should go out and which others should remain within the atomic range. No answer is forthcoming. It appears more like an act of will or fate, as one may choose to say than like any mechanical motion. The physicist can no longer explain life and mind in terms of matter. Sir James, with his new standpoint which is perfectly clear, said that today there may be wide measure of agreement, which on the physical plane

of science approaches towards almost to uncertainty that the stream of knowledge is leading towards a non mechanical reality, the universe begins to look more like great thought than like great machine. Sir Arthur Eddington<sup>4</sup> declares that the material stuff of the world is mind stuff. The mind stuff of the world is, of course, more general than our individual conscious mind; but we can think of its nature as not altogether foreign to our consciousness. The physical world is now dissolved into a subtle composition of some thing like mind stuff and science is expected to admit that this universe exists and it moves about individuals composed simply of life and mind. It is our mind that transforms the physical world of symbols into the world of our experience. Physicist's search for Reality has led him right through the physical realm into the realm of metaphysics.

In India, Vedanta declares that through self-analysis alone one can have the glimpse of ultimate truth. It is interesting to note that some of the disclosures made by Vedantic process of self-analysis are being corroborated by the findings of modern science. By the process of self-analysis Vedic seers in course of their quest for Reality revealed the truth that cosmic mind is the ruler of the universe; life and mind exist even after physical death are being corroborated by the findings of modern science. It was precisely by this method of self-analysis that the Vedic verses had gone to the very core of the universe, the Eternal background of pure consciousness. Then science is

no longer in a position to say anything against religion in regards to the latter's process of search for Reality. Just as the scientist tries to be closer to the Reality in and through the illusions of the everyday life, so does the mystic who tries to get nearer to the Reality in and through the illusions of the mystic world. Though the mystic world is illusory from the standpoint of the Absolute Truth, it might be said to be in a close togetherness with Reality. So Science and religion need no longer to inhabitate in different camps.

Science is not opposed to religion. The religious thesis give us the objective consideration of the cosmos. The methods which attempt to construct by reasoned argument the ultimate being from the observations of the facts of nature are the scientific methods. The Brahma Sutra starts with a query to know Brahman, from which the origin of the world along with subsistence and dissolution Proceeds. In the Taittiriya Upanishad we find that there has been a steady ascent from the inorganic to the rationalised sprititual self which picturised the steady growth of the spiritual fellowship ushering the intermingling of this spiritual being with that which exceeds the physical world.

The achievement of science stand as witness to the spirit in man. The nature of the cosmic evolution suggests the reality of underlying spirit. Albert Einstein is of the opinion that the scientist's religious experience raptures

the harmony of natural law revealing a superior Intelligence to which all the systematic thinking and acting on the part of man is an utterly insignificant reflection. Thus Science in the pursuit of truth is serving God who is Truth.

Further the spirit of religion is rooted in experience. The spirit of science adopting an empirical attitude engulfs paranormal phenomena and spiritual states.

All religions are opportunities for self-realisation. They call the human beings to strive incessantly to attain immortality. We will then be awakened spirit who do not differentiate between him and the others and this would be possible because of Religion. It is the binding force which will deepen the solidarity of human society, love for the others.

The above said discussion would not be complete if we do not discuss the revolutionary view of Karl Marx again.

Dialectical materialism, propagated by Marx, can give only a temporary truth as his theory is pragmatic in its character which contains the characteristic of progressive truth.

The material of things determines the social changes but the raw materials of nature are to be attained with the power of the human minds to subserve the human ends. Human intelligence can not be excluded as it has the productive

power to discover newer and newer height of undiscovered power of nature as the ultimate principle of reality is not stubborn matter and it is not solid. The very essence of the spirit of man is self-active in its nature. Marx conceived that the historical evolution as dialectical.

Marx believed in the inevitability of social progress but it might be pointed out that history reveals the picture of the peril of social progress as it is not a continuous development through conflict. Love and friendship, courage and adventure will be the potent forces than struggle for power and self-interest. All novelties occur first as the ideas in the human mind and we can not identify the economic structure of society with society itself. According to Radhakrishnan,<sup>5</sup> what is urgently needed at present, is a spiritual upliftment which will enhance a deep spiritual impulse. Religion is the only force which is rooted in the discovery of the essential worth and dignity of the individual and his relation to a higher world of reality. Religion is the binding force which deepens the solidarity of human society and religion is the practice of discipline of the spirit. There are, minorities who are attempting to work for a religion of spirit. The world congress of Faiths, World Alliances for Friendship through Religion and Church Peace Union, World brotherhood, World spiritual council, Society for study of Religions are working for a religion of spirit. We inherit the heritage of the whole of humanity by

which the Western religious circles have been fascinated.

Vedanta is ready with representations to meet the requirement of the mass. "Brahman is truth, consciousness and infinity" And Brahman is immanent in this universe, in and through Him every name and every form has its existence. "The phenomenal world is to be considered pervaded by God". say Isho Upanishad.

The various sayings of the Upanishads have furnished materials to different schools of philosophy for giving different explanations regarding creation. The Upanishads hold the view that Brahman is the final cause of this infinitely differentiated universe and at the same time it accommodates all shades of doctrinal opinions.

From the systematic outlook of Vedanta one learns to respect all scriptures, all prophets and all apostles. Leading to a central unity beneath the diversities of religion, and to the realisation of universal Religion there is the inauguration of a new era in the history of religion.

Now one may ask! What is the situation of religion in this changed modern era?

In this changed era humanity is taking a leap into the future. In this era there is the widening of intellect with increasing secularisation of life. The note of despair and anxiety are preparing for a radical change in our life. But

this state of mind gives a clearer recognition of the inherent brotherhood of man. Man is now searching for his soul. We are hopeful that religion will now shoulder the responsibility to save the utter ruins of civilisation.

All the living religions of the world that is Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity are readjusting themselves with the changed world. These religions are now examining their basic tenets to find out whether these are relevant to the present conditions of the world.

Newton was a very devout christian. He would Perhaps be horrified if he had thought that his life work would result in a general undermining of religious faith . He said that, there is no natural cause which could determine all the planets and if in the future he can determine these planets even then we could not be able to determine the cause of these planets. Thinkers including Newton himself, have given many other instances of apparent design which may have the ability to explain the cause of the design of the phenomenal world.

If the world were a machine, then everything that happens in it could be explained mechanically. The theory that this world is a machine excludes from its range any type of purpose or telos. From this mechanical explanation, however, it can not be deduced that machine has no telos or purpose. Each and every machine subserves some purpose and so we use a particular machine to subserve a particular

purpose. Therefore, the view of the world having no purpose is a non-logical transition. From the mechanistic science we can not deduce the denial of a world-purpose. It is true that any explanation which explains the world in terms of causes of laws is a mechanical one. But now the inevitable question comes. Who does regulate these laws.

There is no cleavage between the scientific explanation and the mechanical one. A fact is explained scientifically when its cause is given.

If one admits the scientific maxim that every event in nature has a natural cause then of course it is possible to bring God at the beginning as a first cause. But this leads to the conception of a God who, has no practical importance in our life. By little logical ingenuity we can avoid this result. God is as it were creating and recreating continuously. Newton himself was prepared to admit any irregularities of nature as an exception. Berkeley introduced God to explain any irregularities of nature. But now in the modern age we find that the indeterminate movement of the electron shows that the law of causation does not apply in subatomic world.

It is to be noted that the exclusion of God as a philosophical principle of explanation has also started since Berkeley. It will be wrong for us to think that the new science with its mechanical explanation is devoid of the

idea of world purpose as this idea is so deep rooted that it cannot be eradicated from the mind. The current literature and art express the futility and meaninglessness of life. But this picture of life is not deep rooted in the minds of men. The idea of a world which has its obedience to the harmonious divine plan is deep rooted. Scientific procedure consists in introducing hypotheses in order to proceed in the search for truth.

If the physicist finds that electrons and protons are insufficient to explain the observed phenomena, he plugs the hole with new hypotheses. We are not capable of differentiating the hypotheses of science from that of the hypotheses of religion. From a logical point of view there is none at all. And if the one hypothesis is logically respectable so is the other.

Berkeley's<sup>6</sup> introduction of God does not conflict with any principle of logic. It conflicts with the scientific maxim that all facts are to be explained by natural causes, and that God is never to be introduced as an explanation of anything. But Scientific world picture has penetrated into our minds. By becoming so it has become an unconscious background of all human thinking. The enormous success of Newtonian science dazzled Western minds. The new science came with its mechanical explanations and concentrated on causes and made us to think that the very idea of a world-purpose is to be discarded in an age dominated by the scientific spirit.

The mechanical explanation of the world view is purposeless and more void of meaning as science presents it so. But the idea of a world-purpose has not been eradicated wholly from the human mind.

In this modern age, religion is operating to build walls between one another. This is the main reason for which so many crusades and jihads are going in the world scene from time immemorial.

But the question is : Is there really any difference among the existent religions of the world? If we go deep into the texts of the religions then it is realised that if there is any difference between two religions, it is really on their attempt to impose their own special dogmas upon each other. If they could think calmly, they would find that nothing but humanity is the real religion of each of them.

The ultimate goal of each and every religion is to attain the Supreme Reality. The only cleavage is in the method which each of them apply to achieve the Reality.

If we have the same goal, then the method or ways should not be counted as the matter which is the ultimate goal.

If the ultimate goal is common to all, we should be overflooded by the feeling of brotherhood. This feeling of brotherhood knows no barrier as it has the common goal to

save religion.

All the religions of the world have no special characteristic by which these can be characterized.

As all religions have the same goal then each and every one should feel in his inner heart the call of brotherhood and fellowfeeling and this call throws away all the differences of caste, creed or dogmas.

Now it is our task to seek out what type of religion is fit for upgrading our lives. Arts, Science, Philosophy and ethics give evidences of the higher life of man. Religion is the most vital factor for the progress of these concerns of higher life as the current of religion works in its fullest harmony with these concerns. The Society can be saved if we nourish and cherish the main theme of religion that is the brotherly love and fellowfeeling which will dispel the spiritual vulgarity. Then and then we can have the vision of union by which we save the society we belong.

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