

ANALYSIS OF LOVE

It has been pointedly written by Lord Russell that man as a social being has always been governed by the lust for power, and that this is the most important category in respect of social life even like Energy in Physics. Love of power is the most general phenomenon in social struggle and evolution. Nietzsche it was who called this the will to power. Man, saint or king or dictator, follower or leader has in him the love for power, and in the manifold exhibitions of this most colourful and variegated instinct there is always traceable not only the need to win liberation for oneself and even for mankind, but also an instinctive wish to lord over others or take care of others virtues and sorrows, and under this guise seek to captivate and govern others. This is the sum and substance of social dynamics. No ruler or priest ever got over this love for power, and in this sense religion too has been instrumental in seeking power, if not for one reason, for a group as a whole.

Love or Power is one thing, the Power of Love is another. Man, seeking a social status and glory and the rest of the wealth and vanities of mankind, since all these have a transient nature, may value the glory of power, but even power in order to sustain itself lives by another power that is not of the social mass but is unique, namely the service that man renders to the brother man from whom loyalty is sought. Nor would it be true to say that even in the most servile of men who follow a leader, there is not in addition to the sense of his own fulfillment of his power-lust another abiding feeling of recognition from the leader, who may be the most tyrannical of masters in the performance of works. The fact is that the leader or teacher in social life does provide a sense of final fulfillment of the personal power-impulse to each of his followers and this is the sustaining fact of social following. But this may be of elemental appeal in all the religious promises of the Kingdom Come. This may be covered up or glossed over by fine phrases of surrender and grace and other technical devices. This is the strong appeal, however in the term *swaraj* or self-government and four freedoms and liberty and fraternity. Ultimately all these are motional appeals satisfying the human craving

for fullness and act as valves for the exhibition of the impulse to power in some form. No wonder leaders as well as their servile followers participate in this impulse towards power. It cannot with any amount of justification be claimed by any follower to whichever camp he may belong that he is more free than any other. The fact is that there is the illusion of power-exhibition alone in every case and not real power for it belongs truly only to the leader who permits this little vanity of participation in trivialities of social domination. The social devices that have helped towards securing for the impulse to power a *distributive* effect, that is to say, the effect of common participation in power in the mass are such slogans as *esprit de corps*, unity and solidarity and other such well-worn ideals. But in truth the unmitigated exercise of power always remains in the strongest group which in its most cunning manner glosses over to administer the pill of subordination of the rest to it under the patently clear collective pronoun, We or Us, which is really the absolutist's capital letters designating the royal exercise of superior existence.

We have pointed out above that love of power thus is the most significant fact in every institution of society, family, community, state and imperial government. This invasion of the social values into the individual life of men is traceable in the occult attempt at conquest of power in psychical life. Power-Religions like Power-Politics are kins and their destinations are identical-the disaster of the true fabric of spiritual unity. It is even true to some extent to affirm that certain modern exploiters of the Evolutionary Theory promise conquest over the limitations of man and the advent of the Superman who is more a Titan than a God. It is this preoccupation with the Regnum rather than the Sacerdotium that is the bane of most spiritual philosophies. It is a degradation of the nature of true Divinity.

What then is the reality of the spiritual life if it be not the accession to power through the power-impulse in social life? We answer that it is the principle of Love. What Energy is to Physics, what Power is to Social Life, what Reason is to Philosophy and Science, that is Love to Spiritual life and phenomena. This is

the cardinal principle relevant in all the attitudes that the individual takes in respect of the Object of devotion, knowledge and services. Whatever be the attitude adopted, be it that of a lover, friend, child or parent, whatever be the sentiment that dominates the religious situation, all of them are varieties or forms of the love-impulse. It is not one that is coerced or enforced by the object but it is a free movement on the part of the individual towards the expression or manifestation of self-giving, which is denoted by self-surrender, renunciation of self or ego, and other equivalent terms. Love in whatever phase it appears-and these may well be socially denoted or individually denoted or supra-rationally denoted,-is a definite fact of give up of oneself towards the object of Love or God or the Spirit Immortal indwelling in all.

Once this point is understood we shall find that all the various prescriptions of *ahimsa*, *āsteya* and others are but variations of the principle of love, expressed in negative terms. These are essentially the principles that inculcate the understanding of the true nature of spiritual consciousness as beyond the purely social or ethical codes of non-injury and non-theft and others. The deepening consciousness of love is had only in the presence of the embracing vision of the Universal Being in such and every individual. The forms of Love are thus seen to be all that minimize the power-impulse and release the spiritual power of transmutive harmony. Social power seeks in its highest to reduce all persons to the level of homogeneity or uniformity, whereas the spiritual love harmonises all the various urges of individuals in its all-solvent love. That the power of love is, in this sense, capable of abolishing or annulling the individuals, or is capable of conferring on all those that are recipients of it, indeed a dubious gift of mere sentimentality or unity, need not be overemphasized. But it does nothing of the sort, for its significant nature is to reveal an infinity of self-luminous giving, the depth of which is unmeasurable. Love, it is to be noted, is not what is usually meant by that term: it is essentially a spiritual act of uniting in the spirit through self-offering, be this offering of the individual human being or of the Divine. It is the act that makes both the recipient and the giver ultimately givers

alone, and none is the pure recipient. Unlike power which concentrates thought and enhances self-righteousness in thought, love diffuses the self into a supreme universal offering of its very substance, so much so that the lover and the beloved in their highest ecstasies do not feel their own existence. Indeed they feel themselves melting away not only into each other but into the universal life of all things. It is in this sense that we should perhaps understand the statement of some idealistic mystics that the highest experience of reality is an extinguishing and annulling experience wherein the ego and everything that it related with are no more than one experience. But the recovery from this experience is always a recovery that reveals an enhancement not of the ego-sense or sentiment or experience, but a firm and luminous unity of integral passion for self-offering.

In the above paragraphs I have briefly-and I am afraid very much so-sketched the importance of the concept of Love in the understanding of the true spiritual experience, wherein it is the only category that can explain the vast symphony of its experience. When we understand the interiority of the nature of Love we shall find that the sources of power of love are to be found neither in the organizations of Religion nor in the competitive machinery of aspirations and guides and teachers. Nor should it be said that love demands moral codes and ethical sanctions for the pure offering of itself. Love knows no enemy of itself nor mere evil as such for its very dynamics consists in its supreme self-offering of itself. It is the very belief of love that it can enter into the core of every individual and draw out the responsive self-offering on the part of the other person however degenerate, recalcitrant and brutal.

This last view is most prominently of Gandhiji than of any other. If reality is spiritual then the core of every existence is love, and thus it follows that all things can be understood, the reality that God or the Spirit is in every one and every one is in Him or It; this being in Him or in us of Him is a fact that belongs not primarily to the order of reason or relation as such but to the region of union. Thus it is that the highest metaphysical category in mystical experience is Union

or Unity or Love that is transcendent to the level of intellect or reason which describes its highest category as either Identity or Difference; or Identity and difference when there is the apprehension of the unsatisfactoriness of either the identity or the difference.

So far then as our analysis goes it can be seen that the most adequate category of spiritual life is Love. Its forms are various on the plane of spiritual existence itself. Its further characteristic is that it can claim to be the highest category because it is transcendent to the categories of identity of Reason, Power of Social Action, and Energy of the physical universe, because it is capable of displaying itself in and through these categories of these planes of life without forsaking its unique nature as the highest form of Spiritual existence and as the highest category of spiritual experience.

It is impossible in the space allotted normally to a contribution in a journal to sketch more fully the several forms of this Spiritual activity and the above sketch or outline is given to intimate the supreme necessity of understanding the relevant categories that help the understanding of the nature of Reality that cannot but be described, because so discerned, as having several levels.