CHAPTER VI

JAINISM

The word Jainism goes back to jina, which, derived from the Sanskrit root ji ‘to conquer,’ means ‘victor,’ i.e. one that has successfully subdued his passions and obtained mastery over himself. The creed to which the name is applied is not an off-shoot or a sub-sect of Buddhism as it was once taken to be, but is quite independent of it. It is, as a matter of fact, much older; and Vardhamāna, styled Mahāvīra or ‘the great spiritual hero,’ was only the last in a series of prophets. Tradition reckons twenty-three prophets as having preceded him, which takes us back to fabulous antiquity. Of these, at least one Pārśvanātha, the next previous to Vardhamāna, who is believed to have lived in the eighth century B.C., can claim historicity (p. 43). There is evidence to show that his followers were contemporaries of Vardhamāna. But corruptions had crept into the older teaching by then, and Vardhamāna gave it fresh impetus by reforming it. It is the only heretical creed that has survived to the present day in India out of the many that were preached in this period in opposition to the Vedic teaching. Though independent of Buddhism, Jainism resembles it in several respects, e.g. in its repudiation of the authority of the Veda, its pessimistic outlook on life and its refusal to believe in a supreme God. But the differences it exhibits are equally noticeable, such as its recognition of permanent entities like the self and matter. In these it resembles Brahminism, justifying the description that it is ‘a theological mean between Brahmanism and Buddhism.\(^3\)

Vardhamāna was born about 540 B.C., near Vaiśāli, the capital of Videha. His father Siddhārtha was the chief of a Kshatriya clan; and his mother was Trīśalā, sister of the King of Videha. Thus by birth he, like Buddha, was a member of the ruling class. Like him, Vardhamāna also first

1 Prof. Jacob: Jaina Sūtras (SBE;), Pt. II. p. xxxiii.
2 Id., p. 122 n.
3 Prof. Hopkins: Religions of India, p. 283.
addressed himself to his kinsmen and through their support succeeded in propagating his teaching. He married Yaśodā; but, unlike Buddha, he lived in the house of his parents till they died and entered upon the spiritual career afterwards when he was twenty-eight years old. ¹ For about a dozen years he led an austere life practising penance and at the end of that period attained perfect knowledge or, as it is said, became a kevalin. He did not, like Buddha, look upon this period of severe mortification as time wasted, but felt convinced of its necessity as a preparation for the great work of his life. As a result of this self-discipline he became a Tirtham-kara (p. 19). He spent the rest of his life in teaching his religious system and organizing his order of ascetics. He died, it is believed, when he was over seventy years of age. The influence of Jainism unlike that of Buddhism is confined to India; and even there it is seen, somewhat strangely, to be wider outside the province of its birth—especially in the West and the South—than within it. The redaction of the Jaina canon or the siddhānta, which like that of Buddhism is written in a Prākrit language (Ardhamāgadhi), took place according to tradition under the presidency of Devardhi about the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century A.D. This comparatively late date has led some to doubt the faithfulness of the canonical doctrine to the original teaching. The truth, however, seems to be that Devardhi only arranged the texts that were already in existence, and had been handed down from the third century B.C. Even before that date, there were Jaina works called Pūrva, which, as their name signifies, were later superseded by the new canon of the Āṅgas.² Thus there is really no cause for doubting the authenticity of the Jaina doctrine, as now known, although this does not mean that additions and alterations, here and there, have not been made in it at all. ³

¹ There is difference in the tradition relating to Vardhamāna’s marriage, etc., between the two important sections of the Jains—the Śvetāmbaras or ‘white-clad’ and the Digambaras or ‘sky-clad.’ The statement above is according to the former.

² This is again according to Śvetāmbara tradition. The Digambara canon is different and is divided, as it is termed, into four Vedas. See Mrs. Stevenson: Heart of Jainism, p. 16.

The Jains bring the whole universe under one or other of the two everlasting categories. The two classes of things are respectively described as jīva and ajīva, i.e. the conscious and the unconscious or spirit and non-spirit—the latter including not merely matter but also time and space. The terms show clearly the realistic and relativistic standpoint of Jainism. As surely as there is a subject that knows, Jainism says, so surely is there an object that is known. Of them, the ajīva has its own specific nature; but that nature cannot be properly understood until it is contrasted with the jīva. That is why it is designated as 'not-jīva' or the contradictory of jīva. The latter is the higher and more important category, which accounts for its independent designation, although that also can be well understood only when contrasted with the ajīva or non-spirit:

(i) jīva.—The notion of jīva in general corresponds to that of ātman or puruṣa of the other schools of Indian thought. But as implied by the etymology of its name—'what lives or is animate'—the concept seems to have been arrived at first by observing the characteristics of life and not through the search after a metaphysical principle underlying individual existence. It would therefore be more correct to take the word in its original significance as standing for the vital principle than for the soul. 'The spirit does but mean the breath.' In its present connotation, however, it is practically the same as the other Indian words for the self. The number of jīvas is infinite, all being alike and eternal. In their empirical form they are classified in various ways, such as those that have one sense, two senses and so forth; but it is not necessary to dwell upon those details here. It will suffice to remark that the classifications imply different levels of development in the souls. The Jains believe not only that the jīva exists, but also that it acts and is acted upon. It is both an experient (bhoktā) and an agent (kartā); its intrinsic nature is one of perfection and it is characterized

1 SDS. p. 33.
2 Prof. Jacobi: op. cit., Part I. p. 3 n.
3 Saddarsana-samuccaya, st. 48.
by infinite intelligence, infinite peace, infinite faith and
infinite power; but during the period of its union with
matter which constitutes samsāra, these features are
obscured, though not destroyed. The jiva’s ‘exterior
semblance’ accordingly belies its innate glory. Man’s
personality as it is familiarly known to us is dual, consisting
of a spiritual as well as a material element. The object of life
is so to subdue the latter as to shake off its malignant influ-
ence and thereby enable the jiva to reveal all its inherent
excellences in their fulness. One of the curious features of
Jainism is the belief in the variable size of the jiva in its
empirical condition. It is capable of expansion and contrac-
tion according to the dimensions of the physical body with
which it is associated for the time being. In this respect it
resembles a lamp, it is said, which though remaining the
same illumines the whole of the space enclosed in a small or
big room in which it happens to be placed. It means that
like its other features, the jiva’s non-spatial character also
is affected by association with matter. The Jains thus
denies the unalterable nature of the jiva which is commonly
recognized by Indian thinkers.

The jiva’s relation to matter explains also the somewhat
peculiar Jain view of knowledge. Knowledge is not some-
thing that characterizes the jiva. It constitutes its very
essence. The jiva can therefore know unaided everything
directly and exactly as it is; only there should be no
impediment in its way. External conditions, such as the
organ of sight and the presence of light, are useful only
indirectly and jñāna results automatically when the
obstacles are removed through their aid. That the knowledge
which a jiva actually has is fragmentary is due to the
obscuration caused by karma which interferes with its
power of perception. As some schools assume a principle of
avidyā to explain empirical thought, the Jains invoke the
help of karma to do so. This empirical thought is sometimes
differentiated from the jiva, but its identity with the latter
is at the same time emphasized, so that the jiva and its

1 Guṇaratna: Com. on Ṣaddarśana-sanuṣcaya, p. 74.
2 SDS. p. 45.
several jñānas in this sense constitute a unity in difference.\(^1\) Perfect enlightenment being of the very nature of the self, its condition of partial or indistinct knowledge marks a lapse from it.\(^2\) Accordingly the senses and the manas, though they are aids to knowing from one standpoint, are from another so many indications of the limitation to which the jiva is subject during its earthly pilgrimage. This leads to the recognition of differences in the extent of enlightenment that a self may possess as a result of the removal of less or more of the obstacles to it. But no self without jñāna is conceivable, or jñāna without a self—a point in the doctrine which well illustrates its distinction from Buddhism (p. 139). The culmination of enlightenment is reached when the obstacles are broken down in their entirety. Then the individual jīva, while continuing as such, becomes omniscient and knows all objects vividly and precisely as they are. That is called kevala-jñāna or absolute apprehension without media or doubt and is what Mahāvīra is believed to have attained at the end of the long period of his penance. It is immediate knowledge and is described as kevala (‘pure’) since it arises of itself without the help of any external aid like the senses, etc. It is ‘soul-knowledge,’ if we may so term it—knowledge in its pristine form and is designated mukhya-pratyakṣa or perception *par excellence* to contrast it with common perception (sāmvyavahārika-pratyakṣa). There are other but lower varieties of this supernormal knowledge recognized in the school, but it is not necessary to describe them here.

(2) *Ajīva.*—The category of ajīva is divided into kāla (time), ākāśa, dharma and adharma (which together may for our purpose be regarded as standing for ‘space’);\(^3\) and pudgala (‘matter’). Their essential distinction from the jīva is that they, as such, lack life and consciousness. Of

---

1 SDS. p. 34.
2 SDS. p. 29.
3 Strictly ākāśa alone is ‘space.’ Dharma and adharma are respectively the principles of motion and stability. They are found everywhere in the universe or that part of space which is called lokākāśa. Dharma helps movement as water does, it is said, the movement of fish; adharma, on the other hand, makes it possible for things to rest. Dharma and adharma, it should be noted, do not stand here for ‘merit’ and ‘demerit’ as they do in Hindu thought. See SDS. p. 35.
these, time is infinite. But there are cycles in it, each cycle having two eras of equal duration described as the avasarpini and the utsarpiṇī—a metaphor drawn from the revolving wheel. The former is the descending era in which virtue gradually decreases; and the latter, the ascending in which the reverse takes place. The present era is stated to be the former. Space which also is infinite is conceived of as being in two parts—one (lokākāśa) where movement is possible and the other (alokākāśa) where it is not. Whatever is, is only in the former and the latter is empty ākāśa, 'an abyss of nothing,' stretching infinitely beyond it. Matter possesses colour, flavour, odour and touch,¹ sound being looked upon not as a quality but as a mode of it (pudgala-parināma).² It is eternal and consists of atoms out of which are constituted all the things of experience including animal bodies, the senses and manas. These atoms are all believed to house souls so that the universe should be literally crowded with them. Prof. Jacobi says: 'A characteristic dogma of the Jains which pervades the whole philosophical system and code of morals, is the hylozoistic theory that not only animals and plants, but also the smallest particles of the elements, earth, fire, water and wind, are endowed with souls (jīva).³

Reality is defined as that which is characterized by 'birth' (utpāda), 'death' (vyaya) and 'persistence' (dhrauvya).⁴ It means that though eternal in itself, reality shows modifications which come into being and pass out of it. A jīva for instance has several embodied conditions—one for every birth it takes, and each of them has its beginning and end; but, as soul itself, it always subsists. 'To suffer change and yet endure is the privilege of existence.' The changes or modes are known as paryāyas, which, as distinguished from

² See Gunāratna: op. cit., pp. 69–70.
³ Prof. Jacobi: op. cit., Part I. p. xxxiii. It is necessary to remember that when Jainism states that there are souls in water, for instance, it does not refer to the germs that may be contained therein, but to souls having for their bodies the water particles themselves. See SDS. p. 35.
⁴ Utpāda-vyaya-dhruvya-yuktam sat-Umāsvāti: op. cit., v. 29.
the enduring substance, come into being, persist for at least one instant and then disappear. Thus the minimum duration of empirical objects here is two instants as contrasted with the single moment of all reality as conceived in Buddhism. The notion of reality here is dynamic as in Buddhism; but it is not the same, for the latter altogether repudiates the constant element and the change it recognizes is therefore really the change of nothing. It accepts the many but denies the one. Jainism, on the other hand, admits both, defining reality as a one-in-many. The many as such are distinct, but they are also identical in that they are all of the same substance. To the question how an identical object can exhibit different features—how unity and diversity can co-exist, the Jains reply that our sole warrant for speaking about reality is experience and that when experience vouches for such a character of reality, it must be admitted to be so. It is in connection with this view of reality that they formulate the theory of syādvāda to which we shall allude later. The term dravya or 'substance' is applied to the six entities mentioned above—the jiva and the ajīva with its five-fold division. The dravyas, excepting ‘time’ alone, are called asti-kāyas, a term which means that they are real in the sense just explained (asti) and possess

1 In addition to this distinction between substance and mode, the Jains recognize another—that between substance and attribute (guna). The two are somewhat discrepant from each other and Prof. Jacobi states, writing on this subject, that 'the ancient Jaina texts usually speak only of substances, dravyas and their development or modifications, paryāyas; and when they mention guṇas, qualities, besides, which, however, is done but rarely in the sūtras and regularly in comparatively modern books only, this seems to be a later innovation due to the influence which the philosophy and terminology of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika gradually gained over the scientific thoughts of the Hindus. For at the side of paryāya, development or modification, there seems to be no room for an independent category 'quality,' since paryāya is the state in which a thing, dravya, is at any moment of its existence and this must therefore include qualities as seems to be actually the view embodied in the oldest text' (SBE. vol. XLV. pp. xxxiv. and 153 n.).

There are two other aspects of the theoretical teaching of Jainism to which we may briefly refer now:—

(i) Atomic Theory.—The term anu, the Sanskrit equivalent of 'atom,' is found in the Upaniṣads, but the atomic theory is foreign to the Vedānta. Of the remaining schools of Indian thought, it is, as we shall see, a characteristic feature of more than one, the Jaina form of it being probably the earliest. The atoms, according to it, are all of the same kind, but they can yet give rise to the infinite variety of things so that matter as conceived here is of quite an indefinite nature. Pudgala has, as we know, certain inalienable features; but within the limits imposed by them it can become anything through qualitative differentiation. The transmutation of the elements is quite possible in this view and is not a mere dream of the alchemist. Even the four-fold distinction of earth, water, fire and air is derived and secondary, not primary and eternal as believed by some Hindu thinkers like the followers of the Vaiśeṣika.2 These so-called elements also, according to Jainism, are divisible and have a structure. By developing the respective characteristics of odour, flavour, etc., the atoms become differentiated, though in themselves they are indistinguishable from one another, and it is from the atoms diversified in this way that the rest of the material world is derived. Matter may thus have two forms—one, simple or atomic and the other compound, called skandha. All perceivable objects are of the latter kind.3 Jainism also, like the Upaniṣads, does not stop in its analysis of the physical universe at the elements of prthivi, etc. It pushes it farther back where qualitative differentiation has not yet taken place. But while in the latter the ultimate stage is represented by the monistic principle of Brahman, here it is taken by an infinity of atoms. It is not qualitatively only that matter is indefinite. Quantitatively also it is regarded as undetermined. It may

---

1 SDS. pp. 35–6.
2 Compare the somewhat similar distinction in the atomic views held by Democritus and Empedocles in ancient Greece.
3 SDS. p. 36.
increase or decrease in volume without addition or loss—a position which is taken to be possible by assuming that when matter is in the subtle state any number of its particles may occupy the space of one gross atom. It is matter in this subtle form that constitutes karma, which by its influx into the jīva brings on saṃsāra.

(2) Syādvāda.\(^1\)—It is the conception of reality as extremely indeterminate in its nature that is the basis of what is known as syādvāda—the most conspicuous doctrine\(^2\) of Jainism. The word syāt is derived from the Sanskrit root as 'to be,' being its form in the potential mood. It means 'may be,' so that syādvāda may be rendered in English as 'the doctrine of maybe.' It signifies that the universe can be looked at from many points of view, and that each view-point yields a different conclusion (anekānta). The nature of reality is expressed completely by none of them, for in its concrete richness it admits all predicates. Every proposition is therefore in strictness only conditional. Absolute affirmation and absolute negation are both erroneous. The Jains illustrate this position by means of the story of a number of blind people examining an elephant and arriving at varying conclusions regarding its form while in truth each observer has got at only a part of it. The doctrine indicates extreme caution and signifies an anxiety to avoid all dogma in defining the nature of reality. The philosophic fastidiousness to which we alluded in an earlier chapter (p. 41) reaches its acme here.

To understand the exact significance of this doctrine, it will be necessary to know the conditions under which it was formulated. There was then, on the one hand, the Upaniṣadic view that Being alone was true; and on the other the view, also mentioned in the Upaniṣads, but with disapproval, that non-Being was the ultimate truth.\(^3\) Both these views,

\(^1\) See Guṇaratna: \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 85–9; SDS. pp. 41–2. One of the fourteen Pūrvas is said to deal with this topic. See OJ. pp. 139–40.

\(^2\) Regarding the applicability of the doctrine not only to matter but also to other forms of reality, see Guṇaratna: \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 87–8.

\(^3\) See e.g. \textit{Ch. Up.} VI. ii. 2. In several passages in the Upaniṣads, however, asat stands not for non-Being but for undifferentiated Being. Cf. \textit{Id.} III. xix. 1.
according to Jainism, are only partially true and each becomes a dogma as soon as it is understood to represent the whole truth about reality. Equally dogmatic in the eyes of the Jains are two other views which also we come across occasionally in the Upaniṣads and which maintained that, because neither Being nor non-Being is the truth, reality must be characterized by both or neither—thus adding, with characteristic love for subtlety, two more alternatives—both ‘is’ and ‘is not,’ and neither ‘is’ nor ‘is not’—to the well-known ones of ‘is’ and ‘is not.’ The Jains think that reality is so complex in its structure that while every one of these views is true as far as it goes, none is completely so. Its precise nature baffles all attempts to describe it directly and once for all; but it is not impossible to make it known through a series of partially true statements without committing ourselves to any one among them exclusively. Accordingly the Jains enunciate its nature in seven steps, described as the sapta-bhaṅgī or ‘the seven-fold formula.’ Its several steps are:

(1) Maybe, is (Syāt asti).
(2) Maybe, is not (Syāt nāsti).
(3) Maybe, is and is not (Syāt asti nāsti).
(4) Maybe, is inexpressible (Syāt avaktavyah).
(5) Maybe, is and is inexpressible (Syāt asti ca avaktavyah).
(6) Maybe, is not and is inexpressible (Syāt nāsti ca avaktavyah).
(7) Maybe, is, is not and is inexpressible (Syāt asti ca nāsti ca avaktavyah).

If we consider for example an object A, we may say that it is, but it is only in a sense, viz. as A and not also as B. Owing to the indefinite nature of reality, what is now or here A, may become B sometime hence or elsewhere. Thus we must remember when we posit A, that we are not stating absolutely what the nature is of the reality underlying it. So far as its material cause is concerned, a thing has always existed and will always continue to exist; but the particular

1 Mundaka Up., II. i. 1; Śvetāsvatara Up., iv. 18. See BP. p. 137 and also the passage from Samyuttaka-Nikāya, quoted in Oldenberg’s Buddha, p. 249.
form in which it appears now and here has but a limited existence. While the substance remains the same, its modes vary. As a result of this qualification, we get to the third step, which affirms as well as denies the existence of A. It is as well as is not. That is, it is in one sense, but is not in another. While the opposition between the predicates ‘is’ and ‘is not’ can be reconciled when they are thought of as characterizing an object successively, the nature of the object becomes incomprehensible when they are applied to it simultaneously. We cannot identify A and not-A thus wholesale, for that would be to subvert the law of contradiction. So it must be expressible as neither. This gives us the fourth step, which amounts to saying that reality from one standpoint is inscrutable. Hence Jainism insists that in speaking of an object we must state what it is in reference to material, place, time and state. Otherwise our description of it will be misleading. It may seem that the formula might stop here. But there are still other ways in which the alternatives can be combined. To avoid the impression that those predicates are excluded, three more steps are added. The resulting description becomes exhaustive,¹ leaving no room for the charge of dogma in any form. What is intended by all this is that our judgments have only a partial application to reality. There is some enduring factor in all the changes with which experience makes us familiar, but its modes or the forms it assumes, which may be of any conceivable variety, arise and perish indefinitely. There is no self-identity in things as common sense hastily assumes, and nothing is really isolated. Jainism recognizes both permanence and change as equally real; hence arises its difficulty to express in one step the full nature of reality. It has been observed² that the Jains are here thinking of empirical being and not of the transcendental, which for instance is what the Upaniṣads have in view when they speak of reality as only Being. But it is clear from the description of kevala-jñāna, the highest form of knowledge,

¹ These seven are the only ways in which ‘is’ and ‘is not’ can be taken singly and in combination. Cf. Prameya-kamala-mārtanda, p. 206.
² ERE. vol. vii. p. 468.
as comprehending all things and all their modifications,¹ that the Jains made no such distinction. Reality according to them is in itself infinitely complex; only knowledge of it may be partial and erroneous or complete and correct. We shall defer to the end of the chapter the few observations we have to make on this theory.

II

The special feature of Jainism, as signified by its very name, is to be found in its practical teaching; and the chief feature of the discipline it prescribes is its extreme severity. It is not merely the discipline for the ascetic that is characterized by such rigour; that for the householder also, comparatively speaking, is so. Jainism, like so many other doctrines, insists not on enlightenment alone or on conduct alone, but on both. To these it adds faith, describing right faith (samyagdarśana), right knowledge (samyagjñāna) and right conduct (samyak-cāritra) as the ‘three gems’ (tri-ratna) or the three precious principles of life.² Of the three, the first place is given to right faith, for even right activity, if accompanied by false convictions, loses much of its value. It is unshaken belief in the Jaina scriptures and their teaching, and is intended particularly to dispel scepticism or doubt which thwarts spiritual growth. Right knowledge is knowledge of the principles of Jaina religion and philosophy. Right conduct is translating into action what one has learnt and believes to be true. It is the most important part of the discipline, for it is through right activity that one can get rid of karma and reach the goal of life. We need not describe this discipline in detail. It will suffice to refer to what are known as the ‘five vows’ (vrata) to indicate its general character. They are in the case of the ascetic—(1) not to injure any living being (ahimsā), (2) not to utter falsehood (satya), (3) not to steal (asteya), (4) to lead a celibate life (brahma-cārya) and (5) to renounce the world (aparigraha).

¹ Umāsvāti: op. cit., i. 30.
² Samyagdarśana-jñāna-cāritrāṇi mokṣa-mārgaḥ-Umāsvāti: op. cit., i. 1.
In the case of the layman they are the same except that the last two are replaced by the vows respectively of chastity and contentment or strict limitation of one's wants. Of the various virtues to be cultivated by the Jains, ahimsā occupies the foremost place. The doctrine of ahimsā is no doubt very old in India,¹ but the way in which it is made to pervade the whole code of conduct is peculiarly Jain. Even Buddha seems to have permitted meat-eating, but it is wholly abjured here. Literally the word ahimsā means 'non-injury' where 'injury' should be understood as comprehending injuring in thought, by word or act. It signifies that one should live without harming others even in the least. This is explained as much more than a negative ideal. It means not only abstention from inflicting positive injury, but also the rendering of active service to others; for we shall be really injuring a person when we can help him but do not.²

It is clear from this that the social or objective side of ethics is not ignored in Jainism; only in so far as its final aim is the development of one's personality, it emphasizes the individualistic aspect. The following Jaina prayer brings out clearly this social and, along with it, the pre-eminently tolerant side of its teaching. 'Let the King be victorious and righteous. Let there be rain in every proper season. Let diseases die and famine and theft be nowhere. Let the Law of the Jaina give all happiness to all the living beings of the world.'

Like Buddhism, Jainism also admits a two-fold training—that of lay life and that of the monk, and places the latter above the former. Naturally the precepts for the ascetic are more rigid and the vows for the layman are therefore called the 'lesser vows' or anu-vrata, to contrast them with the former known as the mahāvrata.³ Thus to take the last of the five vows, while contentment is all that is required of a layman, absolute renunciation is insisted upon in the case of an ascetic so that he can call nothing his own—not even the alms-bowl. But the two institutions of lay and ascetic life are more closely connected here than in Buddhism, which

¹ See Note 4, p. 92.  
² See OJ. p. xxiv.  
³ SDS. p. 33; OJ. pp. 69 and 133.
emphasizes the latter at the expense of the former. It permits for instance the combination of the two modes of discipline in one or more directions, thus making it possible for the spiritually weak to rise to the level of the monk by easy steps. To give an example, a person while continuing as a layman may follow the higher ideal in regard to food alone. The difference between the training of a layman and that of an ascetic here is thus not one of kind but only one of degree.

The aim of life is to get oneself disentangled from karma. Like the generality of Indian systems, Jainism also believes in the soul's transmigration, but its conception of karma, the governing principle of transmigration, is unlike that of any other. It is conceived here as being material and permeating the jīvas through and through and weighing them down to the mundane level. 'As heat can unite with iron and water with milk, so karma unites with the soul; and the soul so united with karma is called a soul in bondage.' As in so much of Hindu thought, here also the ideal lies beyond good and evil, so that virtue as well as vice is believed to lead to bondage, though the way in which each binds is different. If through proper self-discipline all karma is worked out and there arises 'the full blaze of omniscience' in the jīva, it becomes free. When at last it escapes at death from the bondage of the body, it rises until it reaches the top of the universe described above as lokākāśa; and there it rests in peaceful bliss for ever. It may not care for worldly affairs thereafter, but it is certainly not without its own influence, for it will serve ever afterwards as an example of achieved ideal to those that are still struggling towards it. During the period intervening between enlightenment and actual attainment of godhead—for all liberated souls are gods—the enlightened jīva dwells apart from fresh karmic influence. An enlightened person may lead an active life, but his activity does not taint him as even unselfish activity, according to Jainism, does in the case of others. During this interval the devotee, as in Buddhism, is termed an arhant3 (p. 152), and he becomes a siddha or 'the perfected'.

1 OJ. p. xxxi.
2 SDS. p. 40.
3 Jainism is sometimes described as the arhat-creed (ārhatā-dārsana).
at actual liberation. It will be seen from this that the stage of arhant-ship corresponds to the Hindu ideal of jivan-mukti and the Buddhistic one of nirvāṇa as explained above.

To describe the Jaina course of practical discipline for reaching this goal, it is enough to explain the scheme of seven principles as it is called. The aim of this classification is to show how the jīva comes to be associated with karma and how it may escape from it. These principles are āsrava, bandha, saṁvara, nirjara and mokṣa together with the jīva and ajīva already mentioned. Karma is the link between the jīva and its empirical outfit, the body. It is, as we know, regarded as consisting of extremely subtle matter which is beyond the reach of senses.¹ We should not think that there was ever a time when the jīva was free from this karmic accompaniment. Yet dissociation from it is admitted to be possible. Karma by its association with the jīva soils its nature and the consequent lapse of the jīva from its pure state is what is termed bondage. In this process of binding, it should be particularly noted, karma acts by itself and not under the guidance of God as in Hinduism. The forging of the fetter of karma takes place in two stages: Certain psychical conditions like ignorance of the ultimate truth and passion lead to the movement of contiguous karmic matter towards the soul. That is āsrava. Then there is the actual influx or infiltration of karma which is known as bandha. The falling away of the karma-fetter is also thought of in two stages. First through right knowledge and self-restraint, the influx of fresh karma is stopped. It is saṁvara. Then the shedding of karma already there takes place. That is nirjara which will result of itself after saṁvara, but may be hastened by deliberate self-training. The condition which results thereafter is mokṣa, when 'the partnership between soul and matter is dissolved'² and the ideal character is restored to the jīva. It then transcends saṁsāra and flies up to its permanent abode at the summit of lokākāśa. The final condition is one of inactivity, but it is characterized by

¹ References to a physical or quasi-physical conception of sin are traceable in Vedic literature. See Prof. Keith: Religion and Philosophy of the Veda, p. 245.
² IP. vol. i. p. 320.
complete knowledge and everlasting peace. These seven principles together with puňya and pāpa, the outcome respectively of good and bad deeds, constitute what are sometimes stated as the nine categories of Jainism.

There remains yet to consider, before we pass on to our final observations on the doctrine, a question which is sometimes asked, whether Jainism is atheistic. The answer to this question naturally depends upon the meaning we attach to the word 'atheistic.' If we take it in the sense of nāstika, which is its commonly accepted Sanskrit equivalent, the answer is clear. For the word nāstika means one that does not believe in a life beyond (para-loka), i.e. one that does not believe in a surviving self. In this sense there is only one atheistic doctrine, viz. the sensualist Cārvāka. The word nāstika is sometimes used, as the result of a later modification in its meaning, to describe those that repudiate the authority of the Veda. In that sense, Jainism is nāstika for it is antagonistic to the Hindu scriptures and there it sides with Buddhism. If, on the other hand, we take 'atheistic' as 'not believing in God,' which is its sense in English, a doubt may well arise regarding the character of Jainism. For it believes in no God, though it does in godhead. In fact, every liberated soul is divine; and there can be many such, since only addition is possible to their number but no deduction from it. If by 'God,' then, we understand a supreme personality responsible for the creation of the world, Jainism must be declared to be atheistic. It deliberately rejects such a conception of divinity as self-discrepant. If God needs to create the world, it means that he feels a want which is inconsistent with his necessary perfection as the Supreme. So there is no God, and the world was never created. In this view the Jaina is curiously enough in agreement with the Mīmāṁsaka, the upholder of strict orthodoxy. However opposed to the common trend of human belief, this position is not altogether without rational support. Theistic systems are generally anthropomorphistic. They bring down God to the level of man. Jainism, on the other hand, looks upon man himself as God when his inherent powers are

1 See Pāṇini: IV. iv. 60.
fully in blossom. God is here only another word for the soul at its best. It is the ideal man that is the ideal of man; and there is only one way to achieve it—to strive for it in the manner in which others have striven, with their example shining before us. Such an ideal carries with it all necessary hope and encouragement, for what man has done, man can do. In rejecting God who is so by his own right and with it also the belief that salvation may be attained through his mercy, Jainism and other systems of the kind recognize that karma by itself and without the intervention of any divine power is adequate to explain the whole of experience and thus impress on the individual his complete responsibility for what he does. ‘Jainism more than any other creed gives absolute religious independence and freedom to man. Nothing can intervene between the actions which we do and the fruits thereof. Once done, they become our masters and must fructify. As my independence is great, so my responsibility is coextensive with it. I can live as I like; but my choice is irrevocable and I cannot escape the consequences of it.’

The Jains recognize matter as well as spirit; and each, according to them, implies the other, for they maintain that nothing is wholly independent and can be fully understood by itself. An old Jaina stanza states that he who knows one thing completely knows all things, and that he alone who knows all things knows anything completely. It means that if we have to understand one thing, we have to relate it to all. Hence the Jaina view may be described as relativistic. It is pluralistic also, for it recognizes an infinite number of jivas as well as of material elements. These two features of relativism and pluralism point to a first analysis of common experience; and Jainism stops short at it, disregarding its implication. Thus relativism, if pushed to its logical conclusion, leads to absolutism, which the Jains refuse to accept. Let us

1 OJ. pp. 3-4.

2 Eko bhāvāḥ sarvathā yena dṛṣṭāḥ sarve bhāvāḥ sarvathā tena dṛṣṭāḥ: Sarve bhāvāḥ sarvathā yena dṛṣṭāḥ eko bhāvāḥ sarvathā tena dṛṣṭāḥ—quoted by Gunaratna: op. cit., p. 89. Cf. also Prof. Jacobi: op. cit., Pt. I. p. 34.
see how it does so in the case of spirit and matter, overlooking the categories of space and time. So far as matter is concerned Jainism adopts a criterion which enables it to reduce the entire variety of the physical universe to one kind of substance, viz. pudgala. It does the same in the case of spirit also, concluding that all jīvas are of one kind. But when it comes to a question of matter and spirit, Jainism abandons that criterion and adopts mere contrast as the guiding principle. If the dualism of spirit and matter were a clear-cut one as it is in the Sānkhya, we might somehow understand it; but it is not so here. The distinction between the two ultimate entities of prakṛti and puruṣa which the Sānkhya admits is absolute, and neither in reality comes into relation with the other. Here, on the other hand, spirit and matter are admitted to be in actual relation with each other. The very disjunction between jīva and ajīva, as they are termed, shows their interdependence. Yet no attempt is made to look for a common principle behind them, and the two are set side by side, as if they were entirely independent. If now we consider the other aspect of the teaching, viz. pluralism, we are forced to take a similar view. Matter is divided into an infinite number of atoms; but, all being of the same kind, it is impossible to distinguish them from one another. Similarly in the case of the jīvas their empirical distinctions are adequately explained by their physical adjuncts. Even the difference in their moral nature is fully accounted for by them, Jainism electing to explain karma as a form of matter. In these circumstances the intrinsic distinction which is assumed to exist between one jīva and another, or the plurality of spirit, becomes only nominal. The necessary implication of Jaina thought in this respect is, therefore, a single spiritual substance encountering a single material substance. And since these two substances are interdependent, the dualism must in its turn and finally be resolved in a monism and point to an Absolute which, owing to its essentially dynamic character, develops within itself the distinctions of jīva and ajīva as known to us. That is the inevitable consequence of the Jaina view. The half-hearted character of the Jaina inquiry, is reflected in the seven-fold
mode of predication (sapta-bhaṅgi), which stops at giving us the several partial views together, without attempting to overcome the opposition in them by a proper synthesis. It is all right so far as it cautions us against one-sided conclusions; but it leaves us in the end, as it has been observed, with little more than such one-sided solutions. The reason for it, if it is not prejudice against Absolutism, is the desire to keep close to common beliefs. The doctrine hesitates to deny anything that is familiar. But at the same time its partiality for common views does not mean acquiescence in all popular beliefs, as is clear from its repudiation of the idea of God in the accepted sense. The truth is that the primary aim of Jainism is the perfection of the soul, rather than the interpretation of the universe—a fact which may be supported by the old statement that āsrava and samvara constitute the whole of Jaina teaching, the rest being only an amplification of them. As a result we fail to find in it an ultimate solution of the metaphysical problem.

1 Proceedings of the First Indian Philosophical Congress (1925), p. 133.
PART III

AGE OF THE SYSTEMS