

## SOME VIEWS ON CAUSATION

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The problem of change leads to the problem of causality. Why does a change happen? Change is produced by its cause. Whatever has a beginning must have a cause. In causation, there is a special relation of two events, one is the cause and the other is the effect.

Aristotle recognizes four kinds of causes in his *Physics* and *Metaphysics*. A carpenter exerts his energy and produces a chair out of wood; the carpenter is the efficient cause of the chair. The wood is its material cause, for wood is its matter or stuff. The form or shape of the chair which is imposed by the carpenter upon the wood is its formal cause. The end or purpose which is sought to be realised by the chair is its final cause. These are the four kinds of causes.

"In the first place," says Aristotle, "one calls cause that from which it arises". In this sense, bronze is the cause of the statue (Material cause or *causa materialis*). In a second sense, the cause is the form of the model of things. Thus in music, the cause of the octave is ratio 2:1 (formal cause or *causa formalis*). In a third sense, the cause or the source from which movement or rest comes; that which produces a change in the cause of the change produced. The father is the cause of the child (efficient cause or *causa efficiens*). Fourthly, cause signifies the end and the goal of a thing. For e.g. dieting and drugs can be regarded as means to health (Final cause or *causa finalis*).

Hume, who is an empiricist, does not admit that there is a necessary connection between cause and effect. What we experience is nothing but merely succession of events. In our experience, we see that one event is invariably followed by another. In this way, the ideas of them become associated in our minds. Therefore, as we think of the former, we cannot but also expect the latter. Hence causality is nothing but uniformity of succession among events. Cause is the invariable antecedent of an event. This is how Hume defines a cause. The idea of necessary relation is nothing but a prejudice of our mind that does not exist in the world of events.

J. S Mill has advocated two definitions of a cause. The first definition states that cause of a phenomenon is "the antecedent or the concurrence of antecedents on which it is invariably an unconditionally consequent". According to the second definition, a distinction is made between cause and condition and a cause is defined as the "sum-total of the conditions, positive and negative taken together". The first definition of cause given by Mill resembles the Indian view on cause as "ananyatha sidha niyata purva bhabhi", meaning, cause as an invariable and necessary antecedent of the effect.

The definition of Carveth Read is a reformulated version of the first definition of causation given by Mill. He analysed cause from the standpoint of quality and quantity. He gave a definition of cause which is scientifically accepted. Thus Read defined cause as "any event which is qualitatively, the immediate, unconditional, invariable antecedent of the effect and, quantitatively, is equal to effect." Hence he is of the view that a cause can be viewed from two aspects- qualitative and quantitative. The analysis of a cause in this way gives two types of marks or characteristics of cause, namely, the qualitative marks and the quantitative marks.

According to Martineau, causality consist not merely in in uniformity of sequence, as advocated by the empiricist. Nor, cause is an apriori category of understanding having no objective counterpart in things-in-themselves, as believed by Kant. For Martineau, cause is a power or force. The idea of a cause is received by us in our own self-consciousness and self-activity in our volition. Berkeley regards all causality as will-causality and physical causality of nature as will-causality of God.

For Hegel and the Neo-Hegelians, all causality is will causality. The incessant changes in nature cannot be regarded as being matters of choice or blind necessity. Changes point to a goal or purpose and is directed towards the establishment of a better state. Causality in nature is thus, consisting in directing energy toward the fulfillment of a particular goal or purpose.

Kant opposed the empirical view on causation. According to him, the idea of causality is not derived from experience. For him, causality is an apriori category of understanding. This category is applied to experience so that it can be interpreted.

According to the Nyaya philosophers of Indian Philosophy, a cause is that which invariably precedes the effect, and is not merely accessory to, but is necessary for the production of the effect. In other words, the cause is an unconditional, invariable antecedent of an effect. Antecedence, invariability and unconditionality or necessity are the essential characteristic of a cause. The Nyaya philosophy distinguishes three kinds of cause: (1) The material (upadana) cause is the substance out of which the effect is produced. For e.g. the threads are the material

causes of the cloth. The material cause is always a substance. (2) The non-material (asamavayi) cause is that which inheres in the material cause, and whose efficiency is well known. For e.g. the threads will remain a bundle, and will not make a cloth unless they are conjoined. The colour of the threads is a non-material cause, since its efficiency in producing the colour of cloth is well known. The non-material cause is always a quality or an action. 3. The efficient cause (nimitta)-cause is distinct from the above two. The efficient cause is the motive power by which the effect originates or the means by which it is produced. For e.g. the potter is the efficient cause of the jar, while his wheel and stick are regarded as accessory.

In Indian Philosophy, there are two rival theories about the cause-effect relation. These are known as Satkaryavada and asatkaryavada. According to the former view, the effect pre-exists in the cause. The Samkhya upholds this view. The second view holds that the effect does not pre-exist in the cause. The effect is a new creation. This view is also known as Arambhavada and is upheld by the Nyaya Vaisesika. □