PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

INDIAN PHILOSOPHICAL CONGRESS

TWENTYSECOND SESSION

BANARAS

1947

Part I

EDITORIAL NOTE

Owing to unavoidable circumstances Mr. T. R. V. Murti and Mr. B. N. Kaul have not been able to send in their contributions to the symposium on 'The Criterion of the Real'.

The Indian Philosophical Congress

SYMPOSIUM I

FACTORS OF SOCIAL DISINTEGRATION

I

By

N. S. N. SASTRY (MYSORE)

Some writers have maintained that sociological factors no less than psychological ones that are connected with social disorganization, have to be carefully considered and a re-valuation of the socio-economic values must be undertaken before adequate social organization and stabilization is possible. I propose in this paper to draw attention to some of the important psychological factors involved and to suggest the possibility of psychological solution to the problem of social disorganization.

Powerful incentives of a psychological nature must have been responsible for the formation and maintenance of human societies. It is needless to point out that every society implies a collection of individuals, living together, with some common interests and problems. What, then, are the psychological factors responsible for the formation of society?

A study of the psychological make-up of the human individual (who is a member of a society) reveals to us that at the every basis of his behaviour either by himself or in company of others, there is a number of propensities to particular kinds of reactions. These propensities are inherited and as such un-learned. These are common to all the members of the group. They are, necessarily, the results of a long process of evolution that the human individual has undergone before he became a man. These are instinctive reaction—patterns called forth by adequate stimuli in the environment. Psychologists are not agreed in regard to the number of such propensities. McDougall started with not an inconsiderable number of fourteen and finally (if it is final at all) has ended with a few more. Watson would have us believe that there are only three pro-

pensities and the rest are merely results of the conditioning of these three. Be that as it may, it is certainly recognizable that there are some native propensities to action, and that they are at the basis of all our behaviour. But in society, these propensities tend to get themselves modified on account of the fact that they are influenced by reason, and that there is always the group and the individual mental reaction in social groups.

The instincts (or propensities) that are responsible for the formation of human society and for its maintenance and development need special consideration here. The most notable of them is what is known as the herd instinct, that is, the propensity to seek the society of other members of the group. One might as well say that "it is by nature, rather by arrangement, that we live together in crowds", and that society rests on a social instinct, not on a social contract. And once a society is formed, other powerful instincts come into play. There is the instinct of leadership with its opposite, the instinct of submission, that is, love for power and tendency for obedience. These again are inherited tendencies that work in society. It is not fear, as Hobbes said, that makes men live together. Modern psychology recognizes the natural tendency to co-operate in order to maintain order—a "free discipline".

In addition to these social instincts there are other instincts which influence human conduct. For example, such instincts as the protective instinct, the instinct for construction or creation, the instinct to fight, do influence the social conduct of man. We might conclude that every one of these instincts serves to limit and control the behaviour of the human individual, whether in society or not. But these instinctive trends are modified in society. Social adaptation calls for inhibition or expression of some of the characteristics of instincts. Hence the nature of instincts undergoes a change.

It is recognized by every psychologist that the compositional nature of the instinct is open to the influence of external conditions. To give an example, let us take the case of fear. Fear, (that is, the escape motive) ordinarily is a reaction to loss of support, sudden noise or change

But it is not necessary that these very stimuli should be present in the environment for the instinct of escape to come into play. Instincts do become generalized on the stimulus side. This may be partly explained on the basis of "conditioning". But this modification in regard to the compositional nature of the instinct, i. e., the stimulus, the reaction and the emotional experience, means that the individual will hereafter react to different stimuli with the original emotional experience. This very possibility of the shifting of the psychic accompaniment of the instinct characterises the process of sublimation. Thus the change wrought in the nature of instincts brings in its train newer social responsibilities to the individual. So, as Fairchild* says, "the phenomena of sociology arise out of the relations of the changing man with the changing environment, *thereby imposing social responsibilities.*"**

In spite of the fact that the instincts are capable of change, there is an enduring strain in the very nature of the instincts that is to be recognized. Not very easily, nor very readily can the core of the human instincts be radically changed. Intelligence, learning, reason and other psychological capacities help the individual to modify the instincts. But radical transformation is a very remote possibility, This aspect of the persistency of the instinctive tendency, probably, has prompted some people to think that human nature is what it is. The enduring strain in the composition of the instinct sometimes hinders easy modification of the instinct. This imposes a limitation on the strength of the social bias of the instinct.

In addition to this factor, there is another that must be recognized as being responsible for the unsuccessful adaptation to the social environment. I refer to the anti-social instincts which also go to make up the basis of human nature. For example, the primitive passive sympathy makes for group action, while the ego, or the positive self-regarding instinct might prompt one to stand aloof.

Also the anger propensity might very often be traced to be at the back of certain types of anti-social behaviour.

*Fairchild : General Sociology p. 97.
**The italics are mine.

Every propensity can be diverted from socially useful channels of expression into anti-social ones. These are at once the psychological capacities and limitations that are imposed upon man.

Two great factors are to be considered as important when we consider the growth of social bias in instincts. I refer to Education and Environment. These, of course, could be used to do exactly the opposite also. I need but give one example to make this point clear. Look at the education that was given to the children in Italy. Japan militarized her education of the young some twenty years ago. You see the result today. Similarly Germany militarized her educational system.

But these very factors could be harnessed properly and made use of for social good. Customs, religion, socio-moral conduct, all go to make up the environment in which the human individual has to live. Education is directed and controlled environment. I will give one example. Let us suppose that from infancy a proper environment is afforded for the Indian child to grow in. In our days as children the very books we studied in those impressionable ages were full of veiled and sometimes outspoken suggestions that Indians are a race of religious fanatics, who place an imaginary God above all social considerations ; that Hindus and Muslims must ceaselessly fight ; that it was the presence of the British that made our lives secure and such other statements. We were taught to believe that Indians cannot manage the government themselves. I venture to think that the result of this systematic undermining of human personality would not have been a good picture to look at but for the redirecting and energizing influence of some of our great countrymen.

Sublimation of the most of the anti-social propensities would easily be effected if one could control the environment. Social customs, religious observances, moral code, etc., must be remoulded. I do not pretend to give a programme of social reconstruction here, but I venture to suggest that it is possible and necessary.

The individual who can, does sometimes rise above the social level. Sometimes this is done by the susceptibility of such an individual to the influences of a changing world.

Thanks to the facility created by science for rapid communication and travel, no one nation can be psychologically aloof from the others. Some individuals are more susceptible to such influences than others. So what happens is that persons like Mahatmaji, Mussolini and others are produced. If they are successful, they are not crushed by the steam-roller of social opinion, but they effect vitalizing changes in the society itself. But for every Mahatmaji or Mussolini that lives hundreds become victims to social persecution. Society hinders these individual efforts to rise above its own dead level.

Thus there is a clash between group ideology and individual ideology. This inadequacy of group ideology to afford shelter to all these various individual ideologies brings out unrest in the individual. The individual's unrest will be precursor to his maladjustment to the social environment. The unrest first noticed in the individual will gather strength gradually. Society will overlook the defects of maladjustments if they are of a mild variety. But in the individual himself it will be gathering strength and finally the individual will come out and gather a few others like himself, thus giving rise to social unrest.

Social disintegration is also brought about by such group propensities as are opposed to the group ideology, for such propensities of individuals composing a society will be toned down and given a certain bias. They should ordinarily help the group to achieve its own ideal. But sometimes the ideology might be very much above the level of the group or the group propensities might not warrant such an ideology.

It is described by Fa Hien, the famous Chinese pilgrim of the early Christian era that in the kingdom of the Indian Emperor thieving was unknown and no locks were manufactured. Doors of houses were never locked ! The group ideology included perfect and 'practical' respect for other peoples' property. Suppose, for instance, that group propensities were not equally chaste. The result would be disastrous. Or take the case of primitive folk like the Veddas of Ceylon. They are incapable, at present, of rising above a certain psychological limitation. If the group ideology includes their wearing clothes, we may find

that the acquired significance of propensities might make it impossible for the Vedda to reconcile himself to the new rule! The result is social unrest.

Social unrest can be explained from another point of view. The fact that members of a group very often rebel against the institutions like caste, government etc., might merely be the expression of the oedipus complex. The unconscious hatred that the child bears to his father might become transferred to all that stands for authority. The institutionized father is rebelled against. I venture to think that psycho-analysis of some of the reactionaries might reveal the truth that at the bottom of this kind of individual unrest is the oedipus complex. Father is no longer the father who begot him but the father as represented by caste, institution etc. Environment is very often responsible for the rise of the inferiority complex in persons. Say, a nation is taught for 200 years to believe that it is a backward and inferior nation. The national inferiority complex is simply the aggregate of the individual inferiority complexes. The result is that this complex sometimes expresses itself in socially bad ways. A compensatory outlook is adopted and the individual behaves in an anti-social way. The unrest could also be traced to unconscious fear. This, I submit, is probably the greatest impediment to national progress. The enemies of a country know this very well. By subtle propaganda, veiled suggestions the people are made unconsciously to entertain fear. This demon of fear clutching at the throat stifles the peace and sense of social security. And this again results in social unrest on a nation-wide scale. The recent example of some countries of the world at the threat of a world-war makes this point clear.

But there is hope for the nation and society. Just as man's weakness brings about social disintegration so his strength can bring about social solidarity. Some of the essential factors that bring about greater integration in society are education and allied factors of environment. There must be a wholesale revision of our methods and materials of educational practice, e. g., our books etc. The guiding principle here should be the consideration of ultimate human values. This is the task of the philosopher-

king. But as a man of the world and a son of India here and today, I think that our immediate 'ultimate' value should be the independence of India. By that I do not mean narrow nationalism but nationalism for international good.

Society should provide scope for the discharge of pent-up emotional cravings. Programme of social sublimation of group propensities ensures mental peace and quietude. This society or the nation should do. Nation-wide celebration of festivities is an example here.

But what is required after all is a coherence of personalities for the ultimate good of each. Each should help the other in this supreme task. Such a coherence is possible if the exploitation of the psychological weakness of persons is put an end to. Alien political interests in our own unfortunate land have done this. 'Divide and rule' has been the policy of administration - - "Rob Peter to pay Paul". The immediate necessity here in our country is to awaken a sense of oneness and nationality. India should be one.

I cannot do better than conclude this paper with a quotation from William Archer ("India and the Future" quoted by McDougall). "It is not through religion alone that morality can be raised to the temperature at which it passes into our blood and nerve - - into the very fibre of our being. All that is needed now is to kindle a sentiment of loyalty to something higher than our personal or family interests. Patriotism is our inspiring principle. Where are we to find·this in India ? To appeal to the masses on the ground of the world-citizenship would be premature."

"But may not the necessary stimulus be found in that very idea of India - - of Mother - - a Motherland which a timorous and merely selfish policy would have us prescribe as sedition ? The loyalty of the Indian school boy should be encouraged to attach itself not merely to his caste or sect, but to his country. Whether we like it or not, this is what will happen, nay is happening in India. It seems to me that the only true wisdom for the Government is to recognize that the inevitable is also the desirable. "Heil Mother" (Vande Mataram) should no longer be the

watchword of sedition but should be accepted as the inspiring principle of a great effort of national regeneration. It should be the motto, not only of the school room but of the Secretariat."

SOCIAL DISINTEGRATION

BY

H. D. BHATTACHARYYA (CALCUTTA)

————

Dr. Sastry's paper not being very helpful, I have been compelled to jot down my own thoughts on the subject of Social Disintegration without reference to it.

Disintegration may be roughly considered under three heads. In its extreme form it means a complete disruption of a whole and a total dispersion of its elements. In this form the disconnected elements are not supposed to be absorbed by any other unit or again integrated together to form a fresh whole. A stone pulverized or a leaf withered and reduced to dust would come nearest to this description. The bonds of connection among the units of a compound or a gross object are totally severed and the elements are reduced to the condition of what the philosophers call unrelated particulars. It is, of course, open to question whether this extreme condition is ever reached by any organization so long as we regard its dissociated elements as remaining within the same universe ; but here we are talking of conceptual possibilities and not actual realities.

But what more frequently happens is that an element gets dissociated from one group only to get attached to another group. Decomposition is followed by recomposition, disintegration is succeeded by re-integration. In chemical action, for instance, an element may pass over from one compound to another. The food that is ingested gets dissolved in one shape to become a living tissue in an organism. A portion goes out as waste product of metabolism, though still as an integration of an inferior kind, but a substantial portion now forms part of a living organism and is vitally connected with the other living elements of the organism in question.

A third possible meaning of disintegration is partial loss of elements with resultant instability of the remaining portion. The rejection of a portion may sometimes mean strength and stability as when a cankerous growth of a

poisoned part is removed for saving the remaining parts or when a plant is periodically pruned initiating vigorous growth. But often loss may involve partial disintegration and consequent insecurity—a dangerous operation may cripple one for life, for instance.

Let us apply these three meanings to social disintegration. A crowd or an army may be seized with panic and may disperse with each individual shifting for himself as best as he can. If absolute disintegration were to overtake a society, it would mean that everyone would turn a misanthrope and abjure the company of his fellow-men altogether. Such a condition can be attained if every member of the human society were to part company with the rest or retire to the forest and begin to live alone. Hell is supposed by some modern thinkers to be a state where each soul lives in such complete isolation from the rest, chewing the cud of bitter memories engendered by wrongs done while alive on earth. If again the aspirant after spiritual perfection is to roam like a lonely rhinoceros, as directed in Buddhism, and it is believed that for attaining truth social help is unnecessary, then also a section would lose interest in social life.

For total social disintegration we must postulate the non-existence or cessation of all the impulses, instincts, propensities, prepotent reflexes or unconditioned reactions, howsoever they may be called, that draw people together whether for defence or for offence or for enjoyment or for co-operation. Sex by itself need not involve a social existence though it may bring two beings together for the time being ; but maternal care necessary for rearing up a family brings into being social life even where paternal interest is lacking. All social life is ultimately patterned after family life with tenderness as the cementing principle. But men and animals may combine as much in common hate and anger as in love and mutual aid though such combination does not generally outlive the cessation of the motive that inspired it. When we talk of gregariousness as an instinct (and this has not been admitted by some) we have in mind active sympathy with fellow-beings and not common hatred against enemies. Unless men become completely indifferent to the world of living beings and

practise Stoical apathy (*ataraxia*) or unless they become thoroughly disgusted with human association of all kinds or unless they degenerate in mental capacity to such an extent that company altogether fails to be appreciated the ideal of complete social disintegration will not be realized. A certain degree of extroversion and emotional craving is essential for social contact and cohesion. Pure intellectuals and introverts are the least social in their outlook and dealings and are bad companions for lasting associations. Self-centredness is inimical to the formation of groups just as selfishness is a bad adhesive for social co-operation. Still society does not disintegrate because self-interest holds people together even when social feeling is absent. But until complete social apathy is reached and the gradual withdrawal into self reaches its ultimate limit, absolute social disintegration does not set in. What more often happens, however, is that we narrow the circumference of our interests and cling tenaciously to narrow groups—nation, community, society and family, and thus prevent the fall into utter self-centredness with consequent indifference to all social happenings. But negative reaction to human groups may sometimes end in possessing animal pets or feeding the fowls of the air or the fishes of the deep or the herds of the earth ; this can hardly be called forming a society but it certainly serves to banish the feeling of loneliness which every normal individual abhors and avoids. It has been pointed out that a cynic like Diogenes must parade his cynicism in a market place and that misanthropes live in lonely quarters overlooking busy thoroughfares ; so ingrained is the need of social contact in men !

The abiding elements of social integration are need of company and absence of fear. You cannot consort with those who threaten your existence and means of livelihood or endanger in any way the lives and properties of those in whom you are interested. Groups with incompatible or antagonistic interests and inclinations cannot live together and less so those of which one happens to be the prey of another. You cannot have a joint kennel and hen-roost and a collective feast of lambs and lions. The surest way of bringing about social disintegration is to implant the fear motive among the social components or its milder

substitute, social distrust. Perhaps a little further specification is possible. The strong may remain socially aloof because they hate the weak and consider it beneath their dignity to associate with those whom they consider to be inferior to themselves in any way. Racial arrogance, pride of birth, position and wealth, and fancied superiority in any art or achievement may thus operate to breed contempt of the low and the inferior and stand in the way of socializing with all and sundry. They foster the growth of select or exclusive groups and engender social stratification with social disabilities heaped on the down-trodden. In a society where common interests are few and class differences are great the bond of unity is weak and snaps easily. Plato envisaged a Republic in which the common interests would be maximum and modern socialistic states also endeavour to maximize common possessions and ideals. In so far as these prescriptions run counter to strong individulistic tendencies they ultimately fail. But there is no doubt that loyalty to a common ideal is a strong adhesive factor and even when it operates temporarily a loose integration can be brought about through the pursuit of a common objective among those who never agree, among themselves at other times. Wolves hunt in a pack when individual effort at securing prey is likely to prove fruitless, as during winter in Poland, for example, though as soon as the objective is attained they may fall out among themselve during the division of the kill. Common hate against a third party may bring together nations, groups and individuals who at other times are constantly at war with one another or are suspicious of one another's movements. But as a rule hate divides just as love unites ; hence mutual hatred dissolves the cementing principle of social life and causes social disintegration. Thus neutrality (apathy) and hostility (hate) produce the same negative effect on social integration, the difference being that the former does nothing to help its continuance while the latter actively aids it dissolution.

Extreme preoccupation with self has a similar effect. Paranoiacs who live in a world of fancy are supposed to owe their malady to a negation of all love except for self— they love nobody as none is so lovable as self. An elaboration of this self-love takes the form of hatred towards others

coupled with a rationalization that hatred is justified because others hate them, *i.e.*, persecute them, whence their persecution delusion. At a less morbid stage we have narcissism or love of self and preoccupation with self. Failure and disappointment may also produce regression and be responsible for shyness, nervousness and fear to mix with others. Selfishness which is supposed to produce unsociality may, however, be due not only to self-love but also to an exaggerated idea of self-importance or to self-conceit. A refusal to subordinate self-interest to social good, if universalized, would mean an end of social existence altogether. But as this attitude carries its own corrective within itself (inasmuch as absolute isolation is attended with considerable personal risk), it cannot be pushed to its extreme limit. So what happens is that the grudging concession to other's needs takes the grace out of social consideration and materially weakens the social tie. Without sympathy, generosity, social consideration and sacrifice social solidarity cannot be effectively won or maintained. If individual greed and sectional interest gain the upper hand in any society or state, difference, disunity and discord are inevitable.

The second type of disintegration is due to the impact of an alien culture. It may so happen that different types of culture, widely separated from each other in space at the time of their origin, meet in course of their expansion. If the contact is, or becomes, friendly, there is often a reciprocal interchange of ideas and, following upon it, unconscious imbibing of each other's elements or even conscious imitation of the attractive features of each other. So long as the assimilated ideas, practices and institutions can be harmonized with existing beliefs and social habits, the degree of reorientation and readjustment made by each is small. The modes of diet and dress of two cultures may, for instance, be approximated to each other to some extent without disturbing social peace in either community. Where the communities are unequally advanced, the current of borrowing flows stronger in one direction than in another —the more backward community doing the greater borrowing to add to its poor stock of ideas and practices. The borrowed materials serve to enlarge or embellish an original

incomplete or ungainly culture-pattern.

Difficulty arises when the ideologies of the contending cultures are different and foreign elements cannot be borrowed without antagonizing or jettisoning some existing beliefs, practices and institutions. A society that refuses to face new issues soon alienates its thinking section and runs the risk of partial disintegration, while a violent break with ancient tradition is distasteful to the more conservative section who threaten to break away from the innovators and thus partially disintegrate society. How to strike the golden mean between conservatism and progress has always troubled all societies that are progressive in their outlook, but are not willing to sever all connection with the past. Ancestral tradition has a greater hold on some sections and these manage to withstand the onslaught of invading ideas and cling to old beliefs on account of mental inertia or horror of the novel and the unknown, or by allegorizing and rationalizing old customs and outworn creeds, or through sheer bigotry and blind faith or even conscious obstinacy. Those whom a particular social system benefits by the conferment of status or privilege or wealth have a material motive in ignoring and opposing the intrusion of disturbing ideas. But those who are socially depressed and nurture a grievance against the social system which makes a discrimination between class and class, and man and man, are more easily won over to new beliefs and institutions and have less hesitation in discarding their old allegiance and deserting an unkind social system.

But all sociological factors act through psychological factors. It is not mere impact of foreign culture that dislodges a section from the main social body : discontent must mount up against the established system either due to spontaneous development of a critical and hostile attitude or on account of the sedulous preaching of anti-social ideas by outside agencies interested in the defection of a section from the main social organization. Missionary propaganda has been responsible in this way for the partial breaking up of many social systems. Social alluvion and diluvion are a constant feature of all civilizations that are not isolated, specially where primitive modes of thought and practice and unjust social laws jostle with attractive

features and high philosophies. Thus Hindu society lost a good slice due to defection of its members through conversion to Christianity and Islam just as, conversely, it gained by accretion lower cultural units which were attracted by its showy rituals, lovely images and refined manners. The Jews absorbed the *gerim* or sojourners but lost the Christian section from its fold. The fear motive has also often played a part in social defections. Forcible conversion is not yet an outworn method of winning converts. Whether the threat takes the form of damnation in the other world or danger and disability in this, men have often been obliged to change their faith to escape undue interference with their religious practices and to save their life and property and the honour of their women-folk. Here there is no question of revolt, revulsion of feeling or intellectual dissatisfaction with an imperfect mode of social life. The seceding group has been carried away not by inner conviction but by external force. Society has not spontaneously burst but it has been hammered to pieces by an overpowering outside agency. Thus the forcible transfer of Negroes from Africa to America was responsible for their conversion to Christianity and change in their social ideal and outlook. The sword of Islam was a partial, if not potent, cause in the breaking up of the Zoroastrian social system in Iran and the Brahmanical social structure in some parts of India. It is to combat this fear motive and escape compulsory disintegration that each Church is anxious to secure or develop a protecting state. However perfect the principles might be and however devoted the members might be to a particular social system, there is always the risk that moral courage will yield to persistent oppression and threat to life and honour and that social disintegration will follow.

But missionary propaganda and political oppression are not designed to disintegrate only. The compotent units do not become scattered as unrelated particulars : they become incorporated in the attacking or aggressive system. A slice passes over from one social system to another and what is disintegrated from one becomes re-integrated with another. Change of religion has almost invariably this disturbing effect on social life : voluntary associations of

members of different communities do not have any abiding social value as all alliances having a bearing on family life are still controlled by the religious beliefs of the parties concerned. The man-to-man relationship is still a far-off ideal and so an individual dissociated from one group has to enter immediately another group. Possibly for some time the old associations serve to influence life and conduct and continue old traditions, and sometimes the absorbed section succeeds in profoundly modifying the absorbing system ; but time gradually effaces the traces of past associations and obliterates the distinction between the original and the absorbed group. The new converts may sometimes turn out to be zealous champions of their new faith and even turn aggressors themselves and attack their old institution to win more converts and further weaken their erstwhile society. This is done as much in conscious furtherance of the new creed as in unconscious desire to drag in as many old associates as possible into the new fold in order to renew the warmth and intimacy of old association and to justify one's own conversion to the new faith. Where the conversion has been forcible there may also lurk a spirit of vengeance against the old society which failed to prevent conversion through weakness or indifference or fear and did not possess the machinery of reconversion with complete restoration of old status in society.

But since the principle of conversion has been conceded in all civilized societies recognizing the freedom of the individual to accept a way of life which is intellectually most satisfying to him (we are excepting here those religious systems which mete out death to the apostate and the unbeliever), defection from one creed means adherence to another. So those who are alienated from one social system get immediately affiliated to another and thus while weakening one system, they strengthen another at the same time. A system that has closed its door to all new admissions can only lose and not gain adherents and it can maintain its strength only by increase of population within the social group. In such a system a small defection may often pass unnoticed, but a large scale desertion serves not only to discredit it but also to disrupt it in the

long run. No hard and fast rule can be laid down about the minimum number that any social group must possess to form a living unit ; but there is no doubt that number brings confidence and strength and defection causes misgiving and weakness. But number as such is not always a sign of strength. A motely crowd or an unorganized mass makes a very loose structure and tends to lose its stability and break up very quickly when conflict of class interests makes its appearance. Some kind of homogeneity, that will not, however, ignore the need of diversity and division of labour, is a powerful antidote against social disintegration. Homogeneity must not amount to perfect equality, for a society with its higher and lower occupations demands the existence of workers and leaders, thinkers and manual labourers, and these different classes must be gifted with diverse aptitudes and attitudes, some being submissive and others domineering. Diversity of social occupation will inevitably lead to some kind of social stratification ; but how far classes have conflicting interests, what machinery exists to adjust class interests and solve class rivalries and antagonisms, and whether social partitions are rigid or movable, *i.e.*, whether the prospect of rising in the scale of social values by dint of personal merit and enterprise is closed or open, are material factors in the determination of the possibility of social amity and understanding. So long as class consciousness remains dormant and class claims do not become blatant due to absence of education, wealth and energy in the lower strata of society, the weakness in the social structure remains undetected. But when ideas are put into the head of the submerged sections that through no fault of theirs they are suffering from age-long injustice and disabilities of diverse kinds a spirit of revolt is engendered among them, and unless their legitimate aspirations are fulfilled, galling wrongs removed and equality in some social spheres is conceded, there is every possibility that there would be a social explosion or a largescale withdrawal of the lower classes from the social fold with consequent upsetting of social balance and danger to social security. People in the periphery of a social structure are sooner knocked off than those that form, as it were, the core or nucleus. Every society has a greater or less mass

of loosely organized units owing nominal allegiance to the social group and professing its principles and following its practices in an ignorant and half-hearted manner. Neglect, inconvenience and oppression serve to detach them from the central group and incline them to transfer their allegiance to an alien culture-group. Social stratification based on principles that hurt the honour or prospect of any class permanently is fruitful of discord when class consciousness is fully developed and the humiliating position is brought home to the mind of the group affected. Unless the social philosophy behind the classification is implicitly accepted the gradation becomes galling and ends either in social revolution followed by a more acceptable regrouping of social components or in social disintegration due to large-scale desertion from the social rank.

But the greatest disruptive force is growth of education. No society is born perfect like Athene from the head of Zeus and therefore every advance in enlightenment brings into the focus of social consciousness the existence of crude beliefs and cruel practices, the mythical character of much class supremacy and the superstitious nature of much class dominance. A critical study of ancient literature reveals much fraud perpetrated to establish and perpetuate class differences, and the extension of democratic ideas tends to challenge the continuation of sectional privileges. Society suffers from a spontaneous disintegration when the spread of education brings in its train dissatisfaction with existing institutions and ideas with no prospect of improving matters by peaceful means because of the stupidity or the cupidity of the privileged classes. It often happens that the classes adversely affected by the existence of social inequality do not feel their inferiority or inconvenience and develop a spirit of protest. It is the better minds of the higher classes, imbued with a spirit of equality and sense of social justice, that often rouse the mass consciousness in this regard through their own idea of social valuation. Then the disappearance of many social taboos and the emancipation of the submerged classes go hand in hand and men ultimately come to realise that

> "Rank is but the guinea stamp,
> A man is a man for a'that."

We come ultimately to the conclusion that is is detrimental to social solidarity that there should remain within society a large mass of disaffected people not reconciled to the position assigned to them in the social scale. Smarting under a sense of social wrong and meditating vengeance for social injustice, they provide a readily inflammable material for social convulsion. The social machinery must provide safety-valves for letting out pent-up anger against wrong so that minor inconveniences might be immediately ventilated and removed and not develop into major discontents with disastrous results. Loyalty to the past ideals of the race is difficult to maintain when the actual social position is intolerably oppressive just as, conversely, allegiance to the real is difficult to continue when there is a disquieting gap between the glowing ideal and the disappointing actual of social existence. Ignorance may be a bliss to an individual, but it is not always possible to prevent any section of society from pursuing the foolish path of wisdom and clamouring at first for protection, then for justice and lastly for equality. Some sections secede because the necessary social protection is not forthcoming ; some others withdraw when social justice is denied to them ; the advanced few leave society because social equality is not obtainable. Timely concession is a sovereign remedy for much social ill ; very often it is denied under the mistaken impression that all social prescriptions are equally sacrosanct and must be maintained intact at all costs. It should not be forgotten that we no longer live in the age of tribal and totemistic culture when common descent gave equal privileges to the members of a social group. Due to historical reasons modern societies have incorporated divergent racial stocks and culture groups within themselves at different times and no community can be said to have achieved a complete fusion of the included materials, though some have done better than others in this respect.

It may conceivably happen that society is faced with the problem of dealing with a few irreconcilable malcontents who are determined to foment social trouble without any idea of improving social conditions. Society would be well advised to sack them in the interest of social peace and harmony just as outlaws have to be hunted down to avoid threat to person and property. A cankerous growth

is best removed surgically in time. This method of dealing with social recalcitrants is at the root of all ostracism and proscription. Just as criminals have to be segregated and detained in protective custody, so also to prevent disruption by force society is sometimes obliged to thrust out an offending section from the body politic in the interest of social security and social concord. Similarly, the voluntary desertion of those who have ceased to be loyal to a social institution is not always a calamity, for a social structure is not materially affected by minor defections, specially when these are not due to any fault of the social system but proceed from a fancied sense of social wrong or sheer perversity of character. But where the social rebels are many and desertions frequent, there it is foolish to maintain a complacent attitude instead of trying to restore social equilibrium and remove the cause of social unrest and opposition. Then it becomes incumbent upon the thinking section of the community to ponder coolly over the imperfections responsible for the social trouble and to rethink the basic philosophy of life from which the social irritation and rebellion follow as corollaries. The sooner it is recognized that society was made for man and not man for society the greater chance there is that timely steps would be taken to prevent disruption. After all, it is functional continuity and not structural identity that matters in social continuance. A machine cannot adjust itself to changing circumstances, but a living organism can within certain limits orient itself to the forces that are brought to bear upon it. So long as society retains its vitality it is able to withstand and absorb shocks ; but when it loses the resilience of life and begins to accumulate inelastic tissues it is threatened with social upheaval, if not also with social destruction. Conservatism is a good brake to prevent precipitate changes and thus to secure continuity of social traditions ; but it is a bad clog to social adjustment and social progress and is a dangerous enemy of social survival. Mobility of organization and not immobility of structure is what keeps societies alive. A society that fails to respond to changing world conditions at a satisfactory rate and to adjust its philosophy to its new experience is destined to disintegrate and dissolve, or at least to dwindle in importance.

SOCIAL DISINTEGRATION

By

DR. ADHAR CHANDRA DAS (CALCUTTA)

The term "disintegration" in its ordinary acceptation means the breaking up of a whole or the lack of cohesion among the parts of a whole. A whole may crumble under some causes either working from within itself or operating upon it from outside. A human organism, for example, may be destroyed by an accident or an explosive. It may be destroyed also by some other cause working either from within it or from without. "Social distintegration" must then mean the disruption of the social whole. And society as a whole, like any other thing, may be destroyed by causes natural or other. Earth-quake, volcanic eruption, drought, etc., disturb and tend to disrupt social organization. Political feuds, communal strife, and war are certainly some of the potent factors that make for social disintegration. All these are broad facts, and it is quite easy to understand them and their working. History furnishes ample evidence for the above statement. Even to-day we are witnessing on all hands how communalism, race-hatred and political feuds can work up to a crisis, social and other. I therefore refrain from discussing them all. I just address myself to the question of the forces and factors that work within the social whole and tend to annihilate it.

Here there is no need for me to discuss the origin of society. Whatever might be the cause of the primitive social organization, we may safely say that the earliest society was just a simple association of a number of individuals. They must have been content with what they got and procured from their surroundings. In the pre-social stage of life, however, every individual had to acquire his food-supply by his own efforts. So almost the whole of his energy was engaged in the effort to maintain himself, and little was left to play in any new direction. The formation of social organization, particularly the development of the secondary means of subsistence at last brought some relief to the individuals. Through co-operatien and corporate life they now had some surplus energy. Aud one of the effects of the surplus energy was an increase in the population. The population increased

and increased; and things came to such a pass that the original homes of peoples proved too small for their vast and ever-increasing number. A remedy forthwith began to work. The pressure on the resources of a place was, in the long run, relieved by a gradual dispersion of the surplus population. The dispersion was evidently caused by a factor working within the social whole. It was immediately an increase population and ultimately some surplus energy in the individuals. But the dispersion under these conditions was no social disintegration. It did not even affect the social aggregation. On the contrary, the dispersion itself served as an effective measure against the causes that threatened the social structure. All this is true not only of primitive societies, but also of the modern. Surplus population is the main determining factor in colonization. Some may argue that the real cause of colonization is greed for terri-tory. That this so in some cases nobody can deny. We should not, however, confuse between the social and the political points of view in this connection. Colonization at the political level indeed points to greed for territory or to an imperialistic policy. But at the social level it points only to a surplus population. Nevertheless, at a developed stage of civilization where social phenomena and political facts react upon each other it is hard to separate the two sides of the question of colonization. For example, just before the last World War the Italians under Mussolini fell upon Abyssinia, and their avowed object was to gain some territory for the surplus population of Italy, although they had also a secret urge to avenge Adowa where they had suffer-ed a crushing defeat in a clash with the Abyssinians. Here the determing factor was both social and political. Never-theless, if we can look back towards the beginning of coloni-zation, we cannot fail to notice the all-importance of surplus population. Man is by nature conservative He has an innate tendency to stick to the society and the surroundings to which he is born. It is therefore natural that a person never leaves his home and homeland for good unless he is compelled .to do so by the circumstances around him. Further, colonization in a particular country presupposes mass migration from another. We cannot possibly explain any mass migration simply by

individual choice. If groups of men leave their motherland
to settle down in another territory, they are obviously
driven to this course by the lack of suitable land and ad-
equate food-supply. It was certainly in this way that
the colonization of America, Africa, Australia and
the islands of the Pacific Ocean started. And it
was later that colonization took a political veneer, and
greed for territory took the place of surplus population
and the want of suitable land. At all events, colonization
is not our theme. I have referred to it only to show that
dispersion of individuals or groups of individuals under the
pressure of an ever-increasing surplus population cannot
lead to social disintegration. The reason is two-fold : first, the
dispersion in question has, as a rule, a healthy reaction upon
the social whole in which it takes place and makes for the
solidarity of the organization; secondly, the dispersion leads
to a fresh social association. The dispersed individuals
again settle down in a new territory and form a congre-
gation.

It is necessary to avoid another confusion, viz,, between
a mobile society and a disintegrated one. A society is
generally settled in a geographical area and depends upon
certain topographical conditions. It is true to say that to
change the environment of a society is to change it alto-
gether. But there is such a thing as mobile society. A
mobile society is one which grows rather independently of
any fixed physical background. A nomadic society is, for
instance, all mobile. It moves from place to place with
its organization in tact. There the individuals as well as
the families retain the social relations with one another all
through, though they change the place of their settlement
from time to time. A nomadic society is, in short, a floating
one. It passes with its structure from place to place and from
one territory to another. Yet it shows no sign of social
disintegration. A social whole in its disintegrated state
is reduced to mere individuals.   Each individual in
a disintegrated society is, of course, a unit of self-con-
scious existence. But he ceases to be a person or at least,
cannot realize his personality. For the sense of personality
seems, in the ultimate analysis, to be a social product; and
there can be no realization of personality outside social life,

that is to say, except in so far as personality somehow comes to be recognized as a common end. From this point of view, the nomads, though they are not rooted to a land, are very much persons, not mere fragments. A nomadic society, in fact, points to the truth that society is more a matter of mind than of physical environment. Anyway, we must keep clearly in view the distinction between a mobile society and a disintegrated one.

Now let us take up the question of social disintegration resulting from internal causes. The internal causes of social disintegration are those that work within the society itself. They work in a subtle way and so need careful consideratien. Here I prefer to begin by an analysis of the nature of social life. Whatever be the original impulse that accounts for social life or association, there is no gainsaying the fact that the individuals in a developed society possess a common language, a common stock of ideas, ideals, beliefs, feelings, customs and practices. The sense of a common end and a common good permeates them all. Social development, then, hinges upon the deepening of the sense of the kindred nature and of the common good in the social individuals. Moreover, a society, being an association of minds, is a living whole. It possesses will and is guided by conscious ideals. It develops by evolving out of itself new ideals and by absorbing new ideas. Here we are not concerned with the truth or falsity of such ideas; for an idea, though false, may be adopted by a social whole. For instance, the purity of the German race or Nordic blood is a myth; yet, as we know, Hitler and his followers hugged this idea, and it was this idea that eventully brought ruin to many countries of Europe including Germany. To turn to ourselves. India is now divided into two Dominions, and it is admitted on all hands that the division was inspired by an idea that is definitely false. The untold misery which people in some parts of India and Pakistan suffered and are still suffering was caused by this false idea. Be that as it may, a new idea or ideology finds ready acceptance with the social mind, if it is considered conducive to the common end which is the determinant of social life. Individuals form themselves into a social association and seek to realize themselves as persons through the medium of the association. Personality is the common end to them. It is

this that at botton inspires the corporate life they live. To prove it I have not to go far afield. I appeal to our immediate sense of our being, to the sense of personality each of us possesses. Everyone of us is conscious of himself as an end in himself and never thinks himself as a means. Therefore, the test of the value of social facts is whether they help towards achieving the social ideal,- the common end which social life postulates.

The causes that work up to social disintegration can be put under three distinct heads, namely, (a) ideological reaction upon social life, (b) exploitation, (c) class-conflict.

(a) Ideological reaction takes different forms. It may proceed from a distinctive philosophical point of view. The materialist theory of the universe, for instance, nullifies all value. If matter is the ultimate stuff of everything including mind or consciousness, we cannot possibly discern any purpose behind human activities, and all human being would come to be regarded as automata. To the materialist, society is a mere aggregation of some organisms, and with him "responsibility", "duty" and "ideal" are meaningless terms. So if materialistic ideas come to dominate the minds of the people, the result would be complete chaos, moral as well as social. In that case social life would be considered artificial and society a drag on men. As the materialists seek to explain away the fact of personality upon which the fabric of social life rests, the influence of materialism is calculated to undermine society.

Another kind of ideological reaction is associated with psychologism. Here I employ the term "psychologism" in a restricted sense. I take it to mean a theory that has been developed in the attempt to explain everything in human culture in terms of a definite psychological fact. Freud, for instance, finds in the sex-instinct the source of all that we have so far achieved through social life. Art, literature and religion are the best among the social products. It is society that makes all these possible. Freud perhaps agrees on this point. Nevertheless, he maintains that each of these is an expression of perverted sex-energy. According to him, sex is the chief motive force in us, and further all energy in us is, in the ultimate analysis, sexual. Freud tells us that

the repression of the sex-impulse leads to neurosis. It is true that he makes overmuch of sex. Yet he shows by psycho-analysis how repressed sex-desire, and, for that matter, the pent-up sex-energy can be diverted to healthy channels. The value of Freud's researches is immense and his contribution to psycho-therapeutics is unique. None-the-less, we can say without fear of contradiction that he is responsible for a new ideology. This ideology draws upon the concept of repression and upon all that it implies, and encourages the de-sociali-zation of sex-relations. Freudism has naturally an appeal for gullible young men and women. The libertines and the debauch receive from him something of a sanction against society where sex-life is regulated and controlled. Freudism, in short, rouses the animal in man. The sex-ideology, if we may so call it, by its over-emphasis on sex tends to deflect people from the path of morality and so makes for social chaos. In the light of this ideology sex-morality has no intrinsic value and is only a matter of internal censorship, which in its turn relates to some old habits. We are told that the social structure rests upon the repression of the sex-impulse and that moral codes and social customs have made us abnormal to a degree. And one may be led to carry the impression that the sooner we sink to the sub-social life of instincts the better for us all. Man is after all rational. But rationality and animality are not two qualities in man apart from each other. Rationality, in fact, represents a peculiar embodiment of animality itself. So in rational life animality functions as regulated and controlled. Rational life is possible only in society in which institutions are erec-ted with the object of regulating instincts. Therefore; Freudian ideology based on Freudism not only takes away the sanctity from all social relations, but cuts at the very foundation of society by giving a sanction in favour of the anti-social.

An ideological reaction is often occasioned by a distor-ted view of history. We can make an approach to history from more than one point of view. There are in fact different theories regarding history. But any and every theory of history cannot produce an ideology. A theory is apt to inspire an ideology when it touches a vital part or phase of our life. That is the main point about the formation

of an ideology. There is one definite philosophy of history, the economic theory propounded by Marx, which has, I think, provided us with a novel ideology. This ideology is based · upon the economic interpretation of things, political, social and other. The economic aspect of our life is admittedly very vital to us. Many of us presumably think that economic adjustment is the be-all and end-all of life. Thus with some the economic aspect of our life becomes an obsession. They, being blind to the organic relationship between the different aspects of human life, make much of the economic and seek to explain society solely in terms of the economic. Their main thesis is that, if individuals become economically independent, there would be no need for society or the state as it stands to-day. The millennium would come, it is contended, through changes in the technique of production and distribution. There is undoubtedly a measure of truth in this view. But people generally fail to recognize it. They only fix upon the weak points of Marx's theory, and they do so with a view to gaining support for their distorted view of life and society. It is verily economic dependence that brings, we are told, individuals together and puts them into groups. The origin of society is too long a story to be related here. I may only indicate how the economic theory at its worst affects our social outlook. An analysis of one single question will make my point clear. According to the Marxists, the family, for instance, which is a social group, is based upon conditions that are purely economic. Therein the individuals hang together, because they require their mutual help in supporting themselves. It is economic helplessness, that is to say, that prevents especially the younger members from breaking away from their family. Everyone of us knows too well what a family is like and on what it is based. We cannot persuade ourselves to accept the position that the economic is the sole determinant there, even though we admit that the economic has a role to play in every human situation. However, here we are not concerned with the falsity of this or that theory. Our only concern here is to see how exactly an ideology starts and how adversely it can affect social life. Now if an ideology which derives itself from an over-emphasis upon the economic, works in the minds of the people, it must lead to

degradation. The relationship between husband and wife, for instance, is naturally determined by love, and that between parents and children is based on blood. If the economic ideology is allowed to prevail in this respect, it would profane sacred feelings like filial piety and parental love. The consequences of the economic ideology would thus be far-reaching. It would destroy all deeper values of life and, infact, vulgarize the social mind by making economic adjustment the supreme social ideal. All this is bad enough. But if the sex-ideology is dovetailed with the economic and if they, in their combination, be allowed to infiltrate into the social strata, they would bring disaster to society. I cannot, in this connection, help referring to the social custom prevailing in some parts of India known as the dowry system.

It is a pity that even educated young men in this country sometimes look upon marriage as the source of a decent income. With them the beauty and accomplishments of the girl to choose do not count so much. In marrying a girl the prospect of an economic gain is the major consideration with them. A married girl is often subjected to inhuman torture only because her parents fail to pay the stipulated sum to their son-in-law or to his party. On the other hand, in certain lower classes a girl is, generally speaking, sold to the highest bidder or given away for a paltry sum in the name of marriage. This shows how greed for money degrades and de-humanizes man. The philistines cannot think that love is no marketable commodity. They are blinded by passion for gain and cannot see that love cannot be bought or sold, but be given spontaneously and of one's free will. It is, however, far from me to say that Marx or his followers try deliberately to debase our social consciousness in such manner. Yet I cannot help feeling that the Marxist ideology, however well-intentioned, tends to annul major social values and to make confusion worse confounded.

Let me now deal with another type of ideological reaction which is purely personal and is, in fact, based upon ignorance of the subtle psychological and ethical background of the traditional social institutions. Some are of opinion that social institutions are all artificial fabrications that served the purposes of some evil geniuses who led their

people in the past. They denounce marriage, for instance, as legal prostitution and regard parenthood as an uncongenial convention. They look askance at religion and take religious practices and ceremonies to be the means of livelihood of the idle priestly class, and so on. Such an attitude is obviously inspired by certain obsessions and egoistic tendencies, or by the basic needs exaggerated by the egoistic impulse. It is verily these that make criminals of men. There is, of course, a distinction between a criminal and an individual who is merely anti-social. One may be anti-social, but not necessarily a criminal, though a criminal is thoroughly antisocial. While an individual who is merely anti-social just toys with his new-fangled ideas, a criminal invariably translates his evil tendencies into actions. The difference between them is, however, much narrowed when the former embarks upon a propaganda in behalf of his subversive ideas. Anti-social ideas become criminal in the full sense as soon as they begin to influence the people in their behaviour.

What then, it may be asked, about social reformers ? To all appearance they militate against the time-honoured institutions and customs of society. Certainly at first they appear to be anti-social, even criminals. It is a commonplace of history that many a creative genius in the past suffered for their selfless efforts to introduce innovations into the structure of society. As I have already said, man is by nature conservative ; there is a tendency in him to stick to old ideas and old habits. And this often creates in him a frenzy to oppose everything new and unfamiliar. It is the love of the old and the out-worn that makes him blind to the line of demarcation between criminals and social reformers. Whereas a criminal is always goaded by extremely selfish and sordid ideas and interests, a reformer is guided by his desire to do good to his fellow-beings. He tries to re-orient the social structure and to rid it of all ills. He takes infinite pain, even risks his life in his attempt to gain his noble end. He is guided solely by the hope for a better social order, and wants to destroy only to construct. That is the test by which we can well distinguish a reformer from a criminal. However, the role of the reformer is not our subject. I touch on it only to clear up a confusion.

Now to revert to my point. I have discussed above the tendencies that drive man towards sub-social life. It is now well to note that there are in man some super-social tendencies also. These tendencies get re-inforced by some religious teachings. Religion is after all a way of life, and not simply a creed. In religious life we seek communion with the deity. Some religions, however, make the deity far too transcendent. Some again much humanize him. Whatever be the conceptions of the deity or the supreme being in the different religions, it is often insisted that religious truths cannot be realized through ordinary social life which is too profane for the purpose. So people intent on spiritual values or truths are often urged to leave society and to take to an altogether new mode of life in order to rise to a higher level of existence. As is well-known, it was in this way that monastic orders under some religions arose in the past.

It was perhaps Buddha who introduced monasticism in India. He was a master yogi and insisted that the ultimate state of bliss was to be attained as the culmination of a yogic discipline. Buddha taught that life was full of suffering and that suffering was caused by insatiable desires on the part of men. So to escape suffering was to turn away from the life of desires which ordinary people live in society. Such ideas inspired the organization of monastic life in the lifetime of Buddha and insured its continuance after his death. A negative attitude, somewhat similar to this, towards wordly life marked the beginning of the Christian Church. Jesus Christ asked his disciples to renounce the world, to leave their families and to follow him. He told them that there was no good in the cravings of the flesh and that they should leave the life of the body and enter the life of the spirit. The words of Jesus were clear enough, and his followers, on his death, formed themselves into an association with an utterly negative attitude towards wordly life. They put a permanent ban on sex-life and took the vow of celibacy. Men and women who believed in Jesus were grimly determined to un-sex themselves. Thus many men became monks and many women nuns. It was in this way that the foundation of the Christian Church was laid. It is well known how the Church was at first conceived as a divine organization all apart from, and above, society and the state. The idea

was gradually borne in upon the people that they had to renounce worldly life if they ever wanted to enter the Kingdom of God. This attitude was obviously based upon a depreciation of social values and so reacted prejudicially up on the social sense of the people concerned. The early Christians no doubt treated the social as antithetical to the religious. In some quarters, even to-day, religious truths and spiritual values are taken to be incompatible with social life. Many under this impression leave their hearth and home and take to flesh-mortification as a means of self-realization. Some again settle down in monasteries which they consider the proper place for spiritual culture. The opposition that is thus set up between social and spiritual life naturally has a harmful effect upon the individual minds. It makes them feel that it is not much worthwhile to live the ordinary life. And if everybody thinks in this manner, it would lessen in him the sense of social value and, consequently, the cohesion among the individuals. This is bad enough. But worse would be the belief that the sooner we get out of society, the nearer to the Truth we are. There is, of course, some justification for one's renouncing the world on account of one's absolute dispassion. But one would thereby set an example which is likely to be wrongly utilized. Physical or mental weakness or idleness is indeed apt to simulate dispassion. A person who renounces the world in the name of religion or a spiritual adventure, may sometimes be found to have left the way of the ordinary life only because it proves too much for him, or because he cannot stand up to it. He may be under the impression that it is more comfortable to live in monasteries or on charity than to live in the open society. Or it may be that he takes to *sannyasa* because he finds that ashes, matted hair, and a pair of tongs bring to him more respect, sometimes a greater fortune, than he can earn by a life-long struggle. Thus we see that renunciation, indicative of high spiritual perfection as it is, has, generally speaking, a very unhealthy reaction upon society. It perverts the social sense in many minds and provides ample scope for the development of an ideology which may have other far-reaching consequences. In ancient India *sannyasa*—absolute renunciation—was conceived as the last stage of life, although provision was made for early renunciation as well. But the

idea was that renunciation was to be preceded by dispassion, which was regarded as the fruition of social life. It seems however that at a later stage of India's history, for some reason or the other, renunciation became a craze in the society and inspired something of an ideology we are just considering. The people thought that to renounce the world was a great ideal to achieve. They did not so much mind the fact that dispassion related more to an inner attitude than to an outer act. Sri Krishna in the *Bhagwat-Gita* therefore warns Arjuna against the wrong course of mere renunciation of work. *Na ca samnyasanateba siddhim samadhigacchati*. No one attains to perfection by giving up action. Sri Krishna persuades Arjuna to follow the path of work, appropriate to his station in life, and not to set a bad example before society by renouncing work. He teaches Arjuna the fundamental principle of mass psychology which is: whatever is done by a superior person is followed by his inferiors. So even those who have no earthly desires and are ruled by absolute dispassion should remain in society, doing their normal work in order to maintain the integrity of society - *lokasamgraham.*

Let me now take up the problem of exploitation. "Exploitation" is a much abused term. It imports one of the fundamental ideas that are of vital importance with the followers of Marx. Yet the term is often indiscriminately used. I for my part employ it with a precise meaning. With me it just means taking undue advantage of a person to gain one's end. It does not necessarily entail the notion of inferiority as against that of superiority, or the notion of penury as against that of wealth. We generally say that it is the rich who exploit the poor. That it is so nobody can question. Sometimes, however, the facts are the other way round. The poor themselves very often exploit the rich. The weak also sometimes enjoy at the expense of the strong. It is common knowledge that the poor serve the rich in many ways and get money in exchange for their labour. But their service itself cannot be construed into a case of exploitation ; for they do their work for profit and of their free will. And so long as they are not coerced into their work, it cannot be said that they are exploited in any way. The main fact about exploitation is then coercion. This implies

that in the situation of exploitation in the strict sense some person or persons are not treated as true persons, that is, as ends in themselves, but only as means for the furtherance of one's ends. For example, there are many in society who are not physically fit for manual work, and they invariably engage labour for their domestic work and also for some work outside their homes. Now the domestic servants or the day-labourers they may employ from time to time, may well exploit them. The former may take advantage of the fact that they are indispensable to the latter and demand wages judged unreasonable in the light of their standard and cost of living. Such acts on the part of the employees are as reprehensible as those to which the employers may resort when they seek to press for a fixed or abnormally low rate of pay in view of the fact that the employees have not any immediate alternative means of livelihood to fall back upon in the event of their dismissal. It is then not far wrong to say that the motive force behind modern strikes is coercion. Sometimes, however, strikes are quite legitimate. They are legitimate only in cases where the rights of bare subsistence of the employees are not conceded by the employers. Nevertheless, strikes are often misused and in such cases the principle adopted is essentially anti-social. Here I am not to catalogue the cases in which exploitation occurs. I am only to show how exploitation works as a disruptive force. I have indicated above what precisely the term "exploitation" means. Let me now show in rough outline how exploitation in any form works against social life. Exploitation, involving as it does coercion, is bound to cause ill-feelings between the individuals who exploit and those who are exploited. And the ill-feelings thus caused must in the end lead to conflicts. Any conflict between one individual and another or between one group and another is an anti-social fact. Exploitation, in short, outrages our sense of personality and diminishes in our eyes the value of the exploited as objective ends. Between the exploiter and the exploited there develop such feelings that they forget altogether that they are parts of the same whole which sustains them all. They in their passions forget that they have a common end which they can realize only through mutual help, co-operation and sympathy.

This brings us to the question of class-conflict and caste. There are different kinds of classes, and they are formed in different ways. But they have certain common fundamental features. The most important of these is that they are each more or less inspired by some common end or a community of interest. Any society, therefore, is the meeting-point of a number of common interests. That being so, if a conflict ever occur between one class and another, it would react upon the social whole far more prejudicially than any conflict between one individual and another. And if all the classes ever come to clash with one another, the fabric of social life would forthwith come to pieces. Let me discuss here one kind of class in some detail. Classes of individuals are formed for some purposes that are formulated under the urge of life, and the purposes are as fluid as life itself. Castes, viewed in their true perspective, are then only petrified classes. They as classes most probably served the purposes which called them into being in the past. But there is obviously no use for them now. Nevertheless, they very much exist at the present time and hinder social life instead of helping it in its progress. The castes are after all exclusive classes, and some are much too exclusive. In consequence, their social feelings, such as sympathy and fellow-feeling, remain confined to their small coteries. All this inevitably leads to communalism. Communalism is not necessarily a matter affecting the Hindus and the Muslims only. Communalism can well be conceived as opposition between the exclusive castes. Now it is through marriage that the most intimate social relationship between individuals or groups is established. The factor next in importance in this respect is inter-dining. For example, a large section of the population in the Hindu fold is regarded as untouchables. Persons belonging to the so-called upper classes do not take even water from the hands of the pariahs. The idea is that their touch makes water foul, and that the water thus fouled, if taken, would degrade the upper-class people who consider themselves highly spiritual. The evil effects of the exclusive castes we are witnessing on all sides at the present time. The caste system has still kept us—Hindus divided among ourselves. It is wrong to say that the

Scheduled Caste is a creation of the British. We are bound to admit that the Scheduled Caste is our own creation, and it was in point of fact created long ago.   The British Government only recognized it when they had a political use for it.   Many of the centrifugal forces that are at work within the present-day Hindu society proceed from the caste-mindedness of the enlightened orthodox.   Rammohan Roy and later Swami Vivekananda pointed out the risks in which the evils of our society would involve us. Mahatma Gandhi has been in his own way fighting these forces for long years.   The main point that I wish to make in this connection is that the social classes must be kept fluid and should not be allowed to harden into castes. Castes are really a dead-weight on society. In other countries there may not be castes in our sense of the term. But nowhere is society to be found without class distinctions. Good care should be taken that the classes in society properly work and avoid conflicts which more than anything else bring ruin to social life.

In conclusion I have to confess that I fail to do justice to the theme under consideration in the few pages that make up this paper. It ought to be clear that I have discussed the problem of social disintegration only in rough outline. I, however, think that I have touched on some points worthy of consideration in any analysis of the cause or causes of social disintegration.

CRITERION OF REALITY

By

KALIDAS BHATTACHARYA (CALCUTTA)

To the *unreflective* mind the real is that perceived content which is not rejected, both *perceivedness* and *unrejectedness* somehow determining the reality of the content. Those who ignore perceivedness as superfluous, or replace unrejectedness by coherence, support etc., are speaking from a higher standpoint which and the relation of which to the uureflective level we shall consider later.

Of these two determinants—perceivedness and unrejectedness—the latter requires some elucidation. The intricacies concerning the former will not be touched.

Rejection is not the same thing as contradiction. While rejection immediately determines the unreality of a content, contradiction cannot. Contradiction being a symmetrical relation, each term of the relation contradicts the other, so that there is no question, so far, of prefering one and condemning the other. We might even say that contradiction, far from determining unreality, is rather a result of that. Only where of two things one is taken as *unreal* and the other *real* can we speak of either as contradicting the other. A and B contradict each other if only one of these is understood, actually or hypothetically, as real and the other similarly as unreal. In the absence of such consideration, contradiction would only be a *formal* relation, as between A and *not*-A.

So contradiction is no determinant of unreality. The only determinant is rejection—the snake, in a rope-snake illusion, is unreal because it has been rejected. This rejection is an immediate certainty, though for that reason it need not be unanalysable. Its constituents will be discovered in Sec. III.

Rejectedness, again, is no mere synonymn of unreality. Psychologically, we have first the feeling of rejection—somehow or other the snake *abruptly disappears*—and only then do we speak of unreality. The cases where the unreal does not disappear belong to a higher level of reflection where

the word 'unreal', it will be shown in Sec. IV, is used in a totally different sense.

In the above paragraph we have equated rejectedness with abrupt disappearance. This is nothing unnatural if only we bear in mind that the rejectedness, spoken of, is not *by something*, but just the rejectedness of a content. At the unreflective level the rejection of a content is the same thing as that it abruptly disappears. 'Abruptly' means that the disappearance is wholly inexplicable, whether by the present-day science or by any science whatever, so that the disappearance of a thing through bomb-explosion or through magical feats is not abrupt in our sense, however sudden and rapid it may otherwise be.

So far with the reason why we have preferred 'unrejected' to 'uncontradicted'. What now is the role of this unrejectedness in the determination of the reality of a content ? It does not necessarily mean that in every particular case we have to be *conscious* of this unrejectedness. It only means that when the *content will be rejected it will cease to be real.* The absence of that contingency need not operate *consciously.* It is enough if it operates as an unconscious functional principle.

Sometimes, indeed, it operates consciously as when we are cautious. But even then no undue stress should be laid upon it. The consciousness is indeed there, but it has no further implication, no demand upon us that it should be adequately attended to, and no demand, therefore, that some positive basis of this negative unrejectedness has to be discovered. To our consiousness it stands as a mere negation, and there the story ends. Should one still insist that a positive basis has to be discovered, that basis may well be the mere presentedness of the given content, no further quality like coherence, consilience etc.

We do not deny that sometimes we may be consious of such coherence, consilience and the like and also that these qualities, in such cases, determine the reality of the content. But all this is from a higher point of view which, as we have agreed, will be taken up later.

There are thus four possibilities –(1) unrejectedness may be only an unconscious functional principle ; (2) we may

be conscious of it and yet this consciousness may accompany the given content as only a fringe ; (3) we may be interested in this negative quality and yet discover that essentially it is identical with (*svarupa* of) the given content ; and (4) we may look upon unrejectedness as no longer negative, but as a positive quality like coherence, consilience etc. The first three cases are constitutionally alike, the unrejectedness being given no independent status, it being either forgotten altogether (operating as only an unconscious function) or, when noticed, as totally subservient to the given content. Only in the fourth case is it raised to the status of a conscious independent principle beside the content.

II

Except in the fourth case, unrejectedness means only that when later the content will be rejected it will cease to be real. The only *conscious* criterion of reality, for all unreflective cases, is then perceivedness. If criterion means a principle which is *consciously* employed, perceivedness is, so far, the only criterion of reality.

A difficulty has now to be met. A rejected content which, on account of rejection, is now unreal *was nevertheless perceived*. Hence if perceivedness be the only criterion of reality, it *was real* till the rejection. But this means that the unreal *was* at one time real (and therefore the real sometimes *becomes* unreal), which however is impossible, as the real should always be real and the unreal always unreal.

But the difficulty is not insurmountable. The principle 'once real always real, once unreal always unreal' round which it centres is not itself sound, as its opposite, viz., that the real may *become* unreal and the unreal may have *been* real, can be proved.

> Premises :—(1) The real may at least *appear* as unreal, and the unreal once *appeared* as real (which no one doubts).
> (2) Contrary evidence not forthcoming, an appearance is but reality. (A fundamental rule of epistemology).
>
> Conclusion :—Therefore, if there is no contrary evidence, the real sometimes *becomes* unreal,

and the unreal *was* once real; in other words, the apparent change is an actual movement of reality.

That there is no contrary evidence is also clear. Those who insist that a real cannot be unreal etc., have only relied on the inconceivability of its opposite. But mere inconceivability cuts no ice unless it is justified, empirically or *apriori*.   Here, however, there is no empirical justification, and *apriori* there is nothing in the mere notion of reality or unreality that it should be eternally real or eternally unreal. As for 'synthetic apriority', any insistence on it would involve a complexity which is absent in any complete idea of reality or unreality at the unreflective level.

It should not be forgotten that we are analysing the real and the unreal *at the unreflective level* only.   Otherwise, a confusion might arise ; it might be argued that as the unreal, even when detected, continues sometimes to be perceived it is, at one and the same moment, both real and unreal.   Such questions might arise at higher levels. At the unreflective level, the moment a content is declared unreal it disappears abruptly.

III

The real is the perceived content(not rejected). A perceived content is felt immediately as spatial or temporal, and space and time are each felt as an unendingly continuous stretch.   The moment, therefore, something is perceived it is felt somehow as spatially (we restrict ourselves to spatiality only) continuous with other contents actually perceived or perceivable. By 'spatially continuous' we mean 'to be in the same unendingly continuous spatial stretch'.

Such spatial continuity of the perceived content with other contents is to be admitted equally by the Idealist and the Realist. As the Idealist cannot maintain that every moment he turns his head aside, the contents he had been seeing cease to exist—for then there would be no distinction between real and unreal—he will have to admit that somehow or other the contents continue to be real, and the only conceivable explanation, unless God or a pseudo-God be suddenly brought in, of this continued reality is the said spatial continuity, space indeed being an ideal content of a different order. The Realist also will have to admit this spatial con-

tinuity, though in his own way. To him the content may be independent of consciousness, but as this would be true equally of real and unreal contents, he will have to find out the differentia of the real. And that would only be the said spatial continuity. For him to brand the unreal as subjective would be an act of apostasy, and to relegate it to another type of space would bring in geometrical absurdities, at least needless complications. And to deny of the unreal content spatiality itself, or at least concrete spatiality, and yet to call it an independent something would be a simplification too inadequate for what is actually felt, an attempt which would only culminate in the replacement of concrete philosophy by a set of conceptual formulae.

The real as what is perceived being thus spatially continuous with other contents, the unreal has to be defined as that in which this continuity has lapsed. The unreal is spatially discontinuous, not merely with anything that is real but also with anything that is unreal unless this second unreal be a part of itself as in dream, a whole dream being taken as a single unreality. This is also how the unreal is actually felt.

This has an important consequence. If the unreal is spatially discontinuous with other contents, it follows first that it ceases to have spatiality, and secondly that *it ceases to be anything at all.* Space is constitutionally an unending continuous stretch, hence that which ceases to be spatially continuous with other contents ceases automatically to be spatial. Again, apart from spatiality a content is nothing— qualities without space are only indefinite abstractions, which means that the unreal as forfeiting spatiality *forfeits itself.* The unreal, therefore, means that which having once been real *has exploded itself into nothingness.*

Both these points require some clarification. The unreal has only ceased to be spatial, not that it was never spatial. Once it was spatial, much as the unreal was once real. Those of the Realists, therefore, who deny of the unreal content space altogether are wrong, and equally wrong are those who place it, even when it is declared unreal, in the same spatial fold to which other contents belong.

As for the unreal ceasing to be anything at all, this

is no mysticism, except to those who believe that *matter* is somehow a self-identical entity even apart from spatiality. The relation between matter and space is such that while space is definable by itself—because a whole science, viz., the Euclidean Geometry, can be built out of it—matter is not so. Matter is anything at all only as spatial; it possesses no definite character that might subsist by itself. So that if space can subsist by itself while matter cannot, the latter is to be understood as only a function of space. It is therefore illogical even to use the phrase 'matter in space'. The real is either empty or hard space. This being the situation, and space being intrinsically an unending continuous stretch, it is not difficult to conceive that for a content to lose it spatiality means that it ceases to be anything at all.

This cessation of being is more than what happens when something merely ceases to be present, i.e. becomes past. The past is not necessarily unreal, even as past it maintains spatial continuity with other contents; what lapses is only its presentness, not its being. The unreal, on the other hand, ceases to *be* at all. Cessation of being, therefore, is intrinsically a non-temporal process, though like many non-temporalities it may act in unison with time.

To sum up the points in this section. The unreal was once real, not merely *appeared* as real; and having once been real, it has exploded itself into nothingness. This is the account of the unreal at the *unreflective* level. How it and the real appear at a higher level of reflection is our next consideration.

IV.

Reflection intervening, the situation takes a different turn. Reflection means that we either *leap* beyond the perceived to something not yet perceived, or *remove disparities* between perceived contents by means of ideal constructions which as such are neither real nor unreal, or *confirm* contents which are either perceived or not yet perceived or constructed. All these three attitudes are inference, but while the first is inferential *discovery**, the second is hypo-

---

*Inferential discovery is different from unreflective anticipation of the immediate future. The latter is immediate experience, as its content is immediately felt as coming, just as in memory the content is immediately felt as what came.

thesisation which is an act of understanding, and the third is different altogether from the other two, its name being *proof*. Of these three reflective attitudes the first two are not our immediate concern. The question of reality or unreality at the reflective level arises in connexion with *proof* alone. The sense of reality implicit in inferential discovery is identical with that in unreflective perception; and in inferential understanding as such there is no question of reality or unreality.

Proof or confirmation is a social act necessarily presupposing a multiplicity of percipients. This multiplicity includes reduplication of oneself in the interest of confirmation; for even if I were the only person in the world I, in the interest of confirmation, would have had to duplicate myself, one myself being the mere discoverer and the other the one that judges that the discovery is justified. It is important to note that this sociality in confirmation is *aprior*. Confirmation is as much a native tendency as unreflective discovery, only it is on a higher level.

At this level the real is to be defined as that which is fully confirmed and the unreal as that which resists confirmation.* The real here is not merely a perceived content with functional unrejectedness, nor the unreal necessarily that which has exploded itself into nothingness. The unrejectedness of the real is here raised to conscious confirmedness. It is therefore no longer negative, but a definite positive character. As confirmation is an act of inference, whether linear or implicational, confirmedness as a positive character is either the logical derivability of the content in question or its categorial connexion with other contents or the coherence as of the Hegelians.

What is confirmed at the reflective level is not necessarily one that was perceived. Confirmation may as well act on contents that are constructed or not yet perceived. This means that the real at the reflective level is *any possible content* that is confirmed.

Similarly the reflectively unreal is *whatever* content resists confirmation, which means that a content reflectively declared unreal may yet continue to be perceived,

---

*In between the two there is a third stage where confirmation is either incomplete or consciously felt as unnecessary. This intermediate stage is either probability or opinion.

continue, in other words, to be unreflectively real. So far
as the level of unreflective reality is concerned, it continues
to maintain spatial continuity with other contents. In
the one unending concrete space it retains its peaceful
share.

To elucidate. At the unreflective level there is no
question of a *substance as some unity of different appearances.*
No question, for example, of an actual moon as the substance
of its different appearances from different angles of vision.
At this level every content is a self-complete presentation
which, if one prefers to call it a substance, is no substance
as the unity of different presentations. The small moon, at
this level, is one thing, and the larger moon —supposing one
comes near it—is another; and similarly with a straight
stick and a bent one (where the straight is reflectively
taken as appearing bent when dipped in water) or the actual
face and its image in a mirror. There is, so far, no spatial
disparity between the members of each pair.

The unreflective level, it should be noted, is not neces-
sarily one to which children and animals belong. In their
life reflection and unreflective attitude run intermingled, and,
as we have said, reflection, so far at least as it is confirma-
tion, is as much native as the unreflective attitude. This
is why even children and animals behave as though many
of the things they perceive are substances of different
appearances.

Substance *as the unity of different appearances* is a
notion at the reflective level only. The actual size of the
moon which is said to appear differently from different angles
of vision is only a constructed hypothesis that is socially
confirmed. Its so-called other appearances are taken as
unreal, only in contrast with it; otherwise, from the unreflec-
tive point of view, they are quite real. They are thus
unreal in one sense and real in another. The reflective
reality of the so-called actual size of the moon is thus no
more than social objectivity which should not be confused
with unreflective reality.

Anything judged to be bigger in size at a distance, or
in whatever specific way different from how it appears now
and here, involves such social confirmation imposed either

on inferential *understanding* or reflective or unreflective *discovery*.

Originally social confirmation is imposed on what is actually perceived. But once we have learnt to distinguish this confirmation from the content perceived we can impose it on what is merely constructed or yet to be perceived. The actual size of the moon is a construction that is so *socialised*, and similarly with regard to every unperceivable thing that is called real. As for ordinary inferred contents, they are yet-to-be-perceived contents as socialised.

The straight stick and the actual face which appear respectively as bent in water and as image in a mirror, and in contrast with which the latter two are called unreal, were actually perceived in the past as much as their so-called later appearances are now being perceived. At the unreflective level, therefore, both are real; but at the reflective level the past contents, viz, the straight stick and the actual face alone are taken as real, only because they alone have acquired social objectivity through confirmation.

Thus at the reflective level the words 'real' and 'unreal' have connotations different from what they have at the unreflective level. Many of the traditional and current theories of reality and unreality, and of truth and error, have confused the two levels. That the two levels are different has been already shown. This difference is most evident in the case of *unreality*. The reflective unreality has no affinity with the unreflective unreality. For, as already shown, the reflectively unreal may well continue to be unreflectively real—the small moon which is reflectively unreal is yet an undisturbed reality from the unreflective point of view.

It is only in the case of *reality* that there may be some ground for confusing the two levels. For when through confirmation we attain reality we nevertheless feel that what we have is after all the old reality of the content that was perceived—we say that not merely that old content but also its *reality* now stands confirmed. This is more evident in cases where we confirm what is merely constructed or not yet perceived—in spite of our not having perceived the content, we yet treat it as though it was aleady real at the unreflective level.

Yet the realities at the two levels cannot be identical, though it is never denied that there is some close relation between the two. If the subjective side corresponding to reflective reality is confirmation, that corresponding to unreflective reality is belief (Perception is a more complex process including belief), and the true relation between the two subjectivities is that the former is of *the* latter—*confirmation is the confirmation of a belief.* The translation of this expression into *objective* language would therefore be 'Reflective reality is the reflective reality *of* some unreflective reality' or, if the word 'truth' is used for reflective reality and 'reality' for unreflective reality, 'Truth is the truth *of* some reality'. Thus there is an 'of'-relation between reflective and unreflective realities, the former being *of* the latter. Now wherever there is a genuine 'of'-relation there is some semblance of identity, for 'of' is almost as close a relation as identity. Yet it is never full identity. The relation between reflective and unreflective realities is no better and no worse than this. Into further intricacies of 'of'-relation we need not enter.

V.

There is a theory of reality and unreality in which the reflective and the unreflective levels have not been confused. This theory deserves special examination, particularly because in its zeal for distinguishing the two levels it, inspite of errors committed, has opened up avenues for studying the concept of reality from a new angle of vision. The main point of this theory is that the unreflective level is not knowledge, but anoetic.

If 'knowledge' were a term with no fixed connotation and employable as one liked, this theory might have been valid, but that also only verbally. There is however a generally accepted sense in which the term is normally used— it means the awareness of an object which is independent of the awareness and has knocked me down. In this sense the unreflective level need not always be anoetic. In a large number of cases, at this level, we do feel we are knocked down by independent objects.

The unreflective level is anoetic only where the object is related to awareness in other ways. There are three

different ways in which the object may stand toward a subject:— (1) It may knock that subject down, (2) the subject may cordially receive it and (3) the subject may voluntarily surrender itself to it.

When it knocks me down I for a moment feel helpless, but necessarily, as the self has a dignity of its own, I at the next moment assert *myself against* it. So here the independent first forces itself on me, but is then rejected. This type of relation may be called *cognitive.*

In the second type of relation I only cordially receive the object. There is no question here of that object knocking me down. As in all cases of invitation, there is here equal recognition of the dignity of both myself and that independent guest. Some sort of dignified alliance is established between the two. So far as I recognise my own dignity only, this indeed is in defiance of the dignity of the guest, but immediately with this I am also aware that the other dignitary also does not care for me, as he is independent. But as both this defiance and indifference have to be got rid of and some alliance to be established, I from my own side learn immediately to incorporate that other dignitary, or at least its shadow, in my own being, and thereby enlarge myself. This attitude may be called *conative.*

These are the three attitudes to the real, and each suggests a *spiritual* level of reality. Spirituality is the perfect form of the phenomenal. Whether this perfection is *apriori* or only an empirical abstraction is not our concern now. We are more interested in the forms of the spitie, i. e. of the spiritually real, from the points of view of the three attitudes just mentioned.

The perfect form of *cognition* should be the total assertion of the self through the total rejection of objects so that the self alone is the spiritual reality from this standpoint. The perfect form of *conation* should be the total absorption of objects in the self—in effect, the total expansion of the self. Such expansion is fundamentally different from conservative purification. It means liberal embracement of 'others' and, through that, the development of a powerful brotherhood. This is what is ordinarily called 'moral value'.

The perfect form of emotive reality should be such

purest object as is totally oblivious of subjectivity, for the subject has by now completely effaced itself in its presence. This is the highest aesthetic reality, attained through worship, love etc. which are transitional forms of aesthesis. When the acme is reached what stands is but pure object—aesthetic value.

The relation between the three types of spiritual reality, as also between the corresponding phenomenal realities, is no topic for this essay.