

THE
IMPRISONED
SPLENDOUR

ASPECTS AND APPLICATIONS
OF THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY

by

R. DIMSDALE STOCKER

INTRODUCTION

by

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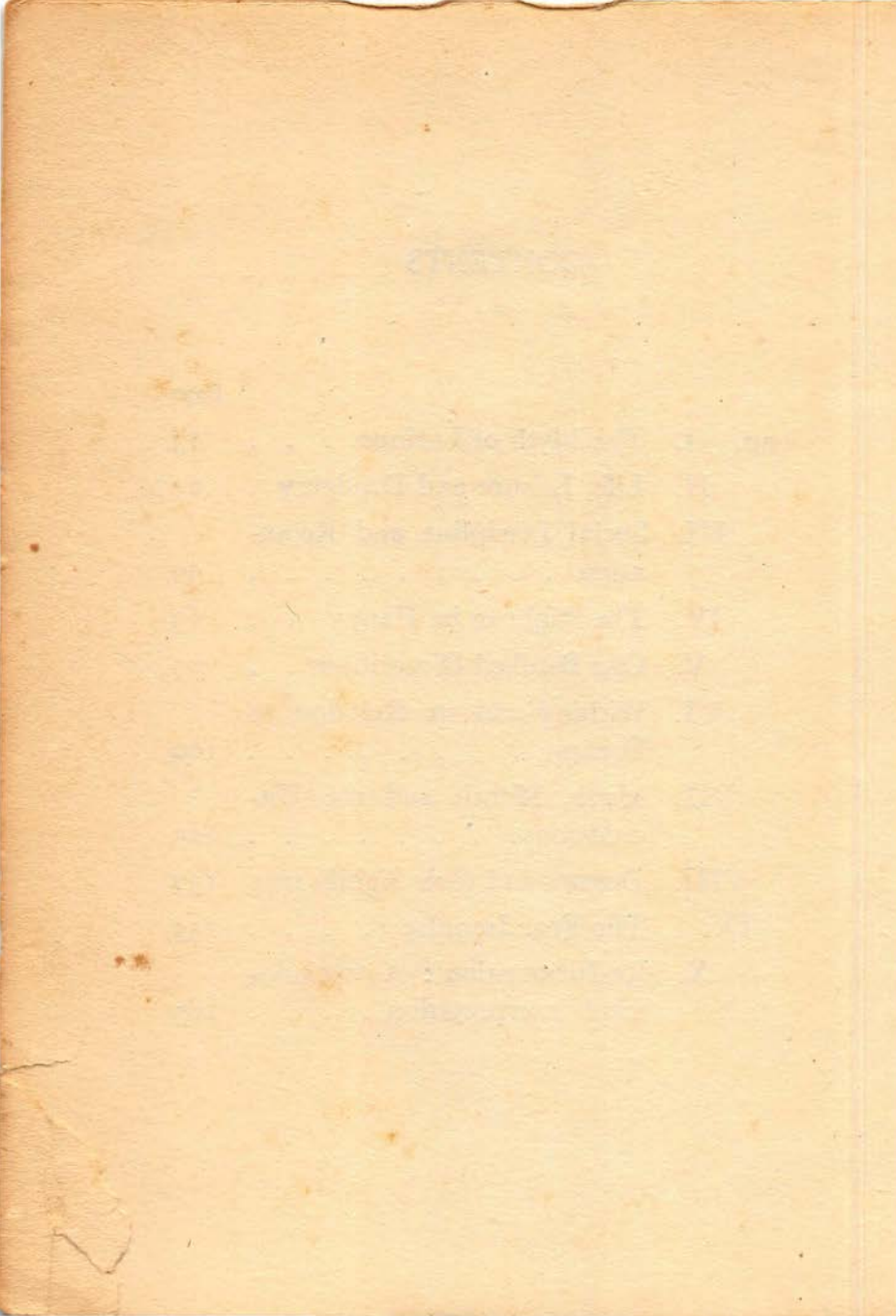
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INTRODUCTION

IN this series of essays will be found what may be called an assessment of the nature and the right functioning of the abstract qualities of man. This implies, of course, a wide and profound scope of observation, an intense employment of logical induction and an exhaustive analysis of metaphysical, instinctive and educational tendencies. This field offers immense possibilities of philosophical instruction : a multitude of luminous guide-posts for the various stages of life-development and for lighting the wayfarer in the fascinating scrutiny of psychical problems. To elucidate so great a subject was a daring project which might well give pause to the most thorough investigator, the most powerful thinker. Mr. R. Dimsdale Stocker has brought remarkable penetration of mind and conscientiousness of intellectual habit to the task. The central theme is the inadequate, often

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erroneous use and treatment of the inner endowments, which, if allowed their true worth, are the greatest, most effulgent glory of our race. That these are too often or even constantly kept from their normal functioning is a psychological tragedy. Hence the highly significant title that Mr. Stocker has chosen for his book.

Self-repression in the artificial mode of life which man has imposed upon himself is the secret of much if not all that is abnormal and disastrous in his behaviour. To begin with, in his modern civilized state he has a pernicious fear of what he terms IDLENESS, and he enjoys but little of what can be discerningly regarded as LEISURE. Man is not by nature an idler, and true leisure does not spell idleness. True leisure, employed to a good purpose, as true leisure can only be, is needed for the proper rounding out of human existence. Mr. Stocker boldly declares that there is not enough of this kind of idleness in the world. He may be said to place himself, in the chapter on the "Myth of Laziness", on the plane of the higher and

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wiser Socialism, which is as far removed from the demagogic, political socialism of the day as noon is from midnight. And with entire justice he says that the fair distribution of toil, giving a larger share of leisure to all the intrinsic producers of wealth, would be a solution of the problem of labour and its rewards.

The existing social order has led to the exaggerated acceptance of certain moral illusions. Work, for instance, has come to be looked upon as "too pathetically tragic". "Far too few of us", says the author, "get enough of leisure to be certain of precisely how much it is worth". A so-called "Leisure class" is an evil because by its existence is implied that of another but vastly more numerous class whose true leisure, relatively, if there be such, is almost imperceptible. But no mere quantitative solution can be had of this problem : the solution must be qualitative, and that, Mr. Stocker implies, is feasible. The whole prevalent conception of human life must be revolutionized from within. Class interests must be subordinated to the

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general welfare, and this through the closer "equalization of means and opportunity".

The strain and tension of "balked desires", thwarted in their natural prompting, are the cause of the rebellion of the SUBCONSCIOUS NATURE, leading, when they are once released, to innumerable social offences. The moral advance of the world has not corresponded to the advance of material civilization. The rightful instincts have been too much subjected to the factitious necessity of disciplining Self beyond the dictate of Reason. "Godliness and nature, by being sharply contrasted, have been viewed as in incessant and eternal conflict". "To reinstate the instincts," adds Mr. Stocker, "and to accord them the dignity which belongs to them must certainly be regarded as one of the signal achievements of modern psychology...

"Every natural instinct that is appropriate to man is essential to his existence, "and when its legitimate exercise is balked or denied deplorable results ensue. "Nature refuses to be expelled : she will not; and the only safe course to adopt

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is the DIRECTION of the forces that are implanted in man."

Mr. Stocker's study of the faculty of WISHING in its relation to DREAMS leads him to exceedingly interesting conclusions. He regards the wish as the "unit of psychology" and its repression as the cause of important mental phenomena. He finds ground here for the statement that "What we do is traceable in the first instance less to what we think than what we are... Our spontaneous actions, which have been elaborated by the subterranean operations of the instincts, are the essential test of our natures."

In DREAMS the Subconscious Mind has liberal play, and the author believes that we may then be "more truly ourselves than when we are subjected by the sway of the artificial personality that society has created for us".

The tracing of MIRTH and JESTING and the EFFORT TO EVADE AUTHORITY to repressed desires or wishes is a more curious process than most of those leading to psychological enlightenment. These effects are like the exploding of pent-up energy, and reveal the real Self.

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The "Seven Ages" into which, according to Shakespeare's sylvan philosopher, human life is divided, may be likened from the psychological point of view to so many re-births. This is the author's conception of INCARNATION, each age, or each act in the drama of life, being a step towards the final willing and even joyful surrender of the spirit and of our choicest gifts to the Indefinable Whole, into the embrace of the Infinite — the merging of Self "in the as yet unmanifested splendours of the Universe".

BRIGGS DAVENPORT.

CHAPTER I

THE MYTH OF LAZINESS

For the most part the problem of inaction is neglected, or dismissed altogether. "Idleness" has so long been a term of reproach that those of us who prefer to indulge in that habit pretend hypocritically that we are busy about nothing, rather than own up to our weakness. So impressed is western civilization with the supposed need for hustle, rush and other kinds of movement that we take it for granted that we must be "up and doing" at any price. To enjoy our leisure too well, or to make the best of opportunities for relaxation, would be, in our perverted estimation, to incur the contempt of our species. Even in religion, the contemplative life is regarded as reactionary and unpractical.

Milton's celebrated line : "They also serve who only stand and wait", would have little acceptance, it would seem, if taken seriously, in this our age. That conception somehow fails to have anticipated the trend of the modern mind.

Yet in spite of our incomprehension of the gospel of inaction, stress has been laid from time to time upon what is termed a "wise passiv-

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ity". Mr. John A. Hobson, for instance, in his recent book, "Work and Wealth", reminds us that "we should not be so terribly afraid of idleness, after all". The world, he seems to think, has cultivated the active mood to a somewhat dangerous extent; and it is time that once in a while we allow ourselves breathing space. The fact however remains that we are afraid of idleness. Our watchword is the "practical", and, unless we are "on the go" all the time, we are persuaded that we are losing everything — time, money, and all other items of "practical" value. Nowadays, of course, the world is too intelligent to evince interest in other matters. Things that cannot be measured or weighed it refuses to consider. The "soul", for instance, it now regards as only of theoretical importance. What is the soul? asks the modern man. Or, How should I stand to lose it, seeing that I have never possessed it? And in that last sense of the word he is right. The modern man has never possessed his soul. But his soullessness bears a more intimate relation to his theory of life than he chooses to admit.

He is soulless simply because he is in bondage. He does not know this: he believes himself to be free. But he is deluded; and his delusion is the delusion of movement.

The times move, and so does he — as much in

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unison with the times as he can or thinks he can. There is great "progress" in the world. It is productive of machines. He must make this progress his own — at least he must be a part of it; he must unceasingly obey its impulse. He must not only make machinery: he must be a machine himself. He has almost come to persuade himself that the primal curse, pronounced in Eden, is a blessing. Reconciled to the theory of the "dignity of labour", he has not only ceased to regard rebellion to the originally ordained state of happy obedience as a sin: he has forgotten what such happiness might mean. After all, thinks the modern man, drudgery is inevitable, and hence must be divinely intended. He must exist; in order to exist in the civilized state, he must have money, and to get money he must toil. By such process of logic he concludes that action of whatever kind is the only condition of life.

There he is wrong. Life, in the fully rounded sense, upon such terms, is impossible. He has not time to see that. He is too desperately busy. He works, works, works. Why does he work? Not always to please himself: by no means. He works because he "must". He fancies that thus he is living according to the universal law — the law of sacrifice. In this he is mistaken. Were he conscious of the posses-

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sion of a soul or of anything not strictly material that is worth the sacrifice, the case might be different. But he is not conscious of a soul, nor in fact of anything of a transcendent order that belongs to him. Hence he is no better than a slave : in point of fact his servitude is worse than that of most slaves.

No profounder delusion exists for the ordinary man of to-day than in regard to his right to leisure. What might properly be his leisure, if wisely put to use, is really so strenuously employed as to negative entirely what should be its normal significance. To spend one's time as one may wish, apart from the thousand and one recreations or amusements that are available, is to incur the criticism and aversion of one's fellows. Let a man prefer to loaf in company with his own thoughts rather than to play golf or bridge, or let him take up science or literature or art rather than motoring or some other prevalent fad, and somebody is sure to exclaim : " Well, really, you must have more time on your hands than you know what to do with! If only you knew what work is you would not bother with such things! " So obsessed is the man of to-day with the notion that " work " is essential, that it must necessarily be something that " goes against the grain " and is bought and paid for, that to identify pleasure with any

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activity that is pursued for its own sake is for him out of the question!

Our social system is the cause of this condition of mind. That system rests upon a gigantic fallacy, to wit : that man is by nature an idler. Only give him half a chance, it seems to say, and he would instantly refuse to do anything at all! Were we not urged by the sheer needs of the body to win our daily bread, we should be content, it is argued, to spend our days flat on our backs until we perished. But this assumption, although based upon tradition and hearsay, those chief sources of popular wisdom, is in defiance of facts. Even Dr. Watts knew better. He asserted in his well-known hymn that " Satan finds mischief for idle hands to do ". He was a true psychologist. Under normal conditions men are invariably busy enough — even when they refuse to work for a living. Beggars, for example, who would scorn to put in a day of real work, are not idlers by any means. Their professional pride is great. A certain beggar known to me personally was an amazingly active man. He sold papers — or people believed he did. He always carried one or two papers under his arm. He also gave racing tips. His fault, whatever it might be, was certainly not idleness! He was never idle. To dodge the attention of the police must

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alone have taken a good third of his time. His failing was a very common one : that of mis-directed effort. His case was typical. Thousands of men who have a reputation for idleness have never known the advantage of that luxury.

There is not enough idleness in the world. I shall be reminded by my critics, of course, that work is " the great thing " : that not only is it useful and indispensable, but that it is also of service to use in the formation of habits. This may be granted. To ensure the welfare of society it is desirable that certain acts should be performed. The value, of course, of a certain amount of prescribed behaviour goes without saying. We cannot, it is clear, afford to wait until men are " in the mood " to undertake such service as may be essential to the community. For instance, I, for one, would be unwilling to take the kind and generous disposition of my milkman for granted; nor am I so sure that, if I trusted myself to his tender mercies without some corresponding pecuniary inducement on my part, he would be encouraged to deliver my milk punctually at my door at 6 A. M. On the other hand, while in a certain degree such discipline as our economic and industrial system imposes may be necessary for the engendering and cultivation of utilitarian impulses, it by no means follows that the contin-

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ual, unceasing repetition of the habitual acts due to this cause is an unqualified blessing to the individual. As Professor Hobson has said :

"Everybody wants leisure for his soul to move about in and to grow, not by some closely prescribed plan of education, but by free experimentation of its secret powers. A very slender harvest of happy thoughts and feelings will justify much apparent idleness."

The sway of the merely habitual is often tyrannical. To be in subjection to such tyranny is to forfeit initiative, spontaneity and volition. A tale is told of a man who, being invited to dine out, went to his bedroom to don his evening attire. Instead of doing so, however, being unaccustomed to depart from his nightly habit, he undressed and got into bed. With implicit reliance upon the habitual we cannot hope to adjust ourselves to novel situations; and consequently imitation and the force of example cannot be depended upon to produce the fundamental effects upon character which are desirable for individual growth and development. In so far as they are "creatures of habit", men ARE inferior. And this inferiority is convincingly demonstrated by the supremacy of drudgery and routine in our social arrangements. Such arrangements, however conducive to public convenience, inevitably deaden the soul.

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But is it not better, asks some one, that men should be condemned to work rather than that they should waste their lives ?

The reply is this : Work, under existing conditions, tends more often than not to deprive men of what is best in life, in other words, of the **TRULY NORMAL LIFE**. We cannot, therefore, waste what we have not. It will be time enough to complain of the misuse of leisure when enough of leisure is available to the ordinary man to make its misuse a possibility.

As it is, the evil effects of drudgery are our snare. And these are not entirely external. If men could be made into machines the result would be otherwise. But they cannot. They have deeper needs. Man has a right to self-direction, joy and personal liberty. Drudgery ignores this right. It tends to make him hard, dull, prosaic and matter of fact. Man at his best, instinctively rebels against this. He wants leisure : he craves the opportunity to see visions and dream dreams. He wants time that he can call his own. He wants what he is not conscious of possessing — a soul.

So potent is the mood of idleness upon man that, when he thinks, he almost curses his lot. But he prefers not to complain. So he does not think. Instead he tries to forget. In the heart of battle, at the music-hall, with the lure

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of alcohol, by any means of distraction that offers, he seeks to lessen his tribulation.

Man is his own enemy, the victim of his own theories. His delusions derive from the conspiracy to which every man is an accomplice. He affects to think that life must consist of things which have bulk, weight and motion; that force and matter can be the only things that signify. It follows logically that he shuns the ideal of idleness. In his anxiety to create he has forgotten that he needs to be re-created, and that, if he would be re-created, he must prize the privilege of re-creation. He has despised this need of nature. He has professed to believe that the atmosphere of leisure is not for him. He has failed to recognize or has denied the appeal of stillness and tranquility. Unlike Walt Whitman, who fain would "loaf and invite my soul", in looking to the "main chance" he has missed the main thing.

Thus far the trend of civilization has been mainly in the direction of imposing the work-mood upon man. And now it is dawning upon him that it is not enough that the poor should toil and sweat : the well-to-do also should have their share of drudgery. If work were better distributed, this, no doubt, would be well. But the chief object in making more men work would be to enable all men to play. In other

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words, unless by a fair apportionment of toil, we obtain for all classes a larger measure of leisure, the labour problem will never be solved. At it is, rich and poor alike are the victims of an identical idea. External action is in their estimation the be-all and end-all of life. But external action, without internal progress, must ever produce only "Dead-Sea fruit". The right to work, without the corresponding enjoyment of leisure, can never ensure a satisfactory social equilibrium.

But here is the point : Is such an equilibrium our goal ? and Shall this goal consist in the mechanical conception of life, which robs us of every spiritual impulse and reduces life to a meaningless waste ? Or shall it not rather lie in a frank recognition and consequent satisfaction of the claims of the spirit — the humanization of the true ideal of manhood and womanhood ?

We cannot, it is true, afford to ignore the material factors of life. Industry, economics, politics, education, and every other incidental of the environment are of inestimable importance. But that their importance may be properly effective we must keep them in their place. Their place is below, not above us. Only by subordinating them to our spiritual welfare can we become their master — the master of things; and unless we are master of things we ourselves are but slaves.

CHAPTER II

LIFE, LEISURE AND DRUDGERY

Work, as a rule, has been advocated on principle: as an antidote to man's alleged inveterate propensity to slothfulness. And it was on this principle, that what was least natural to man must therefore be most wholesome for him, that Carlyle pronounced his famous benediction upon toil.

Well may we admire the eloquence evinced in such an eulogy. At the same time, it is more than doubtful whether, at any rate to the toilers themselves, it can ever be completely convincing. It is all very well, no doubt, in one's armchair, at a safe distance from the office, the factory, the mine or the workshop, to extol the energy and enterprise and industry which are essential to the performance of necessary work. Such work needs to be done; and that somebody can be found to do it — even when the motives by which he may be actuated are merely those which prompt him to get a livelihood — may very well evoke our gratitude

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and thankfulness. But people are beginning to think. The illusions that we have consecrated with a view to securing obedience and submission to the existing order, are one by one becoming threadbare; and few nowadays are prepared to endorse the sentiment of Carlyle's enthusiastic deliverance without reservation.

If play is still regarded as too trivial a matter to be taken seriously, work is coming to be looked upon as too pathetically tragic a thing, in many cases, to be tolerated at all. The lot of the toiling masses, it is true, may occasionally be viewed in too sentimental a light and such sentiment, we may feel, is mawkish and unwholesome. Nonetheless, the contemplation of millions of men and women who spend their entire life in one vast unceasing round of drudgery, prompts the social conscience, from time to time, to utter a word of protest. So that we are constantly asking ourselves "How will it be possible to lighten the burden of these people, and by what means shall we so organise employment as to enable them to participate in the institution of leisure?"

In leisure, therefore, we have what is fundamentally a moral problem. This, however, is abundantly evident from a survey of religion. Chiefest among the values conserved by religion is the conception of heaven, the beatific hereafter

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wherein man may be permitted to claim exemption from the ills of earth, pre-eminent among which is that of enforced-toil. But significant as this is, it is nevertheless clear that leisure constitutes a problem no less acute than that of labour itself. And any consideration of this question raises the point, how is leisure to be secured, and when it is secured, how are we to dispose of it? As to the first point it may be said that few have realised seriously that leisure is something which it is in man's power to control, while fewer still have grasped that it should be regarded in the light of a commodity, like wealth, land or health to be universally owned, distributed and enjoyed. Rather is it customary to view leisure as a privilege : a monopoly, belonging by right to the fortunate few, whose status and means entitle them to its exclusive possession and enjoyment.

Now, on what grounds, let us ask, can such a conception of leisure be maintained and defended? or how is it possible to justify any theory of leisure which would regard it as a class institution? First, then, it may be replied, leisure is good because, while it may be abused it is conducive to much that is beautiful, elegant and excellent. A man who literally does nothing with his time, it is true, is a poor argument for leisure. But, on the other hand, if nobody had any time at

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his disposal for doing nothing, that would be an even worse argument for the work-principle. Leisure, in short, so far as it is distrusted is distrusted mainly because it is viewed with a covetous eye. Leisure is not bad: but far too few of us get enough of it to be certain precisely how much it is worth. So on the fox-and-grapes principle, we visit it with ignominy and reproach. That, however, is proof of insincerity rather than of sagacity. Without leisure, even as it is, all would be condemned to toil: whereas, even as it is, only a very large proportion of the population need slave. The rest, though in a minority, are at least exempt from such an evil, and are free to devote themselves, as they may choose, to art, science, literature, invention, politics, travel, hospital nursing, philanthropy, and so forth. None of these pursuits, it is true "pays", in the strictly commercial sense of the word; but one and all of them, to be undertaken at all, call for a liberal allowance of "spare time". Such pursuits, it is true, may be regarded, and very properly so, as fitting vocations for the "well to do". Nevertheless, each one of them, in its own particular fashion, contributes to the general richness and fulness of life. If we are to have grace, refinement, culture and appreciation for the things of the mind and the amenities of life, to say nothing

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of social enthusiasm and nobility of soul, we must somehow provide the necessary leisure for some person or persons by means of which they shall be free to follow their true individual inclinations irrespective of the soul-deadening and sordid considerations which must necessarily play so extensive a part in the existence of the average wage earner.

So far so good, and even as it is, the war has demonstrated that if only the opportunity presents itself, the heart, if not the head, may be depended upon to respond. By thus claiming an absolute value for leisure, however, regardless of its application to the individual life, it will be observed that by far the most important aspect of the problem is ignored. This being the essentially personal advantage of leisure to the community.

To the convenient plea that a leisure class is in the interest of social welfare, exception may be taken principally for the following reasons :

1. That the mere existence of a leisure class as such is no necessary guarantee of ensuring the widespread distribution of the advantages which are alleged to accrue through such leisure, and that as a matter of fact,

2. The maintenance of such a class inevitably involves, as a corollary, the existence of a class

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of toilers, who, minus economic freedom, are compelled to support them as well as themselves, and forego the very things for which their labour is requisitioned.

Here we may realize, perhaps, that the connection between leisure and labour is somewhat more intimate than we have been apt to imagine; and if so, what we must see is, that in leisure we have one of those fundamental problems whose solution must tax our entire social energies to the utmost. Why, let us ask, is the concentration of leisure in the hands of the few socially disastrous? The reason is evident: it is because of the inequitable system which admits of the maldistribution of the means of enjoyment. Now, these, which are a social creation, should be enjoyed not only by the few, but by all. Moreover, their production should be entrusted, as far as possible, to the community as a whole. Such being the case, under a co-operative, rather than a competitive industrial system, all would have the time, as well as the opportunity and inclination, for participating in the advantages. As it is, however, the fruits of toil which are consumed by the leisured classes are "good" only in an exceedingly restricted sense, and because they enable the well-to-do few to escape the iniquitously sordid lot of the poverty stricken majority.

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From the point of view of the masses, procured as they are at such terrific sacrifice, they are utterly bad.

The plea for a leisured class, then, considered with regard to society as a whole, is a plea for the rankest anarchy; what it involves being nothing less than free permission to the favourably circumstanced few to exploit the unfortunately-situated many for their private advantage. Such a plea, obviously, means power, but power divorced from responsibility. And this fact, in itself, is sufficient to condemn the theory under consideration.

There are, however, many kindly and well intentioned people, who even yet believe it to be possible, by moral suasion, to readjust our social arrangements by appealing to the moral sentiments of the well-to-do classes. But such a notion, while it may proceed from a touching faith in man's goodness, does little credit to the intelligence of its advocates. In the first place the very conditions under which a leisure class is maintained are against its chances of enabling it to realise its obligations. Its ideals, to begin with, are exclusive rather than comprehensive; and while they may comprise many elements of genuine value and importance, their remoteness from the practical situation which calls for consideration, must inevitably preclude any

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extensive enterprise in the direction suggested. In any real or broad sense, the leisured class is not social : for " Society " indeed, with a capital letter, it may care very much, but of the concrete and actual state of affairs beyond " Society " it is for the most part supremely ignorant. Nor has it the imagination which would enable it to conceive truly of the circumstances beyond its immediate vicinity. As much may be gathered from the efforts which are constantly being made by persons belonging to the leisured class. Of the talents of such persons indeed we need have no doubt. From their ranks many authors of distinction have been drawn, as well as innumerable clerics, lawyers, politicians, etc. The labours of such men, however, it must be confessed, do not seldom fail to satisfy us. When such a man turns author, for example, what evidence, as a rule, do his works afford us of his qualifications to enlighten us on life ?

That he is clever is frequently true : but that his ability is no less frequently equalled by his amazing prejudice and class consciousness is more evident still. Of how many popular writers who might come within this category can it be said that they have a message for us ? And of how many more can we not say that their interest, what little of it there is, is

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academic or exotic ? And so of our politicians. Though they may be actuated by what they believe to be public spirit, of what avail is it to them to legislate on behalf of the people, seeing that they have never come into contact with a single individual outside their own precious circle ? Of course, our politicians " know us " — from their own standpoint — as they see us — in our working clothes or our Sunday attire ! But what, so long as they fail to mix with us as one of themselves, can they be said to know in any real sense about us ? What wonder, then, that so much of our legislation should prove abortive ? Such considerations as these lead us to Professor Hobson's conclusion that " the total severance of class life from mass life disables our leisured class from a true handling of the ground issues of life in any of its great departments " ; which fact, though greatly to be regretted, is distinctly favourable to the assumption that any appeal made merely to the " upper class ", however noble it may appear either to them or to ourselves, is unlikely to avail in achieving the looked for results.

Socially considered, then, the defects of leisure, as a class monopoly, are too obvious to call for detailed treatment. It may, however, be objected that such an institution, in spite of its existing

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drawbacks, must have served a purpose, and that its survival is intelligible only on the assumption that, at one time at any rate, its possession was, upon the whole, advantageous to the amenities of social life. Let us proceed to consider this matter.

By way of preliminary, I may remark, the origin of leisure is very ably dealt with by Mr. T. Veblen, in his work, "A theory of the leisure class" ; and in order to understand the problem in its historical aspect, we cannot do better than proceed to summarise some of Mr. Veblen's statements. Briefly, what he maintains is, that the leisure class took its rise in very primitive times, but that it is best developed in the higher stages of barbaric culture. To realise man's earliest modes of leisure we cannot afford to overlook the conditions under which man lived or the avocations which were congenial to him. These, as Veblen shows, were exemplified in warfare and the chase. By means of fighting and hunting man first of all secured the chance to distinguish himself, and the trophies which he won through his predatory exploits constituted his original claim to recognition and honour. Might was right. And those hunters and warriors who could kill and capture to the greatest advantage became the acknowledged chiefs. In process of time,

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as social development proceeded, some modifications took place. Instead of indiscriminate slaughter of the weak by the strong, slavery was introduced; and by this means, those who could most successfully subjugate the least resisting of the males, and the women, rose in the general estimation. These men, as the lords of the conquered, by their magnanimity and power, gradually obtained enhanced prestige, until at length they became the ruling caste. As time went on, further modifications were needed. The conception of personal power itself underwent a change, so that instead of physical strength, skill and cunning sufficing to obtain the mastery, intelligence and law-making were developed. These necessarily involved a higher order of men, and it was to these that war, government, religion and sport were entrusted. Hence the rise of a mode of life in which leisure was adapted to play the leading part.

Meantime the industrial arts were introduced. These, however, were entrusted exclusively to those who occupied a subordinate position or who were in a state of slavery. Those in a superior situation, of course, were in a position to refuse work; and work, in virtue of the servitude of those engaged in it, was regarded as appropriate only to slaves. On the other hand those who owned the slaves and all that

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slavery could produce, tended to acquire increased authority, prestige and power.

Throughout his exposition of the subject, there is one point that Mr. Veblen renders remarkably clear, and it is of exceptional importance. The leisure class took its rise not in idleness, but in ownership. In other words leisure as such is not synonymous with the exemption from toil, but with the emancipation from economic slavery. The powerful and lusty held sway and dominated their fellows and were able to command a spacious existence, not because they were inherently addicted to parasitic vices, which must necessarily have proved inimical to society, but because they were in the privileged position of having the right to hold and administer property. As Veblen adds, property is still the basis of conventional esteem; and to have any standing in the world, one must at least be able to command such commodities as shall conduce to a decent if not luxurious existence.

No greater travesty of Veblen's interpretation of the leisure class could possibly be witnessed than the conventional conception of a life of leisure under modern civilised conditions. With the vast and unexampled concentration of wealth in the hands of the few and the sloth and parasitism that have been fostered by the more

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sinister side of "capitalism", no limit has been placed upon the vulgar and ostentatious parade of luxury and extravagance that have been flaunted before us today. Thousands who, until a generation or two ago, were content to live quietly have been drawn in the "social vortex", and have in consequence devoted most of their time and effort to "keeping up an appearance"; i. e. living beyond their means. Instead of production by all for all, consumption by the fortunately favoured few at the expense of the necessitous many, has come to be regarded by a large section of the community as the only possible or tolerable thing for man. Riches, instead of being regarded as the means of life, have been mistaken for life itself. While expenditure unregulated by any appeal to the sense of social utility, has been applied to the satisfaction of artificially stimulated and often imaginary wants. Accordingly we have witnessed the vogue of the most insupportable triviality : social functions, motor expeditions, restaurant-entertaining upon the most lavish scale, night clubs, jazz dancing and so forth, have vied with each other to provide an antidote to the ennui and boredom that must otherwise have ensued. Small wonder if those in revolt against the most sordid aspects of wage-slavery and the other abuses of industrialism,

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which co-exist with these features of contemporary life, should sometimes seem bent, when challenging the claims of the "idle rich", on inciting the workers to revolt.

But if the leisure class is a failure — and that it is we need not doubt — it is far otherwise with leisure itself. Leisure, real genuine leisure still needs, as it always has needed, a place in our social economy. Nor can there be too much of it, provided only that it is more equitably distributed and shared. Here, however, lies our problem.

From our previous considerations it will be apparent that, while the few, from the point of view of the community as a whole, are in a good position to enjoy an abundance of leisure, to the grievous disadvantage of the rest, the vast majority are absolutely deprived from participating in such leisure. This fact seems to suggest that no mere curtailment of the privileges of what is after all a very small minority can hope to meet the emergency. We cannot actually confiscate the hours of leisure of any considerable number of well-to-do idle people, and bestow them upon a large number of overworked industrialists. If only, we sometimes think, some of the work which is now performed by the working class could be given to the members of the leisured class; and if only some of the

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leisure which is so recklessly squandered by the leisured class could be given to the workers what a salutary change we should effect ! But no mere mechanical re-distribution of goods, services or time could of itself effect the necessary re-adjustment. No mere quantitative solution of the question can possibly enable us to introduce such modifications into our industrial and social order as shall tend to guarantee to all the conditions of a decent and adequate existence. Our ideal, it must frankly be seen, involves a qualitative solution, so that unless we revolutionise our whole life-conception from within, we need hope to secure no permanent benefit. On the face of it, the actual aggregate amount of leisure, in terms of hours, enjoyed by the comparatively well-to-do, if actually distributed among the less fortunate would not go round. Nor would the accession of a million or so well-to-do people to the ranks of labour itself appreciably reduce the exertions of the present toilers. The sought-for change, evidently, must be brought about by more intelligent means.

In conclusion, it may be pointed out that, while no merely mechanical readjustment can prove effectual, the problem of leisure bears the most intimate relation to that of labour. Not until there is greater equalisation of means and

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opportunity, and not before class interests are subordinated to the general welfare, can we hope for a solution of the matter. When, and only when, leisure, like wealth, is owned by the community — when men are no longer exploited and enslaved by the selfishness of the few for the folly of the many, will drudgery disappear and relaxation be accessible to the many.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL DISCIPLINE AND RELAXATION

The exclusive identification of our most imperative necessities with the laborious and strenuous ideal, is, as we have already seen, both arbitrary and fallacious. The things that matter most to us are not by any means invariably those which the accredited moralists have upheld for our admiring wonder. And certainly something may be said for the wilful perversity of man which has instinctively impelled him to protest against what was alleged to be "good for him". In truth, while, in sanctifying work, we have made the best of a bad job, in refusing to accept toil as the be-all and end-all of life, we have proclaimed our right to participate in the essential blessings which should be the prerogative of every child of man.

The attitude towards this question has, for some time past, signified something of a revolt. In the craving which exists on all sides to-day for increased freedom, change, variety and joy, we have a significant re-action against, not only

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the more deplorable features of present-day existence, but the whole moral economy of the past. Man, we are convinced, was not created to be the slave that circumstances have made him. The soul-deadening effect of dreary monotony and unrelieved routine can have no elevating effect upon his life and character. And, in consequence, we are prepared to recognise the claims which are advanced on behalf of legislation and social organisation that, while it would not lose sight of all-round efficiency, would still provide for the satisfaction of man's primitive needs. One of the most convincing illustrations of the need for such provision was witnessed at the outbreak of the world war. Many a man who had previously contented himself with following the daily round of a life passed in the factory, shop or office, positively gave a sigh of relief. The war would at least put an end to that for a time for him! Accordingly we found numbers of men who were only too glad to jump at the chance of quitting civil life for the army. Here at least was an excuse for casting aside the dreary, drab existence that had been passed in the unending grind for bread and butter. Upon the subsequent disillusionment of these men it is unnecessary to dwell; that is a matter of recent history. On the other hand, the alacrity with which these men respond-

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ed to the national appeal, under the old voluntary system, was the source of dismay to many people, who saw in it nothing but the unseemly interruption of the work habit. To these persons, civilization bore no essential reference to the inner needs of man, but was to be simply an interminable process of probation in the office, factory, emporium, school and laboratory. Fortunately, these theorists were not to have the last word. Although their vision omitted the obvious brutalities entailed in warfare, it no less excluded all reference to the fundamental instincts of human life, including the impulse to serve, to strive, and to exercise voluntary responsibility. Hence, in failing to reckon sufficiently with the evergrowing distaste for the effete conditions imposed by modern life upon man, these "progressivists" were positively instrumental in precipitating the calamity which befell us.

Of all the disorders which have been inherent in our social system, none has been more radically symptomatic than that which has failed to take account of and to satisfy those instincts and impulses whose exercise is requisite to the normal condition of man.

Prior to the war, every town dweller realised this. High pressure and tension were the order of the day. And this was visible no less in our

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work than in our popular type of recreation. Sensationalism flourished; and the vogue of such forms of amusement as the "tango" and other such extraordinary means of spectacular entertainment, variety displays, the cinema, football contests and the like bore witness to the unsatisfied cravings of their millions of patrons. Our leisure was perilously strenuous. It gave evidence of fatigue and exhaustion.

To the average moralist, of course, all this was exceedingly deplorable. Unaccustomed to the task of serious investigation, he speedily became impatient, and warned us that man had become decadent and corrupt. In reality, it was the moralist who was at fault. The disquieting symptoms were due to the frantic and widespread efforts which were being made to escape from a too tense and serious mode of life. In great part, this fact was becoming apparent to the man-in-the-street who, having become out of patience with the alleged pronenesses of mankind to evil was in open rebellion against the current explanations which were vouchsafed him. Mankind, he maintained, was the victim of "conditions" and at the root of the trouble lay economic disorders to which it was possible to trace all such symptoms as the moralists professed to be able to diagnose. What wonder, seeing that the great majority of men were

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exploited by a system in which only the few flourished, they should seize every opportunity which presented itself of escaping from their sordid surroundings? As a matter of fact, the explanation, no less than the diagnosis, was superficial in the extreme. The phenomenon in question constituted not only a protest against evil economic conditions, but also a revolt against a mode of life in general that we have since realised was inimical to human welfare.

In the craze for the sensational, and the vogue for the spectacular, therefore, we may see a **PSYCHOLOGICAL** implication. And this we may define as the morbid rebellion of the instincts against the impracticable course which had been followed in stimulating the mind at the expense of the body. This, as I say, has been better realised since, the situation which was created by the state of affairs that existed in 1914. On the other hand, civilization, it must be admitted, has something to be said in its favour. To begin with, it has certainly proved instrumental in developing the capacity for voluntary attention. It has stimulated thought; adapted man for undertaking laborious tasks : guided his capacity for analysis, and augmented his power for concentration. The effects, however, of civilization have not unhappily ended with

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these desirable results : but have produced in addition a somewhat alarming state of tension and strain. Upon this point many of our more philosophic psychologists have of late seen fit to dwell. And, as typical of their attitude, I may profitably cite the following passage from "The great society" of Mr Graham Wallas : "We cannot in St. Paul's sense "mortify" our dispositions. If they are not stimulated, they do not therefore die, nor is the human being what he would be if they had never existed. If we leave unstimulated, or, to use a shorter term, if we "baulk" any one of our main dispositions, curiosity, property, trial and error, sex, and the rest, we produce in ourselves a state of nervous strain. It may be desirable in any particular case of conduct that we should do so, but we ought to know what we are doing. The baulking of each disposition produces its own type of strain ; but the distinctions between the types are, so far, unnamed and unrecognised, and a trained psychologist would do a real service to civilized life if he would carefully observe them. One peculiarity of the state of "balked disposition" is that it is extremely difficult for the sufferer to find his way out of it. The stimulus must come from outside. When once he is "dull" or "flat" or "sick of things" or whatever the name may be

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which he gives to his feelings, he cannot, unless he is a man of quite exceptional resource and nervous elasticity, invent anything to do which will "stimulate him".

Our age, it is clear, has done not a little to give rise to the accumulated sense of strain and tension of which Mr. Wallas here speaks ; and, in consequence, it is responsible for much of the lack of peace, poise, and harmony that we witness. But this, very evidently, though not unrelated to our economic ills, goes far deeper. Whatever be the causes, however, the efforts are witnessed in the thousand and one nervous affections, rapid and extreme fatigue of the higher brain centres, and the corresponding demand for increased relaxation.

Such phenomena, though morbid, are not unnatural, and constitute merely a species of subconscious rebellion on the part of the instincts which are denied full and free expression against the exacting demands of society. This up to a point is inevitable : and its due recognition by every member of society is manifestly compatible with the well-being of the community as a whole. Beyond that point, however, the usages and restrictions which are imposed upon the individual cannot but have a deleterious effect. And this fact is instinctively realised when advantage is taken of an opportunity

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to protest against such hampering restrictions. In all forms of "unconventional" behaviour, whether it be an outbreak of temper, or a fit of intemperance, or some form of creative effort akin to the exercise of the imagination, as it is in art, we see the expression of these desires where thwarting has led to a mode of gratification outside the prescribed limits.

Nor is it without reason that, with the average man, the protest should take the form either of a debauch or outburst of temper, since the facilities for satisfying one's instincts by means of alcohol or retaliation are so enormously more accessible than those which would afford other and better means of gratification. Man's consciousness of his needs, after all, is so much stronger than his intelligence to gratify them wisely, that, in nine cases out of ten, he naturally takes what he believes to be the shorter cut to his destination. The man, who, before beer became a beverage only for millionaires, insisted that the best way out of Manchester was a shilling's worth of liquor, was at least aware of the naked truth. He was conscious at any rate of a baulked desire which led him to seek something better than the squallor and dirt of a manufacturing city. The beer gave him temporary relief. But had he approached a moralist of the conventional order it is doubtful

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whether he would have got even as much as that.

For the moralist in his anxiety to win us to his theories has been painfully addicted to the pitiful practice of dodging facts. Excepting for a theory of the original depravity of man he has abstained altogether from investigating the nature of man. That man was fearfully and miraculously prone to seek consolation in "pleasure" and that such "pleasure" meant immoderate indulgence in strong drink, sensual vice and other unlawful practices, our moralists have taken for granted. And that concessions to the frailty of human nature must be made, our legislators also, following them, have believed. As a natural consequence, instead of making better provision for the baulked dispositions which society has engendered, we have let things go from bad to worse, and then complained because, for all our civilization, no corresponding moral advance has been accomplished. Such advance, I may as well say, in view of the fact that we have allowed our resources for gratifying man's thwarted impulses to be commercialised, must certainly have proved nothing short of a miracle.

Our "moral tradition", then, having blinded us to the facts, must certainly be regarded as immoral. Not only has it encouraged the

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Puritanic prejudice which has precluded a sympathetic comprehension of the needs of mankind; it has hypocritically led us to tolerate only the coarser modes of gratifying those needs. Of these modes, we may make mention of the public house, the turf, and the cinema. That neither one nor all of these is in itself inconsistent with human welfare, I need not observe. At the same time, who doubts that the interests that are served by the promotion of these objects are commercial and that, such being the case, the true welfare of those to whom they ostensibly minister is only a secondary consideration? Much virtuous indignation, from time to time, is expended upon those who spend their time and money in frequenting the picture palace, the public house, the race course and similar resorts; and many of the objections which are brought against them in their existing form are doubtless valid enough. At the same time, who doubts that such institutions do supply a very real want of man's nature — a want that at present no moral system in existence has been able to satisfy?

If we are to set up as innovators, therefore, we must begin not by reforming others, but by informing ourselves. And this is why I must now take the liberty of proceeding to discuss the various types of relaxation appropriate to man.

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And first of all let me speak of play.

But what is play? This is an important question, and one that has suitably enough engaged the attention of many serious and learned persons. We have Herbert Spencer's theory, for instance. Whether Spencer even as a child ever played like ordinary children may be open to question. But however that may be, his views are sufficiently diverting to call for notice. According to Spencer, play comprises those activities which do not immediately subserve the vital processes; they are due, he says, to surplus vigour. We play "to let off steam" as it were. Now this theory sounds very plausible no doubt; and some people who are brimful of life and spirits will naturally be inclined to endorse the assertion of so learned a man. But that will be simply because they will wish to go on with their play and spare their brain all critical effort. In point of fact, Spencer's theory is sheer nonsense. Play is no by-product of a healthy organism. It is on the contrary its supreme concern. On Spencer's theory, however, play only comes in to use up the energy the rest of which is to be consumed with work.

We are built, he says in effect, to labour. But why do children play? And why does everybody else who is occupied in a congenial pursuit

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play? Spencer did not know nor will his theory help us to account for these facts. Play, not work, is what comes most natural to us.

Another theory of play is that advanced by Groos. In Groos' judgment play serves an educational purpose; and children, like animals, play in order to prepare themselves for their vocation in later life. But to see an intention like this in play is to miss its essential significance. The child does not play merely because it is young and because its immature instincts predispose it to activities which are to subserve other purposes in after life. It simply enjoys a period of infancy to which play is appropriate.

Upon the whole, the most tenable view of play is that given by Dr. G. Stanley Hall, who, in his volumes, "Adolescence" observes that play is "the motor habits and spirit of the past of the race, persisting in the present, as rudimentary functions sometimes of and always akin to rudimentary organs". Thus, we do not, as Groos asserts, rehearse in play-activities those modes of behaviour which are useful to us in after life : we rather revert in the play habit to altogether more primitive activities. Play, therefore, as Dr. Hall remarks, never practises the phyletically new. Children when playing do not exercise the faculties which are called out in

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later life and which would enable them to fit themselves for the serious duties of life. Even the child with its doll is not, as Groos would lead us to suppose, graduating in Nature's school for mothercraft; for motherhood involves the exercise of faculties which are entirely beyond the play-habit and which no play-habit as such can stimulate or engender. What we see exhibited in all such recreations is the exercise of atavistic and rudimentary functions, which as Hall tells us will in many cases "abort before maturity, but which live themselves out in play like the tadpole's tail, that must be both developed and used as a stimulus to the growth of legs which will otherwise never mature."

"The young", writes Hall, "grow up in the same forms of motor activity as old generations that have long preceded them, only to a limited extent, and if the form of every human occupation were to change to-day, play would be unaffected save in some of its superficial imitative forms. It would develop the motor capacities, impulses and fundamental forms of our past heritage, and their transformation into later acquired adult forms is progressively later. In play every mood and movement is instinct with heredity. Thus we rehearse the activities of our ancestors, how far back we know not and repeat their work in summative and adumbrated ways. It

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is reminiscent, albeit unconsciously, of our line of descent and each is the key to the other. The psycho-motive impulses that prompt it are the forms in which our forebears have transmitted to us their habitual activities. Thus stage by stage we re-enact their lives."

This goes a long way to account for play. To begin with, it suggests a solution to the question, why is play pleasant? Play is pleasant simply because, when we play, we satisfy impulses that are natural to us : we follow instincts which have perpetuated the race-life, and in doing so, exercise those primitive functions which are indissolubly interwoven with our fundamental existence. The form which play usually takes exemplifies this.

When playing children instinctively run, romp, leap, jump, climb, wrestle, swim, make bon-fires, gather fruit and flowers, throw missiles, etc. All such activities are of exceedingly primitive origin. They simply recapitulate the activities of the childhood of the race. Man from the earliest ages was accustomed to resort to such modes of behaviour ; when he found himself in the midst of the unruly forces of Nature, surrounded by wild-beasts, homeless, and without the means of subsistence, he instinctively acted upon such impulses as enabled him to escape from his foe, take shelter, climb trees and dwell

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in caves and go in search of food. These activities were not of a laborious nature. Man pursued when hunger compelled him to do so. He took refuge in flight, from a sense of security which the exercise of his locomotive apparatus gave him. And so of the child. When it plays it reverts to habits of racial origin and significance. The child's love of climbing, for instance, is merely due to the survival of the self-same instinct which led its ancestors to seek safety in the trees. Its notorious addiction to the fascination of puddles and fire, may no less be due to the impulses which led primitive man to coerce the unruly elements into doing his bidding.

Such considerations as these, which demonstrate the racial origin of play-activities, suggest to us that the functions of which we are speaking are un-intellectual. Play, involving as it does well-worn brain-tracts is, therefore, the result, not of mental power, properly so-called, but of certain organic necessities of our nature. For this reason, it stands in direct contrast to the exercise of those volitional and intelligent operations which entail sustained attention, concentration, abstraction and analysis. Play is needed principally for the reason that it is pre-intellectual. The mental powers which develop latest in evolutionary life, are highly subject to fatigue.

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Hence any prolonged strain to which they may be put, would speedily produce exhaustion and nervous debility unless means were resorted to, to establish equilibrium. Play furnishes us with such a means, and through such purposeless activities permits of recuperation. Play instead of producing further fatigue, acts as a restorative. This involves a psychological reason. It is because play provides for the exercise of simple, primitive activities. These correspond to a mode of release from the rigid inhibition induced by social pressure. In play, we simply return to the childhood of the race. Of this fact, it is true, we are individually unconscious, but all spontaneous diversions of the kind are intelligible on the hypothesis. Thus, children, when playing, invariably show their preference for some simple object, such as a stick or a spade. No child, if left to itself, selects the expensive mechanical toys which appeal to the adult. The explanation is perfectly simple : the child, when unsophisticated, is more clearly aware of its primitive needs, and such needs prompt it to choose such playthings as afford the freest scope for the exercise of its instincts. The doll and the knife, therefore, are admirably suited, in the child's estimation, to its needs. In point of fact they answer to two latent race-memories.

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From this it is easy to see why the child is attracted, like elder persons in their play-moods, by the thrilling and sensational. The thrilling and sensational are the old and elemental. In warfare and in racing, and under the spell of the sporting and adventurous instincts, the human race started on its pilgrimage.

And it is to the arousal of these impulses that the fascination of such pursuits may be attributed. It may seem somewhat paradoxical, but it is true, nevertheless, that witnessing a sensational event, reading a thrilling romance, or taking part in an exciting game of chance, may have the effect of tranquillising a person. This would be unintelligible were it not for the obvious fact that, when participating in such recreations, we are working the older, more basilar and more primitive parts of the brain. In doing so we thereby inhibit the superior and more recently acquired powers, which have the chance of becoming rested.

Man's need of exercise, therefore, is fundamental and so true is this that man rests, not when he abstains from every activity, but when he rings the changes upon his various modes of activity. Modern man has complained of the toilsomeness and fatigue of having so much of his daily life confined in an office, seated upon a stool. All things considered it is marvellous

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that he should have adapted himself to such an unnatural posture as he has. But modern man's complaint, that it is sitting that is responsible for his fatigue, is only half a truth : it is because he refrains from using his legs. Originally, man used his feet to a far greater extent than at present. And this demand of his nature, though seriously interrupted by the conditions under which he lives, and the multiplication of mechanical contrivances which obviate the necessity of his walking, has not been eradicated. Man, in short, modern man, when he sits for any length of time, becomes fatigued, not because he happens to have been sitting, but because his right to use his legs has been ignored. In consequence of which he is a victim of a "baulking" of his nature.

This will enable us to realise the extraordinary exhilaration which attends such pursuits as golf. Men seek, and find, relief in golf not alone because they escape from the physical stuffiness of their office and business-life into the fresh air ; but also because, through the exercise and muscular effort which such games involve, they are temporarily released from the clutch of conventional existence. And this is fatiguing, not because it is essentially subversive of their natural inclinations, but because, at best, it imposes such inhibitions as are calcul-

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ated to produce tension and strain. Thus the need for periodic relief becomes, under civilized conditions, imperative. And hence it is that, not only in play, but in many other ways, relaxation has been prescribed.

One such means is religion. Ultimately, all religious exercises, are so many devices for "letting go". Religion, to prove effectual, should sustain us. Music again, constitutes a marvelous restorative in cases of emotional and nervous strain. Yet another means is sleep, in which according to Freud, the dreams play an enormously efficacious role. As for dreaming, according to Freud, so far from its tending to disturb the sleeper, it positively facilitates his rest. Its function, he tells us, is that of gratifying the wishes which are withheld from us in our waking state. We dream in order that our wishes may be fulfilled. Our dreams provide us with a realisation of our wishes. An illustration may prove helpful. A certain friend of the writer's, happened to be away from home. He was not well off and his wife was obliged to write to him for money. Unfortunately he was not in a position to comply with her request. But on going to sleep he had a dream in which he was taking a walk and picking up half-pennies everywhere.

The dream, of course, came in response to

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the husband's desire to be in the position to send his wife the money. Freud's theory of psychology is based entirely upon the existence of such repressed wishes. We are all, he says, victims of desires which we have to repress. Some of these desires are "evil" : other wishes are the forlorn hopes which we refuse to brood over. We brush them aside; and think that, by an effort of the will, we have made an end of them. In reality, we have only **BURIED THEM ALIVE**; in our subconscious life, they still lead a half-animate existence, and struggle and strive for expression. Fits of rage and weeping, which are often due to no assignable cause, are due to suppressed desires which slumber in the subconscious depths of our nature. And until these are squarely admitted and faced, or until they yield to psycho-analytic treatment, we are liable to suffer from the effects consequent upon their repression. Not without reason has religion recommended confession on the part of those who, but for some sympathetic ear into which to pour their troubles, would be compelled to become a prey to their balked wishes and unrealized ideals.

Among the many available modes of relief from such tension, however, none is more effectual than laughter. Laughter has long been defended as one of the most important factors

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in health; as a nerve tonic, it has found innumerable advocates. Yet laughter is frequently frowned upon as improper. To be "correct", we are often obliged to preserve a sober and grave demeanour; whereas a hearty laugh would be of incalculable benefit. For laughter, like no other act, brings relief.

Laughter, in a wholly unique manner, frees us from strain. Many a difficult situation may be saved if only it is met by a good laugh.

To laugh means to get the better of things.

We laugh not only at the comical : we make things comical by laughing at them. In tragedy, the will is over-powered : in comedy, man is more than a match for circumstances. He bobs up smiling every time. Laughter is the breath of life. People will sometimes laugh under peculiar conditions : they may have run to catch a bus, and only just caught it. Down they will sit, laughing. The situation, of course, is not in the least funny except to the onlooker; and even he may be at a loss to account for such mirth. The explanation, of course, lies in the sense of relief at having accomplished a feat little short of impossible !

Laughter it is evident possesses a psychological significance. This is clear from the fact that it implicates the muscles of the diaphragm and chest, as well as those of the face. The exercise

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of these muscles brings a sense of relief from inner tension and constraint. Hence the exhilarating effects of any comical situation or personality. It appeals not exclusively, if at all, to the intellectual faculties : but produces a bodily reaction which is followed by a sense of liberation and comfort.

When we consider the deadly seriousness of modern life, and the exacting demands which are made upon us by the proprieties and conventions of society with a view to inhibiting the spontaneous expression of our constitutional impulses, the significance of the occasions of laughter will be realized. Not alone in Germany, but wherever civilization has extended its sway, life inevitably tends to assume a sedate and sober aspect; in consequence of which we may say, in the words of an eminent authority, that all such civilizing influences involve the progressive renunciation of our natural instincts.

All group life, in point of fact, is exposed to the same drawbacks, inasmuch as it calls for restraint, repression and self denial on the part of its members. In one way, no doubt, this is immensely advantageous; since, but for the claims of society, the individual would remain destitute of those qualities which are exclusively conferred upon him by contact with his fellows. Beyond a certain point, however, social pressure is little

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short of disastrous. Hence, the subordination of the individual, which may exhibit itself either in acts of violence, excentricity, or outbursts of laughter, which, inconvenient they may appear, are blessings in disguise. In his heart of hearts, every man cherishes a grudge against the conventions and usages of polite society, by means of which he is kept in his place. Law and order, though necessary from the point of view of the majority, are invariably irksome to the minority, who instinctively rebel against the supremacy of such institutions.

Accordingly, all lapses, irregularities and deviations from the accepted ways of doing things produce mirthful reactions upon us. Somebody, instead of walking with his accustomed dignity, effects a hop, skip and a jump; or someone, in defiance of custom, adopts exaggerated gestures, either unconsciously or with a view to arouse merriment : we instantly indulge in laughter. The vogue of Charlie Chaplin appears to be attributable to no other cause than our secret satisfaction at the temporary suspension of the customary and habitual. Charlie may be nonsensical, but he is not senseless. Only things are senseless, and every man has a right to protest against their tyrannical monotony.

Law and order may be perfectly tolerable in

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their place; but when they prevent manhood from finding its legitimate sphere they become a nuisance. Hence, our delight at the escapades of Charlie. He is a veritable law unto himself: and so much so, that we cannot help feeling that we should like his chance for having our fling — even at the risk of incurring a minimum of inconvenience. His is a sort of vicarious enjoyment, in which we are the willing participants. Charlie, for all his folly, is never quite so stupid and absurd as the things and persons he refuses to take seriously. Comedy and tragedy blend in his exploits; but comedy predominates, as it should; and he comes up smiling in the end.

It is not however, only by bodily contortions that mirthful relaxation is manifested. Lapses in speech also may accomplish similar results. And in this connection, we may readily appreciate the potent appeal of PROFANITY. Whence proceeds the fascination of the profane? Clearly, it is due to the attempt to effect one's escape from the trammels of propriety, decorum and conventionality. In our inmost selves we all despise the taboos which the exigencies of "law and order" have prescribed for us. And in our efforts to get the better of these, the indulgence in a profane expression brings with it a sense of intense relief. It supplies, therefore, a

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mode of release from tension, and affords us a vent for emotions that "polite society" is unwilling to countenance. Many expressions that are used in swearing are clearly traceable to a reaction against the influence of social taboos. They refer, for the most part, either to very primitive instincts or to "sacred" objects. As to the religious association of the oath, it may be pointed out that it was originally used to give force to a statement. Sociologically, veracity is not an early virtue, but to reinforce an assertion by mentioning the name of a sacred being, was calculated to impress one's hearers. Perhaps, however, the social antipathy which is provoked by the profane, is principally attributable to the survival of the superstitious dread in which the spoken word of a malignant-minded person is frequently held among primitive mankind. On this point the following passage, from "Alpha and Omega", by Miss Jane Harrison, is illuminating :

"A savage has an enemy, he wants to hurt him, so he makes a rude image of his enemy and sticks pins into it. Here, we are sometimes told, the savage acts in obedience to a false law of analogy; he argues, "As I stick pins into this image, so may sharp things be stuck into my enemy, and he be hurt". The real explanation is far simpler. The savage cannot get at his enemy,

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who is remote and anyhow reluctant, so he gets his psychological relief by sticking pins into the image : he does so for the sheer joy of the thing. Such embryonic joy is not dead to-day. We get a letter that hurts us : instinctively we tear it up. There is more in this than obedience to a law of false analogy. The mere tearing of it up makes us feel better ”.

The subjective delight, however, at another's expense, has unquestionably been connected, and is still unthinkingly connected, with the malign influence once supposed to derive from such procedures. Hence, one may conclude, the ban upon the curse.

The significance, however, which Miss Harrison sees in the subjective satisfaction afforded by the indulgence in this practice, is amply borne out by an appeal to the situations in which profane expressions are resorted to. For example, in his work, *THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELAXATION*, Prof. G. T. W. Patrick, speaks of the case of ” a German peasant, who left the train for a moment at a small station on his journey ”, and who ” returned just in time to see the doors of the cars shut by the guard ”. What followed? Just this : as soon as he realized that he had been left behind, he stopped with an expression of dismay, and then with a tremendous force pronounced the word ” SAKRAMENT ”. The

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explanation which Prof. Patrick provides is as follows :

”The ”SAKRAMENT” which the peasant uttered completes in a certain sorry fashion the activity which should have been completed by his entering the carriage. The emotion, his disappointment and chagrin, are psychical states which accompany the attempts at readjustment or inhibition, and are to a certain extent allayed by the oath. As a means of restoring disturbed balance and of relieving inner tension, profanity thus has a CATHARSIS effect similar to that of laughter and play and may thus appear as a form of relaxation. This effect is probably further increased by the elemental characteristic of profanity itself. The individual revels in an outburst of primitive language giving him a certain sense of release and escape from the constant inhibitions which society demands”.

From profanity, we may pass on to the subject of alcohol. Of its universal appeal, nobody can remain in doubt. But to what is such an appeal due? By some, this has been ascribed to the inherent depravity of man : by others, it has been regarded as due rather to human ignorance, or as a substitute for good cooking. Careful inquiry, however, goes to show that neither assumption is correct.

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It may perhaps be as well, in the first place, to observe that innumerable misconceptions upon the value of alcohol have been prevalent and still exist. It has been regarded, for example, as a food substitute, and civilized man has frequently taken it under the impression that it would answer the same purpose as solid food. While, however, it may appear to offer similar advantages, the results attending the administration of alcohol lend no support to this assumption. Nor is alcohol a stimulant. Its tendency is to depress. But this is not to say that alcohol produces no definite effect. On the contrary, it deadens pain, relieves care, and produces a general sense of ease, well-being and contentment.

Alcohol is desired, therefore, not because it produces (as is so often imagined) states of consciousness of higher intensity : but precisely because it lowers such tension. Its result is to produce a temporary paralysis of the higher brain centres. And this has the EFFECT of stimulation. But such stimulation is only apparent and illusory. Alcohol, then, it may be said, supplies an undeniable need; but this often at too great a cost. The resort to alcoholic "stimulation" is disastrous especially owing to its after-effects : the following inevitable reaction causing a morbid or unhealthy

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state both of the physical and psychical organism.

This, however, is not to say that the person who seeks relief in alcohol is a natural pervert or degenerate. Far otherwise. Nor must we regard alcohol save as one of the least innocuous safety-valves that society has provided for the relief of man. There are innumerable such safety-valves : and among them we may include sport, art, and certain varieties of " religion ". But, demoralising as such agencies may be, it is, after all, highly questionable whether the excessive indulgence in either drink or any form of pleasure is more to be regretted than the monotony, routine and drudgery that lead to it. In any case, the only safe remedy for the abuse of such expedients is a more intelligent apprehension of the true function and value of relaxation.

Of all our criminal follies, none has been fraught with greater evil than our puritanical neglect of this question. Moral enthusiasm is, unquestionably, one of the most tremendous of human powers : but, unless it be directed by the intellect, its results may be far from beneficial. To take work in a serious spirit may be right : but to consider play from a frivolous standpoint is wrong. " Inspiration ", not " perspiration ", should be our watchword.

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And for that, our conception of life must involve a revaluation of existence upon a more recreative basis. Unless brains are made to tell where brains are required, they will be applied in undesirable directions. This is where "capitalism" scores. Vast enterprises, which are conducted altogether irrespective of their moral and social consequences, are promoted, which, in default of better ones, secure widespread public support. Museums, art galleries and play grounds may be advocated by the authorities; but the cinemas, public-houses and race-course constitute the most formidable competitors to such institutions; and this for the obvious reason that they provide an atmosphere which, while it may lack elevation, is nevertheless destitute of dullness. In other words, our organised cultural resources fail, as yet, to appeal to those cravings which require to be catered for. To make these attractive, we must forget the ponderous abstractions which have regulated our efforts to promote them. Instead, we must consider the concrete psychology of human nature. And, until this is made our paramount problem, no solution of either labour or recreation can be found.

CHAPTER IV

THE RIGHT TO BE HAPPY

Happiness seems to be the most fundamental craving of human nature. Like the desire for sunshine and fresh air, or the appetite for food, happiness, and the wish to realize it, appears to be a normal condition of life. Without it, none can be said to live in the true sense of that word.

When, however, we proceed to consider the actual state of average mankind, we discover that comparatively few are vouchsafed anything approaching the degree of happiness to which it would seem they are entitled. Seldom is happiness our portion. Rarely, if ever, are people to be met who would describe themselves as thoroughly happy. And the more such people begin to think of their lot, the less likely are they to express satisfaction with it. Most of us are more or less dissatisfied and unhappy. Many men are downright miserable. And the majority probably are induced to prolong their existence only on the offchance that the future may hold better things in store for them. Why is this?

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In speaking of happiness one should not omit mention of the claim which man makes to be happy. Everybody feels that somehow happiness is his due : that he has a right to expect it. Yet this would appear to be in complete defiance of experience. Human life in the aggregate, whatever the facile optimists may allege, has never yielded an excess of happiness. Nor have the conclusions of the philosophers and religiously-minded suggested that happiness need be looked for — at least upon earth. Man, it was said of old, is born to trouble : tribulation is our appointed portion. And this idea has met with emphatic endorsement at the hands of some of the most modern of men. Mr. Shaw, for instance, has not scrupled to remind us that he has long ago renounced happiness as an ideal. In his own words :

"Happiness is not the object of life : life has no object : it is an end in itself ; and courage consists in the readiness to sacrifice happiness for an intenser quality of life."

Whether this is indeed a higher ideal than that of happiness is perhaps a more debatable problem than Mr. Shaw appears to think. For, unless one restricts the term to the exclusive enjoyment of sensuous pleasure, it is manifestly evident that any off-hand assumption

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of this sort is as meaningless as it is arbitrary. Mr. Shaw, no doubt, like many more, derives little satisfaction from the prospect of instantly attaining a condition of existence in which every immediate wish would be gratified without the necessity of effort or struggle. But, in saying this much, does he commit himself to any denial of the self-evident truth that the worth-whileness of life consists, in the main, in the preponderance of pleasurable experiences? Of course he does not. Clearly, while he professes to abandon the pursuit of the ideal of happiness, his gift for paradox has only led him to reconceive of this ideal, and to picture a form of happiness which is to afford him an intenser sense of happiness.

We need not, then, take exception to the popular belief that happiness is a legitimate object of human life. Nor need we even question the soundness of the instinct that has inspired the superstition that there is a vital connection between happiness and virtue. Such a connection, indeed, does exist. This was especially apparent to the Israelites. To the Jew, human well-being was attainable on one condition : the due observance of the Mosaic law. But this was an attempt to prove that moral and material well-being were eventually one and the same thing. Thus, it was held virtue ensured peace, honour, prosperity and

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length of days : whilst vice entailed misery, disgrace, and inner discord. Providence showed his favour by rewarding the faithful with appropriate blessings : these, however, were received upon earth, and were not reserved for post-mortem bliss (which was not seriously considered by the Jews). Hence the psalmist's enthusiastic deliverance :

"I have been young and now am old ; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

Such a conception, in spite of its crudity, must have survived for long ages ; for it was not until the subsequent tribulation of the Israelites, and when it was discovered that terrestrial justice was not invariably to be relied upon, that the doctrine of future rewards and punishments was introduced. In this respect, of course, the New Testament, and the teaching deduced from it, stands in marked contrast to the old. For, whereas in the latter, wordly prosperity is regarded as especial proof of divine favour, in the New Testament the lot of the righteous is identified with "spiritual" rather than "mundane" things. In the New Testament, it is clear, the promise is to the sorrowful and afflicted. These, the rejected and despised, need not expect to find the world a comfortable

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abode. Life for the worthy must necessarily be hard and toilsome. No adequate compensation can be made to the man who has steadfastly prepared to live for immortal ends : and, as a natural consequence, he must abandon the base estimate of mankind. To say that Christ deliberately inculcated this, or that he sought to teach men to despise the world, would be indeed to subvert the spirit of his genius. At the same time, it is undoubtedly true that Christianity has been made responsible for the sanctification of suffering. Jesus has been hailed, *PAR EXCELLENCE*, as "the man of sorrows"; and life, for his followers, has been regarded as an inevitable "vale of tears".

That Christianity has tended to spiritualise our conception of happiness, we need not dispute. To the Jew it was emphatically a question primarily of material prosperity. And that material prosperity does not exhaust our resources for happiness is too evident to require demonstration. On the other hand, it may be questioned whether the "joys" which Christianity has consecrated are calculated to appeal as forcibly to the average man as has sometimes been assumed. Thus, the traditional ideal of Christian happiness has clearly involved the surrender of all terrestrial enjoyment for the sake of a "higher" and different idea of happi-

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ness which it is alleged is conferred by a supernatural means. The world, and the things of the world, have been sharply contrasted with the delights of heaven, and, it has been held, to seek even a minimum of such satisfaction is delusive, if not fatal. To say that the modern Christian does not take such doctrines seriously is to make no reply to the charge which can be brought against his faith. Were he a thorough-going Christian, and not a very average-minded person, the "Christian" would necessarily find himself, not only among the number of the dispossessed, the sorrowing and the down-trodden : he would long ago have refused to perpetuate his existence at all, and by this time have become extinct.

Whether such "Christianity" has not been exterminated, in spite of the ineffectual attempts of the few surviving Christians to rehabilitate it, is a matter of speculation. But, at least, the theory which has been associated with it has survived. And, as a natural consequence, we still witness much that is morbid, unwholesome and perverted in the religious aspect of life. Instead of men realizing that it is, in truth, their right to be happy, they have only too often professed, on spiritual grounds, to renounce their legitimate instincts, and to substitute for their natural and normal exercise the accept-

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ance of a theory of life which is as artificial and grotesque as it is demoralising and misrepresentative of their nature.

Instead, therefore, of quibbling over theories, we may put the case thus : not only is it man's right to be happy : it is his duty. Were he to be completely deprived of happiness, all sense of the worth or significance of existence would vanish. On the traditional view, to be sure, happiness is a snare : pain and suffering have almost universally been held to be the source of human salvation. Who, however, in his heart, believes this : or who, while he may feel that the courageous acceptance of a minimum of suffering is not incompatible with a tolerable existence, does not resolutely endeavour to eliminate the chance of such suffering ? Who would voluntarily have undertaken to create a world so fraught with suffering as the present ? Or who, realizing how much misery and pain is entailed in it, would not, does not, seek to recreate life, and thereby improve upon the scheme of the creator he has professed to worship ? Such considerations as these involving as they do the most practical implications, may well be pondered ere we attempt to perpetuate the blasphemy that pain rather than joy is worthy of pursuit.

In proceeding now to prosecute our enquiry,

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and on the threshold of our subject, it becomes our duty to analyse. What, we ask, is happiness? And here at the outset we encounter a serious difficulty. Any hard and fast definition of such a term becomes impossible. Happiness, like many another thing, involves a tremendous paradox. We rarely think of it consciously, unless we happen to be miserable! Happiness, when it is discussed at all, has usually been discussed under the stress of depression and affliction. This explains why so much of the world's philosophy has been pessimistic. Profound thinkers, it has been asserted, are naturally pessimists. This, however, is not necessarily the case. Much facile optimism it is true may be shallow. But an impartial survey of the facts and problems of life is not necessarily conducive to despair. The case for pessimism, and a strong case at that, would seem indeed to be sufficiently made out by an imposing array of facts. Happily, however, any such case must of necessity ignore the most impressive of all facts, viz., the refusal of man to accept them at their face value. No such array of facts has sufficed to dispose of the instinctive optimism that dwells in the human heart. Contrary to what has sometimes been declared, it is our profound conviction that we should be happy, that we can be happy, and that we will be happy.

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This fact of itself must constitute the most emphatic and convincing refutation of the pessimist's philosophy.

Happiness, it is evident, has a wide significance. There is first of all what we may speak of as the negative form of happiness : the mere exemption from suffering. Much happiness is unconscious rather than conscious. Thus, when we are in perfect health, we are, at least as far as our physical state goes, in a condition of happiness.

To be free from pain, anxiety and trouble, is to experience at least some measure of comfort. And comfort is an element in the happy life. Simply to realize that things are " all right " with us, is to have eliminated some of the conditions that would give rise to unhappiness. The question, however, suggests itself : does happiness depend upon external conditions, and if so, to what extent? If what we have just said is true, manifestly external conditions cannot altogether be disregarded in our problem. There is an inseparable connection between us and our environment; and while it may be true that the thoroughly happy man may feel himself to be superior to circumstances, it is infinitely truer that the average man should realize how much his happiness is dependent upon the favourable adjustment to his surroundings. No profounder

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delusion exists than the conception that the realm of the mind is separate and apart from the accompanying material economy. Mind and body form an indissoluble alliance; and while it may be an exaggeration to contend that the mental life is the mere by-product of the physical, it is no less erroneous to maintain that a state of true contentment can proceed from an inharmonious condition of the outer man. The body is of tremendous significance; and complete happiness is impossible unless the organs and functions are healthy and sound. Hence, happiness, in the real sense, is impossible to the anæmic, to the martyr to indigestion, or to those suffering from depressed vitality. Fatigue and exhaustion, again, exert an unfavourable effect upon the psychic, as well as the bodily life. To enfeeble the capacity for natural enjoyment, must inevitably diminish happiness. Accordingly, all derangements of the nutritive and respiratory functions must be regarded as obstacles to its attainment. This fact has frequently been ignored : it was certainly overlooked by the stoics, who threw the whole weight of emphasis upon the Mind. With Marcus Aurelius, for instance, the recipe for happiness consisted in subjecting ourselves to the exclusive sway of the sovereign reason. " Look inwards ", he wrote, " for you have a lasting fountain of

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happiness at home that will always bubble up if you will but dig for it ”.

To Seneca, again, happiness was dependent alone upon the practice of virtue : and one of the highest of virtues was utter indifference to the accidents of life — grief, pain, death, poverty, loss of reputation, etc. While, however, none of these things, either collectively or singly, need distress us to the extent that it is sometimes believed, it is no less evident that one and all of them must tend to reduce the sum of human enjoyment. Accordingly, the importance of harmony, satisfaction, abundant vitality, leisure, opportunity, etc., must not be under-estimated.

On the other hand, the influence of the mind upon us is undeniable. And no matter how fortunately circumstanced a man may be, unless his mental attitude is favourable, no external conditions or possessions can render him happy. ” Misfortune ”, moreover, may be a fixed idea with many people who would otherwise enjoy perfect happiness. They seem to have everything that can fall to the lot of man, yet in spite of it they remain dissatisfied. Here ” suggestion ” may prove a potent factor. They are miserable principally because they fail to realize that the eventual secret of life consists in the complete adjustment of every function and power. A mind that is not fully occupied is

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rarely happy. The man who has no time to be miserable is the happiest of men. And, to reinforce the strenuous mood by conscious appeals to the optimistic spirit, is one of the surest methods of realizing happiness. There is more than a grain of truth in "Christian Science". It may be a misnomer, but its votaries are right in maintaining that the repeated affirmation of a principle tends to produce corresponding results. It does. Nothing enfeebles the will so completely, or destroys the capacity for happiness so much as dwelling on the depressing side of life. No doubt, it is there; and even the denial of a Christian Scientist would be superfluous were not this the case. At the same time, by continually recalling this to the mind, by harping upon it we tend to exaggerate its importance. A healthy mind is simply a mind which can resist the untoward decrees of fate. Instead of succumbing to the worst, it surmounts it and by the very effort that it makes to oppose its adversity, it draws increased strength and confidence. The instinctive desire which all men have to exclude the painful, is a healthy symptom. It means that we prefer to attend to the things which yield us happiness. Practically speaking, of course, it is impossible to achieve this. Nevertheless, the more we tend to focus the mind upon the pleasurable objects

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and experiences of life, the better we shall promote those functions whose exercise is indispensable to vigour and happiness.

Here, however, it becomes necessary to interpolate a word or two upon the mistake of supposing that any static condition of life can yield true contentment. Our conception of happiness, especially under civilized conditions, is only too often a mistaken one. How many a person imagines that, in order to realize bliss, he has only to indulge his whims. Happiness, in innumerable instances has come to be identified with the indefinite multiplication of wants and the improvement of conditions. That there is a truth in this may be allowed. Civilized life doubtless involves the multiplication of an infinite variety of needs that were unknown to our brute ancestors. The fact, however, remains, that improved conditions alone cannot guarantee the satisfaction which man is prompted to seek. This was the lesson of Maeterlinck's *THE BLUE BIRD*. The story, it will be remembered, was that of two tiny children, who set out in their dream to discover the Blue Bird of Happiness. Before doing so, they received a visit from a benevolent fairy, who, having presented them with a magic hat to enable them "to see", conducted them successively to her own fairy abode, the Land of Memory, the

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Palace of Night, an enchanted forest, the Palace of Happiness, a graveyard, and the Kingdom of the Future. Although the children are permitted to view the Blue Bird, they never quite succeed in catching him. And, at length, at the end of their pilgrimage, the extraordinary biped is discovered to be in their own cottage. On awaking from his dream, the little boy, suddenly looking up at his bird in its cage, exclaims : " Hullo, why he's blue. But its my little dove. But he's much bluer than when I went away. Why that's the blue bird we were looking for. We went so far and he was here all the time ".

The point of the story, of course, lies in the indisputable fact, that to be in a position to realize Happiness, it must dwell within us. By some, this theory will, however, appear to be at variance with life, inasmuch as, they will tell us, a divine dissatisfaction, rather than ease or contentment, should animate mankind. So convinced was Carlyle of this that he could write, " Man's unhappiness, as I construe it, comes of his greatness; it is because there is an Infinite in him, which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite ". This spirit of divine discontent, however, is by no means incompatible with true happiness. This is beautifully illustrated by a poem of

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Mr. Trench's, in which Man is depicted in a succession of metamorphoses with none of which he remains satisfied. But in the end, when Nature addresses him and asks him whether he does not realize that everyone of his former states, which contented him only in prospect, were a delusion, Man replies that :

"Just to have been round and learned the grammar,

Contents me with my sitting pad and hammer".

While, therefore, Happiness is attainable rather through an adequate appreciation of the essential values of life, its achievement is far more a question of our attitude to life than anything. Yet, to know this requires such proof as only wise reflection and mature experience can yield. We may, it is true, realize joy in all things : but to experience such joy, we must first have learned to survey life from a proper angle.

It is regrettable, no doubt, that man should be so prone to neglect his experience. So much of the Happiness of life is missed, because, instead of realizing the source of joy in the things which are with us, we view life either too much in prospect or in retrospect. As Emerson has said, man has an inveterate habit of postponing and remembering ; he lives too much either in the future or in the past : it is a case of jam

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yesterday or jam tomorrow, but never jam today ! Many identify this Happiness exclusively with the things that they have LOST, or WILL have, or CAN NEVER GET ! These people should be reminded of the joys which reside in the present, and which once overlooked, can never be recovered.

The quest of Happiness — the search, that is, after a condition of things which shall produce an entire transformation of life, rendering it immune from the CONTRASTS which are indispensable to a sense of greater WELL-BEING, — is, then, largely illusory. Absolute Happiness, in a world conditioned by the relative experiences which are inevitable to growth and knowledge, is unthinkable. And since this is so, to seek deliberately for Happiness, instead of accepting the conditions of life as they are, is to court failure at the outset. No object upon which the heart may be set, yields the gratification which its pursuit may lead us to suppose. Riches, for example, however eagerly they may be coveted never give the possessor the sense of satisfaction for which he yearns.

Yet, if the object fails, it is nevertheless true that the business of money-making does bring a certain measure of satisfaction with it. Fate seems to decree that most of us shall be kept poor; and the average man who manages to

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amass a little wealth, not only feels that he has greater power than his fellows : he also feels that he has succeeded in cheating destiny. This is as it should be. All effort in which we rise superior to circumstances, is pleasurable; and in discharging our natural functions (the acquisitive instinct among the rest) we obtain an enhancement of those energies which contribute to the promotion of a healthy existence. Nothing is more fatal to a man than to suffer from the atrophy or misdirection of any natural function. To do so can but have the result of robbing life of its zest and interest.

It is probably owing to the fact that legitimate opportunities are denied to so many men for all-round development, that Happiness is as rare as it is. No doubt it may be argued that, when circumstances are against us, we should create circumstances. That is all very well, but in a social system such as at present, in which the vast majority of us are unconsciously, if not consciously implicated in the conspiracy to deprive mankind of the elementary right to be themselves, it is not to be wondered at that so many should go to the wall. The marvel is that so many should manage to get as much out of life as they do.

Happiness, then, which inheres in the legitimate exercise of each natural function and

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power, may be said to proceed from the use — not the abuse or disuse — of the organism. It lies, in short, in our INTERESTS and the chance which these afford us of self-expression. A striking illustration of the relation between occupation and Happiness is presented to us by Mr. Graham Wallas, in his work "THE GREAT SOCIETY". "When I was in Boston, U. S. A., in 1910", writes Mr. Wallas, "a lady who collected the stamps which represented the elementary savings of girls and women in the Boston laundries and poorer kinds of factories, most kindly consented, at my request, to ask those of them whose confidence she had gained whether they were happy. The answer at the time surprised me greatly. I expected to hear those complaints about bad wages, hard conditions and arbitrary discipline which a body of men working at the same grade of labour would certainly have put forward. But it was obvious that the question, "Are you happy?" meant to the girls, "are you happier than you would have been had you stayed at home instead of going to work?" Almost everyone of them answered "Yes". The replies that were elicited from the girls went to show that the employment in which they were engaged tended to "take up the mind", make them conscious that "you were of some use" and relieved the mo-

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notony and loneliness of "home life". One "little girl with dyed hair and a good heart", on being interrogated, replied to the effect that she enjoyed her work, which "made her feel that she was worth something". Such answers need cause us little surprise : for even granting that industrial conditions entail hardships, it is no less clear that the activities of an industrial career are perfectly consistent with the effective discharge of many functions which are inseparable from a healthy existence."

The question, however, may suggest itself: granting that our practical activities, in the main, are conducive to the enjoyment of happiness, do Happiness and Virtue necessarily coincide? Is the pursuit of duty synonymous with Happiness? or is Happiness itself ultimately a question which demands an ethical solution? Here, it seems, we must proceed with caution. On the face of it, it by no means follows that goodness and happiness are invariably associated or casually related. The moralist's maxim, indeed, "be good and you will be happy", is not wholly devoid of truth; for to be conscious that one has satisfied the claims of one's moral nature, is certainly an element in happiness. At the same time, while, theoretically, we cannot ignore the relation of the moral economy with our problem, neither can we pretend that Happiness is wholly

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dependent upon morality, nor that a considerable amount of happiness may be enjoyed irrespective of moral considerations. Very often, it seems, the moralist's assumption is strangely at variance with experience. Not only are many persons, of indifferent moral character, far from being miserable but also some of the loftiest natures are anything but happy. Probably most of us would agree that the pursuit of moral ideals is seldom rewarded by unalloyed happiness.

Whereas ease and self-complacency usually bring a certain measure of satisfaction. In one sense, morality must certainly involve the repudiation of mere happiness : inasmuch as self-sacrifice, if it is genuine, can never mean the exchange of one form of happiness for another. When a person performs an act of self-sacrifice simply with a view to increase the sum total of his happiness, his conduct is morally worthless. Further, it may be said that though the performance of duty (since it relieves us from inward reproach), is a source of negative happiness, this seldom ensures complete satisfaction. All virtuous persons are "unprofitable servants"; whilst the worst men, if they are unconscious of the bliss which follows upon disinterested behaviour, are no less saved the pangs of conscience or the sting of remorse. Anyone who realizes what it is to have a

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"conscience" is aware that it constitutes an element of suffering. If we are out for sheer unadulterated pleasures, then it is certainly necessary to renounce conscience : to give way to the solicitations of the senses and to follow the path of least resistance. Very possibly, if any moral person were able to do this, he would ultimately experience moods of regret. At the same time, by ignoring the appeal of our "higher-self" our moral sensibilities become blunted and deadened. Which fact only goes to prove that, while certain higher aspects of joy may be denied us, we are no less deprived of the pain which their appreciation must involve.

All this, however, is not to say that the popular belief in virtue as a means of Happiness — at least of the permanent sort — is a delusion. Right living, in the main, invariably tends to augment human welfare : and this inevitably coincides with Happiness. Industry, purity, moderation and honesty are morally preferable to sloth, sensuality, intemperance and dishonesty. Nor is their moral worth a mere figure of speech. Such courses of behaviour ensure appropriate rewards. In the long run, the worker tends to be respected while the idler is despised. The pure and the temperate, who show self-respect, claim the regard of their fellows. And so of the honest and trustworthy : he in turn, wins the

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confidence and trust of others. The same with other virtues and vices. Anger, selfishness and envy may, it is true, yield a momentary sense of gratification : but these no less involve the loss of friends, and provoke animosity and dislike. It may certainly be agreed that our moral qualities, for the most part, contribute in a greater degree to social welfare than to individual prosperity. At the same time, since our life is pre-eminently a social affair, it is all but impossible to suggest how, save by ethical means, human welfare in the aggregate can ultimately be promoted.

One aspect of our problem however still calls for elucidation. It is the necessity for a QUALITATIVE estimate of Happiness. Directly we speak of Happiness we are prone to think of it in quantitative terms. But this is impossible. Many natural objects that give outward and visible signs of joy are inferior to man, even the least happy man, when judged by the qualitative standard. A case in point is the lark. From its song, one might easily suppose that the lark was far superior to ourselves from the standpoint of happiness. But blithe and joyous as the lark may be, it is clear that it must remain for all its rapturous moods, insensible to much that affords man happiness. If the lark knows nothing of the toil and care that springs from human grief and

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wretchedness, neither does it realize the deep sense of serenity and gladness that proceed from our vision of the ideal; our hopes for better things; our faith in the grand possibilities of human perfection.

In the last analysis, all man's bliss and pain appear to be referable to the selfsame origin : his sensitiveness. By means of this, and this alone, our development has been provided for. And unless this had been so, though we might have realized intense happiness of a sort, we could never have discriminated the finer shades of joy and sorrow. Our sensitiveness, it is true, is a double-edged weapon. On the one hand it is the source of undeniable evil and sorrow. But on the other hand, sensitiveness is the source and condition of all good including Happiness.

Persons are to be found who, viewing the welter of human misery, would infinitely prefer (so they tell us) to have been born to the lot of a jelly fish. A jelly fish, they fancy, pursues a life which is at least destitute of trouble. In all probability, this is so. But we must not forget that, if the disappointments and dreads of life are not (quantitatively) compensated by its hopes and ideals, to be deprived of the experience of the one is to forego the other. There are, we hear it said, people who never seem to suffer. Is their case, however, as enviable

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as we sometimes assume? In all likelihood, it is not. These people, we may be sure, though they are spared the worst, can never know the true value of the best. It is the same with sympathy. It is a prime cause of sorrow. Yet who would be without it? Those, who, having once sympathised, would shut themselves off from those who excite their feelings of pity, shut themselves off no less from the joy which comes from the effort to alleviate misery and woe.

In concluding our survey of this subject we cannot perhaps do better than to consider the means by which it becomes possible to surmount suffering. It is perhaps impossible to hope to eliminate completely recurrence of those moods which, arising from the very sensitiveness which yields our most exquisite exultation, renders us liable to despondency and sorrow. While life lasts, all are subject to such alternations of feeling. Yet, if what we have said be true, the transmutation of sorrow should be possible to all who are persuaded that life is worth living. Let us remember, then, that however disappointing our experience, and however much inclined we may be to agree with the pessimists, while life lasts, and so long as we consent to go on living, we are PRACTICAL OPTIMISTS. Every moment that we continue to breathe, each time our lungs respire, our hearts beat, our limbs

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move, our functions act, we are giving the lie to the doctrine of pessimism. In effect, we affirm that life is worth while : that it is better to be than not to be and that we believe so far in the purpose of things. To sustain this attitude, it is doubtful whether a more beautiful and fitting declaration could be found than is furnished by some words of Dr. Felix Adler :

” At bottom, the world is to be interpreted in terms of joy, but of a joy that includes all the pain, includes it and transforms it, and transcends it. ”

Here, by an act of religious faith, we are transported into the mood which is begotten of the intensest conviction that, despite all appearances to the contrary, life is fundamentally good : and that every effort that we make to promote all that enhances the worth and significance of things is destined to yield us an ultimate and abiding joy. Such a faith may be beyond the resources of reason. Is it, however, above the range of experimental proof ?

Such ecstasy is essentially religious. Nay : it is religion. For Religion rightly interpreted, is not the consecration of suffering : it is rather the sanctification of the higher joy which may proceed from such suffering. All our deeper expe-

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rience yields us perplexity. And, in the central solitudes of the soul, it is often hard to make a distinction between suffering and joy. In each new experience, joy and suffering seem blended. "Our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught." Yet would we be without the pain? We would not: else perchance our very laughter would be denied us. Each bitter experience, loss, bereavement, disappointment, suffering may entail grief and heaviness. But from one and all we may attain a fuller and deeper sense of the significance of life. Man has no greater need than to accept the inevitable. But the discovery must necessitate that he shall make his peace with pain. And, having done so, Happiness may still remain to him. Pain may be the price that man pays for joy: but it is worth while, for without it, joy is impossible for man and life itself is as nothing.

CHAPTER V

OUR BAULKED DISPOSITIONS

It is frequently asserted that "mankind is the same the world over". And with certain reservations, the statement may be accepted as substantially true. In one sense especially, is this so. While, to all appearances, no greater diversity, as regards tastes, sympathies, modes of life, interests and outlook, can possibly exist than between the savage and civilised, the resemblance is greater than their superficial dissimilarity.

But to appreciate this fact, and to realize its truth, it is necessary to consider some of the factors which are frequently ignored in the discussion of human nature. To generalize, indeed, is common enough. But the generalizations which are often indulged in are calculated to throw little or no light upon the problems which they are intended to solve. The term "human nature", for instance, is constantly used as though man were a being possessed of a sort of deific reason, in virtue of which he should invariably rise superior to every instinct upon which the relatively lowly denizens of the animal kingdom in general are supposed

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to rely. Human life, it is given out, in so far as it has succeeded, must be dependent upon the exercise of the intellect rather than the instincts; and to replace those by the "higher faculties" engendered by the brain, is obviously man's privileged task. While this is half a truth, it is only half a truth. And to accept it without examination is to fail altogether to do justice to the intricacies of human life.

This fact is apparent directly we consider how largely human life is, and must be, dependent upon the self-same instincts which reside in the animal kingdom at large. Although man's superiority may consist in the possession of a developed brain and the appropriate intelligence which it confers, this fact does not in the least dispose of the underlying dispositions, impulses and tendencies without which the brain itself would be useless and uncultivated. The functions of the brain, it is clear, while they may perform the duties of abstract thought, are no less concerned with the regulation of those concrete activities which are inextricably connected with our bodily life. Accordingly, as we cannot rightly sever mind and body, it is essential to see how far the body influences the mind, and in what relation the natural feelings and impulses stand to the mental life as a whole.

At the outset, we shall be required to make

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a clear, if somewhat arbitrary discrimination, between what it will be convenient to call CHARACTER and DISPOSITION. By CHARACTER, let it be said, we mean that part of us that is acquired or made by us : all that is the product of the will. But, besides this, we have also the involuntary department of our being — that was born with us : that we did not choose or create. To this we may fittingly give the name of DISPOSITION. By disposition, then, we imply the sum of all the instincts with their specific impulses and tendencies. And from this disposition proceed those propensities and inclinations which prompt us to experience hunger, give rise to curiosity, or render us prone to fall in love, etc. Such dispositions are common to the race. And these, far more than abstract properties of thought, fundamentally characterize and distinguish average human nature.

In speaking of the dominance of instinct in human nature, we cannot do better than to consider the position which is occupied by these dispositions in the human economy. And it may be remarked, at the outset, that the admission of the instincts is somewhat characteristic of the modern mode of thought. Generally speaking, these have been excluded from consideration, or have been, if not eliminated altogether, relegated to a wholly subordinate

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place. In this respect, our moral and religious traditions in particular have tended to operate most aversely, inasmuch as they have opposed their full play and exercise. Nor has the warfare on the instincts been restricted to the West. Whilst, therefore, Monastic Christianity, as well as Puritanism and Protestantism, did not hesitate to enforce the ideal of fleshy mortification, Buddhism, in the East, insisted upon the extinction of self. Stoicism, again, despite its rational pretensions, also counselled self-repression. And Kant, for all his revolt against theological abstractions, undertook to show that a becoming apprehension of duty must necessarily be in inverse ratio to the inclinations. Hence the popular theory of goodness, which in effect has been exclusively identified with self-denial. Thus self-sacrifice, irrespective altogether of the consequences, has been regarded as meritorious. Thus have "Godliness" and "Nature", by being sharply contrasted, been viewed as in incessant and eternal conflict.

To reinstate the instincts, and to accord them the dignity which is due to them, must certainly be accounted one of the signal achievements of modern psychology. And this, needless to relate, must have remained impossible but for the now-admitted inter-relation of the body and the mind. Though, it is evident, it would be perilous to

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endorse the unsupported assertion that the mind is the mere by-product of the brain, or that the bodily states are completely at the mercy of the mind, it is nevertheless clear that the mental and organic life are mutually dependent upon, and supplementary to, each other. So much so, that to deprive human nature of its natural instincts would be to forfeit all claim to a complete and effective life. This has been realized by none better than the poets. And Browning's words may be construed as a prophetic anticipation of the trend of modern speculation :

"Let us not always say
"Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made way, gained ground upon the
As the bird wings and sings, [whole !"
Let us cry, "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than
flesh helps soul !"

To the average man, nothing would be easier than to demonstrate the futility of the ascetic ideal. Briefly, the mistake of opposing the instincts to the spiritual economy may be stated thus : (1) that by this deliberate neglect or suppression, emancipation from their thralldom is impossible ; (2) to mortify the flesh is by no means necessarily the same thing as to cultivate the spirit — and especially so, seeing that, by

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such means, an exaggerated importance is attached to the former; (3) self-repression is apt to limit our notion of good for others, as well as ourselves. Nature, in short, refuses to be expelled : she will out. And the only safe course to adopt is the DIRECTION of the forces that are implanted in man.

The point then, which must be made, is that every natural instinct that is appropriate to man is essential to his existence; and that, when such instincts are baulked or denied legitimate exercise, deplorable results ensue. All the instincts which man shares with his fellows, and with many of the lower animals, are of service to him, and their activity is necessarily accompanied by a sense of general well-being. Such instincts as the desire to possess, curiosity, pugnacity, and the affections, are natural and right to us. Accordingly, while society may think fit to prescribe certain disciplines whereby such instincts may be kept within due bonds and restrained, it is manifestly impossible successfully to prohibit their exercise. Upon the whole, however much we may feel that prudence and guidance are called for in connection with the instincts, it seems doubtful whether greater harm could sometimes have been produced by yielding to the solicitations of the instincts than by having failed to afford them adequate means of

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expression. The popular superstition that Nature "will out" is only a half truth which attests the importance of this principle. No man, indeed, is compelled by his instincts to rob, murder, commit adultery, and generally make a nuisance of himself. But the senseless prohibitions and usages which encumber our civilized conditions of life render it impossible to provide adequate channels for instinctive tendencies. Accordingly, as the result, a sense of inner tension and strain is created which may give rise to even worse evils than those which it is sought to suppress. In this matter, our habitual blindness has tended to encourage the belief that, if only severe repressive discipline could be secured all must be well : that men's character was a question of external conformity, and that a sufficient amount of thwarting of their free, spontaneous action could be relied upon as a remedy. A sufficiently impressive refutation of this baseless delusion is afforded by the condition of Germany during the war; her wanton excuses being doubtless attributable to the reaction which has followed in the wake of the long period of repression and discipline prior to the war.

Prussia's theory, however, though held in an exaggerated form, has been in some measure typical of the world. It was the culmination of a policy, that is to say, which has been implicit

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in the whole system of so-called civilization. That it has at length been challenged, merely goes to show that it is, in the long run, incompatible with our more humane aspirations. But popular belief has invariably upheld the view that practical wisdom was at variance with mutual trust of mankind. Man, we have held, is by nature prone to evil : brutal, selfish and in need of severe repressive discipline. And, for the most part, conformity to the established institutions of society has been observed and justified on the ground that natural, free and spontaneous action would result in anarchy and chaos. A standing illustration of this prepossession may be seen in the attitude to the institution of "property". Property, it is declared, must be protected, and unless men's interests were protected, at much cost and inconvenience, by a system of law, you would undermine the whole foundations of society. The assumption, clearly, is in great part a psychological one, and it may be added, exceedingly unpsychological at that. It reposes upon the belief that man is by nature covetous and selfseeking. Everybody, in short, is a potential thief, whose acquisitive faculties require to be kept in check by the safeguards which are tolerated for that purpose. Hence "Capitalism" is justified not, indeed, because the comparatively few rich persons whom it suits

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are loved ; but rather because it constitutes a device whereby the greater many are providentially deprived from participating in what could only prove to be a snare and a hindrance to them.

Seldom or never are our economic arrangements regarded with reference to our true psychological necessities : nor, for the most part, is the satisfaction of the acquisitive instinct viewed as legitimate in itself. By our attitude, it is true, we have tended to evolve a theory of "thrift", which has been in the nature of a grudging concession to the acquisitive instinct. But even this has failed us to-day. Thrift, whatever its value in the eyes of ethical pedagogues, possesses a doubtful efficacy under modern conditions : practical experience is the best educator ; and the growth of economic dissatisfaction and envy of the lot of the rich, following upon the servile respect of the poor for their masters, has had a distinctly prejudicial effect upon the prospects of the existing order. This, of course, is only one of the numerous ways in which the hitherto prevailing system has been threatened.

The point of the challenge which has thus been flung out consists in the invariable reaction against arrangements which have only tended to produce a type of strain that has been

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wholly inconsistent with social welfare. Poverty, when it is voluntarily undertaken, if not a specially sanctified notion to the modern mind, is not destitute of merit. It is better, morally, to choose to be poor, than to be rich and have no free will in the matter. But if to have riches thrust upon one and to be too weak-minded not to refuse them is bad, to be obliged to give up hope of getting something which one has never had a chance of getting is infinitely worse. In short, all involuntary behaviour, sacrifice included, must be relegated to the scrap heap of oblivion, if we are to have a moral condition of human affairs.

"Baulking", however, is not confined to the poor, nor is the strain consequent upon repression exclusively concerned with our economic instincts. We have a disposition which craves not only to possess, but also to strive. This is why, even supposing every man were allowed to have as much money as he could possibly desire, it need not be feared that the millenium would be brought within measurable reach of mankind. Many a wealthy man, as well as the poor, has his burden. But this in the case of the rich, is more likely to assume the form of boredom or ENNUI. Why do the rich so often get "fed up" with life? Why does wealth never satisfy a man? Why, in short, if we gave men

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everything they wanted, could we always depend upon them to remain still unsatisfied? The reason is that there exists in everyone an element of pugnacity, which, however much restrained, seeks to discharge itself in DOING rather than in having. Many people get all that they want: but their prosperity, instead of contenting them, leads only to restlessness and disappointment. It is precisely the very people whom we think "ought to be content" who are most generally the reverse. The reason is evident: Nature sets up a fierce protest against the ease and sloth which hold sway over their lives. They accordingly become irritable, moody and subject to fits of rage. When society is reconstructed upon a sound psychological basis, the instinct which prompts these persons to vent their thwarted pugnacity upon their neighbours, will be recognised, and then it will have such chances afforded it as at present fail to exist, save when war breaks out.

Another instinct which is apt to remain in a state of abeyance is fear. Its original use was that of preserving life from danger. Under civilized conditions, however, the opportunities for its display have greatly diminished.

True as this is however, we must not conclude that, because the situations which were favourable to the manifestation of fear have all but

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ceased to exist, the disposition to fear has been lost. It has not. Fear asserts itself in all kinds of subterranean ways. Hence, the craving to get a periodical "thrill" : to indulge in the sensations of the scenic railway, to watch the exploits of gymnasts and animal tamers : to participate in football, Alpine climbing, and other pursuits that involve risk to life and limb. In its more mental form, fear prompts us to read a "shilling shocker", or to visit the chamber of horrors at Madame Tussaud's. We like now and then to feel our flesh creep : we want to be made to shudder. All these facts point to the survival of an instinct for which accommodation must be found. One of the reasons for the appeal of war appears to lie in the scope which it affords for the sense of danger. We demand security, but the sort of security which is won at the sacrifice of a safety which we have not procured for ourselves. Hence the quest for adventure. No mere sheltered existence is adequate to sustain us : we crave variety, change, and an outlet for those activities which alone are the means of securing us adequate protection.

Such applications as these will go far in the direction of demonstrating the contention that, in the future organisation of society, provision must be made for the psychological necessities

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of man. Hitherto no such considerations have weighed with us, and as a consequence, after protracted periods of apparent quiescence and order, tumultuous outbursts of frenzy and passion have taken place and have threatened to overthrow the whole course of civilization. That this has been impossible goes without saying; but that such moods have had the deplorable effect of dissipating our mental and moral energies is all too clear. Wars, commotions, revolutions, and the like, which have been piously taken for granted, have undoubtedly acted as so many vents for suppressed desires for which the existing order has failed to cater. Accordingly, under certain aspects, they may be construed as disguised blessings. But nowadays nobody dreams that such violent expedients are either consistent with social welfare in the long run or ought to be resorted to if they can be avoided. Consequently our only remedy is to realize the necessity of providing for the normal discharge and regulated exercise of all those instincts which are legitimate for man. Certain of these instincts we have already considered, but others may be named. The sexual impulse is one of these. None of the instincts has been banned with more disastrous results. Its very recognition, save under the most questionable circumstances,

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has been forbidden. Its gratification accordingly has been largely dependent on illicit means. As this topic will furnish the material for a portion of a succeeding chapter, we need not enter more fully into the question here. But the need to realize frankly its surpassing importance is evident directly we disabuse our minds of delusions which are fostered by our sentimental ignorance and self complacency.

The point throughout to bear in mind is, that what produces strain is not so much what one does as what one is prevented from doing. A man tires not from pursuing certain activities, but from neglecting to pursue other activities. Man is not a machine; and if he elects to treat himself as a machine, the nature that is in him rebels. Hence the need of recreation : it rests us because it gives us a chance of exercising parts of our nature that are ordinarily subjected to restraint and inhibition. To liberate these is the secret, the whole secret, of emancipation. Nothing less than the reorganisation of society upon psychological principles, which will afford our suppressed dispositions a chance to function, can possibly effect the individual and social improvement that is needed. For only when life becomes the genuine expression of our spontaneous and untrammelled natures can its living prove worth man's while.

CHAPTER VI

WISHING AND ITS RELATION TO DREAMS

Wishes, for the most part, have been regarded as vain things. "If wishes were horses", runs the proverb, "beggars would ride". Admitting, however, that much of the wishing that people permit themselves is of little practical value either to themselves or others, the fact remains that humanity has never eradicated the habit of wishing. Nor, apparently, however slender the prospects of fulfilment of its wishes may seem, would it willingly forego the privilege.

Why do we wish? It may be asked. What makes us yearn, crave, desire the things that seem to be beyond our grasp? To solve this question would be to settle once and for all a very profound problem of psychology. To attempt this is obviously impossible. But we may do well to review the question in the light of modern science.

And, at the outset, let us realize the new departures for which modern psychology is responsible. It has superseded the older methods.

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To "know thyself" is excellent: but, whatever our "ego" may be, it is surely not a fixed thing, but an expanding, developing life; and hence all static conceptions of mankind must perforce be abandoned in favour of a more dynamic view. Man is as he BEHAVES: and as he behaves, so he comes to know himself. This self-evident proposition constitutes the key to our problem.

It is, then, with the volitional factor in life that we are more especially concerned. Our "characters" comprise an assemblage of tendencies, which the will translates into purposes, according to desire, circumstance and opportunity. These tendencies become organized for manifestation in action, upon the formation of purposes and the birth of impulses, correlatives of them and of the will. Thus it may be said figuratively that we are what we purpose and what we do: no more, no less. Our Will is ourself: life is simply the volitional element of our complex being wishing itself in action.

The unit for psychology, is thus the WISH. The mainspring of our action consists in those desires which, lying deeper than the intellect, impart the interest, purpose and zest to life. If man's distinctive power lies in his capacity to look before and after, most of his satisfaction comes from his expectancy, his joy in realizing

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what, by means of his reason, his imagination, and circumstances, he identifies with the future. For a definition of the wish, we may accept, therefore, those tendencies, desires and impulses to act, in virtue of which a man is a living organism. Deprive man of the power to wish and you reduce him to a mere mechanical contrivance, which, destitute of inclination, preference or interest, would be without every distinctively human attribute.

To obviate the possibility of misconception, however, let it be remarked that the wish need not necessarily be identified with mere whim or caprice. Any mode of behaviour or mental attitude which is due to the co-ordinated activities of the self constitutes the basis of the wish. As for our "self", it may be defined, for all practical purposes, as a psycho-physiological product. We do not consist of OURSELF PLUS our BODY. We are so many SYSTEMATISED ACTIVITIES, comprised in the entire mechanism of our organised nervous apparatus. The self is thus the reaction to specific modes of behaviour each of which relates us with its appropriate environment, between which and our unconscious life we are perpetually seeking to establish adjustment.

But here it becomes necessary to realize that, whereas "Human Nature" comprises that vast

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assemblage of instincts which are fundamentally volitional in their origin, such purposes are found at all levels of consciousness. Thus we find, (A) those which are actually present, in the form of attention, and which we would like to acknowledge; (B) those which are co-conscious, less prominent, but still admitted; and (C) those which are unconscious.

This is easily understood. Our psychical economy is generally assumed to comprise a dual aspect: a sub-conscious as well as a conscious department. And while, by means of the conscious side of us expression is afforded for our normal activities, the subconscious elements also influence our nature enormously. Nor is the conscious life, though of supreme importance, as vast and varied in its nature. In the subconscious lies all our most inclusive and intimate life: the things we feel and fail to manifest outwardly: our desires, hopes, fears, aspirations, ideals — all these and much more are hidden within this "buried life". Nor is the subconscious inferior. Its MEMORY is PERFECT: all that was, is, and will be, lies potentially in its recesses. And, under the operation of hypnotism it is possible to revive those experiences which have passed beyond the recall of the waking self.

To understand the fundamental nature of the

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wish, therefore, it will be convenient to distinguish between two opposed attitudes :

- (1) the wishes that are executed and
- (2) the wishes which are latent and suppressed.

And having done so it is necessary to explain that it is more especially with the latter, which bear exceptional significance, that it is proposed to deal. These are of importance more particularly inasmuch as they throw a flood of light on the problem of our practical conduct. And the investigations of Freud go to demonstrate that it is only by considering these that it is possible to give an adequate interpretation of psychology. The principle upon which this theory is based is simply this : that those wishes or impulses whose expression is achieved tend to promote the normal operations of our psychical life, entailing as they do, a sense of freedom and exemption from all sense of remorse, regret, and division; whereas, the wishes which are repressed produce the contrary effect, and are the cause of dissociation and mental instability.

Our problem, therefore, resolves itself into this : How we may avoid REPRESSION — i. e., such conditions as give rise to dissociation and mental instability, and by what means may legitimate opportunity be afforded for the free expression of those wishes which, either in their existing

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condition or in a transformed state, may crave fulfilment? To render this branch of our inquiry profitable, we may turn to the practical application of the theories based upon this principle. These may be illustrated by reference to the phenomena of dreams, the vagaries of memory, wit manifestations, etc. All of these are due ultimately to the self-same cause, viz : the conflict of Wishes.

At the outset, however, the question is suggested, why do our wishes frequently remain latent, and what is it gives rise to the conflict to which such phenomena may be traceable? The reply is, **THE INFLUENCE WHICH IS EXERTED BY SOCIAL PRESSURE.**

Society, civilized as well as primitive, while susceptible of such development as is calculated to secure the progressive emancipation of its members, is never compatible with absolute freedom. And every institution whose ostensible object is to secure such emancipation, is the means of engendering corresponding inhibitions which impose themselves upon the psychical development of mankind. These inhibitions, or taboos, while inevitable from the collective standpoint, and essential to ensure those courses of behaviour which are prescribed in the interest of the group, no less involve a conflict between the social group and the individuals that comprise

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it. This clash arises in the following manner : There is, first of all, the compulsory element, which exacts conformity to those usages which are compatible with the general requirements : and this, which is favoured by our moral, educational, religious and political conventions, and motivated by gregariousness, dread of punishment and ostracism and loss of approval, induces us to conform. On the other hand, and since none of us is completely assimilated to the existing institutions of society, we find also the innate tendency to gratify impulses whose unchecked manifestations are contrary to the prescribed sanctions and ordinances.

Hence our problem centres in those psychical phenomena, which, though obscure in many ways, possess primarily an individual significance. And first among these we may include the element of THE DREAM. When and why do we dream? And what significance has dreaming? The same authority tells us that we dream simply in obedience to a psychical necessity of our life : because we cannot help it. Our dreams are the embodiment of our repressed wishes — veiled and undetected though those may be. In our dreams emerge those unsatisfied cravings of our nature which are denied and ignored in waking life. The dream is a compromise. It affords us an opportunity of doing that which

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we want to do deep down in our nature, but which, owing to the exigencies of circumstances, we are prevented from doing. The Dreams of children often plainly illustrate this. The investigations which psycho-analysis has rendered possible, go to establish one fact beyond dispute. It is this : that all wishes subserve definite ends. They cannot be completely eradicated or destroyed. If they are thwarted they tend to find another path. Nature cannot be cheated, and while we may deceive ourselves, the fundamental nature of the volitional factor in human life will, in the long run, assert itself.

Dreaming, therefore, possesses a very serious significance for us. For, however senseless, absurd and grotesque our dreams may appear to us, it is plain that they do not occur at random : that they are not strictly speaking uncaused, but that they are traceable for their origin to tendencies by no means remotely connected with our waking state. There is, in short, a method in our nocturnal madness ; and this method is the result of those dispositions of the Will which we have more often than not left out of our reckonings.

One fact of interest that may be mentioned is that, contrary to the popular notion, all dreams are of direct, as well as indirect utility : they do not wake us, but rather facilitate sleep.

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A common example of this would be the dream of thirst. In our sleep we DREAM that we are DRINKING. Why? Because, being thirsty we wish to drink, and being tired we also wish to remain asleep. Accordingly we dream that we are drinking, which provides for the satisfaction of both desires. Another similar case would be that of a person who is sleeping soundly at whose bedroom door somebody knocks in order to arouse him. The sleeper, half awakened, replies "all right", and then turns over and dozes off again. Having done which he proceeds to dream that he has already got up, breakfasted and departed to his office for the day. Such a dream accompanies the feeling that there need be no further necessity for physical exertion; for if in one's sleep one seems to have responded to the summons of one's caller, why need one bother to get up? Thus the dream is the means of accomplishing one's wish in the easiest and least laborious manner.

What distinguishes our waking state from our condition during sleep is simply this, that the former is modified and controlled by the organized rational intelligence. This exerts a sort of censorship over our unconscious self, whose operations however are always striving to influence our behaviour. But our conscious self, it must be remembered, is only a fraction

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of our total self. The field of attention is invariably narrow and restricted, consequently we are never entirely comprised in those habitual and deliberately initiated activities which appear most characteristic of us. Our personalities are verily multiple, and this is owing to the existence of a variety of latent and often unacknowledged wishes which, ordinarily held in check, are yet ready at the least suggestion to bound to the surface of our mental life. What our dreams disclose, therefore, is what lies smouldering within us. Their significance, it is true, frequently escapes us. But this is simply because we refuse to admit their intention and are too sophisticated to face the facts which they reveal. Even the dream itself is an artifice : in it we resort subconsciously to the expedient of imagery or symbolism whereby we clothe or mask the purposes for which it exists. Thus the real meaning of innumerable dreams is totally unintelligible until we are in a position to investigate them by the principle of psycho-analysis.

Many dreams are typical. In them we find the free play of the instincts, appropriately veiled, however, in order to provide a plausible pretext for their liberation. The large part which is played by the erotic impulse in dreams is especially noted by Freud; but it

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must be observed that all the great fundamental instincts of life -- fear, pugnacity, hunger, etc., are conspicuous in such phenomena.

Besides dreams, there are other means by which we betray ourselves. One such mode is that of Humour and Wit. Humour frequently constitutes a means of "letting the cat out of the bag". The cat in this case is the suppressed wish, the bag being the confinement imposed upon it by the censor. By Wit we cheat the vigilance of the censor, who like most officials, is dull-witted and stupid. Jokes therefore are so many vehicles of suppressed wishes, and laughter which usually accompanies them, is a relief both in a physical and mental respect. By means of mirth we provide a mode of release for those repressed instincts which would otherwise find no vent for themselves. All jokes, it should be observed, if they are to prove effective, require to be fired off in the company of those having the requisite complex. When a joke misses fire, it is owing either to the fact that the listeners are destitute of this, or that the censorship imposed upon them is too complete to permit of the discharge of the instincts which are appealed to. For the most part, however, certain special complexes can be relied on; hence the popularity of the comic press and the music-hall comedian, whose jests are invariably

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restricted to certain well-worn themes. Almost without exception such jokes revolve round the "Old Adam" within us, who, either by his defiance of the proprieties, or by his protest against the observances of society, provides a way of escape from the tension of convention.

Yet other means by which we "give ourselves away" may be enumerated. Our gestures, for example, even the most trivial, may be of enormous significance. From a handshake it is possible to draw some surprisingly important conclusions. To grasp another's hand and to have at the same time an unfriendly intention is beyond human power, for subconsciously every bodily movement interprets the psychical condition with which it is associated.

Still other illustrations of the potency of the subconscious are found in the hundred and one haphazard gestures that we make every day of our lives and which appear to be altogether destitute of meaning. For instance a slip of the tongue teems with the most intimate significance.

WE DO NOT FORGET UNLESS THERE IS A REASON FOR OUR DOING SO. Although we may be utterly unconscious of the fact, our speech-blunders are prompted by motives. Many such mistakes, as where one word is substituted for another, are due to wholly personal reasons.

If this theory be reliable, we should tend to

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forget any name which is fraught with unpleasant associations. This is achieved, of course, not by any deliberate effort of the will, but by the play of those motives which operate beyond the sphere of our conscious experience. Automatically, as it were, the offending name, by reason of its unpleasant associations, is banished from the mind, which obstinately refuses to release it from its prison, with the result that another, probably similar to it, is substituted.

Sometimes, mistakes in speech betray the addiction of the speaker to a particular habit. Such a case is afforded by a young woman of a tyrannical disposition, whose husband having been ill, had consulted a doctor as to his diet. Her remark was, "The doctor said that diet has nothing to do with his ailment, and that he can eat and drink what I want".

Other examples of what is stated above illustrate this theory which, by reason of its far-reaching implications, is fraught with such enormous psychological significance. Thus, the most casual remark or act may betray a wholly unsuspected disposition or tendency. A case in point is that of a woman who wrote to her sister, congratulating her on the occasion of removing to a new and commodious residence. A friend, however, observed that, instead of addressing it correctly, the writer put an address upon the

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envelope which was that of the sister when first she had married. Upon being asked why she had done this, she admitted that she begrudged her sister her new abode, and wished her back in the rooms which she had occupied recently. "It is a pity one is so mean in such matters", she added.

Even so apparently trivial an occurrence as the mislaying of an article may betray the existence of a suppressed intention. In effect, in some such cases, WE WILL TO FORGET. Thus, a case is cited by Brill in which a man was urged quite against his wishes to attend a social function. In response to his wife's desire, he began to take his dress suit from the trunk, when it struck him that he had not shaved. After accomplishing this necessary operation, he went back for his clothes to the trunk, which however he found to be locked. A diligent search was made for the key, but nowhere could it be discovered, and, it being Sunday evening, and as no locksmith was available, the pair had to abandon their intention and stop at home. Next morning the trunk was opened, and lo and behold ! inside it was the key. In a fit of "absent mindedness" the husband had evidently dropped the key inside and sprung the lock, which proceeding, while he alleged it to be entirely unconscious and devoid of intention, was

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obviously due to the disinclination on his part to attend the social function.

Instances of the sort may be multiplied AD INFINITUM. Why for example should it prove more usual to "mislay" bills rather than cheques or even receipts? Obviously, sins of omission are not unmotivated, nor are our (apparently) least systematic modes of behaviour unrelated to a deep-laid psychological system whose MODUS OPERANDI must be sought in those organized groups of fundamental interests the spontaneous reactions of which so frequently elude the resources of the conscious mind.

For the general reader, of course, such researches and the conclusions at which they enable us to arrive, must possess primarily a speculative significance. Upon inquiry, however, it will be found that they can lay claim to a practical as well as theoretical value. Once we grasp the all-essential principle that the root of personal character lies in volition and impulse and the instinctive reactions on the part of those tendencies which are implanted within us and which only conscious and deliberate inhibition can modify and control, we are in a position to realize the force of our contention.

WHAT WE DO, then, is traceable in the first instance less to what we "think" than to what we ARE. Thought, it is true, may react upon

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and modify conduct. At the same time, our spontaneous actions which have been elaborated by the subterranean operations of the instincts, are the essential test of our natures. Hence by watching our acts and by observing our actual behaviour, we shall be in a far better position to form an adequate conception of ourselves than by any process of mere introspection. Even the least of our deeds betrays us. But this fact need not mean that we should become fatalists. For by learning what we may expect of ourselves and by intelligently anticipating the direction in which we are likely to be prompted to behave, we may so regulate our conduct, by imposing upon it the authoritative direction of experience and insight, as to ensure the harmonious development of our nature, whereby every tendency, by being understood and accorded its legitimate sphere of influence, is subordinated to those purposes and ideals which comprise the ultimate element in personality.

CHAPTER VII

MIRTH, MORALS, AND THE UNCONSCIOUS

Through Civilisation and by means of the manifold technical resources and acquisitions that have accrued to him by the evolution of human faculty, man has already achieved the partial conquest of nature. And as a consequence of this, two outstanding facts confront us. On the one hand we observe the ever-increasing control of the factor of environment; whilst on the other, we see the effects of a corresponding reaction upon man, which has resulted in a heightening of self-consciousness. Accompanying these phenomena, physical and psychical, we witness the gradually-emerging process of social development, which, despite innumerable obstacles in the path of its achievement, is approaching unprecedented complexity and perfection.

To speak of such achievement as though it constituted an overwhelming gain for man, and as though it were unattended by disadvantages, would be manifestly to exaggerate its effects.

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All such progress must involve effort, and the expenditure of effort no less entails the inevitable postponement if not the sacrifice of immediate interests, and this, however necessary and desirable it may be from the collective standpoint, must no less exact renunciation on the part of the individual which is calculated to involve the denial of many of his fundamental instincts and needs. It has indeed often been suggested that the revolution in human conditions has been accompanied by a more or less complete transformation in human nature itself, and that whereas in its unruly youth mankind was only too prone to yield to its undisciplined instincts, it has at length reached a state of moral and mental maturity. All appeals to facts however are at variance with such an assumption. For not only in the least civilized forms of society are modes of discipline prescribed for man whereby his latent savagery may be limited and restrained, but also at all stages of subsequent evolution we discover, as well as the "artificial personality" which conformity to social pressure and usage has produced, ample evidence of the existence of the "Old Adam".

If then we ask, has the nature of man undergone any appreciable change, we must reply that this is, to say the least, doubtful. Without

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attempting to suggest that civilized man is only savage man plus the veneer of hypocrisy, a position which only sheer cynicism could maintain, we must nevertheless remark that far too little has been made, by our idealists and educationists, of the potent unconscious elements in human life and character. When it is realized that, while we embody the present and contain the germ of the future, we no less epitomise the entire racial past, the factor of which we are speaking cannot escape our notice. Nor can we wonder if, under the rigid conditions which have prevailed under the stress of social necessity, those impulses which have been held in check should manifest themselves by means which, though little suspected, prove that such instincts cannot be eradicated as easily as is frequently assumed.

Ample proof of this is afforded by the researches of psycho-analysts, with many of whose theories we have already concerned ourselves. The relation however between wit and humour and the subconscious still remains to be considered, and it is with this aspect of the subject that it is now proposed to deal. Why then do we laugh? What is revealed by the mirthful propensity? What purpose is served in the expression of humour? An answer to these questions is easily given: wit and humour

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are due to the operation of instincts which exist below the level of the conscious mind. Mirth, according to Freud, is simply a mode of release : a means of "letting the cat out of the bag", the "cat" being, as we have already seen, the suppressed wish or latent volition, and the "bag", the confinement imposed by the censor (in the shape of the social will or force of custom).

By wit then we may understand the free play of certain tendencies which, under ordinary conditions, are repressed by the requirements of social convention, but which, given favourable opportunity, come to the surface in the form of jokes. All such manifestations, it is interesting to note, are motivated by a comparatively few yet fundamental interests of life. These are found to centre especially in the affectional nature, pugnacity, fear, etc. When analysed, the themes of wit are confined to an exceedingly restricted range, as the ever popular jokes at the expense of the mother-in-law, conjugal infidelity, and inebriety go to show. In all such cases the function of wit is that of gratifying certain cravings of human nature in spite of the hindrances to their actual realization : to elude such hindrances and to render the source of pleasure, otherwise inaccessible, possible.

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To appreciate the theory, we must bear in mind that, while the censorship exerted by the conscious mind of the average person is sufficiently vigilant to appear to conform to the requirements of respectability and propriety, it is, nevertheless, easily hoodwinked. Moreover, by the devices provided by wit, sayings which pass muster and are allowed to be uttered, possess the two-fold purpose of partly deceiving the conscious mind, and in so doing, releasing the instinct which strives, under cover of the **DOUBLE ENTENDRE**, to affect its escape. An illustration (given by Mr. Edwin Holt) will serve to make this clear. Here the subject is of a religious character — all such themes being severely barred by the censor of average mankind. A man once observed that "the Rev. Mr ----'s prayer yesterday was the most eloquent prayer that has ever been presented before a Boston audience". In reality, the statement amounts to the rankest blasphemy, inasmuch as it alleges that the preacher was more concerned about his audience than the Almighty. It however passes the censor because (1) it ostensibly involves praise of the reverend gentleman's effort, and (2) the **EAR** substitutes for **PRAYER** the word "**SERMON**" to which it is habitually accustomed. Hence although the remark is in every way the reverse

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of complimentary, it is so happily adapted to the attitude of the average person that it fails to give offence. In the guise of high praise, we infer A SUPPRESSED ATTITUDE OF HATRED.

The censor is invariably conventionally-minded. But it is the form, rather than the spirit, which concerns him. He disapproves of all primary pleasure. Direct and flippant allusions to "indelicate" or "sacred" subjects exasperate him beyond endurance. Yet he is marvellously tolerant of lapses from decorum if only they are wrapped up sufficiently carefully. Why is this? Why will he pass in the shape of jests things which he would never tolerate if they were presented seriously? Mainly because he is too slow-witted to detect the implication of a joke. His standpoint is external, and he sees only the obvious and literal meaning. The reason for this may be stated thus: the standards of propriety of a community are invariably below the level of its intelligence, and the intelligence of the censor is merely the semblance of intelligence which suffices to preserve the appearance of decorum. By means of wit, therefore, a path is found whereby the propensities are discharged over which the "sense of decency" ordinarily imposes rigorous supervision. Thus the object of all jesting lies in providing the play-instinct with

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a means of manifestation, and this is accomplished indirectly, i. e., by appeasing the reason, which would otherwise stifle such satisfaction.

And now a word as to the meaninglessness of jokes. All jokes are in reality senseless : we do not really know why they make us laugh. In all joking we find either absurd combinations of words or ridiculous jumbles of ideas. But such jokes are a challenge, and we are forced to MAKE sense of them. Here the ingenuity of the wit process comes into play. The superficial sense of wit is intended only to guard the pleasure against rational suppression. All mirth is the liberation of pleasure from suppressed sources. The jest makes possible what the reason forbids.

Between wit and the phenomena of the dream Freud has discovered a direct analogy inasmuch as both are due to SUPPRESSED WISHES. You cannot, by burying a wish, kill it ; sooner or later it is certain to effect an outlet for itself. Hence like the dream, wit is an effort on the part of some unrealized wish at self-manifestation.

Among the factors of wit we may observe brevity, condensation, and substituted formations of words. As an illustration the following may be cited. A friend who is in the habit of attending meetings of a certain Ethical Society, facetiously alluded to it as the "Lethical Meet-

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ing". Wherein does the wit of this remark lie? On analysis we notice that the word "lethical" is a term formed of the fusion of two words, LETHAL and ETHICAL. The point however is clear only when we bear in mind that it involves a veiled comparison of the Ethical Meeting to a lethal chamber, which by no means incorrectly characterizes the mental condition of those who are in the habit of attending it. Thus the word LETHICAL, which bears an obvious similarity to ETHICAL, carries with it a hidden meaning but reveals a subordinate sense. Additional examples of concealed meanings might easily be given, and once more we may refer to the pages of Freud. One story illustrative of this principle which he relates is as follows. Two Jews happened to meet near a bathing establishment. Says one to the other, "Have you taken a bath?" "How is that?" comes the reply, "Is one missing?" Here the comicality of the situation turns upon the reply of the second Jew, who instead of answering the question in the obvious way (1) ignores the idea of BATHING and (2) interprets it in a purely acquisitive sense: the notion of cleanliness is made subordinate to the sense of possession.

Among the most pronounced tendencies that are visible in wit we may observe the obscene, the hostile, and the flippant. As to the first,

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the "smutty joke", its irresistible appeal is apparent from the fact of its indissoluble connection with certain primitive functions, which, whilst subject to the severest taboo, are nevertheless of universal importance. Sly allusions to these therefore, providing a mode of release, furnish a means whereby the vigilance of the censor is outwitted and the instinct of curiosity receives gratification. As regards the manifestation of the hostile impulse, it may perhaps be argued that jokes in which somebody is supposed to get the better of somebody else are invariably popular — so much so indeed, and so potent is this instinct, that it is questionable whether the majority of jokes are not inspired to some extent by combativeness. Thomas Hobbes indeed was inclined to trace laughter to a sense of "sudden glory", proceeding from a consciousness of power. Man, it would appear, is the only animal capable of laughter, and man's risible faculties were probably roused in the first place when he was victorious. Says Lloyd Morgan, "Derisive laughter may have had its origin in the exultation of the savage over his vanquished foe". In any case, the habitual repression of the pugnacious instinct under civilized conditions would tend to suggest that a mode of release was required in order that it might at least manifest itself in a rela-

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tively inoffensive manner. This would be provided by the sort of mirth which results in "chipping", teasing, and practical joking. Accordingly, humour of this description is rarely or never consistent with the spirit enjoined in the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount.

Another factor in such manifestations is the escape from the restraint of Authority. This also may be explained by reference to the principles which we have already considered. In society, respect for law and order constitutes one of the supreme considerations; but whereas this is so and the claims of group-life necessarily involve the subordination of many of our constitutional impulses to a sense of the general welfare, such conformity involves no little injurious repression and strain upon the individual. In much of the wit therefore which is exercised at the expense of those who occupy official positions and who are accordingly held up to ridicule and contempt, we temporarily effect an escape from those pressures whose unrelieved uniformity would thwart our individual expression. In our attempt to make fun of the ponderous solemnity which possesses so irresistible a fascination for the mirthful impulse, we, in effect, "put down the mighty from their seat" and by dethroning them, as it were, secure a means of relief from

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their tyranny. Wit may therefore become the most powerful ally of rebellion. All that is mechanical, rigid, inflexible, formal and stereotyped tends to become absurd ; and, as Bergson has shown, it is all that we contrast with life and which conspires to obstruct the free-play of the spiritual and life-enhancing that is ultimately provocative of mirth.

Thus the jest may become a most potent vehicle of truth. Many a truth, we are reminded, is uttered in jest : in jesting indeed many a man may voice a truth almost without knowing it — frequently with the most amusing effect. In so doing, one may easily experience a decided sense of relief, for not only is the act of escaping from the rigour of social dissimulation liberating in its psychical effects, but the physical action consequent upon the indulgence in laughter also is calculated to promote the vital processes in such a way as to secure a healthy equilibrium alike for body and mind.

Thus wit becomes one of our greatest assets. By its means we reveal stupidity, override conventions, and unmask the follies of custom. The surest way of ending any abuse or misdemeanour is to hold it up to ridicule. As we tend to despise the objects of our mirth, what we have once laughed at we shall be unlikely to adopt. No force either in public or private life is greater

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or more salutary in its effects than humour. No freedom can exist without it, and so long as it remains with us complete servitude is impossible. The spirit of England is displayed in nothing so much as its fondness for the comic. The serious-mindedness of Germany up to the time of the war was her greatest peril. Our Press, it is sometimes said, has forfeited its right to freedom. Be that as it may, so long as PUNCH is left to us, we may still boast that we are a nation of free men. For it is by humour, by the spirit of mirth, that we reveal our truest selves ; and our love of the nonsensical, in holding cheap the ponderous gravity that we profess to respect in our trivial daily life, is the surest means of delivering us from those obsessions which would otherwise ensnare us, and wrest from us our very sanity itself.

CHAPTER VIII

DREAMS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

In his brilliant and illuminating essay, "DREAMS," Professor Bergson has written :

"A dream is this : I perceive objects and there is nothing there. I see men; I seem to speak to them and I hear what they answer; there is no one there and I have not spoken. It is all AS IF real things and real persons were there; then on waking all has disappeared, both persons and things. How does this happen? "

Proceeding, Bergson asks further whether it is correct to assume that there is literally nothing there, or whether the delusive images of the dream-state are originated exclusively by the subjective fancies which haunt us during sleep? Is there, he seems to say, no ordered sequence in these nocturnal experiences? Are they wholly devoid of meaning? Are they completely out of relation to our normal and waking psychological condition?

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For all persons, it is safe to say, this question possesses some degree of interest. All are in the habit of dreaming — sometimes, at least. In the ordinary course of events, sleep occupies a good third of our existence, and on awaking we are frequently conscious not merely of the suspension of our normal consciousness, but of an interval during our slumbers in which our mind has been the reverse of inactive. For the most part, it is true, such occurrences fail to leave any marked impression behind them. Sometimes, to be sure, we remember these, but usually we dismiss them from our thoughts. But why do we do this? The reason appears to be that, in most cases, dreams are too absurd and grotesque to be worth recalling — they seem to bear no connection with the events of our everyday life. And in consequence we find ourselves disposed to waste no time on them. Is this attitude justified however? Is the dream-state totally destitute of psychological significance?

Before replying to these questions let us satisfy ourselves as to the condition attending the act of dreaming. "The dream", says Höffding, "is one intermediate stage between the purely unconscious and conscious state." It is usual, he tells us, to contrast the sleeping and waking

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states as opposites, but in reality there are many shades of transition from sleeping to waking. We often speak indeed of "dreamless sleep", in which the slumbers of the sleeper are so profound that we are inclined to imagine his condition to be one of complete unconsciousness, and we are sometimes informed that the period in which we dream is confined to the moment immediately preceding our awakening. Probably, however, this assumption is unfounded. It may well be that in reality total loss of consciousness, if it occurs, is of exceedingly brief duration.

As for dreaming, it may be accounted for on two widely diverse hypotheses, as follows :

(1) THE "SPIRITUALISTIC" THEORY, according to which the phenomena are attributable to the temporary liberation of the "soul" from its bodily imprisonment. In this case a distinct and separate existence of the soul is postulated and its connection with the physical nature and senses is regarded as merely accidental and as tending to obstruct rather than interpret its essential nature. Through its release, therefore, from its tenement of clay, the soul, it is claimed, comes

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in contact with a higher order of "reality" — psychic, astral, or spiritual, the remembrance of which on awaking constitutes the dream. This view is of extreme antiquity, and was especially favoured in pre-scientific ages, when it was assumed that revelation was possible by means of the dream state. Many Biblical allusions to dreaming appear to be in harmony with this theory, which in a somewhat modified form and readapted to the scientific spirit of the times, has been adopted by modern theosophists and others.

(2) THE "MATERIALISTIC" THEORY, which, instead of referring the dream to psychic action, prefers to attribute it to physical and external causes. From this standpoint the dream is wholly useless and meaningless and is frequently regarded as symptomatic of morbid tendencies.

Without necessarily subscribing to either of these views, we may content ourselves by observing that the dream constitutes a projection of the dreamer's own psychical life, and that while it would seem unwarranted to claim for it a wholly external origin, it is nevertheless evident

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that the mechanism of the brain and nervous system is indispensable to its production. And not only so : many elements of the dream are furnished by the materials of the waking life. Its imagery, though frequently distorted and fantastic, is borrowed in the main from actual experience, and though we may often appear to have dreamed of persons whom we have never seen and localities which we have never visited, we nevertheless identify the phenomena of dreams as " people " and " places " etc., and unless the prototypes of such phenomena had existed in real life it is more than doubtful whether we should have discovered them during sleep. Further, while during sleep we appear to be oblivious of everything about us, it is proved that in reality our consciousness is never completely in abeyance. Our self-consciousness it is true may have lapsed, but our " unconscious self " is still functioning. Nor are our senses completely quiescent, since impressions are perpetually reaching us by way of one or another sense-avenue and through the exercise of the respiratory and digestive apparatus. Though the intensity of such impressions is diminished during rest, we are never completely isolated from the outer world.

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This fact is well realized by Bergson, from whose essay, "DREAMS", I quote the following :

" The eyes, when closed, still distinguish light from shade, and even, to a certain extent, different lights from one another. These sensations of light, emanating from without, are at the bottom of many of our dreams. A candle abruptly lighted in the room, for example, suggests to the sleeper, if his slumber is not too deep, a dream dominated by the image of fire, the idea of a burning building ".

Besides the subconscious activity of the visual sense, that of the tactual, olfactory, aural and gustatory organs is equally possible. For instance, if, during sleep, the bedclothes happen to slip to the floor, and the weather happens to be cold, ten chances to one we shall dream of participating in an expedition to the polar regions. This is due to the fact that, having experienced the sensations of cold, a train of imagery associated with such sensations is spontaneously aroused in the brain, which fulfills the twofold purpose of providing a plausible explanation of the occurrence and sparing the sleeper the trouble of awakening from his slumber. Professor Höffding

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tells us of a man who dreamed that he was walking on the crater of Mount Etna. The explanation was nothing but that of contact with a hot-water bottle. "Often", says Höffding, "a most complicated event is constructed to explain some quite simple impression, as when the falling of a curtain and the appearance of light in the room calls up a dream of the Day of Judgment depicted with a host of details". Very evidently, the dramatisation of the dream will depend to a great extent upon the imaginative resources of the dreamer. We must not, however, fail to note that, whilst this is so, explanations which would be rejected as absurd in the waking state will not only be entertained in sleep, but will be accepted as entirely probable and normal. The man, for instance, whose dream is due, let us suppose, to some slight nocturnal disturbance such as a thunder storm, which, instead of awakening him, affords him a vivid presentation of the end of the world, would probably laugh when, in the morning, he proceeded to relate and reflect upon his experiences of the night. This fact, of course, is attributable to the close approximation of the dream-condition and the state of mind in which hypnosis is induced.

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Since in sleep the dreamer is, for the most part, at the exclusive mercy of one or other of the senses and is deprived of the means of checking by his reason the impressions with which he is thus furnished, he is compelled to resort to whatever explanation may be afforded him by the imagery which links itself with the sort of impression that may be aroused.

Thus the dream-state may be said to differ from the waking principally owing to the following causes :

(1) It occurs through the intervention of a relatively restricted operation of the senses;

(2) It exhibits the absence of all ordered sequence in the trains of imagery which are presented to the mind of the sleeper.

In the lack of all consecutive and sustained attention and interest, indeed, we have the clue to the dream state. During the ascendancy of the dream, the sleeper is inevitably at the mercy of whatever sensations and feelings may assail him; and being deprived of both judgment and volition, is utterly unable to invest his experience with the least adequate sense of PROPORTION.

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Whatever may be felt is accordingly apprehended as real, and the spontaneous reaction which is accomplished in consciousness is consequently accepted as valid beyond the least shadow of doubt.

Having dealt with the two prime factors in the production of dreams, which as has been shown, consist in the external stimulus and the vast reservoir of memories wherewith such experiences are accounted for, it now remains for us to consider another aspect of the problem. Assuming that the phenomena in question may be elucidated in the manner that we have already described, the further point that remains to be considered is this : granting that dreams defy the resources of ordinary logic and that they reveal such incoherence and lack of consistency as to render them incomprehensible from the standpoint of the reason, are we therefore at liberty to conclude that they are wholly destitute of all serious significance? Or can we, in other words, regard their apparent absurdity as due merely to the operations of a disordered and capricious mind that works in defiance of law? To maintain this, would surely be impossible. To argue that, because superficially the dream is devoid of intelligibility, it is therefore without

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meaning, would be in effect to regard the dream-consciousness as uncaused and this, it is evident, would be tantamount to declaring that dream-phenomena lie beyond the scope of scientific inquiry. Any such assumption, it is clear, is wholly at variance with any valid psychological conception, and all that remains to be decided is, how we are to interpret the dream-consciousness and what is the precise significance that we may assign to it.

Let us, then, having once for all disabused our mind of the intellectualist fallacy, proceed to consider the problem from the standpoint of the most recent investigators. This will enable us to regard the dream as due to a specific origin which we must seek in the instincts. When we dream we inevitably betray the presence of those wishes and impulses which, lying beneath the surface of the primary consciousness or waking state and inhibited by the pressure of the rational mind, surge up and take possession of us during the interval of sleep. Accordingly, while we appear to witness a distinct breach between the waking state and dream-consciousness, in reality the most indissoluble connection is apparent; so that we may legitimately regard the dream-existence as nothing other than the sequel of the

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waking life. The dream in short, as Freud tells us, is the means whereby we obtain the gratification of those desires which remain in abeyance during waking life. "The dream gives us what the day withheld". Hence the function of dreaming is none other than that of fulfilling the wishes which may be normal to us.

This perhaps is best realized in the case of children. A child let us say, has been told that he must not play with snails in the garden. He is put to bed and dreams that he is in the land of unlimited snails which he is carefully collecting in his little pail. Or he is absorbed in his games and is made to go out for a walk. During the night the child probably resumes his activities among his toys : in dreamland he visits a region which affords him surpassing facilities for play. In this way his wishes, which have been checked during the day, are fulfilled in his dreams.

Many examples show that, whereas the wish by which the dream may be motivated is simple, the imagery by which expression is given to it is often of the most complicated kind. Our dreams, it would seem, instead of being produced with a view to enlightening us as to their source, are rather elaborate attempts on the part

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of our subconsciousness to conceal from our waking mind the insistent attempts which our repressed instincts make in the course of our dream to urge their claim upon our notice. In consequence, unless the most careful consideration is bestowed upon the analysis of dream-imagery, one may easily remain oblivious of the profound significance of dream-phenomena.

One such case is related as follows : A man had for several days and nights watched by the bedside of his dying child, who at length expired; whereupon the father retired to an adjoining room, leaving the door ajar, the corpse meantime being surrounded by lighted candles and watched by an old man. Falling asleep, the father dreamed that his child stood near to the bed, clasping its arms and calling out reproachfully " Father, don't you see I'm burning ? "

On awakening, the man found the bed in flames. This dream it is evident was started by the luminous sensation which produced the same effect upon the sleeper as if he had been awake. But the underlying motive of the dream was due to two things : (1) the subconscious dread of the aged guardian of the child's body that he was unequal to the task which his vigil involved, and (2) the supreme desire to see the

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child alive. Had it not been for the latter impulse, indeed, the dream would not have proceeded as far as to have introduced the dead child; the sleeper would have responded merely to the fire suggestion ; whereas as it was, this became the pretext for recalling the child to life. Such a dream as this will suffice to illustrate the course which must be followed in dream interpretation.

But clearly, if this method is to be successfully applied a careful examination of the preceding states of mind and feeling must be made. To be in a position to approach the dream for the purpose of psycho-analysis we must be prepared to realize the tremendous influence of the elemental instincts in all such phenomena. When we remember the extraordinary power which these exercise throughout our entire life, and that whatever restraint we are able to place upon them is owing in the main to the existence of those inhibitions and taboos which have been devised in order to meet our social requirements, the whole problem becomes simplified. When left to ourselves or during sleep, we are at liberty to give play to our more intimate and personal desires and feeling : the things we long for we need no longer refrain

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from : the release from a condition of stress and tension supervenes and we are instantly capable of yielding in an imaginative way to our wishes. In doing so, however, since our mind is socially conditioned, we betray not only our primeval impulses, but the acquired art of dissimulation; so that, unless we review the circumstances which have led up to the dream it is ten chances to one that we shall fail to fathom its mysteries. So accustomed is the conscious mind to interpret its "instinctive" motives with reference to social aims that, unless the essential nature of the instincts be realized, it is almost inevitable that the construction which will be placed upon the dream will be remote from the truth. Once, however, we grasp the principle that the dream is the vehicle of self-revelation, we shall be in a position to make our researches of both interest and profit. "The dream", says Freud, "creates a form of psychical relief for the wish which is either suppressed or formed by the aid of repression, inasmuch as it presents it as realized... In sleeping, we make use of the dream to dismiss the external stimulus... The dreams which come with a loud noise just before waking, have all attempted to cover the stimulus to waking, by some other explanation, and then

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to prolong the sleep for a little while". Illusion is the simplest artifice whereby through the action of the dream, sleep may here be prolonged. A simple illustration of this would be the dream in which we are quenching our thirst.

We see, then, that, contrary to the popular assumption, the dream state in reality involves no rupture with the waking condition. In our dreams, while we possibly become more truly ourselves than is the case when we are subjected to the sway of the "artificial personality" that society has helped to create for us, we are in no wise essentially different beings from what we are on other occasions. At least, the intervention of the supernatural entirely breaks down when we come to investigate the question. As we think and are by nature and habit, so we tend to become in the dream realm. Much, it is true, other than we seem we discover ourselves to be under such conditions; but this is owing to the previous partial and inadequate conception that we have probably formed of ourselves. Let us but dispel the illusion that we have so jealously cherished, and let us but realize that our self-knowledge is at best but fragmentary and incomplete, and we shall discover that dreams may possess a genuine significance. There is no

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one but is in a position to contribute something to this important branch of psychology. And it may be that the little that we bring will shed a flood of light, not only on our dream-state, but also on our waking condition. For it is there that the problem centres and its solution must be sought.

CHAPTER IX

THE FEAR IMPULSE

In his "TEXT BOOK OF PSYCHOLOGY", William James writes :

" The progress from brute to man is characterized by nothing so much as by the decrease in frequency of proper occasions for fear. In civilized life, in particular, it has at last become possible for large numbers of people to pass from the cradle to the grave without ever having had a pang of fear. Many of us need an attack of mental disease to teach us the meaning of the word. Hence the possibility of so much blind optimistic philosophy and religion. The atrocities of life become "like a tale of little meaning though the words are strong"; we doubt if anything like us ever really was within the tiger's jaws, and conclude that the horrors we hear of are but a sort of painted tapestry for the chambers in which we lie so comfortably at peace with ourselves and with the world. "

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Unfortunately the decease of Professor James took place some time prior to the outbreak of the world war : otherwise, he might have seen the necessity for modifying this passage. But in truth while in normal times fear and the necessity for it seem to be reduced to a minimum, the instinct itself not only persists but is appealed to in innumerable ways. We have only to cite the State for example : though in ordinary circumstances the average citizen behaves himself and pays his rates and taxes as a matter of course, he need not look very far to assure himself that any failure on his part to comply with the recognised requirements would be met with by the appeal to fear. The policeman may be a civil enough fellow; but civilized life is still desperately uncivil. And behind the policeman lie the policecourt and the prison. Anybody who is acquainted with these institutions will be in a position to realize that fear rather than love is relied upon ultimately in the administration of law and order. Whether fear should thus be relied upon we need not delay to consider, nor need we defend the arguments advanced on its behalf. The fact remains that fear survives.

Religion moreover is largely if not predomi-

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nantly the offspring of fear. Is it not still DREAD OF THE UNKNOWN that keeps men in bondage to orthodox beliefs and that renders them impervious to the "impious" suggestion that their faith is but superstition? To say that religion of the "old type" is passing and that "modern faith" is inspired less by fear than by the appeal to human love, in no wise invalidates this contention; for though doubtless the highest order of religious feeling tends more and more to emphasise the efficacy of ethical emotion to the eternal discredit of supernaturalism, existing institutions are supported and maintained mainly if not exclusively by the precise dread and awe which it is the object of rationalism to oppose and overcome. Very naturally and with the most praiseworthy logic therefore the more conservatively-minded religious man regards the advance of rationalism as the most serious foe with which religion has to contend.

The reflections which are recalled by such facts, so far from suggesting that fear has ceased to play anything but a subordinate part in human affairs, only go to show that it continues to exercise the most potent influence upon mankind. And so much so indeed that we may well ask whether it is not one of those instincts

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which however we may rationalize human nature are destined to exert a lasting influence.

Before passing on to discuss fear in relation to man we may do well to remind ourselves that it constitutes one of those deep-rooted instincts that are appropriate to most if not all sentient creatures. Man being the product of an interminable past, is the inheritor of the impulses which distinguished his brute ancestors, and of these none is greater or more universal than fear. The unfamiliar, the vast, the sublime, the terrific, fill us with dread. Let a sudden noise fall upon the ear and we are instantly startled. A storm produces restlessness. Children are often nervous of dogs, cats, black objects, and the dark. Let the man of the strongest nerves visit a lonely wood at night-time and he becomes conscious of a sense of dread. These facts are not without psychological warrant, for it was under similar conditions that our savage ancestors met wild beasts and other foes. A certain form of this fear is known by the term "Agarophobia", which means the terror of open spaces. To what is it attributable? Doubtless to the resurrection of an ancestral impulse which led primitive men to seek cover from danger. The cat's aversion from exposing itself to view is

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well known. And in this respect the human species strangely resembles the cat. Our dread seems to be little else than the revival of the cat's desire to seek shelter from its possible assailants.

If we ask what fear is, the reply may be given that it is the impulse which prompts to the avoidance of danger. But this definition it is clear does not commit us to the conclusion that fear is itself capable of forming any adequate judgment as to whether the object of such fear is inimical or otherwise. Yet it is nonetheless evident that unless this impulse had existed and spontaneous flight had enabled a creature to effect its escape, many species that have survived would have been exterminated. Fear has undoubtedly possessed survival value, and by means of it escape from innumerable sources of danger has been facilitated.

But fear is by no means a mere feeling, and we must guard against the temptation of over intellectualization. It rather constitutes a mode of behaviour, an impulse which involves specific organic reactions. This can be seen by watching any animal under its influence. Let a creature be terrified in any way and it is once prompted to exert its locomotory apparatus to the utmost.

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Under the feeling of fear, it is often possible to exhibit feats of almost superhuman power, as for instance in leaping.

Here the question arises as to how far the mind can be said to influence the body and vice versa. Is fear in reality a mental process, or is it rather a psychical state that is induced by a bodily condition? Probably it would be true to say that while fear is a psychological fact, it is one of those psychical facts which implicate our physiological life to a far greater extent than we commonly suppose, and that although we tend to act as we do because we feel "afraid", the sensation of fear is greatly reinforced by its bodily concomitants. "Without the bodily states following on the perception", writes James, "the latter would be purely cognitive in form; pale, colourless, destitute of emotional warmth".

As for the manifestations of fear, Professor Shand observes that these may take either one of the following forms : the creature may take flight, it may shrink back, remain motionless, seek a hiding place, cling for protection to another creature, or utter cries for help. These manifestations, as he shows, involve different sets of nerves and muscles and constitute so many different systems. But the point to be observed

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is, that fear thus regarded constitutes an organized set of reactions which qualifies the creature which exhibits it to behave in specific ways. Each of these without question has tended to subserve certain utilitarian ends. For instance, as has been said, the impulse to run away is obviously a reaction calculated to facilitate escape. Motionlessness again, as when one is paralysed through fear, was probably due originally to an instinctive act which tended to prompt the creature to lie still and thereby elude detection, or even simulate the appearance of death. The cry of terror was unquestionably a call for aid. In all such cases therefore, we see the biological value of fear, and unless it had been experienced and induced its appropriate reactions the chances of survival must have been remote.

These considerations however, which so far as the animals are concerned are too obvious to call for detailed comment, appear less applicable to man. Man, it is true inherits fear, but whereas this is so, it by no means necessarily follows that the things of which man is most afraid are invariably those which are most harmful to him. Far otherwise. A case is afforded by a thunderstorm, in which the peal of the

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thunder is often far more terrifying to the nerves than the lightning flash. Excessive fear again, such as is produced by a scare of fire, instead of prompting us "to cut and run" may occasion a temporary suspension of the locomotory powers. Further, the ascent of a high building may result in dizziness even when there is no danger. Another instance is the dread of the supernatural, although we are fully aware that there is no such thing. These facts and many more suggest the frequent futility of fear; so much so indeed that we are tempted to ask whether fear is not one of the factors in our psychological equipment that has outlasted its uses — that it is atavistic and should if possible be eradicated.

While however, in view of this, the desire to eliminate fear seems to be sufficiently legitimate, the practical chance of doing so is problematical in the extreme. So much so indeed, that the only thing open for us appears to be boldly to confront it and meet it in the most intelligent manner. We may, it is true, achieve this in fact by withholding certain stimuli to which the sensation of fear reacts, though this it is evident does not destroy fear. In point of fact, in common with other emotions, when fear is left unstimul-

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ated we merely get a state of baulked disposition, with its attendant strain. Fear, as we have already seen, is exceedingly influential in the social economy of everyday life. Being one of the principal agents of social discipline it tends to inhibit actions which unless checked might easily threaten social permanence and stability. To do right under compulsion or threat of punishment may argue a relative lowness of motive ; at the same time so long as base motives persist recourse to fear is inevitable. By fear many egoistic impulses are restrained : fear not alone of corporal punishment, but also of ridicule and censure tending to keep us within the limits prescribed by society. Law and government, as we have already remarked, are clearly supported by fear.

However regrettable this may be, the fact remains that until people can be depended on to respond to the appeal of love, fear must remain in the background. Nor need we doubt that by its means much serviceable conduct is secured. This is well put by Emerson :

"How much, preventing God, how much I owe,
To the defences Thou hast round me set :
Example, custom, fear, occasion slow, —
Those scorned bondmen were my parapet."

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Although, given the requisite degree of intelligence, the necessity for fear should be small, so long as man remains subject to the sway of his animal impulses he must be liable to experience terror and dread. For fear we must bear in mind is educative, inasmuch as it is the means of arresting the attention. A thing to which we ordinarily pay no heed and remain indifferent, may, by its effect upon our fear instinct, make a deep and lasting impression upon our mind. One of the most significant lessons of the war has been that of teaching us how much it is possible to accomplish by reducing the population to a state of terror and helplessness. However much we may sympathize with the pitiable impotence of the mass of humanity, we may well ask ourselves whether unless it were for fear, their plight would not be even more disastrous.

As it is, taking the present state of the world as our guide, we may well believe that for many years to come fear will still fulfill a function in human affairs. Accordingly, our problem is not so much how we may proceed to banish fear as how we may best direct it to subserve our highest welfare. If it can be shown that many of the things of which we have hitherto stood in dread need no longer be feared, it is true notwithstand-

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ing thatt here is still ample reason for fearing many other things, the danger of which we have never suspected. Of these poverty, disease, tyranny, and ignorance may be cited as of especial urgency. Man may legitimately and profitably fear lest he incur economic want, ill-health, servitude, or other such evils. But the fear instinct if it is to prove of value to him, must be so exercised as to adapt man to respond not in the old reflex ways, but through the instrumentality of his mental powers. Particularly is this true in the social sphere. And it may be observed that unless the fear impulse motivates the brain, no amount of knowledge is likely to avail. No mere facts without the sense of the necessity which compels us to utilize them can possibly suffice for our needs.

We may have outgrown our dread of the personal devil, but there are still things remaining with us that require to be shunned : apathy, self-conceit, obtuseness, tyranny, and vulgar opinion. It is true that, in order to overcome these, we should not run away from them ; but to fight them and to get the better of them we have need of courage, and true courage proceeds not from recklessness and indifference to danger, but from prudence, carefulness and forethought. And

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these, no less than cowardice, are rooted in the fear impulse, which intelligently directed must still occupy a position of honour in human life.

BENEDETTO CROCE.

CHAPTER X

RE-INCARNATION : A PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

When Emerson wrote, in his essay on "Worship",

"Higher than the question of our duration is the question of our deserving. Immortality will come to such as are fit for it, and he who would be a great soul in the future must be a great soul now",

he had in mind something far beyond the conception of personal survival. That problem, indeed, which possesses such an irresistible fascination for the speculative mind, is not devoid of interest or significance : and for those who are sufficiently curious about such matters, investigation along the lines of psychical research may afford suggestive possibilities. For the more exclusively practical, however, the solution of life's mysteries centres in the application of the "faith that is born of Ethics", and the entire sufficiency of the moral sentiment itself.

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In the words of Emerson :

"Of immortality, the soul, when well employed, is incurious. It is so well, that it is sure it will be well. It asks no questions of the Supreme Power".

Protracted reflection upon this problem, must have convinced many truthseekers of the profound wisdom which is embodied in such a declaration. The meaning of life is not to be sought in remote or contingent conditions : its eternal "depth and strength" must somehow be inherent in the present, and be now and here. Nor can the spiritual significance of our existence be enhanced merely by the prospect of the POST MORTEM perpetuation of our personality in another world. That, to be sure, may be provided for. But, finally, in any event, our conception of life must reduce itself to a question of Values ; and these values will be inextricably interwoven with the fabric and tissue of our terrestrial experience and substance. Whatever WORTH life may possess for us therefore, must inevitably proceed from precisely those aims, purposes and ideals which inspire us to act, achieve and to be in the living present. Here, then, or nowhere, in this ACTUAL, men are called upon to realize the Life of the Spirit.

But this conception itself, which is grounded

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and rooted in the unassailable conviction that here, upon this earth, man is predestined to an immortal consciousness, is necessarily progressive and subject to development. The "thousand and one goals" upon which men have set their affections, which have limited the range of human vision and precluded the apprehension of the way that leadeth to Life, must needs be transcended. For that way, if it is to be entered upon, calls for nothing less than incessant and utter surrender : the renunciation of all that men may hitherto have identified with themselves.

It was with this thought in mind that Matthew Arnold penned the lines,

"The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give!
Calm, calm me more, nor let me die
Before I have begun to live",

"Ye must be born again", said Jesus, when a certain master in Israel approached him by night. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God". But Nicodemus was incredulous. "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" To this irrelevant question Jesus makes answer, "Marvel not that I said unto thee ye must be born again.

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The wind blowed where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth : so is everyone that is born of the Spirit”.

Jesus and Nicodemus were obviously speaking different languages. Each was on a different "thought-plane", as it were. To the literal unimaginative intellect, this sublime disclosure of Spiritual wisdom was unintelligible. Yet, in the light of modern psychology, the truth that Jesus affirmed becomes entirely plain and evident.

"Re-birth," or re-generation, is one of the Eternal Verities that have invariably been pre-figured and symbolized in the great myths and religions of the world. In the Phoenix, for example, we find the idea presented to us in the shape of a fabulous bird, alleged to have resembled an eagle, with resplendent red and gold plumage, which, having lived 500 years or so in the Arabian Desert, burnt itself on a funeral pile and afterwards rose, from the ashes of its former self, rejuvenated. A very similar idea is embodied in the rituals of primitive peoples, whose "initiations" provide their believers with a vivid dramatic representation of burial and subsequent resurrection. The more philosophic religions too have presented the same conception in "Re-Incarnation" : the doctrine that our present terrestrial existence is but one among

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many successive corporeal manifestations of the indwelling, immortal Spirit. "Re-Incarnation" has, of recent years, made an ever-increasing appeal to the occidental mind ; and this may be accounted for mainly owing to the decisive reaction that has set in against the individualistic superstition of an antiquated theology, that had been content to regard each "soul" as a separate and distinct creation of an omnipotent external will, and had taught that man's nature and destiny were arbitrarily determined by extrinsic and adventitious means. The significance of the idea, it should be mentioned, consists not so much in its attempt to provide an unending life for the individual, as that its deeper implications suggest that every "personal" expression of life takes its rise, develops and finally merges in what is one continuous and sequential process.

But apart from the hypothesis to which the popular interpretation appears to commit us, Re-birth is susceptible of psychological treatment. Whether or no this present self is a phase of a former one : or whether, at death, this phase will subsequently be refashioned into another, in which the continuity of the Ego will be preserved everlastingly, may appear doubtful to many. What is certain, is, that, here and now, life is a process of continuous and sequential unfoldment, whereby our inner mental, moral and emotional

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nature is incessantly passing through successive series of metamorphoses. These transformations proceed in a orderly manner, and are accompanied normally by appropriate changes. When Shakespeare exclaims

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players,
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages",

he appears to be alluding to a psychological scheme for which the biological provisions of Nature afford adequate preparation.

Roughly, these stages might, perhaps, be said to correspond to Infancy, Childhood, Puberty, Adolescence, Youth, Adult life and Old Age, respectively. As a rule, these stages are associated in our minds merely with certain physiological changes which are incidental to existence; viz. Growth, Maturity and the decline of physical power. In point of fact, however, they are concerned with far profounder processes, corresponding as they do to the evolution of successive stages of experience and development.

In the Individual, we have what is to all intents and purposes a recapitulation of race-history. Hence every normally constituted being passes through a series of Life-cycles which successively

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provide for his ensuing growth and development. Thus, each phase which distinguishes his evolution, being natural and inevitable, should be allowed to make its own specific contribution, when, having been incorporated in his make-up, it gives place to the next stage upon which the individual is required to enter. This process will be intelligible if we consider these phases in the following manner.

First of all, then, we encounter the period of Infancy, the phase which is appropriate to babyhood ; the stage that provides for the experiences typified in our legends and myths by the "Golden Age".

What "re-incarnates" first in the newly-born babe ? The " Pleasure Principle " : those impulses and tendencies, transmitted by heredity, that provide for self-gratification and enjoyment. At this stage of our career, the nutritional functions predominate, and existence is concerned principally with promoting the interests which are responsible for our physical nature. The world of infancy is a very little place, and is controlled in the main by deep-seated instincts that preside over self-preservation and self-enlargement. The whole universe for us is then organized round our own personality as its centre, and we are conscious of little save in an instinctive way, and when it interferes with our

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enjoyment. Having emerged from its pre-natal condition, in which it secured every possible blessing without the least necessity for making conscious effort of any kind, the infant reaches a stage when it endeavours to prolong its Paradisal existence, and when it accordingly makes unlimited demands without in the least realizing that its state of perfection is in reality that of the unregenerate man. This phase often persists long into after life and bears the closest analogy to that which distinguishes the evolution of the primitive. To it we may refer the beliefs which repose upon the assumptions that have led both the savage and the civilized to a "magical" or "supernatural" conception of life. In infancy, the rational mind is as yet in abeyance ; every wish, in so far as it is gratified, is gratified by means which lie beyond our cognizance or conscious control. Everything is done for us, and in order to get what we desire we emit a cry which usually summons those who supply our want.

But this stage cannot be prolonged indefinitely, and between the ages of three and five years, self-consciousness dawns. Life is a process of un-selfing, and now arrives the period when the child begins to adjust itself to the practical situations of life. Now comes in the influence of the parents, guardians and nurses, and during

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the interval in which it is subjected to their control, the child is driven forth from its former Eden. But its "omnipotent ego" is still strong, and, in order that it may be afforded opportunities of still keeping in touch with its primal needs, it resorts to play. The child revels in its imagination, and this is possible because it is permitted to exercise certain instinctive tendencies which, as yet without conscious direction, enable it to indulge in certain "phantasies". These form the foundation of those fictitious personalities which constitute it the little actor that every child should be. Through its attempts at mimicry, it acquires the free-play for those tendencies which will later be available for the more serious business of life. Among such tendencies we find curiosity and pugnacity. The child invariably exhibits interest in certain actual persons and things and its phantasies commonly centre in some character or situation that happens to fire its imagination. In the case of boys, this phantasy may proceed from the pugnacious or hunting impulse, which may result in military or piratical aspirations; or it may be seized by a frenzied ambition to become a fireman or the driver of a motor bus, in which case it will have projected itself by way of its danger or constructive instincts, into such situations. Later on we shall find the parental

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instinct asserting itself, and this will lead the child to play at mothers and fathers or to show a love for dolls as well as manifest affection for pets. As the child grows older, the acquisitive impulse comes into play, and this may be shown by the desire to collect and possess — either stamps, tram tickets or "fag cards". Later still, and between the seventh and fourteenth years, the gregarious tendency is usually displayed, when the "gang spirit" comes in, games are played, and loyalty is revealed.

The next stage is that which is reached at puberty and adolescence. And now we find a return upon the self. From 15 to 18, and sometimes long afterwards, the adolescent becomes aware of the growing needs of his or her inner nature. New energies and emotions come into play, and though the origin of these is not understood, a vague sense of yearning for something that remains unattained and unrealized, enters. Psychologists have noted that at this period religion frequently becomes a dominant idea, and that many young people undergo "conversion". In any case, they are liable to experience a sense of their own imperfection and unworthiness, and, in virtue of the birth within them of a new insight, seek a fresh ideal for themselves. This is the age of Romance, as well as stress and conflict; and the normal

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course is to direct the energies to some person of the opposite sex who will so engage the emotions as to transfer the interest from a merely subjective and ego-centric standpoint to one which will provide for the subsequent development of character.

Youth follows, during which there should be further adaptations to the practical requirements of life. Idealism should now give place to a more realistic outlook; yet the contribution of adolescence should have prevented this from becoming sordid or utilitarian. Fresh interests should crop up; and with the assumption of responsibility, the character should undergo development.

With maturity, the powers having being exercised, we are brought to a still fuller state of development. And by this time, adequate provision should have been made for the final phase, which is only too often believed to signalise the approach of inevitable decrepitude and decay.

But old age, while it may deprive us of many of the joys which are appropriate to the preceding stages, should conduct us to a period in which, by reason of our having lived out each phase as it arose, with our eye upon what was to follow, we should be fully equipped to enjoy much which still remains for us, "The last of

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life, for which the first was made". The idea, however, that advanced life can, excepting in certain rare cases, bring us such blessings, is usually denied. Readers of Wordsworth's "Ode" will recall the poet's pathetic reference to the vanished splendours of early childhood : how, as the youth grows up, the vision of Life, instead of leading him onward, recedes into the background of life — becoming a hallowed memory, until at length the man is left to brood on so much as he can remember of its departed glories. The suggestion that is thus conveyed to us is that ultimately all that we have to look forward to is the unsubstantial dream of what "remains behind", in the land of memory. That the "philosophic mood" is indeed consistent with the happy memories of a well-spent youth, is undeniable. But are we really to infer that a life that is passed in a wisely-ordered series of adjustments to natural, biological and psychological necessities, is merely an experience which finally dissolves in a sense of something that has vanished, like a tale that has been told? Old age has constantly been found to find its delight in dwelling thus passively upon what went before, and has all too seldom been credited with the power to make any positive contribution to life.

But in spite of his apparent despair of the possibilities of continuous and progressive develop-

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ment, Wordsworth, it will be remembered, suddenly gives utterance to the exultant exclamation :

"O joy! that in our members
Is something that doth live!"

And he intuitively perceives that, while life may not give us all that we have desired,

"Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
which brought us hither".

From which declaration we may infer that he held that man was not a piece of clockwork, wound up to go for three score years and ten, and then finally reduced to a phantom; but rather that he is the incarnation of the inexhaustible, quenchless Spirit of Life, which, at each stage of his career, will replenish him from its own boundless resources.

Modern psychology furnishes us with an interpretation to this conception of life. And what it tells us is, that life itself is a process of change, in which we encounter a transition from the Pleasure principle to that of Reality. And what is Pleasure? Certainly not a state of mere happiness. And what of Reality? Assuredly it is not a mere condition of disillusion and emptiness. We oscillate, in short, between two poles :

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that of our primal desires, and that of Truth. The one provides us with our wishes; the other compels us to come to terms with what actually is. Desire prompts to action, but brings pain; pain, as far as possible, we avoid, and in order to do this, take refuge in phantasy.

But our phantasies are regressive. They hold us back. The origin of phantasy appears to be the failure on our part to adjust ourselves to a world which seems to be at variance with our wishes. Truth is never palatable; facts are always inconvenient. We therefore, shun them. And we fancy that, by shutting them out, by substituting our phantasies for them, we can have what we want. For a time no doubt we can, or so it appears.

Thus, our world is, in most respects, an excessively infantile place, and it is full of people who, as yet, are totally unprepared to confront anything in the shape of Reality. Truth to tell, they have never been brought up to do so. Our institutions, for the most part, have developed under the tradition of influences which, instead of appealing to the individual responsibility of their members, have fostered a delusive sense of security. Church, State, School, and Home, have all tended to keep us, one and all, in a backward condition which has thwarted the legitimate exercise of those tendencies whose pro-

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gressive evolution alone must have provided for the experimental and dynamic growth of the individual.

Especially has this been apparent hitherto in the relations that have subsisted between parent and child. In our domestic regime, though young and old may have been accustomed to meet upon a friendly footing, little imagination has been exercised on the part of the mother or father to anticipate the future Man or Woman in the offspring. Nor has the older generation itself exhibited any proof of its right to claim the position accorded it. During the war, perhaps better than at any other time, we realized how hopelessly inadequate had been the upbringing of those to whom "the rising generation" had been taught to look. And who, since then, has felt that he could afford to rely on the alleged wisdom and guidance of the Past? Unless our inspiration and guidance are destined to come from our own exertion and experience, we may well prove apprehensive of the future.

Fortunately, however, ever-increasing stress is coming to be laid where it is most needed, and people are beginning to realize that a fresh start has to be made with EVERY INDIVIDUAL, who if he is to be in a position to profit by the mistakes of his ancestors, must be prepared to undertake the serious business of life by adopting as

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responsible an attitude as possible at the outset. And this must inevitably mean that he must make up his mind to relinquish all his illusions in advance. Thus the consoling belief that he can remain, or afford to remain, in the infantile or adolescent stage of growth to the day of his death, is one of those fondly-cherished dreams that he will be called upon to abandon.

Many still refuse to "grow up". And some of the tragic results of this infantile state of mind, in its re-action upon the individual, are vividly set forth in the poem, "Mrs. Effingham's Swan Song", by Muriel Stuart :

"I am growing old : I have kept youth too long,
But I dare not let them know it now.
I have done the heart of youth a grievous wrong,
Danced it to dust and drugged it with the rose,
Forced its reluctant lips to one more vow.
I have denied the lawful grey,
So kind, so wise, to settle in my hair.

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"I am afraid to grow old now even if I would.
I have fought too well, too long, and what was once
A foolish trick to make the rose more strangely gay
Is now a close-locked mortal conflict of brain and
[blood.—
A feud too old to settle or renounce".

RE-INCARNATION

The poem is true to life. Whenever the passage from one phase of life to another is ignored, or resisted, a state of conflict is bound to ensue. Let the young athlete go on playing at football until the time arrives when he is no longer able to continue, and unless he has made conscious provision for his potential growth, what happens? Or suppose the business man at 70, having made his fortune, decides upon retiring, without however having in the meantime cultivated a single hobby — gardening, reading or even bowls — what is likely to occur? Break-down. In the same way if the woman of fifty still dresses and behaves as she did when she was a "flapper" of 18, and having repressed her maternal and mental needs becomes a mass of neurotic egotism, who can wonder at it? In all these cases, we observe the same identical arrest of development which is opposed to the full discharge of the biological and psychological functions. Nature rebels. But such rebellion is the outcome of our own folly and ignorance. It is this that we must rectify.

The law of Re-birth, then, must win practical acceptances. Periodically, we must survey and revise our mode of life. But at each new phase what we observe is that the source of salvation lies in the capacity which we inherit for cultiv-

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ating fresh interests. And, ultimately, when we approach the final stage, we find that, having lived through the preliminary stages, that which awaits us in the form of intellectual vigour, instead of reducing us to mere shadows of our former selves, introduces us to what may become a period of creative energy. In his play "Back to Methuselah", Mr Shaw makes one of his "ancients" say "Infant : one moment of the ecstasy of life as we live it would strike you dead", "No one ever dies of old age", wrote Richard Jefferies. "No one single person ever dies of old age, or of natural causes, for there is no such thing as a natural cause of death. They die of disease or weakness which is the result of disease either in themselves or in their ancestors. No such thing as old age is known to us. We do not even know what old age would be like, because no one ever lives to it".

Our problem therefore is how we may so live our allotted span, whatever it may be, as to learn to surrender each phase through which we may have passed at the right time, in order that we may thereby facilitate our entrance upon the next. Nor is it the future that we have reason to fear. Death does not stand awaiting us, ready to cut short our life before we have finished our course. For, as life finally derives its value from

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the purpose to which we may ultimately commit ourselves, so it acquires its power from the realm of our psychological being. Truly, many prolong their days through learning to regulate their lives in accordance with a principle which reveals to them the supreme truth that the highest and fullest life depends upon the acceptance of those aims and ideals which find their realization in self-surrender. The only fatality that can befall us is that which proceeds from resisting the oncoming of the Life-cycles. And none knows this better than those, who, though they may be aged in years, have yet managed, as so many do, to preserve the spirit of Eternal Youth within them.

It is therefore by facing the Infinite Future with hope, courage and faith, that man prevails : and though, in the natural order of things, it may be ordained for us that the body may need to be discarded when it has served its purpose, having once learned the secret of Surrender, this act may well become a voluntary one. If, instead of identifying ourselves with the necessarily transitory stages which provide for the ever-developing and increasing life of which our corporeal self is but the vehicle and manifestation, we keep our mind steadfastly set upon the Process : if, in glad anticipation of new revelations of Truth, Wisdom and Goodness that await us, we can so

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merge ourselves in the as-yet unmanifested splendours of the Universe, then we shall indeed joyfully surrender even our choicest gifts to the Whole : the devotion, the thankfulness and the love, by which we have been the privileged participants in the Eternal Plan.

” There is no need to oppose a eulogy of Life with a eulogy of Death, since the eulogy of Life is also a eulogy of Death, for how could we live, if we did not die at every instant ? ”



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