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THE SOCIAL PROCESS

(in the light of a century of Sociology)

BY

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1. You and I want to live, and live well. This needs definite effort on our part. For, there is something which characterises us all, as members of the kingdom of living beings, something which shall happen, whether we will it or no. This is Change, which is but a name for the way in which organisms slide from one state to another. Change, you know, implies something which resists change or rather remains relatively static. This change is so universal a phenomenon that it may well be called an organic attribute of all living beings, leaving out, for the time being, the inorganic as falling outside our immediate reference. If you, for example, were to be different persons for the different experiences of your life, there could hardly have been any occasion for me to appear before you in the way I am doing at present. Nay, in that case, the very words 'you,' 'yours,' and 'me' would have ceased to carry any sense. Further, it needs no metaphysics to see that this phenomenon of Change would have meant nothing for the activity of the individual organism, if its character were to be fixed, though not necessarily universal in its nature.

Now, it is the *unfixed* changing character of Change which is, it must be remembered, one of the great factors which has made us Individuals. And again, it is mainly this *deterministic* quality of the changing nature of Change along with the known fact that that nature, though unfixed, may, to a great extent, be controlled by those very beings, who are in the process of becoming, *i.e.*, here, by ourselves as organisms, who are being individualised, which sets us thinking, if we

are conscious of our responsibilities for being human, about the character which the Change within and without us should take. Change within and Change without are interdependent factors. You cannot concentrate on either to the absolute exclusion of the other, though you expect, and naturally so, that the Change without would be comparatively static.

The Change within is best understood in terms of characteristics which distinguish one individual from another. These characteristics are, in general, of two types: the physical and the mental. From the point of the individual as an organism each of these types is as important as the other, perhaps the former more than the latter. Not only that but they are interdependent and complementary. It would not, however, shock you, I suppose, if I say that the interests of human life, the conditions of what I mean by living well, *i.e.*, good life, depend more upon the mental side than on the physical. Please observe: first, that what I am doing is merely to point out a fact—no judgment; and secondly, that I am employing the word “more,” a relative term with a specific reference. Now, if you agree with me about this correlation between the mental and the physical sides of the human individual, and you should not find it difficult to do so, I believe, if your grocer whom you might be meeting almost daily does not manage to influence you more than the lecturer, for instance, to whom you have extended the privilege of addressing you this evening and whom perhaps the majority among you do not personally know,—with a further proviso, that you grant as you should that the organism needs environment for the inevitable growth to which it is subject, then you would not, I hope, hesitate, in the least, to concede that that part of the environment is *more* vitally related to the development and progress of your being which is directly concerned with the mental side. This is the part which may, broadly and briefly, be described as Culture.

Progress or rather improvement needs, as you know, not only insight but something more—anticipation. And what

is anticipation? Certainly we do not mean by it the vision of the mystic but something of the nature of the scientist's foresight. The *sine qua non* of such a foresight is perspective, perspective as correct and judicious as possible. In order to know the "whither," you must know the "whence." You have to think of things around you with yourself in the centre, and this you cannot do without knowing the "process" to which you both, you along with your surroundings, are subject. And in this regard, the process to attract the students of human sciences, of Economics, of Politics, of Sociology, and even of Philosophy, should mostly be the Cultural or the Social Process.

2. The way we have been brought to this concept of Social Process should make it quite clear that I am using the term in the least technical sense. But in view of certain controversial associations to which it gives rise, I will state here in more definite terms what I mean by it. Social Process, as I understand it, has two aspects: first, the nature of cultural development as reflected in the trend of thought about man conceived as a living entity, as an individual whose personality comprehends the socius and transcends it, during the period under review, *i.e.*, the century we have just left behind; and secondly, the process by which the individual, which has a certain mental substratum for the basis of its personality-structure, is assimilated into the cultural flow of the times. Of necessity, I have to be somewhat scrappy, confining myself to the main current of this process.

3. During the known period in the life of Man on earth, he may well be said to be leading a sort of communal life, life of One among the Many. Who the Many are depends upon the nature of each case, upon the time and place of the birth of the individual, as also the group which immediately surrounds him.

This feature about the essential nature of the historical man could hardly escape the notice of those who set themselves the task of understanding the working of human

affairs, for one purpose or another. Before they could do anything to re-form the existing state of affairs, they had first to take due stock of the relationships already subsisting between the group and the individual members of that group, according to their ideology. And even this stock-taking was, by itself, hardly sufficient to enable them to put their new ideas into force straightway. A very rigid stage had to be passed through—the stage of regulating. Thus first they had to read the situation, then to regulate it on lines conducive to the programme in view, seeing that in doing so they did not stretch the traditional fabric too much, and it was after this that reform could be made actual. Babylonian Law, presumably based on earlier Sumerian Law, for instance, attracts our attention in this connection as perhaps the most ancient among the available legal codes, being dated a little prior to 2000 B.C., wherein is evident a definite attempt to understand the subtleties of human nature and to regulate accordingly the most intimate of relationships like the sexual, etc. That what they did proved perhaps fatal to their vitality does not invalidate their having tried to improve upon the past in respect of a very significant part of the aspect of their communal life. But this yields nothing which may be called scientific in the modern sense of the term.

4. Nor are we pushed further in this respect by the study of ancient Indian Philosophy, that of the Vedic period generally. Philosophy, it is—perhaps of first rate quality. But Philosophy and Science are not co-terminous. When your doctor advises you on how to get rid of your superfluous flesh in order to lead what they call normal life, he is not speaking Science. It is Art. Nobody, however, doubts that he knows the science of Medicine. Let me not stress the analogy. What I mean is this: the ability of our forefathers to understand on up-to-date scientific lines human nature and its correlates is not in question here. But the fact as we have it today is that what they actually gave us is Philosophy—a Philosophy of Life. You are born a debtor and

unless you strive to pay back the debt which you owe to the past, present, and future, your condition at death will perhaps be worse—you may die a criminal, with an unreturnable increase on your debit side. Your first care should be about the life ahead, for death is nothing else but another lease of life elsewhere, happy or miserable depends directly upon your conduct here and now. Such an outlook may be described not so much as philosophical much less as scientific but more appropriately as mystic *cum* ethical.

5. It was the Greeks who carried the torch in this respect. It is to the Sophists that goes the credit of leading the human intellect to altogether a new field of exploration, that of understanding man as a self-determining agency. It was here for the first time in the history of Thought that you get something to talk of as the *Problems of Human Life*. Man, his ideas, his actions, the circumstances of his life, conditions of his happiness—all these were actually brought within the purview of his empirical observation and independent scrutiny.

In particular, reference must be made to Protagoras (circa 480—410 B.C.), the intellectual leader of the Sophists, who shifted the world's vision from the remote fringe of almost an imaginary world to the centre directly: Man is the measure of all things, he declared categorically. It was he who gave the most effective currency to one of the fundamental requisites of science, *viz.*, to take Experience as the only category strictly knowable for the human intellect.

6. Protagoras and his band, however, were unfortunate in their posterity, so far at least as the scientific side of their efforts was concerned. For, there followed a period in which ethical outlook got the upper hand of the just-imbued scientific spirit. The character of Socratic (Socrates: 469-399 B.C.) science, and even of psychology, is ethical. Concepts and good life were the termini within which the scientist in man was to move. Everything else remained in the background. Hybrid epistemology rather than science of man was the result.

7. Plato (427-347 B.C.), too, did not improve matters. What he mainly aimed at was a double-edged goal: to uphold Socrates, to criticize the Sophists. And all through his efforts to achieve this end the under-current predominates, *viz.*, the desire to solidify the foundations of the sort of absolutistic ethics of Socrates, demolishing at the same time the already rudimentary structure of the relativistic psychology of the Sophists. The scrutiny of the actual phenomena was burnt in the fire of enthusiasm to build up a world of Ideas, the understanding of man was sacrificed to the moulding of philosophers.

Nor do we get anything positive about society as such in Plato's thought. No doubt Plato's is a comprehensive system of philosophy, but after all it remains a philosophy, like all other philosophies, non-scientific, call it supra-scientific if you like, but certainly not scientific. It is moreover a philosophy manifestly ethical in character, in its outlook decidedly political, with the result that questions about man and society are relegated definitely to a secondary, if not inferior, status. No science, far less the scientific study of man and society, could arise in such a soil.

8. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) hardly helps us to go any farther, for he too follows his teacher in this respect. Perhaps you are shocked to hear me say so. For, Aristotle, you might wonder, is admittedly the founder of more than one science, psychology included. He is most certainly. And that is exactly why what may appear to you to be a paradox is merely a statement which should bring home to you how intensely scientific you need be in order to understand your nature and its attributes on the scientific plane. Aristotle with all his abilities failed to found a science of human life or even to create proper atmosphere for the advent of such a science, precisely because he fell short of the scientific equipment. Here too was a muddling of Science, Politics, and Ethics. Social processes were starved, political factors fed: and all this was done mainly in the interests of Ethics.

And it was chiefly Ethics which proved fatal to the scientist in Aristotle. To be a scientist, the first and the most important requisite is that you need to be de-emotionalised. And secondly, you cannot move in two realms at one and the same time, least of all in the realms of "Is" and "Ought." Not that these two realms are antagonistic or unrelated. Not in the least, nor so even the interests in them. There exists, on the contrary, the most intimate relationship between the two; and it is this very fact which necessitates, on our part, the utmost scrupulousness to keep them from mixing up when science dictates that each must be studied apart from the other. It is with the full knowledge of this fact and for a special purpose that you should bring them together and study the resultant issues, like those of Social Philosophy, for instance.

The character of the Greek thought on the whole was thus a mixed one. It presented a stage of acute conflict where the politician and the ethicist in the philosopher were trying to achieve the impossible—a compromise. In this conflict science was almost completely ignored. The result was that the Greeks expended all their superior intelligence over prescriptions prepared without diagnoses worth the name. Witness, for example, Plato's failure as an administrator, when he had his life's opportunity to put his ideas into practice. Scientifically, the proper planning of a good life must rest on the understanding of actual life. To make a man happy, whether as a member of a society or as a citizen of a State, you must first know in what, as he is actually constituted, his happiness consists. It is, in short, the psychological study of the individual and the society which should precede the study of man, as a political and a moral being.

9. With the mediaeval times (from about the 5th to the end of 15th century A.D.) in Europe we pass from bad to worse. Before science could get enough time to grow, politico-ethical philosophy clouded the atmosphere. And thence we have now moved to what may, from the point of view of

science, be called the Dark Age, the Age of theology. Science, you know, is no respecter of personages, but she was asked, if she was to exist, to respect images. For, this part of the universe was declared, by the Church fathers who were then in power, to be under the rule of ordinances, which were issued by an Unseen hand and revealed to the world to act upon. The general atmosphere thus was absolutely unsuitable for the continuance or existence of science, much less for its birth. For the rise of sociology, there was no hope. Sociological outlook is nothing but an aspect of scientific outlook which enables us to study all social phenomena without exception with a view to ascertain their *human* value. If the scientist, in general, does not respect personalities, the sociologist, in particular, does not respect societies, whether it be the State or the Church. Among the scientists, it is thus the sociologist, who needs freedom most. Mediaeval Age was anything but a congenial period for freedom of this kind.

10. Emerging from this dark track in the life of thought we are confronted by a series of fresh outlooks, each emanating from a genuine effort to re-interpret and re-model Man and his Life, in their own way, on lines befitting the new conditions. And naturally these outlooks as we view them, with the advantage we possess in virtue of the distance, which separates these thinkers from us historically, look to be characterised by both good and bad points. But what needs our attention is the new orientation, the new ways of looking at things in general. First to attract our attention in this respect is Spinoza (1632-1677 A.D.). He did see the limitations of human consciousness, realised that the thoughts and actions of the individual have existence so far as they exist in his consciousness, but the normative cause was somewhere over and above the individual, not subordinate to the interests of the State as the Greeks, Plato and Aristotle, thought but final, natural. What was true about the individual was also true about the society: both were to be under the sway of the sovereignty of Nature. Instead of rights being social,

they were natural,—rights the conception of which, logically, was beyond the grasp of the ordinary being, within reach perhaps of the men at the top. In this system, with Nature and Man for its upper and lower extremities respectively, State, too, occupied merely an intermediate position.

From the point of view of Sociology, Hobbes (1588-1679), a senior contemporary of Spinoza, too, does take us no further. He too believed in a law of nature, but this time to uphold the *absolute* sovereignty of the State. Individual had no existence of his, society hardly figured in the picture. In such a system of thought which is ruled by the conception of rights and duties, which work independently of what we call the social force, there could be no room for a faithful figure of man and the soulful idea of social relativity.

Hobbes reminds us of Rousseau, who differs from him in one important respect. With Hobbes individuals had to submit to the authority of the State, as the only possible way of maintaining peace. As individuals they were at war with each other, man being, by nature, selfish. It was only by virtue of the legal contract and acceptance of the authority of the State that they compelled themselves to tolerate one another. To Rousseau (1712-1778), on the other hand, man, was by nature good and social. And this being so, there was no necessity of forced compulsion to keep him within the four walls of a peaceful community. By the very nature of his will, he was expected to help the orderly maintenance of the social compact. The existence of the State was necessary to enable man to lead as free a life as possible without harming the life of the whole community. The necessity of force arose because of the deterioration of man, deterioration for which nothing else but the historical processes were responsible. The most potent of these influences, Rousseau found in the institution of property which was ultimately responsible for making man selfish.

I do not propose to evaluate these diverse theories, of legal and social contract, from the view-point of political

science. I wish to emphasise only an aspect of them to show how they remain tied to a traditional mode of thought and thus fail to be scientific in their essentials. It is their philosophic methodology. These theorists started with assumptions, perhaps unshakable, according to their ideologies, and, on the strength of those assumptions proceeded to build their respective systems. As I have already said, Science, nay, even pragmatic philosophy for the matter of that, cannot accept such a procedure.

11. And now I may mention the turning point. It is in Charles Montesquieu (1689-1755) that we come across the Descartes of modern Sociology. It was this French political historian who, for the first time, looked with the eye of the scientist towards human experience, and transformed the so far doubtful association of Politics with what was later to be known as Sociology into a life-companionship. It was an inductive outlook. The fate of the conclusions directly depended upon concrete facts. That the methodology thus initiated falls short of the modern standard does not annul the fact of its revolutionary character.

It was in Montesquieu's argument that, for the first time, the force of human motives got recognised in a realistic form. He showed how the relationship of the individual to the whole changes with different constitutional frames. Laws, according to Montesquieu, were to be looked upon as the generalised forms, which had for their contents the facts of national character. To explain their spirit he evoked the aid of the actual conditions of the times, as the only reliable source. Thus besides bringing about a methodological revolution, Montesquieu quite effectively showed, in his own way, the crucial interdependence of the two spheres of human life, *viz.*, the political and the social. But the world of ideas is often immune to the efforts of individuals. It was quite long before Montesquieuan trend of thought could push ahead its boundaries.

12. In the meanwhile, Germany was predominantly

philosophical, though not without a change in the outlook. I may only refer to Johann Fichte (1762-1814) and Georg Hegel (1770-1831). In Fichte we have a milder Kant, so far at least his system of morals goes—a system which rules his thought in other spheres also. Thus the rigidity of the categorical imperative is there, but the sensibility of man is raised to the status of reason, and this is certainly because here human experience receives more consideration. Moral personality of the individual was conceived as having the right to demand *the right to work* as an important condition of existence, and it was the duty of the State to fulfil this demand of the individual without disturbing the social equilibrium. The social compact was the basis of the State, and was analysed into the citizen, the property, and the defence contract—aspects which were comprised under the doctrine of the right to work. To Hegel *morality* consists in subordinating the subjective individual disposition to the dictates of common consciousness, *social morality* being its realisation in the form of *State*. State is the visible manifestation of the invisible spirit of Man.

13. It is only six years after the death of this philosopher of history and a century before this day when we have met here to celebrate the founder's day of this temple of self-sacrifice that we find the spirit of Montesquieu's method being lifted once again and once for all in the magnificent work of the French Philosopher Auguste Comte (1798-1857). Both as a concept and subject, Sociology was born in 1837.

Comte looked upon the phenomena of the world as simple and complex, in varying degrees. To know and understand the nature of the latter, one must have the knowledge of the former. Correspondingly, the notion of hierarchy characterises his conception of the order of sciences, where Sociology, the most comprehensive of all, stands at the top. Society, according to Comte, passes through three stages, the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive. What determines these stages is the way in which phenomena

are explained in each stage. It is a kind of supernatural explanation which characterises the first stage, the conceptual the second, the factual the third stage. New integration is the distinctive feature of each of the higher stages. What determined the character of this integration was the then existing thought form, which was but a manifestation of the basic solidarity of the social fabric of the times. Thus it is in the method and manner in which the synthetic outlook is brought to bear on the current of world's phenomena that Comte demonstrates how evident is the hitherto unknown principle of the dynamics of the human mind. It was a sort of picture of the Mind in Evolution. Comte held that the past history of mankind should be studied and generalisations deduced therefrom, which generalisations he hoped would serve the very useful purpose of guiding the cultural process in future. It is this study that he christened Sociology in 1837.

14. England's service with regard to the advancement of human knowledge on the Comtian plane is far from being negligible. Among those who deserve our notice, I may mention only four: Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), Charles Darwin (1809-1882), John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) and Thomas Hill Green (1836-1882).

Spencer was the most versatile of all these. He was a biologist, a psychologist, a sociologist. And what he presented to the world as his interpretation of the Universe was itself a synthesis. It was an interpretation of one who was by nature a philosopher, equipped with a deep insight into the biological and psychological sides of human nature. Life, he conceived in terms of progressive adjustment of the inner relations to the outer, adjustment which was evolutionary in the sense of passing from simple to complex. Development of the individual life is a prototype of the development of the social life.

Comte, and more so Spencer, were no doubt evolutionists but they were philosopher-evolutionists. They were correct-

ed and substantiated by Charles Darwin, who worked, for the first time in the history of thought, on scientific lines to solve the problem of origins, especially the origin of man and his species. And he solved it successfully. The basis of human nature was shown to be essentially biological. Everything else had the character of superstructure.

On its ethical side, the social philosophy of Comte directly influenced the ethical system propounded by John Stuart Mill, the system of Utilitarianism. This system, which is based on the principle of the greatest good of the greatest number, is significant for the view it takes of man's motives to moral action. It is because man never conceives himself as a solitary being that the individual good and the good of the community go together. It is in the "social feelings of mankind" that Mill finds the ultimate source of man's moral motives.

In Green's theory of morality, Politics and Sociology meet together. Self-realisation is the goal of human action; but the good, which is thus personal, is also the social good, for, outside society man has no existence. Man owes his betterment to institutions, which stand for the good of the community as well as of that of the individual. And it is in political society that man reaches the fullest realisation of his self.

15. We thus see that it was the social life of man which was becoming the centre of attraction, and motivation the principle of explanation. Man was moved to action, whether ultimately for his own good or the good of the community, because he desired to seek happiness, to avoid unhappiness. And the final explanation of the phenomenon of human motivation was fundamentally psychological.

Human hopes and strivings were made the subject of direct psychological investigation by William James (1842-1910). The foundation of James's psychology is biological, its treatment scientific. Though some of his theories have undergone corrections and alterations, it was he who was the

first to state in scientific form how the mechanism of motivation depended on the formation of man's habits, habits which, in turn, were subject to innumerable influences during the early growth of the individual.

James's contribution to the understanding of human life is great. Only a point or two can be mentioned here. Man was undoubtedly a biological animal, but there was much more about him which could transform the character of his personality altogether. The human environment, the actual reality which clothed the individual, did certainly determine the character of human experience, but the more significant factor was the life of the organism, that was in correspondence with the environment. And this life could not be explained adequately either on the physical or biological plane, unless a due note was taken of the psychical side of man. Man was a functional structure, whose structure was biological but the functional correlate was so much complicated that it assumed an altogether different character, *viz.*, the psychical character, which depended more or less upon the cultural process, which supplied the material for the situations which were directly concerned with the process of individual development.

16. The psychology of motivation, however, found its scientific liberator in A. F. Shand (1858-1936). The basis of Shand's conception of the human mind is biological, but the explanation of human motivation, Shand held, was to be sought not in the biological activity of man but in his social behaviour. Social behaviour, the product of the activity of human beings in response to situations, could only be dealt with in terms of integrated systems of emotional dispositions, which come to characterise the whole course of the life of the individual organism. These systems Shand described as Sentiments. The whole character of the human personality depends upon the character of these systems of sentiments. For sentiments are nothing else but the motivating agencies which control the activity of the human individual, agencies

which embody the comparatively stable attitudes formed during his concourse with the environmental conditions. Sentiments thus provide the key to the understanding of the process of individual growth which forms an integral part of the general social process in which it functions.

I do not think that we have made any advance over Shand's interpretation of the psychology of motivation. The doctrine of Sentiments is finding its confirmation in the work of psychologists, of social investigators, of anthropologists.

Sentiments are thus seen to be the springs of action in an individual mind and are themselves an integral organisation on an original basis of certain mental factors. This unravelling of the social process opens up the approach to its other aspect which has been referred to above.

The individual *qua* individual has certain elemental dispositions, which are considered to be common for the whole of humanity. Above this common substratum and perhaps embedded in it are certain mental factors which a number of leading psychologists declare to be three in number. They are: general intelligence which is considered to be constant for the same individual in different performances; two, specific ability which varies in the same individual from performance to performance; and three, self-control which also would seem to be constant for the same individual. The precise relationship in which the two general mental factors, the first and the last, stand is not yet quite clear. It is manifest that it is these three factors and not the fundamental elemental dispositions that determine the degree of uniqueness of the individual. And as the system of sentiments which, as we know, is a superstructure, can be built only on the basis of the elemental dispositions *plus* these three factors, it is clear that the nature of these systems of sentiments cannot be wholly determined by the cultural pattern of the society but will be influenced to some extent at least by the basis, particularly by the three mental factors referred to above. That is, the second aspect of the social process, the accommodation

of the individual into the social mould brings us to the individual, his biologically given mental make-up, and the early years of his life which are now accepted to be predominantly formative. Thus marriage, and its associated grouping called the Family, comes to occupy the centre of the canvass in the depiction of this aspect of the social process.

17. You are all, I am sure, enough of sociologists and psychologists to see that the social and psychological significance of the institution of marriage is not so simple an affair as the invitation card seems to represent, though this latter is not altogether without its meaning. You are requested, as respectable members of the society to which the parties belong, to accord your approval to the action of the two individuals marrying on a particular day and in a particular way by your attendance. Further, you know that what you are requested to attend is a connection of two families (as they are called) and the creation of a third. And you are aware that the two families, which are being connected in this way were each the result of the connection of two others, representatives from which were married to create the third. Again, as a student of society, you know that many things precede the actual ceremony, many more follow it. As a phenomenon for scientific interpretation, the whole incident appears to you as a network almost beyond your grasp. And the easy way in which it passes our notice certainly makes you feel that after all it is in the institution of marriage that social process has acquired its masterpiece.

The scientific interpretation of this phenomenon must be started, not with the social and psychological aspects of it, but the biological. And that's what you perhaps actually expected. For, what are you if not biologists when you are, for instance, discussing, after your attendance at marriage where you happen to be invitees, the suitability or otherwise of the partners? You are shocked, for instance, if the one happens to be, say, 4' 3" and the other 5' 11" or the one with fair skin and chiselled features and the other with dark

complexion and a snub nose. 'Well,' you declare, 'they have been blind and non-rational.' You are perfectly right, for, you find that, if not in this sense, it is in some other sense that marriage is—and remember there is no escape from this conclusion—at its basis fundamentally and essentially non-rational. And there is nothing wrong about it. To be non-rational is not to be non-human, much less inhuman. Man himself is at bottom non-rational and it is this very aspect of his being which enables him to develop a rational whole. Let me show how.

The institution of Marriage, and its consequent group, that of the Family, is far from being exclusively human. In the same form which it takes with human beings, it is found to exist with many birds—certain parrots for example; also with infra-human beings—gorilla, for instance. Two individuals of opposite sexes mate, and by the exercise of their mutual sexual behaviour find themselves in a situation, which determines the lines which their individual careers are to take thenceforward. In an important sphere of life their purposes converge, though the subservient interests differ, precisely because of the inherent biological difference between them two, as representatives of their respective sexes.

I said 'in the same form.' And by this I mean that form in which a single male mates with a single female, and further that the companionship which is thus formed is supposed to run, in the ordinary course, for their lifetime. It is known as monogamous. This is one of the forms of marriage which is found to exist generally in the case of human beings. There are other forms like polygyny and polyandry. The former consists in the mating of one individual with more than one female, the latter in the reverse.

Now, this monogamic form of mating is thus a phenomenon which is common to human beings and animals, and this community of occurrence goes a long way to enable us to appreciate the biological side of the institution of marriage. Man is a product of evolution, and has to obey certain funda-

mental urges of his biological nature. Sex impulse is perhaps the most important of them. And the regulation of sexual impulse or rather of sex-life in general happens to be the primary function of the institution of marriage. Sex impulse is a functional need which is coupled with many others in this regulated pattern. Among these we may note the absence of seasonal periodicity for mating and reproduction in man, and the parental urge he feels to support the offspring during its comparatively long period of dependency. To add to this, there is the female whose relative helplessness during the early growth of the child makes her dependent on the male not only for the supply of her wants but also for genuine companionship. Marriage thus becomes a turning-point in the careers of the individuals concerned. It is, in the main, a product of the biological processes of the organisms concerned, not of the processes of reason and the resulting consensus of opinion.

Whence the need for this type of regulation? It is to be explained by man's desire for happiness, which consists not in the solitary satisfaction of individual impulses but in their expression through organised and integrated patterns of behaviour. Such organisation of behaviour and channelisation of impulsive drives depends mainly upon those forces of character which we have called "sentiments." If you agree with me about what happiness should mean, you will immediately see that, at least from the point of view of the development of the personality, the barrier between the so-called private and public breaks down. What remains is organisation and adjustment conducive to the harmonious growth of the life of man. In other words, in the interests of this harmony what *will* be desired by the individual needs must be as near as possible to what he *ought* to desire. It is, therefore, necessary that there must be a legal norm laid down in our marriage laws to give the individuals concerned a prevision of what he or she should expect out of marriage at its minimum.

You are aware, I take it, that there is a school of thought which propounds that sex relations, so long as there are no issues arising out of such relations, are a private concern of the parties concerned. The terms on which such relations are entered into may be determined by the individuals and that there need be no regulation of such terms of agreement. Of course, you know, that this school of thought has been rendered possible by the fact that science has facilitated the dissociation of sex activity from reproduction. If the argument so far advanced in terms of the social process is correct, then it follows that this position is untenable. For, as I have already pointed out, the norm, which is to harmonise our growing happiness, must keep a watchful eye, not on what the individual instinctively desires, but what is really desirable. And that is the only way impulsive behaviour can be synthesised into a pattern adding to the strength of social solidarity.

You remember, I said a moment ago, that the essence of the individuality of the developing personality consists in the three mental factors. And now when we try to reflect upon their exact nature, the question arises how much of them we owe to the two cultures, which I differentiated in my introductory remarks as biological and social. How much of our mental make-up, that is to say, we owe to Heredity? How much to Environment? For the reply, we look up to our geneticists, who, in asking us to wait *sine die* for a conclusive statement, tell us not to rely here on the social side exclusively but to take serious notice of the biological side, *i.e.*, Heredity, as a significant and fundamental source. It is a reply which compels us to consider, before we proceed, the biological aspect of the institution of marriage little more deeply.

In all societies we find regulations as to who should marry whom, or who cannot or must not marry whom. In every society, that is to say, there are laws regarding what we call exogamy and prohibited degrees, which prescribe the cir-

cle outside which individuals, who want to marry, must choose their partners. Whatever the origin of such laws, in the light of genetics it is seen that most of them are needless from the biological point of view and vexatious from the social, excepting the one which prohibits marriage within the narrow circle of the immediate family. That exogamic laws served a useful purpose in primitive societies may be readily admitted. Such societies are generally small and their clans, which are the basis of exogamy, are smaller still, and spread over a fairly large tract. Exogamy, requiring individuals to seek their mates outside their clans, served the purpose of bringing together clans from different areas and thus integrating them into the social whole, called the tribe. In the larger communities of historic civilisations this integrative function of exogamy could, by the very nature of the communities concerned, not but be merely meagre. Its persistence, on the other hand, must have resulted in random distribution of the genetic factors instead of concentrating them and fixing up more or less homogeneous types.

In almost all human societies marriages have been taking place habitually within the confines of each society whether tribal or national, and in some societies the group within which an individual seeks his mate is much smaller than his nation-society, groups which more often than not are based not on the principle of territorial contiguity but that of birth primarily. And in the early history of mankind among a number of peoples these habitually endogamous groups were so rigidly organised that endogamy or marriage within one's own class was prescribed more by law than by custom. It is well known that this custom of legally ordained endogamy now obtains almost wholly in our country amongst the Hindus. The biological consequences of this practice of endogamy in the case of societies other than the Hindu need not be gone into here.

Hindu endogamy has for its basis the unit of caste or sub-caste. Our fore-fathers did not merely lay down injunc-

tions in favour of exogamy and endogamy but also exhortations to parents and guardians in the matter of actual selection of particular individuals for their sons, daughters or wards. These exhortations leave no doubt about the wisdom in this behalf of our fore-fathers. It is clearly seen therefrom that heredity was accorded the greatest importance. If this wise prescription was acted upto—and we have no reason to believe that it was not among the enlightened sections of the community at least—the genetic constitution of some families of those castes must be to a large extent homogeneous and sound. The worth of the genetic constitution of a family can only be ascertained from the manifestation of ability or otherwise and as in our recent past opportunities for such manifestation were restricted owing both to the rigidity of caste and the circumscribed nature of cultural development, the operation of the rules regarding the right choice of mates could not have produced sufficiently large number of families, homogeneous and sound in genetic constitution in each caste or sub-caste. There must be a number of individuals and families of a sound genetic constitution unevenly distributed in a number of castes or sub-castes which for lack of proper opportunity for manifestation of ability had to mate with families of indifferent genetic constitution owing to the barriers of caste. That this is no mere speculation ought to be evident to any impartial student of our social history during the last fifty years. A number of individuals from diverse castes have proved themselves to be of outstanding ability and yet their matings had to be restricted to caste groups wherein families of similar genetic constitution of manifested ability may or may not have been available. Such a state of affairs is clearly dysgenic. It is, therefore, necessary at this stage that the barriers of caste, considered from the biological aspect, should be broken down; and, that parents and guardians may be exhorted to look upon marriage primarily as a union between biologically and psychologically compatible mates, having no concern with status, either

economic or social. I cannot leave this subject without stressing the great need that lies before us of creating a positive eugenic conscience in the minds of our youths, as marriage in the near future in our society will come to be determined by so called self-choice.

I have already drawn your attention to the great importance of the first few years of the individual's life in the aspect of the social process, with which I am dealing in this part of my discourse. It appears to me that if the accommodation of the growing individual into his social mould is to be smooth and harmonious, the environment during these years of his life must be provided by a small group, the individual constituents of which are highly sympathetic. Such a group, it is manifest, can only be ideally provided for in the family unit.

If I have been able to carry you with me in my argument about the social process, I am sure you will whole-heartedly endorse the concluding remark that I am to make. It is an earnest plea for the institution of a chair in Sociology in the Institute under whose auspices this evening I have the privilege of addressing you. The plea, you will agree, is very opportune both in time and place. In time I say because the first year of the second century of the initiation of the science of Sociology has just begun, and second, to-day is the founder's day of this Institute, a founder who was himself a keen student of social currents and an ardent social reformer. I say, in place, because the Institute has done such splendid work in unravelling the intricacies of one aspect of our social life, *viz.*, the economic, that we may expect similar contributions in its other aspects, and second, because we have met in a place which is named after a great man, who made significant contributions to almost all aspects of our national life.