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IN MAN'S OWN IMAGE

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PREFACE

This monograph is an introduction to the philosophy of New Humanism which has been developed in the course of the last one decade by the Radical Democratic Party of India. Its fundamental principles were stated in the form of the *Twenty-two Theses on Radical Democracy* and adopted by the All-India Conference of the Party in December, 1946, at Bombay. We were then asked to prepare a systematic exposition of these principles. Here is the first expression of our joint endeavour.

Humanism has been defined as "a philosophical theory which imputes the historical developments of humanity to humanity itself" (Fernand Robert, *L'Humanisme : essai de définition*). This is a fair working definition to start with ; but the enquiry of humanism should go further. Two of the basic ideas of humanism were formulated long ago in the propositions : "Man is the root of mankind" and "Man is the measure of everything." The former implies a humanist historiology ; we have tried to

develop it in our second section. Our debt here to earlier historiologists from Vico, the Encyclopædists and Michelet to modern enquirers in this field is obvious. The second indicates an axiology or a theory of value-judgment. Here the Protagorean statement is rather ambiguous and open to diverse interpretations. The usual interpretation is that of dualism or "critical conventionalism". While recognising the influence of that position, we have however found it inadequate and have tried to develop the alternative of "materialist axiology".

"Materialist" or scientific humanism maintains that man and the universe are integrated in a law-governed and self-sufficient cosmic system (thus eliminating any form of transcendentalism) ; that facts and values are organically related in an evolutionary process ; that values are formed in the course of co-ordination between human strivings and knowledge ; that the source of all value judgment is the individual striving for multi-fold self-expression and the emotions associated with its fulfilment ; that reason (in its scientific and non-esoteric sense) is the universal means to such fulfilment and is thus essential to morality ; and that inadequate

integrations of human experience, strivings and the processes of the universe, when absolutised in habits, institutions and conventions, become the most difficult obstacles in the way of human growth and welfare. It therefore pleads for scientific outlook and enlightenment of the people and maintains that harmony in individual life as well as social organisation (which is so very necessary for human creativeness and welfare) can be truly approximated through dissemination of knowledge and education in co-operative and creative living. The key to human progress is to be found in the quest for freedom and search of truth which are the basic urges of human nature ; and the satisfaction of these urges is the source and content of what the Greeks called *agathon* (a generic word covering goodness, beauty and truth)—of human creativeness and welfare. The aspiration of humanism is to help develop a cosmopolitan society of free men and women—a society in which personal life and conduct and social relationships and institutions should be informed with the spirit of individual creativeness and enlightened co-operation.

This is the main thesis of New Humanism ; in these pages, these ideas and a number of

other ideas related to them have been explained in the form of a monograph. The historical situation which has contributed to hasten the development of these ideas and their publication has been analysed at some length in some of the companion volumes to this book, particularly in the *New Orientation* by M. N. Roy, *Beyond Communism* by M. N. Roy and Philip Spratt and *Radicalism* by one of the authors of the present study.

Though this book has been written by the two of us, the philosophy of scientific humanism has developed in the course of innumerable discussions, camps, classes, lectures and conferences in which many people from all over the country actively participated—teachers, students, political workers, authors, medical practitioners, administrators, trade-unionists, economists, engineers, lawyers, etc. The responsibility for the present exposition, however, is entirely our own.

July 14, 1948.

ELLEN ROY
SIBNARAYAN RAY

FOREWORD

At the end of 1946, an All-India Conference of the Radical Democratic Party endorsed a document formulating the "Principles of Radical Democracy" in Twenty-two Theses. The document was the result of a theoretical discussion which had been going on inside the party throughout the country for a year. The first stage of the discussion culminated in a statement on the post-war international situation. Called "A New Orientation", the statement pointed out that experience had exposed the fallacies and deficiencies of revolutionary political theories and plans of social reconstruction. It came to the conclusion that the civilised world surviving the post-war crisis was conditional upon a new orientation of the theory and practice of progressive and revolutionary politics. That conclusion logically raised problems of historiology and ethics.

The discussion, originally of political theories and practice, was raised to the philosophical plane, and the outlines of a system of philosophy resulted from it. Though they were stated as the principles of the theory and practice of a particular political party, they covered not only the entire field of human activity, but also man's relation with the physical universe. In expounding the philosophy outlined in the Twenty-two Theses, while recommending their endorsement by the conference of a political party, its sponsors suggested that it should be called Integral Humanism or Scientific Humanism or New Humanism.

Admittedly, there is nothing altogether new in the system, it being deduced logically from the far-reaching implications of modern scientific knowledge and the world-wide lessons of recent experience. To co-ordinate the philosophy of nature with a social philosophy and ethics in a monistic system is the central purpose. It is humanist as well as materialist ; naturalist as well as rationalist ; creativist as well as determinist. It deduces a humanist social philosophy and positive (non-relative) ethics from a mechanistic

cosmology and a materialist metaphysics (Physical Realism).

Is that possible or permissible? How is the result achieved? This book has been written to answer these and other questions of similar order. It also answers another set of questions regarding the relation between politics and metaphysics. These latter should not be raised, because no serious political theory of modern times has been without a philosophy. Pragmatism is the philosophy of the most opportunist political practice. Yet, modern academic philosophers hold that a social philosophy cannot be integrated in an all-embracing explanation of life and nature; and political theory is a part of social philosophy. The consequence of this opinion has been a growing alienation of morality from political practice. While Marxists have got out of the dilemma by taking a cynically negative attitude to ethical values, others are moving towards a religious revivalism in search of a solution of the problem of introducing morality in political practice. Meanwhile, callousness of the Left is matched by cant of the Right. The crucial problem of the day, the core of the crisis of modern culture, is the need of a system of ethics

which will be neither intuitional (transcendental) nor utilitarian (relativist). Such a system of secular morality evidently must rest upon rationalism. But so long as rationality or Reason is conceived as a mystic or metaphysical category, which transcends intelligence, it will logically be a treacherous foundation for a system of ethics.

The monist system of philosophy expounded in this book throws an entirely new light on the concept of rationality ; it is an integrated knowledge of nature—organic and inorganic. By his very relation with nature, man is essentially rational and moral ; therefore, rationality and morality in general social behaviour, including political practice, are possible. That is a message of hope.

The philosophy expounded in this book does not stop there ; it shows that the optimistic view of life is a practical proposition. On the basis of a monistic philosophy, not only is a new social philosophy outlined, but a programme of political practice is also formulated. There, in its practical application, the really distinctive feature of the philosophy emerges. Its approach to the problem of power is novel ; and that novel approach solves the problem of morality in

political practice. Because of this practical consequence of a system of philosophy, its principles can just as well be stated as the "Principles of Radical Democracy", as the theoretical programme of a political party.

For all these reasons, a book like this perhaps is more important than the aphorisms explained therein. It will greatly help the understanding and propagation of the philosophy of Integral or Scientific Humanism. But no closed system of thought is hereby presented to the world. Problems confronting the contemporary world, some of which are as old as civilisation or *homo sapiens,* are stated anew in the perspective of experience and in the context of a logically coherent history of thought, and solutions suggested. They are extremely pressing problems. The fate of mankind hangs in the balance of their solution. Humanism implies action ; it is a philosophy of man's creativeness. In order to inspire purposeful action, ideas must be clear, stated without ambiguity. There are different approaches to a problem ; but a solution, once it is found, must be offered with conviction. That may sound dogmatic to congenital sceptics. But a line can be drawn between conviction and dogmatism. Here is presented

a philosophy which has grown out of experience, in response to a cultural crisis of the modern world. Born of the adventure of life, it marks a stage in the adventure of ideas.

Dehradun,
June 30th, 1948. M. N. ROY.

I

MAN'S PLACE IN NATURE AND SOCIETY

MAN'S PLACE IN NATURE

The philosophy which will be explained in these pages is not a philosophy for people who believe that God has created the world and shaped man in his image, an imperfect imitation, and that the fate of man is predetermined either by his own *karma* or by the will of God. But apart from this statement, there is nothing in it to offend religious minded people. Certainly, if there were such a Creator-God, which we deny, and if it were a good God, he ought to be proud of man for having created, on his part, this philosophy.

It is a philosophy for people who believe in the reality of the world, without having to have recourse, for conceiving its inception, to the simplified idea of its creation by a magic word ; who have the boldness to face the concept of infinity without mysticism ; who are satisfied to think of their race not as the handiwork of a wilful God in a playful mood, or because he felt lonely in his absoluteness, but as the culmination of a process of evolution,

from primitive matter to complex matter, from inanimate to animate matter, from the lowest living organisms to the form of the human species; and from the early ape-like ancestors of *homo sapiens* to Prometheus-man taming the fire, conquering the elements, and shaping his environments to his desire; man who wants to be moral not because a God enjoins him to be so on the threat of his wrath, but because it suits his nature better to be so than otherwise; and who, according to this philosophy, has only one more thing to do in order to become, from the image of an imaginary God, as God himself: that is, to shape himself and his world in such a way as will allow him to enjoy freedom.

This is what is meant when we say *Man is the archetype of society,* the content which shapes its form in society. Because, *man is the measure of everything, and quest for freedom and search for truth constitute the basic urge of human progress.* To fulfil this urge, man, as the maker of his world, must shape his society as a suitable environment for the pursuit and attainment of freedom.

In order to do that, he must know himself and his place in the Universe.

Our philosophy is a philosophy of life, of the life of man. We are concerned with man, and with everything else to the extent that it concerns man's life. That sets no limit to our concern, because there is nothing that did not concern man, in the sense that to know everything is man's instinctive and primary endeavour ; for, increasing knowledge brings him greater freedom, and freedom is not only his birth-right, but the original and ultimate end of all his pursuits.

Knowledge is the awareness of the existence of things in nature and the understanding of their inter-relation, those things including man himself and his relation to all other things. What is thus known is truth. *Truth is the content of knowledge.* And the freedom which this knowledge confers on man is the freedom to live up to his creative role, to shape his world to his purpose, to develop all that is, consciously or unconsciously, in him. Since the things in nature and their inter-relations are infinite, knowledge of them can be only an approximation to the whole of

truth. And the freedom of man, thus conceived, while not an elusive and fantastic utopia, is an eternal ideal, which can, however, be increasingly realised by man, for ever and ever.

The pursuit of freedom can be traced, as we shall see, to the earliest endeavours of the first human beings, and connected logically with the pursuits of man's pre-human ancestors, on lower levels ; and the pursuit accelerates with the increase of knowledge. Landmarks in this quest for freedom in human history were the earliest tools invented by man, freeing him from the necessity to adapt his limbs to the requirements of the struggle for existence ; they were the subsequent discoveries of things in nature and their interrelations, freeing man progressively from the tyranny of the forces of nature, discoveries made thanks to man's instinctive inquisitiveness, his urge to enquire for the Why and How of everything, his need to explain whatever he sees rationally, and to prove what his brain, his capacity for abstract thinking and logical deduction—the co-ordination of several elements of his knowledge—had postulated as

truth. Thus, knowledge has grown, truth has been progressively known, and man freer to that extent.

Yet, who would say in our days, when knowledge is greater than ever before, that man is free? And why is man not free? Because man has had no clear and satisfactory picture of himself and his place in nature. And because, for this reason, he has not been able to shape his own creation, society in which he has his being, in such a way as to live in environments which allow him to become free. For, even if for the rest of nature a creator above man had to be postulated by those whose incomplete knowledge could not see any other way of its having come into existence, society is undoubtedly man's own creation, and whatever is wrong with society, is man's own wrong. Only when man has a clear picture of himself, of his place in nature, will he be able to shape his own creation so that it will enable him to fulfil his basic urge for freedom. And for what else should man create anything at all?

For long, man could not have a clear picture of himself when, in the absence of

better knowledge, notions were created of his place in the Universe which might have served as working hypotheses at some time, but were not discarded even when disproved. One of these was the hypothesis of the Creator-God, which made of man the plaything of a higher being, dependent on it and at its mercy for all he did and even thought ; and in that state of absolute dependence, man was also bound by the inexorable law of *karma*. He was not a free agent ; he always acted according to the will of God ; yet, he was bound by the consequences of acts which he did not commit as a free agent. If that was the picture of man, man should not aspire nor desire nor create—he should commit suicide, because he had a wrong start and no hope of worthwhile salvation. And yet, who, in the face of the world as it is, compared with what it was, and with all its imperfection, would deny man's creative genius, his capacity of doing great things ? And how, with this creative gift in him, could man not aspire and desire for great things and great deeds ? But he cannot fulfil his striving as long as his picture of

himself in the scheme of the Universe is one of a dependent and helpless creature, at the mercy of an incomprehensible higher being, beyond reason or any laws accessible to the mind of man.

To-day knowledge is already great enough to visualise the picture of a free man ; but that knowledge still remains beyond the reach of most men, and therefore they cannot yet derive from it the measure of freedom attainable even now. That knowledge is conducive to man's freedom is proved by the changed position of man in the picture of the world which modern science provides. It has disposed of any necessity to speculate about a God. It has allowed man to discard the notion of any Creator and opened the grand vista of an autonomous physical Universe governed by laws, without any sanction but that inherent in the properties of the stuff it is made of. It has allowed man to raise his head in pride. And even though deprived of the stern but protective God-Father, man need not be afraid of the cold immensity of the law-governed Universe, because he is part of it, and its laws are working also in him. Its

law-governedness functions in him as rationality, and he has the advantage over all other parts of the Universe of being endowed with intelligence which enables him to know those laws and be conscious of his own innate rationality. *Rising out of the background of the law-governed physical nature, the human being is essentially rational.* That is the specific distinction of man. All else derives from this.

It cannot be proved in an exposition of this scope, but it can be proved, that all events in nature and all its phenomena happen and exist due to causes inherent in nature. That is what we call law-governedness. The laws of these happenings have been discovered in the course of man's quest for knowledge and search for truth, and this knowledge is continously expanding and perfecting itself. These laws are functions of the stuff of which the world is made ; they too have not been imposed by a super-natural will or being. They are functions of matter, to which every thing has been reduced, and which exists everywhere and pervades everything, even where the human eye perceives nothing. When it is known and proved that air is

matter and electricity is matter, human intelligence should not shrink at this statement. The Universe being material, and matter having its laws which thus govern the Universe, and man being part of the Universe, the laws of logic and causality operate also in man ; we call their operation rationality and say that man is essentially rational, even though he may not always be conscious of the fact, and even though, due to undeveloped intelligence and incomplete knowledge, he may often act in ways which appear to be irrational.

Rationality is law-governedness on the higher, human, level ; and while it can thus be traced to the background of physical nature, on the human level it becomes qualitatively different, in a certain sense. Man's consciousness corresponds to the degree of his knowledge. Knowledge began with man and has been only slowly losing its limitedness with the maturing of the species. Man, at the start of his career, even when he acted by instinct rationally, was not yet conscious that he did so. As man grows increasingly conscious of his innate rationality, as he learns to

know what is rational in any situation (having come to understand the laws governing things and events), he overcomes the influence of the contingent factors of life which make him act irrationally. The will resulting from the intellectual realisation of his essential rationality then enables man to overcome those contigent influences, and to be actually rational. Intelligent will is an expression of essential rationality. It is to be referred to the law-governedness of the entire Universe, in the context of which man has his being and becoming. On a low level of intelligence and consciousness man's will may lead him to act irrationally, in the sense that his own acts may lead him away from freedom and cramp his creative potentialities instead of unfolding them, leading to frustration, perversion and psychoses. But being part of the law-governed nature, man can be increasingly conscious of that fact and capable of acting rationally, aided by will and intelligence.

Law-governedness and freedom of the will are thus not mutually exclusive on the human level of consciousness and intelligence. *Reason being a biological property, it is not the anti-*

thesis of will. Reason is a property of the biological being, while law-governedness is a physical state which, as such, embraces the biological world also. Man's consciousness of the law-governedness of nature and of its functioning in himself as rationality, and his ability, based on increasing knowledge, to anticipate and influence events, generate in him the will to exercise this ability and to act on the world,—the urge of creation.

Society, which is a creation of man, and is nothing except for man who makes and composes it, is also part of the physical Universe and subject to its laws of rationality, of logic and causality. The law-governedness of human society we call Historical Determinism. And while law-governedness in the inanimate Universe, or in the world of lower animate beings, functions automatically, in the society of human beings it has to function on the level of intelligence. When the level of intelligence is low, the degree of knowledge limited, society is not organised by the conscious will and co-operative effort of rational human beings, and the amount of freedom in it is therefore small. As man's consciousness

of his essential rationality increases, history provides a record of attempts at organising society more and more rationally, affording a larger and larger amount of freedom. It may be a record of relative failure in every instance, but considered as a process, it is a record of progressive approximation, and at a speed which accelerates as we approach contemporary history. This is evident from the shorter intervals between revolutions in modern times. Revolutions are the manifestations of the consciously directed impact of human will on the determined (law-governed) process of evolution in the realm of human society. *Historical Determinism, therefore, does not exclude freedom of the will. As a matter of fact, human will is the most powerful determining factor. Otherwise, there would be no room for revolutions in a rationally determined process of history.*

The incentive behind the will to act and the urge to create is man's basic urge for freedom. *Freedom is progressive disappearance of all restrictions on the unfolding of the potentialities of individuals.* In so far as will is not sufficiently differentiated, by intelli-

gence (choice, selection), from the mechanistic biological function of impulse or instinct, it leads to actions not in tune with the law-governedness of the Universe and rationality, and therefore, we might say, out of harmony. Disharmony with the law-governedness of the Universe—when man is out of tune with the laws of nature. particularly in their functioning (as rationality) in his immediate environments, that is, society—causes jarring friction, which impedes the development of man's potentialities, and in that measure deprives him of freedom. The avoidance of disharmony, the positive and conscious striving for harmony, is therefore rational. Man's being essentially rational expresses itself in the striving, the will towards harmony, and within the law-governedness of the Universe this will is free.

And because harmony is also the essence of aesthetics, we may perceive in this striving the common ground of ethics and aesthetics. While harmony with the law-governedness of the Universe, in its aspects accessible to human perception and affecting human life, would give satisfaction to man's aesthetic aspirations

and requirements, in the realm of human society, harmony is an ethical postulate, and moral behaviour the means to its satisfaction. Therefore we say that man, as an instinctively rational being, *is moral because he is rational.* Whatever man does in pursuit of harmony with the law-governedness of the Universe, which includes also his own social world, is conducive to his greater freedom. Since man cannot ultimately achieve his individual freedom without striving for the freedom of all individuals, his pursuit of freedom is also ethical; and since rationality in man is the expression of the law-governedness of the Universe, it also satisfies the requirements of aesthetics, the Universe being a harmonious cosmos. Thus, another urge of man, inherent in his rationality, is being fulfilled—that of reducing all categories to a minimum basic number; and we arrive at a monistic philosophy which, because it is more rational than all other philosophies, is more conducive to man's freedom.

Because, *the quest for freedom is the continuation, on a higher level, ... of the biological struggle for existence. The search for*

truth is the corollary thereof. In order to be free, man must first exist. The original form of man's fight for freedom is the struggle for existence. Like that of all the prehuman animate beings, man's struggle for existence was first a negative endeavour : it was a fight against annihilation and extinction of the species, guided by the laws of the jungle. The fight for existence, or for survival, in the jungle took the form of physical adaptation. Thus, for example, certain plants and trees had to grow taller than others, out of the thickets of uncontrolled vegetation, to get enough air and light. The animals, too, developed either heavier bulk to smother their rivals, or teeth and claws to kill and eat them; and man's more immediate ancestors had superior advantages to earlier animals in organic continuity because they had developed nimble and more articulate limbs to swing themselves from tree to tree, away from pursuing enemies, and longer arms to break from the higher branches the fruits which served them as nourishment.

The appearance of the human species is marked by a change of method in the struggle

for existence. When some animal approximating *homo sapiens* hit on the idea of breaking a branch from a tree in order to get down the fruits with its help, and with it even hold his enemies at bay and strike terror in their hearts—then, the struggle for existence has already changed its level, and the new animal is functionally an anthropoid. Whether the very animal which first used the stick as an instrument actually may be counted as the first of the human species, or whether its descendants, due to habits formed by the use of the instruments, underwent structural changes which marked the birth of the new species at a later stage, is a question which would lead too far out of the given context and is not decisive for our argument.

The qualitative difference consists in that the struggle for existence is no longer carried on through organic adaptation to surroundings, but by subjecting surroundings to the organism's purpose, by making use of part of the surroundings themselves to fit them better for the purpose of survival. The newness is the method which presupposes consciousness. The purpose is at first still only

survival ; but the novel method is so effective that the negative purpose of freeing man from the threat of annihilation and extinction is soon largely attained and the struggle for existence consequently changes its level. It assumes a new character ; it becomes a pursuit of more positive forms of freedom.

The difference lies in the quality of man's brain. The lower animal gets an impression registered in its brain, say of an approaching dangerous enemy ; an emotion, say of fear, is evoked, and an automatic reaction takes place : it runs for its life and hides ; for that purpose, it is equipped with long and swift legs, or a protective colour.* Man, in a similar situation will experience the same sensations, but his reaction can be to take his stick and slay the enemy, which may be physically much more powerful. To use the stick was an idea. It was a creative act. To react to surroundings and their stimuli with ideas instead of mere instinctive responses, is what

* The sequential relation between emotion and motor response which is still a matter of dispute among psychologists leaves our argument unaffected either way.

distinguishes man more than anything else from the lower animals. It is at the same time a more powerful weapon in the struggle for existence, the fight for freedom.

Many examples could be given to show the qualitative difference between the reactions of man and those of the lower animals to impressions and experiences, and to the tyranny of the forces of nature. The animal is thirsty, it must drink. In many parts of the world, there is no water unless it rains. When there is draught, the animal suffers from thirst and may die of it. Man observed, when it rained, that water gathered in mud puddles ; the sun dried the mud ; the water stood in the puddle for sometime. Man had another idea : of mud he shaped a form in imitation of the puddle, dried it in the sun and made enough of these forms to preserve water for the non-rainy days. Another creative act, born of an idea, and the risk of man's annihilation by thirst was so much reduced.

Thus, perhaps, man's first handiwork was born, and thus one can visualise the origin of all crafts and arts and industries—the sequel of an idea. *The brain is a means of produc-*

tion, and produces the most revolutionary commodity—ideas. In response to the requirements of a given situation, man co-ordinates various elements of his knowledge into ideas, and these manifest themselves in certain acts or creations which, even when the situation no longer exists, still continue to have an existence of their own. They continue to exist not only in their manifestations, but as ideas embodied in symbols, and these have consequences, both abstractly in man's brain, where they form elements of new associations and co-ordination, as in their practical manifestations, where they influence man's life, his language and his behaviour, having become part of his environments.

At an early stage of his evolution, man must have had the idea of purposeful organisation. Animals also herd together in the instinct of survival. But when man began to live in groups, the instinct was transformed into a purpose which went beyond self-preservation. The purpose was to use man's creations—his tools and other handiworks—to better avail and organise their production, this being conducive to greater fitness in his struggle for ex-

istence, and therefore to man's greater freedom. *The purpose of all human endeavour, individual as well as collective, is attainment of freedom in ever increasing measure.* At a certain stage of this collective endeavour for freer existence, labour was divided between some who were put on guard, in charge of defending the community against approaching enemies; some who produced the instruments and tools for the use of the community; and some who thought it all out and administered the affairs of this primitive society according to the light of their reason, their knowledge and their understanding. Thus, we can visualise the origin of society, as a creation of man. In course of time, organised politically as the State, society developed into a veritable Frankenstein, threatening to annihilate its own creator. This relation between man and society must change, if society is to serve the purpose of its origin. It must be reconstructed so as to be the means for man's struggle for freedom, to enable him to attain a greater and greater degree of freedom, instead of demanding his surrender as an individual. Unless society is so reorganised, it will ultimately

become man's doom, finally depriving him of his place of pride and dignity as the creator of the world he lives in.

From the production of man's first handiwork to the taming of his co-creatures to serve him, first directly as food and then as means for producing more food by cultivating the earth ; from there to the creation of the first vehicles to carry him on land and on water where his feet could not walk or not walk fast and far enough ; from the first wooden plough to the tractor ; from the earliest observation of the forces of nature and the first sun-dial to abstract science and the stratospheric rocket ; and from the incipient purposive grouping to the complexities of modern society—man's struggle for existence has successively, even if with long lapses and intervals, been taking place on ever higher levels. But his brain has remained his mightiest instrument in the struggle for existence and his most powerful means of production. It is ever producing ideas, which embrace the whole of the Universe and put his stamp on it. The whole evolution of man can be traced if we can trace the history of his ideas. His struggle for exis-

tence has become a positive quest for freedom.

Yet, man is not free. He can still not develop all his potentialities. And that is so because one of his earliest creations—his society—has not developed commensurate with man's requirements in the quest for freedom and search for truth. The reason for this misfortune is that generally man has remained unconscious of the fact that he is the *archetype* of society. Unconscious, or not having sufficiently keen consciousness, of the urge underlying his being and becoming, man could not shape society so as to help, instead of hinder, the unfolding of his potentialities. A reconstruction of society so that it will serve the purpose of the means to the end of freedom, therefore, is conditional upon the intellectual conviction on the part of social architects and engineers that the urge for freedom is latent in human existence, being identical with human life, and therefore the will to freedom is also there in every human being. The will to freedom grows in proportion to the consciousness of the urge which, indeed, operates through the will, in the form of the will.

Unless society is so reconstructed, all the great things that man has thought and done since the dawn of his career, all that he has achieved and created, will be of no avail to him. The problem before modern man is to shape his society so as to make freedom possible. His future depends on the solution of this problem. Our philosophy may solve the problem, because it starts from man, it aims at his freedom, and it visualises action in harmony with this aim, based on the contention that man is rational and therefore moral ; and only such action can lead to freedom.

In order to have an image of himself after which to mould and create, man must have a philosophy, a picture of the world, which explains the world and his place in it, which gives a meaning and significance to his life, and which provides him incentive and inspiration to act, as well as a perspective of his own evolution and of things to come. From the earliest records of human thought, we can trace man's endeavour to formulate a philosophy. But none so far has given him final satisfaction, intellectually, emotionally, and as a spur to action. Because, man cannot exist,

like the lower animals, on eating, drinking, sleeping and procreating. Man must create. Because it is given to him to influence and thereby change his environments through creative action, he must exercise this potentiality also. This is part of his freedom. But it depends on his knowledge, on which his philosophy is based, whether his action really leads him towards greater freedom, and not elsewhere, which has often happened. For, while man is essentially rational, this essential property is often obscured by wrong moves in the process of trial and error through which he had to go—wrong because they led him away from freedom, and because he had a very limited initial store of knowledge at his disposal for his guidance in the process. His essential rationality manifests itself in that he can realise his errors and change his moves.

Thus, we know of philosophies in the earlier days of human history which were to the men of their time intellectually or morally satisfactory, but failed to provide them with the incentive to purposive action, as was the case with most religious philosophies which guided man's pursuits up to the seventeenth and

eighteenth centuries. We know of others which seemed to provide satisfaction to both kinds of requirements, but, being based on incomplete or fallacious knowledge and co-ordination of experience, also failed to lead man to greater freedom, as was the case with the naturalist-liberal philosophies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; or, if some of them gave the men of their time relatively greater freedom, they set limits to the widening of its boundaries, subsequently.

Man's ideas in any given epoch are found to be co-ordinated in systems of philosophy, and man's history in that epoch, his life in society —intellectual, cultural, political and economic —is guided by, and reflects, those ideas. At the same time, the experiences of man, made in all his pursuits, influence and correct his ideas. *The dynamics of ideas runs parallel to the process of social evolution, the two influencing each other mutually. But in no particular point of the process of the integral human evolution can a direct causal relation be established between historical events and the movements of ideas.*

It is necessary to emphasise this relation

between the realm of man's ideas and his existence as member of a collectivity, because fallacies in the conception of the relation between the two run like a red thread through most of the philosophies of the past up to this day. In some, they appeared to have no relation at all: all importance was laid on the ideal aspect, and man's life on earth did not seem to matter except as a preparation for an imaginary life hereafter; which was a necessary imagination, because, given the desperate conditions of life of the majority of human beings on this earth, they could not have been expected to carry on without some hope, even if only an imaginary one. Other philosophies left man's life on earth to the laws of supply and demand in the economic realm, which were conceived as some kind of subsidiary laws of the Universe, and believed that all would be well in this best of all worlds, if only these laws were left to work themselves out without interference. The ordinary man did not have anything to do about it. It was another kind of fatalism. In reaction to both these kinds of philosophies, the pendulum swung to the other extreme, and the result

was a philosophy which laid all emphasis on man's material conditions, as the only thing that mattered and could inspire him to action; it went to the extent of denying reality to ideal values and concepts like morality and freedom, by declaring them to be mere derivatives of economic relations which, in their turn, were traced to the forces of production in society, and the very existence of values, except economic ones, was disputed.

It may be helpful if we briefly note what was the condition of man in society when it was guided respectively by these philosophies. Leaving aside antiquity, they can be broadly identified as the religious-theocratic-feudal, the naturalist-liberal-bourgeois, and the materialist-Marxist-proletarian eras. For the purpose of this exposition, we can also leave aside the religious philosophies, and their political feudal counterpart. Few would want modern society to be organised under monarchs who rule by the grace of God and with no other sanction than sheer force. And the philosophy corresponding to this political dispensation is also too remote from the modern man with scientific education to re-

quire refutation here. Because, we are concerned with a philosophy for the modern man. We are concerned with philosophies and social organisations of our time, which have already shed misconceptions and fallacies of the remoter past; which profess the same ideals and speak in similar terms as we do; and between which, therefore, we can compare and choose, differentiate what has proved its worth in them from what experience has proved worthless.

MAN'S PLACE IN SOCIETY

We have given ideas their place of dignity. And we have also maintained that man's destiny must be fulfilled on this our world in this physical Universe, and that freedom, which is his ultimate aim, must consist in the fullest development of all his potentialities in this life on earth. It may be assumed that the essential rationality of man, if provided unlimited scope to assert itself, will increasingly produce only such potentialities as will permit of the free unfolding of all other men's potentialities as well, and not atavistic, prehuman, asocial response-habits, which may yet linger in man's subsconscious memory. For, man has his life in society, which he has created for the purpose of achieving his ultimate aim of freedom. We may now therefore consider the affairs and institutions of society and men's ideas about them; and we shall try to find out to what extent they have so far served their purpose of increasing the amount of freedom enjoyed by human

beings in society, this being the criterion of progress, which means development in approximation of freedom.

The purpose of all rational human endeavour, individual as well as collective, is attainment of freedom in ever increasing measure. Freedom is progressive disappearance of all restrictions on the unfolding of the potentialities of individuals, as human beings, and not as cogs in the wheels of a mechanised social organism. The position of the individual, therefore, is the measure of the progressive and liberating significance of any collective effort or social organisation. The success of any collective endeavour is to be measured by the actual benefit for its constituent units.

The organisation of groups of human beings in ordered society was one of the earliest human endeavours—a thoroughly rational endeavour, as we have seen, because it was aimed at a more successful struggle for existence and fuller development of the potentialities of the individuals in the group, and thus conducive to greater freedom. Social organisation is a collective endeavour in which the individuals co-operate in various capacities, and

for whose improvement and greater purposefulness individuals have, throughout the ages, applied all their wit and all their resourcefulness.

Yet, experience has shown that even until our days only very few individuals, comparatively, could develop to any significant degree or extent, and that means, freedom is still a far cry. From the potentialities developed in those few, it can be inferred how much more freedom there should be in the world, and how much greater and finer things could be done and created, if more and more individuals could develop their potentialities. It was found that those actively participating in the collective endeavour of creating and recreating (by changing) society enjoyed more opportunities of developing their potentialities, and therefore more freedom. They used to be very few in the earliest stages of social evolution ; their number increased in course of of history, but even now it is proportionately very small. The striving to enlarge their number progressively with the object of extending it to the maximum number, that is, to all the people, is called democracy.

Democracy aims at a state of society in which all the people participate in the affairs of the community, contributing their share, in thought and action, to shape society so that all can have the opportunity of developing their potentialities. The precondition for this is that the material problems of the struggle for survival and existence must be capable of solution : human existence must be secure and guaranteed on the highest level rendered possible by the forces and means of production at any given moment of history. Only then can man devote his energies to the positive aspects of the pursuit of freedom. The highly developed technique of production in our age permits of this precondition. Enough can be produced to-day to free all men from the necessity to struggle for their existence as such.

But the history of economic evolution has attached to the process of production certain notions which limit its effectivity for increasing human freedom. Because, from the first earthen vessel to the products of human labour in stone, wood and metal, from the earliest primitive articles of daily use to the

more recent products of arts and crafts, their manufacture was carried on by individuals, who often themselves produced their means of production, that is, their tools. And after the early days of primitive communal ownership, the tradition of private ownership of the tools and the things produced with them by individuals came to stay throughout the centuries. Those individuals carried on their crafts for the purpose of improving their individual chances in the struggle for existence ; and that purpose was served while at the same time serving the needs of society well. And while, at the stage of history when these conditions prevailed at their height, the general level of knowledge and the civilisation it generated were low compared with those of our age, the diffusion of opportunities of individual development was probably proportionately wider. Of course, we are dealing here only with the manufacture of articles of use, apart from food. The main means of production, land, and property relations in it with the consequent social conditions of the men engaged in its cultivation, while basically more important, is left out of the development

of our particular trend of thought here.

A great change in the process of manufacture of commodities took place with the introduction of the machine and the resulting mass production. Because the earliest machines were still produced, and therefore owned, by individuals, the tradition of private ownership continued even when the mode of production changed as the means of production became, in course of time, so complex and vast that large groups of human beings had to operate them collectively ; and the tradition still persisted even when the ownership itself became *de facto* collective with the rise of joint-stock enterprises and the development of a complicated system of finance. This tradition vitiated the spirit of production and frustrated the purpose of man's capacity to produce, his creativeness. Things were not produced because they were needed for the use of human beings, or even because the creative mood of the artisan impelled their production, but merely because they fetched money ; and things which were needed by human beings were not produced when they happened to fetch less money.

The vast economic machinery which developed in course of time was administered, controlled and monopolised by small groups of people, who had nothing to do with the process of production itself, and had no meaning for the masses of men who operated the machinery of production, but themselves played the role of mere cogs in the wheels of that machinery. Whether they produced screws or aeroplanes or guns or works of art, meant nothing to them ; they were not to be benefitted by them ; they were never to possess them ; they were perhaps never to see them in their finished state ; they were possibly to be killed by the arms produced by themselves. They themselves meant no more—they meant much less—to those individuals or small groups of owners, than hammer and chisel had meant to the artisan of the past, because they did not have to be so carefully preserved from wear and tear ; they reproduced their kind in more than the required number, in spite of themselves. They were paid enough not to die and, if possible, not more than that.

The corollary to this state of affairs in the

economic field was an equally undignified place for the majority of men in the other spheres of social life. Those few who owned the means of production also determined the political and cultural affairs of society; they had all the freedom there was. The majority of the race were only cogs in the wheels of society as a whole, and could not conceive of the idea that it might have any significance for them as a means for their freedom. It never occurred to them that they too had potentialities to develop apart from those required of cogs in a wheel. The proportion of the distribution of freedom and suppression in society was at its worst. Those enjoying freedom developed their potentialities, created cultural values and ideas, but their conscience, their sense of social responsibility, their awareness of the sordid environments, was not sufficiently developed to desire a diffusion of those opportunities to the largest number of men, or even to realise the effect of their own actions and behaviour on the lives of the majority. With all their material wants satisfied, they preached a philosophy according to which only ideal

concerns mattered and people should not bother about the vulgar things of material existence. Only when these discrepancies in social existence had led to the actual experience of disaster and social upheavals, revealing the squalor and indignity of the lives of the majority of men, did social conscience become also a moral and cultural postulate in the consciousness of the privileged sections of society.

This state of affairs had been developing and aggravating ever since the close of the Middle-Ages in Europe. There had been isolated individuals, invariably from among those with greater opportunities of freedom, whose potentialities of rationality, and hence morality, had been developed enough to make them resent this condition of their fellow-men, and endeavour to change it. They developed the ideal of democracy and spread their ideas. They did not have to invent the ideal, because ever since the height of antique civilisation, human thought had been feeling its way in that direction, thereby proving man's essential rationality and the existence of perennial human values ; and those tenden-

cies were carried throughout history, more clearly as man's knowledge and consciousness of his environments increased. *Morality is an appeal to conscience, and conscience is the instinctive awareness of, and reaction to, environment.* Those environments had reached a stage when the rationality and morality in man revolted, and reacted with the idea of Socialism.

Democracy, the idea that all the people should co-operate in running society politically, that is, the State, had been experimented in modern history since the French Revolution. The experiment was not successful because the preconditions did not exist : the majority of men were too deeply involved in the struggle for sheer existence to develop their potentialities as full-fledged useful members of society striving for freedom. As a reaction to this situation, from amongst those who had had a chance of fuller development of their potentialities and greater awareness of environments, came the reaction in the shape of an idea—the idea of Socialism. Socialism was to create the precondition for the largest number of men to develop their

potentialities and enjoy freedom; the precondition of political democracy through economic democracy—that was Socialism to be. It was to end the thoroughly irrational state of affairs where the majority of men were enslaved by what their ancestors had brought into existence as a means in the struggle for greater freedom; it was to diffuse freedom, that is, the opportunities to develop innate potentialities, to the largest number, that is, to all members of society.

The prophets and ideologists of Socialism recognised the inconsistency and irrationality of private ownership in a collective system of production. They pointed out the irreconcilable conflicts which were already appearing in the early days of the system of capitalism, and anticipated those crises which later on actually overtook capitalist society with ever increasing frequency. They maintained that a system of collective production postulated collective ownership in the means of production and greater collective consciousness, and that the class of people directly involved in the operation of the means of production, the proletariat, must henceforth be the prime beneficia-

ries of that system and control the State, which had been found to be always the instrument of power in the hands of those owning the means of production. Because the capitalist bourgeoisie would never surrender this instrument in their hand voluntarily, the prophets of Socialism, not satisfied with only propounding ideas, but bent on seeing them put in practice, visualised the necessity of a revolution through armed insurrection of the oppressed proletariat under the leadership of a proletarian class party as its vanguard ; the forcible expropriation of the exploiters ; and the establishment of a powerful revolutionary proletarian State, which in order to prevent any sabotage and counter-revolution by the bourgeoisie, was to take the form of a dictatorship of the proletariat.

This idea was fraught with dangers, implying that the end justifies all means, and ignoring that the means are bound to influence the end. But this idea naturally appealed to the oppressed and deprived, who in consequence increasingly swelled the ranks of the proletarian class parties. Even non-proletarian elements joined those parties,

because this attempt appeared to them as the most promising way so far indicated towards a less irrational order of society. Whatever reservations they might have had against certain tenets of this new ideology were silenced, because their conscience accepted them as a just atonement for injustice done to a large part—in some parts of the world, the largest—of humanity. Their humanist conscience was moreover partially satisfied by the perspective of the proletarian ideology, whose authors, Marx and Engels, had themselves been humanists enough to demand an ultimate collective order on a wider basis than that of a class, and therefore visualised a time when the dictatorship of the proletariat would have abolished all class distinctions in society, and would transform itself into, or abdicate in favour of, a classless State in which true democracy, that is, the people as a whole, would rule, and the State itself, which was conceived as essentially an instrument of coercion, would wither away.

The socialist movement grew in strength until, in a moment of crisis after the first world war, one of the predictions of the

Socialists came true: the reactionary State machinery broke down in one country, and a revolution occurred under the leadership of the most organised group of Socialists who, for historical reasons, called themselves Communists or Bolsheviks. It was an accidental combination of circumstances which forced the application of the most advanced ideas in Russia, one of the most backward countries of Europe. The experiment, therefore, did not take place under optimum conditions. However, it succeeded in establishing itself and was carried on by strong and devoted men according to the letter of their scriptures, if not—a point which might be argued from two sides—according to their spirit.

With the conscious aspiration of creating a new world of greater freedom for all mankind, the Bolsheviks captured power, abolished private ownership in the means of production, ruled in the name of the oppressed and exploited masses, and modernised and industrialised the country in a staggering tempo, at a time of perpetual crisis in the capitalist world, thus proving the superiority of the socialist economic theory. The political

structure of the State was based on the foundation of Soviets, councils of ordinary men and women for whom all power had been demanded at the time of the revolution. The Soviet State became a powerful dictatorship, if not of the proletariat, certainly of the Communist Party. It did improve the status of the working class, even though the general backwardness of the country and the particular circumstances under which the Soviet State had to operate, militated against a standard of living comparable even to that enjoyed by the proletariat in capitalist countries.

In the end, it proved its stability and vitality by its colossal and decisive contribution to the defeat of Fascist Germany in the second world war, out of which it emerged the most powerful force in international politics, rivalled only, but not surpassed, by the United States of America ; the one proclaiming itself a Socialist State, the other, the most powerful exponent of capitalism. Given the conflicts and contradictions of capitalism, which even in the land of its greatest success are glaring and revolting to developed cons-

cience, the entire world of civilised human beings should have been expected to proclaim the Soviet Union as its ideal, adopt the socialist ideology and follow the example of the U.S.S.R. Instead, we find crisis-worn and war-weary mankind faced with the exasperating situation of a world polarised between U.S.A. and U.S.S.R., neither of the poles holding out hope and satisfaction for man's basic urge for freedom and a rational order, in which he could develop his creative potentialities, an urge which has become a craving more burning than it has ever been before, because never has humanity appeared to be so conscious of the need.

Why is that so? Why has even the most recent expression of man's rational endeavour for greater freedom been so frustrating and so disappointing? To find out the reason for this failure is the precondition for more successful endeavours in the future. And who would say that more successful endeavour was not required, or was not possible? The reason is that *for creating a new world of freedom, revolution must go beyond an economic reorganisation of society. Freedom does not*

necessarily follow from the capture of political power in the name of the oppressed and exploited classes and abolition of private ownership in the means of production. Otherwise, we ought to be in a position to say that man in the U.S.S.R. to-day is freer than he has been elsewhere and at other times. And while we may conceivably admit that, on a low level of the struggle for physical existence, man in the Socialist Republics may have greater security than elsewhere, we cannot legitimately say, from the factual information available to the outside world, that the Soviet citizen is free to develop all his potentialities. He is not even free to do many other things that citizens of non-socialist countries are free to do as a matter of right.

It is argued, on the other hand, that the U.S.S.R. has not yet had time and opportunity enough to afford a greater amount of freedom to its citizens, and that free play of their potentialities might yet endanger the safety and existence of the Socialist State. But if it is true, as we maintain, that man is essentially rational, and his basic urge is the attainment of freedom, nothing should be expected from

the development of his potentialities that could endanger a social order in harmony with his rationality and his basic urge for freedom. Or, if it be contended that man's essential rationality has been so perverted in prolonged epochs of irrationality that it could not yet be relied upon to assert itself even after nearly one third of a century of socialist construction, then we must either doubt man's essential rationality altogether, or accuse the Soviet State of criminal neglect to nurture and foster this most significant distinction of the species, which is at the same time the only ultimate safeguard of any rational libertarian social order.

Admitting that the safety of a first socialist experiment, made under most precarious conditions, required extraordinary vigilance and prudence ; and admitting also that to make a social experiment on such a gigantic scale, with the most backward human material, would impose certain restrictions on the libertarian intentions of the experimenters, we are yet compelled to question the necessity of certain instances of restrictions of freedom in the U.S.S.R., whose existence cannot

be denied. In view of the enforced and abnormal conditions of military preparedness, of war, and then of post-war reconstruction, in which the U.S.S.R. has had its existence ever since the Russian Revolution, and given the appalling backwardness of its population, we might go to the extreme length of admitting even the temporary necessity of such repugnant restrictions of freedom as the control of the movements of workmen, or of labour passes, to ensure a stable manning of socialist industries.

But, leaving apart all practical measures which the U.S.S.R. might have found expedient, what can, for example, justify the systematic withholding of truth and dissemination of untruth about the outside world and whatever is thought and done there, in the Soviet Union ? When ideas are believed to be but super-structures of economic relations, and the latter being socialist in the U.S.S.R., is it rational to curb the operation of man's reason in this way ? This shows a lack of confidence in the intelligence and rationality of man, who should be trusted to appreciate the actual situation, relations

and difficulties and to realise that, in consequence thereof, the heroism and significance of the experiment in which they are all collectively engaged, is all the greater. It even betrays a lack of confidence in the correctness and validity of the experiment itself ; because, if it is as great as we presume it is, this can be appreciated by all men, if intelligently explained, and through systematic education of the citizens (in the place of benumbing propaganda-drumming). This gross and vulgar error has placed the Soviet Union in a false light even in the eyes of its own men, whenever these happened to get in contact with the outside world, which could not at length be avoided ; and it has certainly created doubt and misgivings about Soviet intelligence, rationality and intellectual honesty even among sympathetically inclined and unprejudiced foreigners.

Many examples could be adduced to show the failure of even this greatest and latest adventure of human mind and creative activity to provide any significant advance towards human freedom. But this is not an anti-Soviet essay ; we simply take note of the

fact that modern man in quest of freedom has not been able to find inspiration in the outcome of the Russian Revolution after thirty years of its existence. We have to record this fact and find out the reason by analysing what we do not approve of, and why we don't. A rational man, for instance, cannot satisfy himself that, to safeguard a social order of greater freedom, artistic creation should have to be controlled; not only guided by rational instructive education, or even indoctrination, by the State, but actually interfered with in details of form and of content, and subjected to economic pressure and political ostracism. We cannot also take it with equanimity that, whatever indoctrination or education the Soviet State disseminates, at home and abroad, to explain or explain away—certain acts of omission and commission, or certain policies and attitudes, should be on such a low and primitive level of transparent demagogy and blatant contempt for the intelligence and perspicacity of the addressees.

A good cause can be defended intelligently, and better by explaining the facts than by

trying to explain them away. To do otherwise means insulting and denying man's essential rationality, and, instead of rescuing it from its perversion and obliteration through ages of irrationality, it buries it only deeper and deeper under successive layers of more or less sophisticated and rationalised irrationality. It undermines and hollows out man's most significant distinction: his rationality being stultified, man loses his moral equilibrium, and freedom becomes an empty word as it recedes farther and farther. When man's rationality is at a discount, his potentialities become doubtful, and whatever he does, it does not lead to his freedom. For having allowed this to happen, history will ever accuse the Soviet State of contempt of man.

The reason for the moral crisis of our days is this collapse of the high hopes and expectations that modern progressive men had placed in the creation of the Russian Revolution. For a century, the best of mankind had an ideal before them, which appeared to provide for endless development of the potentialities of all individuals and for an un-

limited extension of freedom. When the ideal was for the first time put to test in practice, it was found wanting as a means to this end. The consequent disappointment led to abject frustration and demoralisation, which expressed themselves in escape towards mysticism and other older ideals, which had been found wanting much earlier, but happened not to possess the particular distortions and disfigurements of this first experiment in Socialism. The people thus afflicted are found to throw out the baby with the bathwater ; they react with a pathological hatred against the cause of their disappointment, and condemn the Soviet experiment outright and without any reservation.

But because the Soviet experiment did not achieve all that was expected of it, it does not mean that it was a miscarriage. Perhaps, according to the socialist blueprint, it was a success. The mistake may lie in the blueprint. And on closer examination of that blue print in the light of the Soviet experience, mistakes can be discovered in it. The pathological hatred, which many honest leftists in their disillusionment have deve-

loped for the Soviet Union, betrays a subjective attitude. What is required is an objective analysis of the theory on which the Soviet practice is based. And, indeed, fallacies can be discovered in the theory; a new practice must, therefore, be devised, based on a sounder theory purged of its fallacies. Those fallacies themselves were largely historically determined, and in the light of newer experience, they can be avoided. The major fallacy to be avoided is to invest ideals with orthodox finality; they must contain in themselves the dynamic capacity for absorption of, and adaptation to, the experiences made in the process of their own realisation. If the Soviet experiment had not degenerated into a fanatical Church and petrified Marxism into a closed system of dogmas and articles of faith, it could have found in Marxism itself the correctives of its errors, and discarded whatever fallacies were discovered in Marx's doctrines propounded a century ago. As things have developed in the Soviet Union, this process of sifting and discriminating the chaff from the grain in their theory cannot be expected to happen

in the U.S.S.R. It has, however, to be done, and we have attempted to do it.

The main fallacy of the communist practice was based on a wrong emphasis in Marxism on the collectivity of human beings as against the individuals constituting it. This fallacy was historically determined, as a reaction to preceding experience. The political system which was the counterpart of capitalist economy against which Socialism was a revolt, was parliamentary democracy. Under this system, the basic units of society were individual human beings, all of whom had theoretically and legally equal rights and equal freedom. But we have already seen that all did not have equal opportunity to exercise their rights and enjoy the freedom theoretically conceded to them. These opportunities were reserved for those who owned the means of production, and the rest were left to their own resources, which consisted in wages not quite enough for the most primitive human existence. Their right to participate in the administration of public affairs could only be exercised periodically by throwing a piece of paper in a ballot box, voting

for one as against another man who promised to do things for them in the parliaments. But there the right ended, because once a man was elected, whatever he did was beyond the control of the voters, whose low living standard included necessarily a low standard of knowledge and consciousness, because cultural values and education, although theoretically theirs as much as the next man's, were available to them only at a price ; and that price was not included in the wages they received for their labour. Thus, the formal rights enjoyed by man under parliamentary democracy were in fact a mockery of human rights.

The prophets of Socialism had found out that individuals were thus utterly powerless ; they also discovered that in their mass, as a collectivity, they could exercise some influence and power, improve their living conditions and, to some extent, widen the bounds of their slavery, and might even attain freedom itself, through collective action, in a revolution. The idea came as an immense relief. Hope and salvation for the oppressed and exploited masses lay in their collectivity.

Safety was in collectivity ; responsibility was to be collective, action collective ; the deprived individual sought to huddle his fears and loneliness and insecurity in the warm stable of this mighty collectivity. He merged his individuality in this collective entity. In the exultation over this prospect of salvation and power, collectivity was idolised ; it was invested with a consciousness of its own and given the dignity of an "ego." The freedom which it was to achieve was to be enjoyed by it ; whatever was good for it, was *eo ipso* good in itself ; whatever harmed it, was sin. The individual was a forlorn despicable nothing ; to sacrifice any number of them on the altar of the new godhead was justified if the latter's service demanded it. Like any other godhead, this new deity of the socialist movement also had its agents, who interpreted what was good or bad for it. And the masses of men, sore with the experience of their individual nothingness under parliamentary democracy, drunk with the illusion that collective power and greatness would bring them freedom, sacrificed themselves in their hecatombs on the altar of "their" collective ego.

They lost the consciousness of their dignity and sovereignty as individuals, and rapturously trampled in the dust everything that reminded them of their unfortunate individuality ; they appeared to belie the idea that man is essentially rational and therefore moral, and that in the development of his individual potentialities lies his freedom.

But the fact that this is so led the more developed individuals in the communist movement to live under the strain of a perpetual malaise. And while inside the Soviet Union the benumbing influence of a scientifically devised propaganda technique may retard the assertion of man's essential rationality by realising errors and blazing new trails, the process has started in other parts of the world, and some people, almost everywhere, are reacting to the Soviet experience in a more or less similar manner with new ideas, a revaluation of old values—remote and more recent—and a reorientation of man's pursuit of freedom.

II

MAN'S PLACE IN HISTORY

MAN'S PLACE IN HISTORY

We have tried to make ourselves a picture of man's place in the Universe—in nature and in society. We have traced his urge for freedom as the highest human value to the prenatal background of the species, and we have followed by odd milestones the circuitous but unbroken paths that men have trodden since known history in their pursuit of freedom. We have seen that his Promethean efforts and creative genius, for all that they have achieved, have yet been frustrated so far. But not only is man not defeated ; through trial and error, through periods of crisis, despair, success and failure, he has approximated freedom, so that we can now, by tracing for the first time the origin of the urge to natural roots, recognise the laws of the fight for freedom, and therefore conduct it more scientifically, more consciously, more discriminatively and more successfully.

But before we shall map out the road to freedom, let us go back to the roots and trace the history of man's unfoldment, which is at

the same time the history of the restrictions which have so far prevented man's potentialities from manifesting themselves in finer forms.

Freedom, which consists in the unfolding of the potentialities of the individual, is not a newly arisen urge in man or invented by us. All progress in human civilisation has been achieved in this pursuit. And we can trace this urge for freedom not only to the endeavour of primitive man, but to the urges and endeavours of pre-human organisms.

In the long story of biological evolution organisms are found trying to maintain their integrity and identity under pressure of the forces of the environment in which they are placed. In responding to the 'challenge of environment' they may react in two different ways. Either they may undergo structural changes within themselves so as to be more in tune with the circumstances; or, where it is possible, they may bring pressure upon the environment to effect partial changes in it so as to make it less fatally inimical to its survival, security and growth. Actually organisms are found to respond in both the ways simulta-

neously to minimise conflict and restriction and to enhance the chances of their survival and continuity. The structural changes may themselves eventually endow them with greater possibilities of adapting the environment. It is only in so far as organisms actively respond to the challenge of the environment and succeed (in pre-human stages, mostly accidentally) in effecting proper internal and external adjustments that their survival becomes more secure and harmonious. The most essential factors in such evolutionary adjustment are discriminating sensitiveness and resilient integration. In the course of such active response to circumstances organisms learn novel ways of achieving equilibrium and flexibility, discover new modes of asserting this integral character upon the nondescript habitat and invent various means to extract from environment services contributory to their survival, security and happiness.

The accumulation of these possibilities in the organism as resulting from its integral response to environment constitutes the foundation of its growth. The greater is its ability of quick adjustment and of successful shaping

of its environment, the larger becomes the range of possibilities of its growth and the lesser are the chances of pain and inhibition and conflict and the wider the opportunity for secure and harmonious development.

In the case of man this two-fold process of self-adaptation and shaping of environment reached such a high level as to amount almost to an unprecedented mutation in biological history. The development of the spinal column and the cerberal cortex and the peculiar physiological adjustment of the various limbs which resulted from a long process of animal evolution gave man unequalled advantages in the long endeavour for secure and harmonious survival. His erect anatomy gave him among many other things the chance of considering dimensions in perspective ; this was not possible for animals whose spine runs parallel to the earth and who consequently cannot rise perpendicular for any significant stretch of time. Erectness probably helped to connect the muscular experience of movement with visual sensations, resulting in an almost revolutionary change in the animal experience of space. His arms, especially the hands, gave

him a potential dexterity in handling tools and the materialisation of this potentiality is evidenced in the history of instruments and technology from stone weapons to spectroscope, from primitive crafts to modern engineering. The peculiar development of the skin and the nervous system gave him greater (both in number and in refinement) sensitiveness to stimuli and incomparably superior ability for nervous inhibition, canalisation and integration of the same. The changes in his vocal organ made it possible to develop a complicated system of sound symbols instead of the extremely limited sign-system of the animals and contributed greatly to one of man's greatest instrumental achievements: language and speech. (As a matter of fact several modern humanists and philosophers like Cassirer have described man as a symbolic animal). But more than anything the unprecedented development of the cerebral cortex gave man indefinite possibilities of co-ordinating stimuli and of relating stimuli with response over long stretches of time which made social organisation, science, morals, technology and the whole complica-

ted system of symbolism and interpersonal relationship, described generally as human-culture, possible.

The physiological revolution which marked the rise of *anthropus erectus* or erect man made the human organism a storehouse of indefinite potentialities. Potentialities, generally speaking, indicate probables of organic adjustment in response to internal or/and external stimulation issuing in the reshapement of the sources of those stimuli. It may be possible to roughly indicate the possible ways of response of lower animals to some hypothetically uniform circumstantial setting because the range of potentialities of such organisms is comparatively limited. (For example, the dog of Pavlov or the fish of Sherington and even the ape of Kohler). In the case of man however his very physiological structure is so extremely complicated, containing potentially such varied modes of response, that to try to simplify human response into the easy patterns of tropism or conditioned-reflex or even pre-human gestalt is necessarily rather naive and misleading. In so far as there is continuity between man and earlier animals all these

enquiries in terms of earlier modes of response may help to trace that continuity. That as an element in the law-governed universe the human organism is also necessarily law-governed ; that, being one of the many biological organisms whose basic urge is survival, man is also dominated by that urge and acts according to the general laws of organic assimilation and response—these are of course quite true. Yet man has also grown into something more than any other unit in the physical world, something more than any other biological organism—this fact is also so very true that unless it is properly appreciated, an attitude of pseudo-naturalist fatalism and biological competitiveness is bound to dominate human thought and conduct and to nullify man's distinction as man.

On the other hand, this emphasis on man's distinction need not be made dependant on the negation of evolutionary continuity. The consequence of that unscientific attitude will be impotent anthropocentrism which, on the one hand, invests the physical universe with a human character, and, on the other, is forced to explain nature's indifference to human need

by the hypothesis of original sin. The false humanisation of nature into providence leads invariably to the perspective of fall, redemption and *grace,* and neither of these ingenious concepts can allow even hypothetically the possibility of man's ever being even a partial shaper of his own destiny. Such swollen humanism, being untrue, can lead only to the negation of man's creative power.

But to resume. While all the earlier animal organisms had various potentialities of response, man, largely in consequence of his unique (but most certainly imperfect) physiology, became a great store of indefinite potentialities. He could construct out of his multifold experience an approximate pattern of the universe ; by following movements within his body and without, he could induct laws of physical dynamism. By storing complex patterns of sensations, he could think in terms of after-images ; noticing the sequence of happenings in his habitat, he could hypothesise possible uniformities and then seek to employ that logic to construct technical devices to achieve economy and certainty in response. He could think in terms of time and even

measure time in terms of space. In the process of his age long response to the challenge of circumstances man has developed the various theoretical and applied sciences, technology and machines, society and morals, institutions, laws and economic relationships, various fine arts, etc. These crystallised expressions of man's various response to the challenge of his environment are evidence of his multifold potentialities, which find widening opportunities of unfoldment in proportion to man's ceasing to be a slave to circumstances and becoming the efficient cause of environmental sequence.

The process of unfolding, however, has not always been continuous or happy, unhampered or harmonious. There have been many obstructions both from environment and from man's own inadequacies ; there have been endless conflicts between man and nature, man and his creations and, within man, among his unco-ordinated impulses and also between his new impulses and old habits. The history of civilization speaks of a long struggle between developing man and his unfinished creations —the creations ultimately demanding the

sacrifice of the individual creators in the name of the glory of their intermediary achievements. Man's history, from this point of view, has been no less a story of his endless development than of his perennial enslavement to inhibitive forces and influences issuing as his instrumental creations in the process of that development. The myth of Prometheus is only a primitive symbol of this dualism in human history—a truer symbol than the later day myth of Adam's fall and redemption through Christ—a myth which dissociates in imagination an integral process into spatial levels and temporal periods and thus gets bogged in the embarrassing dilemma of immaculate conception.

An understanding of the various restrictive influences whose elimination is the *sine qua non* of human freedom is necessary before we proceed to consider the more positive aspects of that history of freedom. These restrictions may be roughly classified into three major groups and the programme of human freedom may be described as consisting primarily in their progressive elimination and in providing for opportunities of harmonious

living both in the individual and the interpersonal life of man.

The first group of restrictions on man may be described as the *natural* or *environmental* as they come primarily from the miserliness, indifference or destructiveness of the physical environment from the human point of view. These restrictions may not however be considered as merely negative. They are a constant challenge to the organising and creative abilities of the human organism. From the earliest dawn of human civilisation to our present time man has been constantly endeavouring, both in imagination and through actual co-operative effort and engineering, to invest the neutral processes of nature with a direction to meet human ends. The conflict between providence and necessity in all religious thought is in fact a reflection of these conflicting movements in the physical Universe: the movement of nature irrespective of any purpose and the purposive movements of sentient beings, particularly of man, to recast inorganic processes into organic moulds. While science is a compromise between the two movements, in philosophy and

religion this perennial dualism has always prevailed. From the earliest conflict in philosophical thought between Heracleitan flux and Parmenidan fixities down to the dualism between Bergson's *Elan* and analytic reason, and in the perennial conflict between sin and grace, one cannot fail to note the dualism between man's desire to impose upon environment and his recognition of the complete indifference of environment to human will.

The simplest outline of human civilisation may be traced along the graph of nature's neutrality and man's persistent endeavour to overcome that neutrality. This endeavour has taken various forms ; as religion, it has tried to invest nature with Providential solicitousness for human good ; as magic, it has extended the small dexterities in manipulation of objects to imply the possibility of such manipulation of nature in defiance of natural processes ; in art it has tried to hold up to nature the forms of human imagination by imitating which nature is expected to reach its aesthetic fulfilment ; and as philosophy, it has tried to resolve nature into categories of human knowledge. But it is only when

man's endeavour to conquer and control nature took the form of science and technology and based all other similar endeavours (*e.g.,* aesthetic, moral, etc.) on scientific knowledge that the real perspective of such conquest opened up for the first time on a grand scale before him.

The restrictions imposed by environment on man are too self-evident to require any detailed description. Forest or desert, mountains or seas, extremely hot or extremely cold climates, flood or failure of rains, sand-storm or hail, earthquake, army of bacteria, swamps—they all stand in the way of a secure and happy and free living. In a million big or small ways man, like every other biological organism, is at the mercy of nature. It indeed needs some glorious intoxication to dream of freedom and happiness in the "state of nature." If there be any such nature-enthusiast who in a malarious swamp would not use any disinfectant on ground of its artificiality, it is better to take one's hat off to him as "nature's natural" and to make a precipitate escape from his company. Organisms constantly threatened with insecurity, starvation, disease can find

little opportunity to develop other impulses save the one of survival. In so far as man refused to be just one of the many inconsequent elements or helpless organisms in the process of nature, that man asserted himself as nature's potential master. The story of human civilisation records the process by which man's potential mastership is being approximately realised. By understanding more and more accurately the socalled neutral processes of the physical universe (of which man is also an element), man came to be in a position to devise methods and instruments with which these processes could be made to subserve his ends. Thus, for example, early human hordes, which probably in the course of their nomadic wanderings were confronted with big river barriers, settled by the river basin and, in the course of their effort to find means of subsistence from their potentially fertile habitat, invented agriculture, grain-husking and storage, use of metals, the art of building-construction, boat building and even geometry and arithmetic and astronomy and in this way transformed whole tracts of fallow river side

lands into the primitive sites of human civilisation.

The second group of restrictions may be described as *organic or physiological.* They also need not detain us for long. In the process of evolution man, as a consequence of millenia of past experience, has come to inherit limbs, organisms and neural-muscular habits and propensities which are of no use to him in the new setting of circumstances, but which instead may tend to hamper the harmonious integration of the new stimuli and response. His acquatic antecedents have left most embarrassing and even mortal marks in his breathing and blood circulation apparatus. Similarly, his past life among other animals in the forest has left certain motor aptitudes and sensory reflexes which are great handicaps to his proper organic adjustment. Apart from these restrictive physiological legacies of past, he has also certain organic imperfections some of which at least are due to the physiological revolution which he underwent in the socalled "missing link" stage. Helmholtz's famous refusal to purchase an hypothetical microscope which may resemble the human

eye because of its too many imperfections and uneconomic complexities is only a pointer to the many imperfections of human physiology. We need not describe them as any casual reading of some text book of human physiology may immediately make this point clear. Here the study of the human organism, as made in physiology and medical science, is gradually, though not yet very substantially, providing for ways and means by which these imperfections, if not removed, at least may be more adequately supplemented. It must however be admitted that these organic or physiological restrictions on human development are a major handicap in our quest for freedom, and unless their elimination is duely incorporated in any programme for human freedom, such programme is precariously poised on uncertain abstractions. We may mention in passing how modern medical science has discovered the cause of many socalled criminal tendencies and forms of pathological conduct and even of stupidity and stunted development in glandular defficiency, and how recent experiments on the basis of the above discoveries have opened a probable perspective of

harmonious individual development and social relationship if proper medical treatment along with rational education and technological improvement is included in democratic institutional planning.

The third group of restrictions are however much more complicated and consequently more difficult to combat. Natural and physiological restrictions may be gradually removed with the means of the physical and medical sciences and technology. Here the conflict is comparatively simple (however hard and unending); it is between man's intelligence and knowledge and co-operative strength and the forces of nature including the human organism. Here the restrictions are imposed and are only to be removed. The third group of restrictions however are man's own creation. They have grown and accumulated very largely in the process of man's endeavour to overcome the earlier two sets of restrictions. We may describe this group, therefore, as *instrumental* or *secondary*.

The restrictions implied by the above description are indeed various. We may only indicate some of the more important catego-

ries in this group. They all resemble each other in this that they are primarily results of man's response to nature, that they are intended to serve as instruments in man's effort for harmonious, secure and less painful survival, that while intended as means they developed an independent importance of their own, and finally though often defeating their original function to serve as means to human welfare, they are in some form or other indispensable, and contain the possibility of being employed, if man will, to subserve their original human purpose. Of the many subclasses in this group we propose to consider here only three of the most important as they have very vital and direct bearing on individual freedom and social welfare.

Among these man-made instrumental restrictions, which while essential to human development can also be inhibitive, are human ideals and systems of ideas. Every biological organism, being an organism, has a proneness to integrate its various experiences both of external stimulation and internal processes. In the case of man however the unusual development of the cerebral hemisphere has lead

to a quite novel form of such integration. Integration is here not only physiological, organic and immediate. Man can trace uniformities among the various groups of experience and therefrom formulate general ideas and abstract laws of relationship between groups of experience. Added to this is the human ability to employ symbols and complicated systems of symbols to stand for these approximate uniformities in his experience. The symbol serves various important functions of which one is to achieve economy in reference and another to provide for some public means for the communication of systematised experience between individual and individual. The ultimate reference of course is to experience including the secondary experience of approximate uniformities and relations. As however, through interpersonal relationship and communication, the range of human experience expanded in an ever-quickening tempo, both the possibility and the need of tracing uniformities, of organising groups of experiences into ideas and of using symbols for them became increasingly greater. Ideas, abstractions, symbols, measurements,

forms of syntax began to have greater and greater influence on human response to circumstance. As more and more men began to live together and as larger and larger tracts of the physical universe began to impinge on the human organism, man began to note greater and greater uniformities as well as multifold varieties among the uniformities, and the consequence of this process was the emergence of the physical sciences, of logic and mathematics and also in a partial sense of the fine arts and various ethical systems.

This is an extremely complicated story and cannot be told even in the barest outline in an expository monograph. What, however, we are trying to impress is the nature of man's distinction from all pre-human animal forms —the distinction which is generally conveyed by the word, rationality. The price of this distinction had also to be paid and we shall come to that part of the story immediately. It must however be appreciated that when man is described as essentially rational, atleast three distinct but mutually inter-related attributes may be implied. First, that as part of the entire physical universe human behaviour

is also governed by the laws of that universe. Lawgovernedness which implies uniformity, relation, coherence, etc., is the foundation of rationalism. This asserts that there is nothing transcendental, super-physical about man. But if that alone were the criterion of rationality, then there would have been no difference between man and other units of integration in the universe. Man as a physical entity is law governed ; as a biological organism he is aware of the law governing process ; but as man (and this is the second implication of rationality) he alone can be fully conscious of the laws and logic of that process. It is this consciousness of the complicated pattern of uniformities in the universe and the consequent ability to guide his response and, to an increasing extent, to control the sources of stimulation on the basis of that knowledge which constitutes the distinctive character of human rationality.

The third implication of reason comes from what is stated in the last clause of the preceding sentence. Man's knowledge of the laws of nature including himself is the basis of his morality. Morality is, generally speaking, the

application of knowledge to the most harmonious and least painful satisfaction of human needs—it is applied rationality to facilitate the process of development of the largest number of individual men and women with minimum friction and restriction. Rationality as attributed to man implies this potentially moral character of his behaviour.

Ideas, we have said, are derived from systematisation of experience by tracing uniformities, relations etc., among them. Labels are then given to indicate or describe the approximate results of these systematisations. These are the various linguistic symbols varying from the extremely abstract and attenuated symbols of logic and mathematics to the comparatively more concrete and pictorial symbols of imaginative literature. Gradually as larger and larger arcs of experience are being systematised, ideas become more and more complex, and gradually through their acceptance over a long period as being convenient and economic, they become so habitual as to be considered as primary data for further systematisation. The original empirical basis is forgotten and complex ideas or laws which had developed

through a long and strenuous process of cerebral integration of multi-fold experience come to be assumed as axiomatic. Ideas become habitual and are invested the character of immediate experience, their original empirical character and their function as pointers in the process of approximate systematisation of experience are largely forgotten.* Systems of ideas which were really concretisations of experiment, observation and accumulated knowledge become closed bodies. Their instrumental nature is forgotten, and they are hypostatised into absolutes. That ideas are always approximate systematisations, that laws are invariably of an hypothetical character, that symbols are only convenient co-relates, this evolutionary historical background of ideology is missed, and it is at this stage that ideas which were the most important instruments in man's endeavour to control and shape nature become restrictions on man's knowledge and consequently also on man's unfoldment. The history of human thought,

* Prof. Whitehead's warning against "misplaced concreteness" probably refers, among other facts, to this tendency.

which is the most decisive evidence of man's rationality and creative power, at the same time offers ample illustration of this inertia of ideas and symbols and of the consequent transformation of what is a valuable instrument of man's freedom into his most obstinate obstruction.

If ideas in general or the abstract systematisations of human experience suffer from inertia and may become restrictive, this is all the more true about such ideas as have bearing on human conduct and inter-personal relationship—the socalled moral ideas or various social conventions. These involve a more direct and less analytical formulation of uniformities to serve the purpose of bringing and maintaining coherence in personal and social life. But while achieving coherence, these undergo a stiffening process so that when further ranges of knowledge are brought to bear upon their tentative hypothetical forms, they violently resist and quite often in history succeed in obstructing the inclusion of new thoughts and experiences. As social institutions are themselves based upon these ideas or conventions, the power concentrated

through the organisation of inter-personal life is employed to maintain them. In consequence, individuals, who demand harmonious incorporation of new data and maintain correctly that every social convention or law is ultimately no more than an hypothesis, are branded as anti-social and, more often than not, become martyrs to human obtuseness and stupidity.

Mention of a few of such conventions or idea-compulsives may immediately bring out their restrictive character. A whole complicated system of ideas and conventions have grown into what are described as the religions of the world. Religions incorporate in their more positive essentials a moral recoil from the inadequacies of contemporary human life, a projection in time and space of man's conception about good life, and an indication of the way in which this spatio-temporal distance (between earth and heaven, life and after-life) may be bridged. This endeavour probably lead to the idea of God and all the cognate conceptions of heaven and hell, retribution and judgment, sin and grace and the principles of good life imagined as God-given com-

mandments. This positive element in religion however was overshadowed by the other tendency to finalise, to become dogma, to invest certain merely instrumental fictions with categorical immutability and transcendence. The consequence is the degeneration of the moral spirit of religion into the morbid and inhibitive practices of religious life which are so wellknown to everybody. In India, for example, the spirit of philosophical enquiry coloured by a moral concern for goodness that one finds in the earlier Upanishads and in the original movement of Buddhism was completely attenuated and tavestried in the later scriptures and the Niti shastras in which God is conceived to be an ill-tempered, revengeful, inequitous patriarch to whose tyrranical dictates the human individual must submit out of fear. This retrogressive movement in man's moral outlook was naturally synchronised by a general paralysis of the spirit of scientific enquiry and an increasing inelasticity in the laws and conventions of inter-personal relationship. Similarly in Christianity, the original spirit of moral revolt and equitable good neighbourliness that inspired early Christians

degenerated into intolerant defence of privilege and dogmatic beliefs and ruthless suppression of all truly Christian thought as heretical. Those who are acquainted with the history of the Church may remember how between Plotinus and Renaissance the only Christian writer of considerable importance, who is not haunted by the sense of sin or dominated by the usual vengeful spirit, is Boethius, and even his Christian character is somewhat doubtful. Whoever among the Christians desired to improve upon the extremely primitive and inadequate explanations of nature, man and morality imagined in the Testaments were considered the enemies of the Church, and, wherever possible, persecuted as heretics. One remembers, for example, Gnostics and Manichaeans, Origen, Nestorians and Monophysites, etc., whose common problem was to reconcile the human and the divine natures of Christ, and who, in their own ways, were trying to find some consistent and rational explanation of man's moral character. The opposition of religion to philosophical enquiry and accumulation of new knowledge (without which the realisation of the very moral urge

of religion is never possible) can be profusely illustrated from any period in civilised history.

This ossification of conventions or moral ideals, this transformation of codes of conduct into super-empirical absolutes, when they are no more than hypothetical abstractions derived from experience (and even that not very systematically), this worship of convenient fictions as super-human realities—this has been probably one of the greatest drawbacks of man in his quest for freedom. In recent history, this is probably seen nowhere with such horribly far-reaching consequences than in the field of institutional thinking and behaviour. For example, man discovered that he could not transform or control his environment except through co-operation with other-individuals. The co-operation was necessary both for man's mere survival and for the expansion of the territories of human control. To ensure such co-operation the ever-complicating system of relationships, called the society, and its instrument of administration, the state, were evolved. Unfortunately, however, what was in truth a relationship of

individuals was elevated to the nature of an entity-in-itself, and later on individuals were considered as means and instruments for the hypothetical wellbeing of these collective abstractions,—as partial and imperfect shadows or *dimiurges* of the collective absolute. The collectivity, however, is only a deduction or a logical abstract, a linguistic symbol conveying nothing more than the mutual inter-dependence of a number of concrete individuals for their survival and development. For greater cohesiveness in the processes of co-operation and for economy in discrepancies of individual conduct, this abstraction is invested (though quite not consciously) with a total organic character, and is considered to be superior to its actual individual constituents. From the earliest days to our own times such absolute group-abstracts (which, as abstractions, have their value and limited truth) as, for example, the tribe, the nation, the race, the caste, the class etc., have been raised to pedestals of godhead, their hypothetical and instrumental character largely forgotten. The human individual for whose survival, welfare and

development such abstractions were conceived and institutions evolved, was called upon to sacrifice himself to these institutional gods. Various moral sentiments, rules of ideal conduct, entire systems of cultural compulsives came to be constructed round these conventional group-myths. The story of man's struggle for freedom from this angle has very largely been the story of the endeavour of individuals to assert the original purpose of all social abstractions and moral compulsives, and of the stiff resistance, amounting to persecution, given by these collectivist beliefs and their associated habits and sentiments and the institutions embodying the same. In every age a conflict has gone on, sometimes concealed because social prosperity could afford it, sometimes extremely violent, between compulsives derived from such collective beliefs (for example, patriotism, tribalism, racialism, communalism, class-interest, caste loyalty etc.) and the truly human, because truly scientific and truly moral, spirit of expanding the boundaries of such social groupings to entire mankind (*i.e.*, cosmopolitanism) and of asserting against all

the limiting and self-abnegating compulsions the basic urge of rational and moral conduct, the urge for the welfare and development of the concrete human individual.

The third group of man made restrictions on man's freedom are the various social institutions with their underlying pattern of relationships and their various conventions and laws. From the standpoint of human freedom, like every other form of human creation, the worth of these institutions and laws shall have to be assessed in terms of their instrumentality to achieve individual welfare. Unfortunately here also the ironical story of man's creations devouring himself is found to repeat. State, family, marriage, laws, various economic institutions and relationships, customs and conventions, which emerged as tentative hypothetical endeavours of human beings to co-ordinate experience and to achieve harmony and co-operation in the response and need-satisfaction of individuals, have invariably tended towards absoluteness, rigidity and immobility and thus towards negation of their original purpose. The main function of any social institution and its laws is to provide

for maximum harmonisation in inter-personal relationship, so that the expression or development of one individual may not hamper that of another, but instead contribute simultaneously to the development of others. This can be done only through incorporation in institutional life of those two apparently opposed but actually complementary attitudes or complex modes of response, which are also essential for scientific knowledge and rational conduct. They are : flexibility or openness to new ranges of experience and constant endeavour to bring about more and more comprehensive coherence among elements already given as data. Such flexibility and coherence are the two basic attributes of rational thinking, rational ethics and rational social life. In terms of social institutions the combination of these two principles may be described as integral liberalism or organised democracy.

Unfortunately more than in the field of thought, more even than in the field of personal ethics, in institutional life the tendencies towards either closed stereotyped systems or to chaos and conflict or both together seem to prevail much more than the attitude described

as ideal. Any theoretical enquiry has greater chances of quick and harmonious development which is based on the scientific spirit of coherence and openness. Any personal adjustment is sure to be more happy and less inhibitive which, while always trying to bring about a certain coherence and equilibrium among the impulses and experiences, is at the same time alive to new impulses and experiences. Similarly in institutional life such organisations, conventions, laws and relationships are bound to be more conducive to happiness and human welfare as seek to harmonise the different resources and requirements of its constitutent individuals with minimum coercion, inhibition or compulsion and which, while endeavouring after harmony and order, is constantly prepared to admit new elements through readjustment of its pattern. It is thus that science is more fruitful as a method of enquiry than magic or religion ; a liberal utilitarian morality is conducive to better personal adjustment and welfare than any rigoristic patriarchal ethics based on superego and sense of sin ; and a democratic society is incomparably more conducive to individual growth

and harmony between man and man than any form of totalitarianism.

In fact it is fundamentally a question of two conflicting perspectives of human life. The one which is tribal, collectivist, dogmatic or rigoristic contends that man is weak, incompetent, essentially sinful, predestined to damnation and may be barely made to survive, with the grace of the Holy Ghost or Historical Providence through strict discipline, order, mortification and self-surrender to institutional discipline. The other believes that man is a product in the process of evolution and embodies as such the obvious limitations of the process along with its achievements; that man, though a part of the physical universe and consequently law governed, can also by virtue of his knowledge and rational co-operative effort partially transform his environment to satisfy his individual needs; that man's reason is the potential meeting ground of physical determinism and moral choice; that man is not only shaped by circumstances but also is an architect and creator; and that this supreme distinction of creativeness in man is founded on what we have

described as rationality. This other point of view, while fully recognising the logic of all the various limitations referred to before, nevertheless maintains that man can overcome these limitations by becoming more and more rational ; that man's history, in so far as it is a history of freedom and progress, is a perennial endeavour to overcome these limitations so that every man can become a happy glorious creator inspite of the neutral law-governed indifference of the universe of which he is also a part. It is only a humanist philosophy like this that may, even in the age of total war and total loyalities, work confidently for a rational democratic society of freedom in which individual welfare will be the basic value and reason will be recognised as the best means to its achievement in public life.

So far we have been talking about the restrictions. Freedom in its negative sense has been defined as the elimination of such restrictions; but this process of elimination is not, properly speaking, simply negative. In fact elimination implies not destruction but the reshaping or reconstruction of inadequate forms and relations so as to meet the require-

ments of individual unfolding much better than is possible at the moment. In so far as consruction requires negation of earlier forms, elimination is negative; but unlike as with the religious philosophers or the mystics, our conception of the elimination process does not imply any false reduction of the physical universe into illusion, non-being or *Maya.* Similarly, unlike the primitivists, humanism does not propose to destroy all human institutions, laws or moral conventions and go back to some empirically unreal and logically self-contradictory state of Nature. In this the humanist position is well illustrated in that anecdote about Rousseau and Voltaire which records how on receiving Rousseau's *"Discourse on Inequality"* (in which Rousseau advocates complete and voluntary destruction of human civilisation), Voltaire replied: "I have received your new book against the human race and thank you for it. Never was such a cleverness used to making us all stupid. One longs in reading your book to walk on all fours. But as I have lost that habit for more than sixty years, I feel unhappily the impossibility of resuming it." (Russell:

History of Western Philosophy, p. 688). In fact there is no going back to walk on all fours even if Rousseau's ecstatic inspiration finds in one's admission of much inability a belief in none but the Devil, even if he describes you or me as "the trumpet of impiety, that low soul." The quadruped freedom in the forest incapacitates you of both piety and impiety and provides no scope at all for the peregrination of the soul, high or low.

Man's programme of freedom therefore lies not in annihilation or sheer destruction but in the remoulding of his instrumental creations to serve the purpose of his harmonious unfoldment. The shaping of environment into some purposive form implies knowledge about the environment and instruments to apply that knowledge. Nature cannot be brought under control through religion or magic. Our only dependable means are the sciences and technology. Fallow and exhausted lands can be made to yield good harvest through application of proper fertilisers, adequate ploughing, irrigation and rotation of crops. No ritual of sacrifice to Osiris or Indra can change its face. Hidden mineral resources are to be

mined out; no mystic incantation will persuade nature to deliver its buried wealth. Mosquitoes and other harmful insects may be eliminated with strong D. D. T. spray, good sewerage etc.; they are immune to one's saintly communion with the Holy Ghost. Consequently man's first and foremost instrument of freedom is science and technique.

But what about freedom from the inertia of man's own creations? Ever since the early days of the Greek democracies, thoughtful and sensitive individuals may be found expostulating against the inhibitive influence of man's moral ideas, legal conventions and social institutions. Some have gone to the extent of suggesting a march back to the pre-civilised stage which however can logically mean a return to the pre-human. Yet unless a human individual can live harmoniously and freely all by his own effort, co-operative human endeavour is an unavoidable necessity. The pretentiousness of pseudo-individualism can be immediately exposed if it is placed in the contex of the elementary requirements of security and survival. There must be enough food for man, adequate shelter against wind

and rain and burning sun; there must be protection against the *bacilli* and the wild and poisonous animals; there must be dams against flood and irrigation arrangements against draught; and even to satisfy these simple needs of an ever increasing number of human beings, a highly developed standard of knowledge, a complex system of mechanical applications and the consequent division of work and responsibilities are necessary. Add to this the many other small and great happiness of life, happiness symbolised, for example, in the national gallaries and philharmonic orchestras, in the sports field and the theatre, in the library and the radio, in the cool comfort of hill stations in summer and of sea-shore pleasure trips in winter, travelling long distances in little time and with less labour, just to mention haphazardly a few of the sources of pleasure that can be made available to every man today, and any unprejudiced man of common sense will immediately realise that such amenities and comforts require co-operation between man and man on an extensive and fairly complicated scale.

And yet it is true that such co-operation

may bring into being institutions, relationships and codes which are certainly restrictive. A rational person will understand that what is needed is not to destroy the institutions altogether and thus destroy the ground of science and co-operative effort and make human welfare impossible. It is only a challenge to man's rationality to devise such institutions and laws as are most suited to personal growth and unrestricted expression. That this is not merely a matter of desire but is also possible, though as an approximation only, can be seen from any study of the history of the development of institutions and laws. A study of the history of the British Parliament, for example, will show how inspite of resistance and various hedgings, the idea of civil and political liberties, of equality before law, of state responsibility in individual growth, of individual's participation in political life—in short of democracy, gradually was elaborated, incorporated and extended ; how restrictions on opinion, expression, movement and organisation were gradually removed ; how through persistent human effort (and no intervention of God or Nature) ins-

titutions and laws became more and more liberal and less and less sacrosanct and arbitrary. They were stiffly combated, at every stage many forms of rigidity persisted, there were and are still many basic inadequacies. And yet who will doubt that the political and legal framework of British society and its moral and social atmosphere today are far more conducive to human development and welfare, far less inhibitive to human expression, than in the days when the majority were tied to the soil, treated as congenital inferiors to their oppressors, when difference of opinion could be settled only by terror and inquisition, when no one would even dream of thinking in terms of universal education, uniform law for all, universal suffrage, social insurance or, universal utility service by the state? The Charter of the Rights of Man in the famous American Declaration, or the incorporation of egalitarian principles (though limited by the idea of private property) in the French constitution of 1792, or the unparalleled progressive constitution of the Weimar Republic, could never be visualised as compatible with social organisation even by the most boldly

imaginative men a few decades before they were actually adopted. To-day progressive people all over the world are thinking in terms of concrete and practicable ways by which power may be evenly distributed among all the people, and the ever-increasing surplus of production may be equitably enjoyed by all individuals through universal utility services. Institutional history did not stop with the laws of Lycurgus or the codes of Manu or Moses. Laws, institutions, conventions, morals have all undergone revolutionary changes wherever man has realised his power as the creator of the same and has endeavoured to improve his own creations to meet his needs more satisfactorily.

But before one can devote oneself to the construction (at first abstract and ideal) of better institutions and morals, it is necessary that he should have a certain attitude to life. The question of attitude is crucial. Without what we may describe as the humanist attitude to life it is impossible to think of reconstructing the social pattern through human endeavour to satisfy human needs. The humanist attitude is to be sharply differen-

tiated from what may be generally described as the religious attitude to life. The humanist attitude consists in recognising man's potential ability to reshape his circumstances; in considering the happy and harmonious development of the individual as the final aim of human activity; in recognising science and reason as the most dependable means for the attainment of that aim and for the realisation of his creative potentialities; in considering institutions, morals, laws and all social constructions as no more than instruments to ensure maximum freedom and welfare to larger and larger number of individuals. It is only on the basis of such an attitude that any discussion about the ways and means to improve man's condition through purposive human effort can become at all fruitful.

Before we pass on to a consideration of the institutional principles which are necessary for individual welfare and growth without involving discord and inhibition, it may be helpful if we very briefly indicate the nature of the humanist interpretation of social history. Man, it has been said, is the root of mankind. This would mean that society,

culture, science, religion, morals, economy, etc. are all results of human endeavour—that they have not been given either as a gift or as an imposition by any transcendental or super-human force. One of the earliest statement of this point of view may be found in the little known Hippocratic *Tract on Medicine,* composed probably by some Ionian Greek towards the middle of the fifth century B.C. Similar ideas can be traced in Protagorean fragments; but the ablest and most consistent of the early humanist philosophers was certainly Epicurus who endeavoured to construct an evolutionary materialist interpretation of social history and ethics and was much maligned for it. The Roman Stoics enriched humanist historicism with their studies in jurisprudence. The enquiry was interrupted during the middle ages. Vico, the seventeenth century Italian author of *New Science,* indicated an able re-formulation of this approach which was later on elaborated by Helvetius, Condorcet, Michelet and others.

Formulated in this way, however humanist historicism is liable to appear as rather naive, romantic and grossly anthropocentric. In

fact social change moves along an extremely complicated pattern. Society is not only composed of men but also of physical environment or geography. The environment has its own laws of interaction and sequence which are studied in the general science of Physics and in such particularised sciences as Geology, Geography etc. It has its influences upon the individual human beings and these influences have certain general uniformities of their own. Besides, society while it is composed of individuals is also an impersonal pattern, not independent of its individual constituents but constituted of inter-personal relations. The individuals living in society develop various complicated relations among themselves which, while they cannot exist apart from individuals, have nevertheless a certain reality of their own and consequently certain specific laws of causal sequence. The importance of the interpersonal framework of relations and of its logic was emphasised by the 19th century liberal neo-Hegelian Mactaggart in ontological and moral enquiry, by Marx and Engels in the field of sociology and revolutionary practice, and in our own

times, by pragmatists like Dewey in the fields of knowledge and conduct. Unfortunately all of them over-emphasised the inter-personal logic of this relational pattern at the expense of the active influence and importance of the individuals among whom the relation-pattern can alone subsist. The inevitable consequence was that such philosophical relationalism tended towards a positivist morality and a politics of power delegation. Nevertheless, the existence of the relational pattern and of its logic cannot be doubted. Thus, for example, the need for security and provision has led to the emergence of complicated economic relations and techniques which have a certain temporal continuity and consequently a certain causal logic of their own. One of the main tasks of the various social sciences, including politics and economics, is to trace the laws of sequence obtaining in these inter-personal institutions which though human creations are not creations of any particular individual. Marx's study in capitalism was an effort to trace the laws of change in economic relationships in particular and in

social relationship in general. In our time the various enquiries in the social sciences, while indicating the inadequacies in the hypothesis of institutional dialectics, are still to find some more adequate interpretation of sequence to build up a science of the general laws of social development.

However that may be, it is clear that besides the laws of the physical environment there are also the laws of institutional relationship and change. Along with these there are also the uniformities in man's knowledge, requirements and conduct. Social history is a complex equation of all these various trends of sequence interacting in an integral process. The integral and complex nature of the process is missed by the purely romantic interpreters of history. On the other hand, the socalled materialist or naturalist interpreters usually resolve this process into environmental determinism or institutional sequence. In the uncompromisingly romantic version though man is placed in the centre of the universe, that placing is as insecure as the geo-centrism of Ptolemy. The refusal to recognise the complex nature of social evolution and of the re-

lative character of man's freedom leads finally to the repudiation of man's concrete achievement in partially reshaping his environment and in determining the logic of institutional creations. Such unmitigated romanticism, when confronted with the recalcitrant and painful realities of physical and social environments, beats a total retreat in surrealist phantasy or existentialist anguish. The purely environmental or institutional interpretations on the other hand can only lead to the transformation of human individuals into cogs in the wheel of the universal machine and ultimately introduce dictatorial politics, positivist morality and a concealed religious attitude to life.

The humanist interpretation on the one hand takes into account all these diverse factors of history and considers social evolution as an integral process; on the other, it points out that this integral logic indicates a probability of the human influence ultimately deciding the whole pattern of social development.* It thus reconciles the positive ele-

* An early and very able formulation of humanist historicism may be found in Condorcet's *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'Esprit Humain.*

ment of both the romantic and the materialist interpretations of history. . The secret of man's control over environment is to be found in human brain. *The brain,* it says, *is a means of production and produces the most revolutionary commodity* which is idea or knowledge. Because man can understand the logic of sequence, he can partially employ or direct that logic to help in his harmonious unfoldment. His knowledge therefore is the ground for his freedom. Idea, knowledge, understanding, therefore, are the essential liberating influences in human history. In so far as human history is a movement towards the freedom of man from the inhibitive influences of environment (physical as well as institutional), it involves a gradual orientation of the integral process of social change by the logic of human idea, by the consciousness of man's own requirements and response. The greater the role of individual in the determination of social life, the wider are the ranges of human freedom, the lesser the impediments to harmonious development and growth. And the participation of individual as individual in social life is

possible only in so far as he is conscious of that life, in so far as he is rational, a man of ideas and understanding. It is in this sense that idealist philosophers of history like Vico, Michelet or Croce are right when they say that history so far as it is human is the history of ideas. In the integral process of social evolution while the actual total of freedom enjoyed by human beings is never constant and is not always necessarily found to grow more and more with time, it is true that the volume of freedom (to use it somewhat metaphorically) tends to vary in direct proportion to the ratio of conscious individual influence to physical and institutional influence in social life.

From the above interpretation it is not difficult to find out the usual method by which a humanist movement proposes to expand the ranges of individual freedom at any given time in history. This method is perennial and can be found in operation in all phases of social history, whenever man has achieved more freedom for himself through his own efforts. In the contemporary context, when the enormous develop-

ment of science and technology has opened the possibility of immense expansion in the range of freedom, and yet when the threat of universal human enslavement to what Prof. Toynbee describes as 'institutional intractability' has become more menacing than ever, a clear formulation of the method for the realisation of the programme of freedom is essential if that programme is not to remain as only a beautiful Utopia.

As must be apparent from what has been said above, human freedom very largely, if not entirely, depends on human knowledge and the construction of instruments and institutions on the basis of that knowledge to help man to control his environment and thereby to facilitate his unfolding through the elimination of all alien restrictions. Precise and approximately correct understanding therefore must precede, logically if not always chronologically, man's endeavour to be free. A revolution must be preceded by the formulation of the perspective which that revolution is expected to introduce. The first step therefore in any fruitful freedom movement is the clear formulation of a system

of ideas offering an approximate understanding of the present, and a general but clear outline of the ideas indicating the probables of the future.

The struggle for freedom therefore begins with the formulation of a revolutionary programme ; but that formulation, so long as it is limited to a small group of people, is not enough to bring about any effective movement for freedom on a social scale. Consequently the philosophy of revolution must spread among the common people, must go to orient their whole outlook of life, must permeate the whole pattern of interpersonal relationship. This process of permeation of the social *ethos* by the ideas of a revolutionary philosophy is what is described as a social Renaissance or a philosophical revolution. Renaissance therefore is an essential condition for any radical social readjustment to bring more freedom in the lives of individuals. Individuals by adjusting themselves to develop an outlook of freedom can thereby come to a position where they can contribute to shape their environmental settings to meet their needs. A person with a free attitude to life

can alone be an active agent in making life really free for himself and others.

What is the essence of this philosophical revolution from the point of view of individual adjustment. First, the individual ceases to depend upon any extra-human agency to bring about his unfoldment as man. He recognises for himself that man alone is the maker of his destiny and fully assumes his personal responsibility in the historic work of achieving human fulfilment. Further, he allows no other authority to influence or determine his judgment and belief except that of experience and reason. On the one hand, he constantly endeavours to achieve coherence and harmony in his understanding as well as in his conduct. On the other, he applies this test of coherence to the ideas and behaviour of other people he comes across in life. At the same time while endeavouring to achieve internal consistency, he bewares of dogmatism and closed systems. He tries to be alive to new ranges of experience and is fully prepared to readjust his present understanding and behaviour. His new experience makes it logically neces-

sary. Further, he recognises that his survival, his happiness, the fulfilment of his various needs and, through all these, the gradual unfolding of his various potentialities is the essential ground of morality. At the same time his experience and reason make him realise that his survival, security and harmonious development depend on providing for similar opportunities to other individuals. The internal harmony of the human organism is very largely dependent upon the approximation of harmony in social life. A moral individual will find it impossible to maintain his equilibrium in an immoral society, and consequently, if he is to maintain the ground of his happiness, he must necessarily take a hand in removing the ground of discord and inhibition in social life and can find no convenient escape in the Axel's Castle of aloofness. "As for living, our servants will do that," said the irresponsible hero of that novel of decadence. Living by proxy, however, does not, as the experience of artists down the ages teaches us, conduce to aesthetic self-sufficiency. In fact a sensitive man who refuses to admit

his social responsibility is invariably haunted by a sense of original sin.

It seems therefore that a philosophical revolution involves a radical readjustment in the outlook and attitude of a decisively large section of the common people. The revolutionary outlook consists in romantic confidence in man's creative ability, democratic aliveness to personal responsibility, scientific mentality of coherent thinking, critical approach and openness to experience, moral acceptance of personal happiness and growth as the criterion of good and of consistency between knowledge and conduct as essential to that growth, and finally a rational recognition of the need of a free moral society to secure a happy moral life for the individual himself.

This then is the second phase in a humanist movement for freedom, the first being an approximately correct formulation of a scientific philosophy in the contemporary context. The third and socially the most obvious phase in the movement for freedom is the crystallisation of the philosophical revolution in institutional forms. As the

common sense proverb goes, the test of the pudding is in the eating. Similarly the test of an idea is in its practice. We have already seen how morals, laws and institutions which are man's own creations in the pursuit of freedom can become his fetters, and yet we also noted that such instruments are indispensable for the free growth of man in the face of nature's utter indifference. Consequently it is essential, if the movement for freedom is to bear any fruit, that the humanist attitude leads to the growth of new institutions and relationships and morals and yet does not forge new chains on man's creativeness.

"Our favourite nightmare in the twentieth century," writes Collingwood, "is about our powerlessness in the giant grip of economic and social and political structures, the nightmare which Prof. Alfred Toynbee calls the "intractableness of institutions" (*New Leviathan,* page 88). The word favourite is not apt because the nightmare is only too real for us. In fact it is this nightmare which made Marx think in terms of institutional dialectics, thereby trying to find some historical

support behind the socialist struggle for freedom. But this trick of imagining some super-human providence (give it the name of God or dialectic) to encourage man to work for his salvation is as old as civilisation and is the perennial source of appeal of all religions. It is essentially, though for the majority unconsciously, pragmatic in nature, as was explained by the eighteenth century French Philosophers. The instrumental value of a cognisably false construction is necessarily small; besides, it is palpably insecure as the foundation of conduct. The Marxian-Hegellian theory assumes that human institutions have an irrevocable logic and consequently all that the human individual can do is to recognise this determinism of social movement and to voluntarily submit to it as the only alternative to death. To use the language of Spinoza, the individual is only an illusory species of the eternal social substance, and all its travails and feelings of frustration can be best dispelled if it recognise its personal irrelevancy as an illusory limitation on that absolute substance. This attitude can be employed to lend countenance to both the

rightist and the leftist forms of totalitarianism. In the case of the rightists (whose classical philosopher is Hegel) the intractability of social logic is not only final but necessarily involves complete negation of individuality through the individual's voluntary identification of himself with the "general" will of history. In the case of the leftists, however, while the dialectical logic of institutions is absolute, it is optimistically imagined (as in all humane religions) to move towards the ultimate liberation of man, thus investing the effort of the revolutionaries with the super-human sanction and support of dialectical providence.*

The humanist approach to the logic of institutions however is quite different from these totalitarian deterministic interpretations. Institutions are man-made, and though they have a certain super-personal relational exist-

* The confused and self-contradictory nature of "leftist" social philosophy can be seen, even before Marx, in Rousseau's writings. In *Social Contract,* democracy is expressly based not on individual freedom and rational co-operation but on collective will and total surrender of individuality. Fundamentally, Rousseau is no less a totalitarian than Hegel.

ence and consequently a certain dynamic of that relational pattern, this dynamism is not sovereign and is amenable to the influence of individual will, thought and action. Institutions, therefore, while having a tendency to intractability, are potentially open to constant reshaping through co-operative individual effort. The investment of a general sovereign will to society as distinguished from the wills of all the individuals, as done by Rousseau and as endorsed and elaborated by Hegel, is a case of false predication. There is of course a tendency or rather an inertia ; but to invest that structural inertia with the personal qualities of will and intelligence is both theoretically and empirically unfounded. Besides, this inertia itself, while having its own law like every other form of inertia, can be directed under pressure of co-operative decision of individual human beings. Therefore, to think of social intractability and individual powerlessness as absolute is incorrect and is a repudiation of the indubitable evidence of human creativeness and individual responsibility in social history.

Humanism on the other hand thinks that

man's ability to use his environment to help in his development comes from two sources: man's growing knowledge and the widening possibilities of co-operation between man and man in creative work on the basis of that ever-accumulating store of knowledge. If man can establish greater and greater control over the physical environment, there is no reason why he should always be baffled by the institutional environment which is very largely his own creation. Knowledge and rational co-operation are the sources of man's power over nature ; the same can also be the means to make institutions tractable to human needs. Once again therefore we come back to our earlier statement that a social renaissance is the best ground for any institutional reconstruction for freedom. Institutions can crystallise in the process of a philosophical revolution and may become, once formed, centres for further and more intensive dissemination of the new outlook. Institutions which result from a fatalistic submission of man to the socalled inexorable logic of earlier institutions can contribute but little to human freedom. A society which

crystallises out of an intense process of social renaissance can alone achieve within itself the two essential principles of human creativeness : harmony and coherence in interpersonal relationship and openness to new and better forms of harmonious adjustments by incorporating new influences and needs. The institutions of a free society are analogous to scientific theories ; they are coherent and yet approximate and always open to more comprehensive probables of co-ordination.

What then, concretely speaking, the method of a humanist movement for freedom amounts to ? And how does it propose to solve the common dilemma that a revolution in social outlook is not possible without an institutional revolution and an institutional revolution is only negative and convulsive unless it is originally oriented by a philosophical revolution on a social scale ? The answer to the first is the method of social renaissance. The answer to the second is the association of humanist revolutionaries. Both of them require some clarification.

Usually in past history the Renaissance movement had taken place in two successive

waves. The first was the phase in which new revolutionary ideas were formulated and broadcast in the form of a cultural or even religious movement among the people at large. This is the phase which is usually described by the term Renaissance. The second phase of the movement consisted in the crystallisation of the new social attitude into new institutions, relationships and social equilibrium. The latter phase is generally described as a social revolution. But the social revolution is nothing more than the culmination of the process initiated by the philosophical revolution. In fact philosophical and institutional revolutions constitute together the movement of social renaissance. The first is barren without the second and the second is blind without the first. A philosophical revolution, unless it is organically related to the day to day endeavours of the common people for better social readjustment, is but academical and soon gets attenuated. On the other hand, the struggle for institutional changes and social readjustment can have no moral or purposive significance if it is allowed to remain as a mere instinctive

convulsion of animal pain and anger and is not properly guided and oriented by a coherent perspective of better institutions, relations and morals.

In earlier periods of history the span of time between the two phases of social renaissance was often long, due largely to the difficulties of dissemination of ideas and absence of adequate technological knowledge to achieve quick, radical and extensive changes in institutional life. In earlier periods the men of renaissance had no modern press, radio or other means of broadcasting to spread their ideas quickly among the people. Further on, there being no general public properly speaking anxious to extend their help and sympathies to such men, these philosophers were quite often forced to fall back upon the patronage of the rich and ruling sections. This difficulty is largely obviated in modern times because the modern humanists have various comparatively more effective means to reach large number of common people, and because industrial revolution has brought into existence a poor but educated intelligent middle class who have replaced

the rich and aristocratic patrons of old in extending their small but effective financial and moral support to the revolutionary thinkers of today. The rapid and extensive institutional changes brought about during a whole century of technological revolution have made the perspective of a radical social reconstruction comparatively easier than of old. In consequence in the modern age the movement of social liberation may not proceed along any mechanical division of revolution into two phases. Philosophical and institutional revolutions today can become simultaneous. On the one hand, the crisis in modern institutions, as evidenced by two cataclysmic world wars, international hostility and conflicts, growing unemployment, trade crises, decay of family and other institutional relationships, extensive prevalence of highly complicated pathological behaviour etc., demands rapid but thorough world wide institutional readjustment. The expression of this need has been the series of revolutions and mass-uprisings which have shaken the five decades of twentieth century more violently than any other period in human

history. At the same time the uncertainty and confusion in the prevailing philosophical and social thought as well as the spirit of enquiry underlying all that is positive in them, convey the need of a philosophical revolution and also a growing consciousness of that need among more and more thinking people in our age. Today therefore the two phases of institutional and ideological revolutions may take place together, the pressure of the former movement providing general ground of acceptance and rapid expansion of the latter, the coherence and non-dogmatic purposefulness of the latter shaping the course and form of the former.

Thus, for example, one most vital institutional form of Renaissance movement is the building up of a network of organised democratic political units connected pyramidally to achieve co-extensiveness and general identification with the society as a whole. Yet such democratic units cannot be securely organised except through the education of the individuals in rational thinking and behaviour. On the one hand, the suffering people instinctively desire a violent subversion

of the present forms of institutions ; on the other, they feel quite helpless in the face of organised institutions not knowing what better institutions may effectively replace them. This feeling of helplessness comes from absence of adequate understanding and knowledge and of rational and voluntary co-operation. It consequently results in the negative feelings of pain, terror and angry destructiveness. But destruction by itself can mean no institutional improvement. Besides, mere instinctive convulsion can rarely be successful in the face of organised institutional bodies. Therefore, while the accumulation of the momentum of instinctive convulsiveness may after a period result in a social explosion, it may develop in the process only negative feelings and, if not integrated and oriented by a conscious visualisation of better institutions, may lead to anarchy and social chaos which is the best breeding ground of dictatorship and goose-step.

It is therefore apparent that any effective institutional revolution today must be supplemented and synchronised by an extensive education of the people in rational,

moral thinking. *This simultaneous and constant process of rational moral education and democratic construction of social life is visualised in the conception of Peoples' Committees.* On the one hand the Peoples' Committees are voluntary and purposive institutional constructions made at the moment within the framework of the present social structure as crystallisations of a sustained process of rational moral education of the local people; but at the same time they derive their momentum from the instinctive convulsion of the oppressed population against the existing order. Itself a result of a process of social struggle and revolutionary education, the committees once formed become the centres for further education as well as co-operative endeavour for constructing better and better institutional forms to secure individual freedom and happiness in social life. When a network of such Peoples' Committees have been formed over an extensive geographical area, they through co-ordination form a free society which, however, always remains a school for education of the people in free and co-operative living.

The process therefore may be generally described in the following way. At any moment there is a given environment, a certain system of institutions, laws and morals and a number of human individuals. The individuals find themselves restricted by the environment and the institutions. This feeling of restriction grows as the institutions gradually develop rigidity and intractability and refuse to be open to the pressure of human needs. In consequence, the instinctive strivings for freedom become more and more intense finding expression in various convulsive movements. Under the pressure of these convulsions institutions sometimes undergo necessary adjustments and changes, but more often than not such adjustments are inadequate to the volume of the pressure. Gradually the possibilities of adjustment within the existing institutional framework may be exhausted and the objective setting for a social mutation mature. This does not necessarily mean the actual occurrence of the social mutation; less still does it signify the possibility of any better reconstruction of the society. Simultaneously with these instinctive

convulsions, however, individuals or groups of individuals may try to understand the nature of the institutional limitations and of human strivings, and assess the various possibilities of their creative adjustment. These efforts take the form of some revolutionary philosophy which then the philosophers endeavour through individual or co-operative effort to spread among the common people. The absorption by a significantly large number of people of the constructive philosophy of revolution can alone give to the instinctive strivings a creative institutional form. As these strivings and the ideas are co-related and new institutions begin to develop within the framework of the present pattern, the real phase of the social revolution begins. The emergence of these new institutional units is not the end but only a land mark in the process of social liberation. These institutions themselves become instruments through which the work of co-ordination of knowledge and human strivings is carried on. What emerged in consequence of the philosophical revolution, itself becomes a means for further and more intensive continuation of that revo-

lutionary process. In this sense even the radical democratic state is also a school for the education of the citizens of the state and freedom is an approximation even when it is a fulfilment.

How then does the philosophical revolution begin and how is it co-ordinated to the process of institutional revolution? In other words what is the human agency of the social renaissance process The answer may be to combine those two distinct historical functions of renaissance and revolution, enlightenment and institutional change, which, as we have already noticed, were usually spread over different periods of time in the past, but which today may take place together and consequently may be initiated by the same individuals or rather the same association of individuals who are at one and the same time humanists and social revolutionaries, philosophers and organisers of social revolution.

This outline of the process of social revolution implies a definite theory of progress in human history. History in the pre-organic stage was obviously a law governed sequence without any moral significance. The term

revolution applied to that period indicates the intensity and dimensions of a violent change ; it has, however, no definite direction or purpose. With the appearance of organic forms, life, survival, preservation of form and various feelings associated with that effort came to give to sequence a purpose. Evolution then came to describe this significant modification in the process of change and sequence. In human history that central purpose or direction is obvious ; it is the biological urge for survival transmuted in the new setting of human form into the desire for freedom, expression, creativity. That purpose then is the measure and content of progress in human history. When therefore we say that *the purpose of all rational human endeavour, individual as well as collective, is attainment of freedom in an ever increasing measure,* we merely state this basic distinction of human history, which is not only a record of causal sequence but has also a definite purposive direction. That purpose is the *unfolding of the potentialities of individuals, as human beings.* It is, of course, *a continuation of the biological struggle for existence,* but it is con-

tinuation on *a higher level of intelligence and emotion.* This therefore gives us a criterion to ascertain the value of every event in human history. If it contributes to individual unfoldment, it is good and progressive ; if it retards that process, it is bad and reactionary.

Once this criterion of historical progress is recognised, we may realise that dogma, intolerance, blind faith, monopoly, obscurantism are all retrogressive influences in human life. One of the most harmful forms that such retrogressive tendencies may take, as they very often do, is to develop in man fanatic loyalty to some absolute or collectivist conception like God, Nation, Community or Class which obliterates individual distinctions and ultimately demands sacrifice of individual welfare and growth in the name of the glory of the absolute. Human progress depends on the maximum unfolding of potentialities of the greatest number of individuals, each growing and setting his creative stamp on life in his distinct way.

Progress being a process of unfoldment of individual personality, it is necessary to enquire what makes this unfoldment possible.

The first obvious factor is the desire to survive developing into the desire to grow and create. This then is the human will to freedom. Without that will, no development is possible. This will is no extraneous factor deriving its strength from any transcendental source ; it is only an expression of the consciousness of needs in the biological organism. It is a biological property and itself an element in the process of universal law governedness. Yet without this factor, law governedness would be only a causal relation and never a creative function. The will to survive transforms physical reality into new forms of life. That will, transformed on the human level into the urge for freedom, introduces the element of cultural creativity to history. This will and its creative expression are not antithetical to causal determinism ; indeed, causally determined, human will gives to causality that orientation of choice.

What makes that orientation possible ? The answer lies in man's other inherent distinction—his unending search for truth. Approximation to truth alone makes human will creatively effective. This basic law of

progress is therefore indicated when we say that the search for truth is a corollary of the quest for freedom. *Increasing knowledge of nature enables man to be progressively free from the tyranny of natural phenomena and physical and social environments. Truth is the content of knowledge.*

The above contention of humanist historicism demands some further elaboration. Man can unfold himself by bringing about transformations in the material universe—transformations stamped with his own impress, contributing towards his inner harmony, releasing his stored energy, giving him satisfaction and happiness. The desire for such transformation comes from a conviction, often only half-articulate, that the transformation is a possibility. That conviction is not derived from any mystic transcendental source—is not in the nature of any "categorical imperative." It comes from actual experience in the course of man's contact with the universe. If the ground of that conviction is practice and experience, then the ground of that possibility is the human organism itself. Man not only responds to stimuli; his very physiology makes

it possible for him to discriminate between various stimuli, to trace their sources, to find analogies in experience, to generalise from particulars, to guess uniformities in occurrence and, on the basis of such guess work, to try to influence the sources of stimulation in such a way as to eliminate or obviate the restrictive and painful ones and to increase or repeat those that give more happiness or sense of harmony. This ability of man is due to his anatomy and nervous cerebral system—in particular, due to his highly developed brain. The brain is thus both the source of *creative* will as well as its sanction and chief means to self-satisfaction.

This crucial role of the cerebral system in human history is very often forgotten and some specific achievement of human mind or other is deified to replace that perennial and inexhaustible source of all creativity. Sometimes it is the technic, sometimes, more specifically, it is the achievement of man in the field of production method ; sometimes institutions are glorified as the source of human progress, sometimes art, science, laws and morals. But essentially these are all expres-

sions of man's inherent creativity which again is physiologically derived from his body and, in particular, from his brain. It is through brain that man becomes conscious of his law-governed character; this it is again which transforms his biological urge for survival into a perpetual endeavour at self-unfoldment, which is creative human will, and this it is finally which puts any content and meaning to that endeavour, which makes approximate satisfaction of the urge for freedom a reality. It is in this way that causality, rationality and creative will can be coherently co-ordinated without the one contradicting the other.

Seen from this point of view, the basic contention of a materialist ethics does not appear either esoteric or irrelevant. That contention is stated in the following terms. *Rising out of the background of the law governed physical nature, the human being is essentially rational. Reason being a biological property is not the antithesis of will. Intelligence and emotion can be reduced to a common biological denominator* (which is the evolution of the human cerebral process). *Historical determinism, therefore, does not exclude freedom of*

the will. As a matter of fact, human will is the most determining factor. Otherwise, there would be no room for revolutions (possibly, the better term would be creative activity) *in a rationally determined process of history.....History is a determined process; but there are more than one causative factors. Human will is one of them....Morality* (which is the expression of human will) *is an appeal to conscience and conscience is the instinctive awareness of and reaction to environments. It is a mechanistic biological function on the level of consciousness. Therefore, it is rational.*

Human brain, thus, in the process of its effective functioning, is the common ground of reason and morality, of law governedness and creation (and by creation we do not certainly mean here biological reproduction), of knowledge and will. It is through the functioning of the brain that the urge for survival is impregnated with the search for truth and is transformed into the quest for freedom.

Thus when the painter takes the canvas and brush and pigments (which themselves are achievements of a long process of creative

work by other individuals), he transforms his materials into a new form by investing in them a new arrangement derived from his discriminative colour perception, his sense of perspective, his ideal reconstruction of a complex body of personal experience, etc. His very desire for pictorial expression derives from his discriminative power, his ability to organise sensations, his knowledge of the laws of optic effect and finally and most important of all, his capacity to transmute his stimuli and the sources of stimulation into a harmonious form. The realisation of his desire depends also on his knowledge of forms and the elements of form and his ability to make use of that knowledge. His brain gives him both the impetus as also the form, the end as well as the method of implementing that end. It gives him his creative urge as also the specific contents of his creative urge. The same applies to every type of man's creative activity.

The supreme expression of cerebral activity is the idea and an idea, in so far as it is self-consistent and corresponds to the reality of which it is an idea, is truth. The role of the

cerebral system being crucial in human history, the nature of that role can be seen possibly best in the working of ideas in human life. The most abiding influence of ideas is manifest in their aspect as truth.

It is reported in the New Testament that Pontius Pilate had asked of Jesus what is truth and did not wait for a reply. In this, Pilate is not certainly an exception in human history. More serious minded people have raised the question and left it in meshes of sophistry. We do not propose here to enter into an enquiry into the complicated matrix of that problem. Instead we should more profitably discuss the role of truth in human life starting on a simple and commonsense definition of what is truth.

Truth, we may simply say, is the content of human knowledge. Having no evidence of divine wisdom we must admit that truth is an empirical concept and hence is subject to the limitations of empirical knowledge. Empirical knowledge, however, does not mean sensationist empiricism. Knowledge is co-ordination of human experience by tracing in it uniformities and distinctions. The tracing

of such uniformities is possible because they exist in the physical universe. They exist not because of human consciousness; but their existence becomes object of knowledge only when man comes in contact with the physical universe including himself. At no time has man comprehended all possible elements of the universe, its entire pattern with all its details, shades and movements. Hence knowledge is an approximation. Truth which is the expression of such co-ordination of elements of human knowledge is therefore also approximate.

Nevertheless, knowledge being knowledge of reality (which is the universe as a whole including human consciousness), the content of knowledge, even though approximate and orientated by the peculiarities of the individual knowers, has objectivity and universality. The subjectivity of human knowledge is no denial of the objective nature of its contents. The fallacy of the purely subjectivist-relativist epistemology lies in not recognising that universal continuum which makes the point-events of human perception at all possible. Truth therefore, in spite of its empirical

approximateness and personal tone, has a public general reference. Without this reference, human progress, co-operation, society, technic, art and all other expressions of human creativity would be impossible.

Because, unless knowledge has an objective super-individual reference, it is not possible to organise the elements of human experience either into the pattern of individual integrity or into the basis of social co-operation ; and hence consistent and purposive action becomes impossible. Unless there is an objectively causal connection between A & B, the individual will never know how to reach B (or B slightly modified by the flow of time and consciousness) and then there can be no co-ordination between his experience and his activity, there can be no bond of purpose between events in individual life. The individual then becomes amoral, a flux of sensations or point-events, without integrity or continuity : that is then the end of all creative activity and growth. This is all the more obvious in interpersonal or social life. If every experience or event is incomparable and unrelated, then individuals completely fall apart ; there can

be nothing like laws, institutions, codes of conduct, means of co-operation between man and man—in short, it is the end of human culture. Every experience being different, no word can mean even approximately the same object, experience, or relation to two persons ; language then is abandoned. There can be no pool of individual experiences, no co-ordination, generalisation ; there can be no categories or ideas, no forms or technics. Such pseudo-empirical sophism is the end of society, culture, progress and even of personal integrity.

There have indeed been attempts to offer such interpretation of truth by clever people and to derive from it sanction of an amoral, non-human order of life. Yet the actual evidence of human history is a clear repudiation of such disintegrative theories of knowledge. The only substantive arguments here which shall have to be comprehended in an objective universalist theory of knowledge or truth are that at no time are all objects, relations and experiences covered by human knowledge, and that every individual is a distinct point of integration of human

experience.* These facts are duly comprehended when we say that truth, though universal and objective, is always approximate. Further, the scientific method incorporates ways and means by which larger and larger arcs of human experience are brought together, compared, analysed and sifted, and maximum number of individual points of view are brought to bear upon any theory to give it maximum approximation to universality and objectivity. This on the one hand constantly eliminates the influence of personal bias;

* The belief that is found to prevail in the minds of many modern intelligent people, instructed by popularisers or "guides", that Relativity and Quanta have "liquidated" the very possibility of objective truth, is, to say the least, highly fanciful. Relativity has introduced the variable factor, but has also reinforced the concept of a more adequate measure. The Quantum experiment has only shown that under the given limitations of the technique and instruments of investigation, the structure of the atom and the movement of its constituents vary slightly in every instance in the spectroscopic record and that any scientifically accepted formula about the atom is only an approximate statistical average. The possibility of the average or the measure, however, is not disputed; only their statistically approximate nature is emphasised.

and on the other, carefully guards against false and easy generalisation. Truth can become an approximation only because it has an objective universal reference; it grows from limited personal arcs of experience to the more and more comprehensive understanding of reason.

Truth thus has two aspects. In its aspect as element of human knowledge, it is necessarily subjective (though not solipsistic); it is imperfect and approximates perfection through greater and greater correspondence with the objective world. The correspondence theory of truth brings out this aspect of it. At the same time as the objective reference of knowledge, truth is reality, reality in a purely exoteric physical sense. And existence being by its very nature law-governed and self subsistent, the criterion of truth from this point of view is the inner coherence of its integrated elements. Truth is thus both self-consistent and correspondent with reality. Through observation, analysis, experiment and verification, this two-fold character of every content of human knowledge is tested. And as in the process of

that testing new elements of knowledge gather and greater precision and discrimination is achieved, man approximates truth more and more, and on the matrix of that approximation is woven the detailed fabric of human culture.

The actual evidence of history corroborates this evolutionary objective conception of truth. Man has co-ordinated his experiences by comparing them among themselves as also with the experiences of others ; has then generalised them into ideas ; has put those ideas to the test of practice ; elaborated customs, laws, moral ideals ; has amended, rejected or improved upon old ideas, ideals and institutions in the course of his pursuit of a more comprehensive understanding of reality ; and has developed logic, mathematics and the various methods of the experimental sciences to help in his pursuit of knowledge. Man's growth and development has broken the boundaries of parochial complacency ; knowledge has become universal possession to be put to test and enriched by all human beings. There has thus developed a logic of ideas—a logic which, applying the

test of internal coherence to old ideas or the inductive test of correspondence, has expressed itself in the history of human ideas and ideals. Without that objective reference of human reason, the progress of man's understanding of reality would never have been possible.

This universal and objective character of truth has had fundamental bearings on human development. Firstly, in its most obvious aspect, as forming the foundation of science, it has enabled man to control environment and thus make the laws of nature serve human needs. Further, this objectivity of truth makes it possible for two or more men to compare their experience and needs, and on the basis of that comparison to work for co-operative conduct. If truth were really solipsistic, then the only two alternatives for mankind would be complete chaos in inter-personal relations or regimentation of all individuals into one. In fact that is what has been visualised by consistent solipsists. But the objectivity of truth makes democratic living a theoretical possibility; it is also the foundation of all efforts in democratic practice.

This social-moral significance of truth is so often forgotten both by the absolutist and the relativist philosophers that we deem it proper to dilate a little on this point. The growth of an individual depends on certain basic conditions. His needs must be capable of satisfaction; his various impulses should be harmonised; his relation with other individuals must be co-operative and stable and not inhibitive, chaotic and uncertain. The first depends apparently on knowledge; the second also cannot be achieved unless the individual can discriminate between the more and the less important among his impulses, and can ascertain some stable form of adjustment among them which is, in that context, the truth of his character. The third becomes impossible if the individual can not recognise the truth about the character of other individuals, their more stable modes of response and patterns of impulses, and will not be prepared to discover some stable frame-work of relations, values and rules of conduct which harmonise the working of these diverse patterns. That stability of harmonious adjustment can be made possible on the ground

of the universality and objectivity of human knowledge.

Finally, there is also another practical aspect of the quest for truth from the point of view of personal conduct. The individual, who has developed this desire for truth, can gradually sift the stable from the unstable, the abiding from the contingent, the element of personal bias from the element of universality in his needs and strivings. Truth, it is said in the Upanishads, purifies character. For Plato and Aristotle, too, truth has a cathartic value. It may appear surprising, but it is true that consistent materialists and Epicureans also consider truth as the only secure foundation of morality. It is so for several reasons. It guides the individual in the choice of harmonious activity from the painful. By bringing out into clear relief such basic modes of adjustment and response as effect such harmony in personal and social life, it gives to mankind the perennial values of life. Truth makes a comprehensive co-ordination of individual sectors possible. Inadequate adjustment need not drive one to introversion and personal make-beliefs. Knowing that there is

a universal and stable reference, reality, individuals may compare notes, rectify incorrect ideas and beliefs, improve inadequate habits and ideals—and all this without sacrificing one's individuality. It is thus that by approximating truth, the individual purifies himself—develops within him what is universal and abiding while retaining his individuality. The Greeks therefore, wise as they were, conceived of philosophy or love of truth as the surest way to good life. This also is the fundamental principle of Buddhist ethics. If good is only a proper adjustment in personal and social life to bring about the unfoldment of individuality in co-operation with other individuals, then truth certainly is the basic corollary of goodness.

The quest for truth develops in the individual the scientific spirit—gives him training in patient enquiry, in discrimination, in systematic thinking, in toleration and open-mindedness, in fact-finding, analysis and judgement. It also develops in him the habit of truthfulness, of following in practice the conclusions of knowledge. The scientific attitude, as we have noticed earlier, is the essential pre-

condition of harmonious living. It alone can obviate conflict and discord, can remove inhibitions and widen the horizons of human freedom.

Thus truth is the meeting ground of rationality and morality. It is the expression of rational behaviour ; it is also the condition of a truely moral conduct. It develops in man the spirit of freedom, the attitude of detachment, the desire for harmonious living. It also provides mankind with some perennial forms of conduct—of course necessarily approximate, being empirically derived and not god-given ; some abiding values which constitute the ground of continuity in human culture and progress and which provide centres of integration in personal life.

And if that is so, then is it difficult to realise that progress of mankind depends primarily on such people in whom the urge for freedom and the quest for truth are highly developed ; who, in consequence, are detached and creative ; who, by virtue of this quest, are constantly approximating the goal of freedom in their personal life and social conduct ? These are the philosophers of whom

Socrates so eloquently speaks in the Platonic dialogues.* They are trained in the scientific attitude of detachment which can distinguish between the contingent impulses and the more stable values and which can therefore work for social harmony without sacrificing personal growth. Their two basic attributes are their aliveness to ideas and their effort to live by those ideas. They are people in whom man's essential rationality and morality have reached a stage of high development and consciousness. They are the harbingers of progress. The more there are such men in a society, the lesser is there the chance

* Among the philosophers of the Enlightenment, Spinoza worked out the implications of this Platonic approach to politics in the most precise and pointed manner. He recognised the central role of the will to self-preservation; and traced the possibility of harmony and good life to the operation of reason. His theory concerning the three stages of knowledge shows the obvious influence of the theological pre-occupations of his age. But his theories of happiness and virtue and of society and state, endeavouring as they do to establish relational coherence between reason and will, determinism and freedom, are indeed most valuable contributions to liberal ethics and democratic politics. See Spinoza, *Ethics,* IV; *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus,* last five chapters and *Tractatus Politicus.*

of conflict, discord, unreason and immorality, and the greater the scope and possibility of development of other individuals in that society. Such men are not the historically conditioned members of any class, community or nation. They represent man's differential attributes in their full flowering. The growth and activity of such philosophers is therefore the precondition of social progress and welfare. *An increasingly large number of men, conscious of their creative power, motivated by the indomitable will to remake the world, moved by the adventure of ideas, and fired with the idea of a free society of free men, can create the conditions under which democracy will be possible.* This then are the *detached, spiritually free individuals, who can usher in freedom for all mankind.*

What will be the function of these philosopher-pioneers of a better social life? Firstly, they shall have to pursue that enquiry after truth which is the source of all human creativity and good. That is what makes them philosophers—men in whom the essential virtue of *homo sapiens* is found in full functioning order. They shall have to formu-

late ideas—and systems of ideas. They shall have to spread those ideas among those other men, who are many to-day, in whom this essential rationality is clogged and inhibited by ballasts of past habits and superstitions, to reawaken in them their dormant inquisitiveness and revive their urge for freedom. This is the work of education for freedom ; this education will be the basic social task of these philosopher-revolutionaries. They shall have to bring about a renaissance of the creative spirit in the entire humanity. The philosophy in which they shall have to educate mankind shall *lay emphasis on the basic fact of history that man is the maker of his world—man as a thinking being, and he can be so only as an individual.* Mankind to-day can respond to ideas only when they are in a state of mass-excitement—when all their discriminating abilities are numbed and when they have become dehumanised. And the ideas to which they respond in such a state are blurred and hazy ideas, without the precision of truth. That is the greatest menace to freedom and democratic life. The philosophers of freedom shall have to restore to man his sense of

individual personality, to sharpen his critical faculties, to develop his sense of personal responsibility, to rescue his essentially rational-moral nature from disuetude and atrophy.

Simultaneously with this work of the renaissance of the human spirit, the philosopher-pioneers shall have also to guide the common man and woman of to-day in harmonious co-operative living. In modern society, while formally and legally every man has equal rights and responsibilities (we are speaking of the highest form of society achieved so far, parliamentary democracy), in reality all power and direction is delegated to few hands—to administrators, executives, capitalists, managers etc. In consequence society is administered bureaucratically and not democratically—in almost all its functions. The task of the philosophers of freedom will be to guide the common people so that they develop both the desire and ability to administer their social functions themselves. The people shall form their own democratic institutions in which power and responsibility instead of being concentrated will be more and more widely diffused—in which every adult mem-

ber of the society shall consciously and actively participate in social administration. With the urge for freedom reawakened in them and the spirit of science and enquiry prevailing in their outlook, the people should analyse in co-operation their common needs and problems, decide about the ways and means to solve them, take part in framing and executing social legislation, in the production and distribution of wealth,—in short, work together to build up the archetypal units of a free society even from within the present inadequate social framework, even from now.

The method and programme of social revolution must be based on a reassertion of the basic principle of social progress. A social renaissance can come only through determined and widespread endeavour to educate the people in the principles of freedom and rational co-operative living. The people will be organised into effective democratic bodies to build up the socio-political foundation of the post-revolutionary order. Social revolution requires, in a rapidly increasing number, men of the new renaissance, and a rapidly

expanding system of People's Committees, and an organic co-ordination of both. The programme of revolution will similarly be based on the principles of freedom, reason and social harmony. It will mean elimination of every form of monopoly and vested interest in the regulation of social life.

And this evidently is political activity. Philosophical revolution here matures into social revolution—culture into politics. And so should it be. For politics, as is obvious, is the science of social organisation ; and if the purpose of social organisation is to make the unfoldment and wellbeing of the greatest number of individuals possible, then the aim of political science shall be to find ways and means to achieve and ensure individual freedom through social co-operation. That freedom being impossible without the scientific spirit and dissemination of knowledge, education is the basic programme of political engineering. The content of humanist politics is education for individual freedom and welfare. Hence the philosophers of a cultural renaissance shall also be the guides in a truely democratic political life. So long as politics and culture

do not become integrated and philosophers come to replace demagogues, a free society can never be approximated.

Unfortunately like many other specialised human activities, politics today has come to be, in the minds of the common people, divested of its human purpose and moral content. Politics has come to mean the art of administration, and as administration so far has mostly been based on concentration of power in few hands and delegation of responsibility by the people, politics has come to be associated with scramble for concentrated power. Politics has become a means to the domination of man by man. Unless this conception of politics is abandoned and its original content rescued, the problem of human freedom will resolve into a vicious circle.

To make their endeavour for a social cultural renaissance of the people effective, the philosopher-pioneers shall naturally gain in time, intensity and range if they work together in co-operation. An early institutional expression of that co-operative effort may be a party of the men of renaissance. Even in its political program, the diffusion of a

humanist culture shall be its basic activity. Its political ideal will be organised democracy—a state really run by the people as a whole, working in enlightened co-operation. The society of freedom will be democratic from the root: hence its political philosophy is radical democracy. *The ideal of Radical Democracy will be attained through the collective efforts of spiritually free men united in a political party with the determination of creating a world of freedom. The members of the party will function as the guides, friends and philosophers of the people . . Realising that freedom is inconsistent with concentration of power, its aim will be the widest diffusion of power . . . . until the state becomes coterminous with society.*

This humanist brotherhood shall be also an archetypal institution in which experiments shall be made in building up the model unit of a democratic society. It shall be a school no less to its own members than to society as a whole. It will spread as more men are educated in the principles of freedom. It need have no other discipline except that of scientific enquiry and of conduct consistent with the

spirit of that enquiry. The process of diffusion of knowledge and of building up a co-operative social order shall work simultaneously within the party and the larger society of mankind. The members of the brotherhood will be men of scientific outlook and moral conduct, consmopolitans, whose aim will be to achieve harmony in social and personal life. Philosophers, social engineers and artists, they are the only people who may at last set the Prometheus Bound free from his self-forged chains.

III

TOWARDS A FREE SOCIETY

TOWARDS A FREE SOCIETY

In his perennial endeavour to achieve individual freedom in social life, man has ever been faced with a dilemma on which his peace and welfare has been precariously poised, a dilemma which has often divided mankind into conflicting loyalties, which has always been a challenge to man's creative ingenuity, and which sometimes has reached overwhelming dimensions to effect great disasters. Man's quest for freedom can never be fruitful unless an adequate approach to this dilemma is formulated, an approach which promises some satisfactory solution to this dilemma, and not only holds out the hope of a possible utopia of freedom but also indicates concrete and practical steps by which that utopia can be every instant approximated nearer and nearer.

That dilemma of freedom arises from the relation of individual to society. If either the human individual could unfold himself without any co-operation from other indivi-

duals; or if society were an organic entity in which individuals were mere elements; then this dilemma would not have arisen. But neither of these "ifs" is true. The individual for his very survival and security requires the help of a society of individuals. On the other hand, the investment of any organic character to society is an abstraction. There are the individuals and their various inter-relations. These relations, partly recognised as laws and institutions, partly subsisting in habits and customs, constitute the framework of a society; their existence however is conditional on the existence of the individuals. Therefore, there can be nothing like a social entity; it is only the sum total of human relationships. Society has no physical existence or integrating consciousness or personality in the sense that the human individual has them. Any such attribution to society is only a figurative transference of the qualities of the subject to the relations between various subjects.

The existence of a plurality of individuals in society, depending for their survival, security and growth on inter-individual

relationships, leads to a variety of complicated problems. The fundamental problem is of course one of adjustment. The satisfaction of the needs and impulses of one individual or a group of individuals may deprive others of the satisfaction of their needs and impulses ; no, it may even lead to the inhibition, persecution and enslaving of the deprived. There may be inequitous allocation of amenities and responsibilities; great power of control, enjoyment, wastage and even destruction may concentrate in few hands while the majority who are deprived of a substantial part of the benefits of social living are held under terror and intimidation with the use of such concentrated power. In particular, as larger number of individuals enter into social relationships, functional division of labour and responsibilities becomes necessary. In this division, some may specialise in certain types of functions which make them wield enormous influence, while others due to their place in social life are never given any opportunity to grow. Thus the primitive magicians, priests and warriors held great sway over the community, while

peasants, manual labourers and slaves were reduced almost to the state of domestic animals. Concentration of power through such inequitous and harmful division of functions brought in a process by which the common man comprising the majority in a society were reduced to cogs in the wheel of a machine. The original purpose of social organisation was forgotten; the aim of laws, conventions and institutions became the smooth and effective functioning of the machine. In consequence of this maladjustment society came to appear as the enemy of the individual; and with society, all the other various crystallisations of the process of social co-operation, the family, the church, the state, economic institutions and juristic conventions, tended to become means of exploitation of the majority of individuals in a society by its privileged minority.

The problem has been so basic in human history that ever since the beginning of organised thinking social philosophers and architects have been sorely troubled by it.*

* An early realisation of the nature of this problem and a statement of the democratic educational approach

All the various social philosophies and endeavours at reform or revolution may be generally classified from the point of view of their respective approach to this problem. We can not of course here consider all these various approaches; but the two major and most decisive trends which culminated after the European renaissance into the social philosophies of liberalism and socialism shall have to be examined as they still constitute the shaping ideological and institutional influences in the contemporary world. The origin of both these traditions can be traced back to the earliest periods of civilization ; it is however their modern forms in which we are interested in our present survey.

may be found in the fragmentary writings of some of the early Greek sophists. Protagoras of Abdera, for example, is known to have formulated in his two lost treatises, *Truth or the Throwers,* and *Republic,* a sound individualist position seeking to reconcile divergences with the aid of common sense and education. See Barker, *Greek Political Theory,* p. 60 seq.

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF LIBERALISM

The greatness of the liberal movement is proved by the decisive evidence that much of what is cherished in social history in the form of values, institutions, laws and customs are logically and empirically associated with liberal philosophy. From the glorious days of Athens to the recent resistance to totalitarianism in Europe, the sustaining framework and source of nourishment of human liberty, peace, welfare, decency and creativeness have mostly been the liberal values and institutions. Though there have been a thousand and one differences between liberal and liberal, from age to age, society to society, school to school, temperament to temperament, nevertheless certain fundamental assumptions in their social outlook and way of living have guided all these divergents towards harmony and toleration and have saved mutual criticism from the lure of intolerant conflict or destructiveness.

During the three centuries when European renaissance crystallised into a new way of social living based on a new *weltanschauung,*

these fundamental principles of liberalism assumed fairly precise and unambiguous shape, and whoever has accepted those principles and tried to live by them has been described as a liberal. The more important of the institutional expressions of this liberal social philosophy have been parliamentary polity, *laisser faire* economy, secular education and public administration, and a formally egalitarian legal and judicial system. Of course, such institutional expressions have always been inadequate and approximate. In some societies they have been so nurtured and developed as to make the fundamental principles, gradually and in a process, grow into a way of living; in others, there have been violent endeavours to incorporate the principles in institutional life, resulting in revolutionary upheavels, civil wars and even temporary chaos.

The most basic and abiding principle of liberalism is its recognition of the fact that the purpose of social organisation is individual growth and welfare, that individual freedom is the supreme value in social life, that the Efficient as well as the Final Cause (to use the

language of Aristotle) of all human progress is the uniqueness and creativity of individual human beings. Explaining the liberal attitude, Wilhelm von Humboldt, for example, wrote: "Reason cannot desire for man any other condition than that in which each individual not only enjoys the most absolute freedom of developing himself by his own energies, in his perfect individuality, but in which external nature even is left unfashioned by any human agency, but only receives the impress given to it by each individual of himself and his own free will, according to the measure of his wants and instincts, and restricted only by the limits of his powers and his rights." As a corollary it is assumed that all individuals are intrinsically of equal value and importance, that they have "essentially" equal rights in society, that by virtue of his or her being a human being, any person is entitled to equal opportunities of growth and development with another. In its moral attitude therefore liberalism is, at least theoretically, egalitarian. Society is only a means to help individuals assert their human dignity and fulfil their individual potentialities of

growth. In his *A History of Political Theory* G. H. Sabine has ably summed up the liberal social philosophy. "The individual human being, with his interests, his enterprise, his desire for happiness and advancement, above all with his reason, which seemed the condition for a successful use of all his other faculties, appeared to be the foundation upon which a stable society must be built.... Society is made for man, not man for Society; it is humanity, as Kant said, that must always be treated as an end and not a means. The individual is both logically and ethically prior. To the philosophy of the seventeenth century relations always appeared thinner than substances; man was the substance, society the relation." (Pp. 432-33).

But this moral assertion at once involves the liberal in difficulties. If every individual is of equal value, and if the aim of social life is individual freedom to the fullest degree possible, then how is one to eliminate the problem of conflicts in the process of self-expression and assertion between individual and individual? It is empirically a fact that the will of an individual often clashes against

the will of another ; that the fulfilment of the needs of an individual may sometimes lead to the privation of others from the satisfaction of their needs. How is the harmony between various wills to be achieved ? How even the possibility of any such harmony is to be theoretically postulated ?

To this crucial question of social theory, liberal philosophy has offered a two-fold answer, which, while theoretically contradicting each other, has worked out in practice into a precarious compromise. It has first of all been assumed that there are certain fundamental laws of social "mechanics" which, like the laws of inorganic phenomena, are universal, immutable and eternal ; which no individual will can transgress any more than material objects can transgress gravitation ; and further that these laws, as different from the physical laws of nature, have a purposive moral tone, are of a providential character, tending to effect in the process of their operation a super-individual equilibrium or harmony between individual wills, a kind of transcendental resolution of all conflicts between individual and individual. Secondly,

it is postulated that every human being has within him or her an innate moral capability (call it "practical reason" or conscience, according to Kant's famous distinction) which can recognise the nature of this "providential social mechanics", and which consequently makes it possible for the individual to guide his or her conduct in the light of that recognition, thereby eliminating the contingent possibilities of conflict, inhibition or maladjustment in social life. Thus liberal philosophy has sought to reconcile its individualist ethics with social compulsions by hypothesising a teleological mechanics.*

* Thus von Jhering, the German liberal jurist, wrote in his book *Law As A Means To An End*: "There is a *social* mechanics to compel the human will just as there is a *physical* mechanics to force the machine. This social mechanics is identical with the principle of leverage, by means of which society sets the will in motion for her purposes, or in short, *the principles of the levers of social motion*" (p. 73). Jhering, influenced by positivists, is uncertain about the providential direction of this lever; not so Grotius or the deist liberals, or even Adam Smith. Grotius defines natural law as "a dictate of right reason, which points out that an act, according as it is or is not in conformity with rational nature, has in it a quality of moral baseness or moral necessity" (*Prolegomena*, I, i, ii). Adam Smith, who

The practical consequence of these theoretical postulates can easily be imagined. If social relationships and movements are automatically determined by non-transgressable laws of social mechanics, then it would naturally be wise not to waste one's energy in trying ineffectively to tamper with those deterministic processes. Given the existent set of social relationships, certain relational and historical sequence is inevitable by the dynamics of social inertia. Hence society should be left to take its causally predestined course. Neither the State nor any other institutions nor individual men and women should be expected or asked to endeavour for any changes in social life. This is the fundamental prac-

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like the majority of the early liberals was inclined to find in economic phenomena the source of these laws of social mechanics, claimed that "natural economic institutions are not merely good ; they are providential" (Gide & Rist, *A History of Economic Doctrines,* p. 89). As Whitehead puts it: "the political liberal faith . . . was a compromise between the individualistic, competitive doctrine of strife and the optimistic doctrine of harmony. It was believed that the laws of the Universe were such that the strife of individuals issued in the progrssive realisation of a harmonious society" (*Adventures of Ideas,* p. 41).

tical postulate of *laissez faire* theory. As liberal economists later on put it, *laissez faire et laissez passer, le mond va de lui-même.*

The origins of this philosophy of the providential mechanics of social phenomena, as has been pointed out by many critics, can be traced to the most paradoxical union of modern science with religious postulates which characterised the rationalist movement in post-renaissance Europe. (For general information, Otto von Gierke's *Natural Law and the Theory of Society* and Guido de Ruggiero's *The Histroy of European Liberalism* may among others be profitably consulted). While the most thorough and comprehensive expression of this *weltanschauung* is possibly to be found in Leibnitz's monadology, its incipient working can be seen in almost all the philosophical writings of seventeenth and eighteenth century, in Descartes as much as in Berkeley, in Grotius as well as Voltaire, in Newton no less than Vico. Leibnitz is possibly the greatest of the liberal metaphysicians. A great mathematician in the Cartesian tradition, he nevertheless took over, almost lock stock and barrel, the theo-

logical arguments of the Thomists about an "existential providence" and ingeniously wove his theory of monads on the fabric of providential mathematics. Every monad (which was an abstract metaphysical expression for the liberal concept of individuality) is unique and self-subsistent; the Universe is an infinite plurality of monads cohering by the laws of mathematics; these laws involve a process by which the coherence of monads develops into a hierarchy of moral arrangements from the less perfect to the more perfect.* Reason consists in the understanding of these laws and tendencies; conscience is the incipient proneness of the individual monads to abide by these laws and tendencies; and morality is the method of sustaining and re-

*It is a pity that Leibnitz is more generally known by his less significant writings in which he diluted his philosophical ideas to please his not-very-enlightened patrons or public. His *Letters to Arnauld*, not published till the 19th Century, throw a new light on his philosophy; and the two volumes of his neglected essays and notes published for the first time by Louis Couturat in the early years of the present century definitely establish the scientific liberal character of his metaphysics.

inforcing this proneness so that the working of the mathematical calculus of divine will may not be obstructed in any way by contingent influences. From this to the Hegelian identification of the real with the rational, and the ethics of idealistic fatalism and the abnegation of individual wills in the absolute inertia of "Rechts-philosophie" was a logical and necessary development.

The confusion of this type of social metaphysics lay in the absence of a proper discrimination between the inorganic processes of nature and the purposive working of human life. The causal determinism of one and the moral direction of the other were united in imagination and applied to the understanding of the Universe as a whole including human society. Thus, in Newton's *Principia,* the mechanics of the gravitational process has a providential orientation; the clock maker persists even with the clock. As the other face of the same *weltanschauung*, we have Grotius (as great and influential in his own department of enquiry as Newton in the realm of physics) thinking of social processes in terms of those of nature, its laws immu-

table, predetermined and perfect like the laws of mathematics. Thus in the philosophical postulates of liberalism nature took a human meaning and human society an inorganic character. The laws of the natural order, both social and physical, wrote a typical liberal rationalist, "are irrevocable, pertaining as they do to the essence of matter and the soul of humanity. They are just the expression of the will of God" (Quoted by Gide and Rist).

In this enthusiastic and unsound confusion of nature with society, of inorganic with organic, of the atom with the individual, of science with morality (which is so very different from an evolutionary integration of the two, a perspective of the place of man in the Universe as part of it and yet as a creative agent, which we have tried to explain earlier), liberalism simultaneously made great achievements and got involved in the process of its ultimate decay. On the score of its abiding achievements may be mentioned its recognition of man's being a unit in a law governed Universe and thus its implied and sometimes explicit repudiation of any transcendental

quality in human nature ; its emphasis on the need of a scientific study of human beings and of their conduct ; its assertion (following the precedent of physics in the study of atoms) that the individual unit is the basic component of social institutions ; its stress on the objective and universal nature of human needs, values and modes of relational adjustment (which crystallised in the concepts of *l'uomo universale** and the natural rights of man and in the ideal of a cosmopolitan society of mankind); its belief that these universal modes are objective and can be grasped through rational enquiry and scientific investigation; its postulation of individual conscience as the application of reason to the problems of conduct and its consequent deduction that the strivings of individuals can be reconciled if guided by reason and based on the recognition of universal truth ; and the socialisation of these ideas into a way of life in which the freedom and happiness of individuals was to be considered as end and society and law as means, into institutions

* The term is used in Burckhardt's *The Civilization of Renaissance in Italy*, p. 84.

based on private initiative, into laws which demanded equal applicability to all, into an atmosphere of toleration and respect for divergences. Liberalism introduced the method and spirit of the natural sciences to human life, thus laying the foundation of the various anthropological and social sciences (like anthropology, psychology, economics, pedagogy, politics, jurisprudence), and creating the psychological atmosphere of a democratic social order in which freedom of opinion was a cherished value, the equal rights of citizenship were being at least theoretically accorded to every normal adult human being, toleration to dissentient voices became a normal attitude, the rule of privileged persons or groups of persons on others came to be replaced by the impersonal authority of law. In short, liberalism laid the foundations of a free rational society of equal and responsible human beings.*

* E. Cassirer's *The Philosophy of Enlightenment* is an excellent study of post-renaissance thought currents. No English translation of this book however is, to our knowledge, available. His other work, *An Essay on Man,* may profitably be consulted by readers of the present book.

And yet, despite its great achievements and abiding contributions, liberalism suffered from certain grave defects and inadequacies which ultimately brought about its ideological disintegration in the late nineteenth century and its institutional collapse after the first world war. Ironically enough, what survived that crisis were those very elements of liberalism, ideological and institutional, which were its least abiding achievements and some of which were responsible for its disastrous finale. In this the passage from renaissance liberalism to modern totalitarianisms is indeed most dialectical.

The first serious defect of liberalism derives rather paradoxically from a wrong application of one of its most sound principles—the principle of applying the method and outlook of science to the study of man and his society. In this, eighteenth and nineteenth century liberalism was handicapped by certain inadequate conceptions prevailing in its mathematico-physical sciences and by the absence of extensive and systematised knowledge about human nature as studied in its varied incidence in time and space. The Newtonian Universe

was conceived of as a pattern of atoms existing in masses and set in motion by an external agency, energy or force ; the atoms, though the ultimate units, were conceived as inert.* Applying analogically this conception to human society, the rationalist-liberal thought of the individual as atom and of society as mass endowed with inertia and moved by forces and laws beyond the control of the atomic unit.† This social perspective, as is obvious, took away from the individual his creative potentiality ; the individual, from the point of view of movement, dynamism or change, was no more than the atomic medium

* See Einstein and Infeld : *The Evolution of Physics : the growth of ideas from early concepts to Relativists and Quanta.*

† This rather naive identification of society and nature, this confused simplification of a highly complex evolutionary process can be traced back to the earliest days of social philosophy, to Pythagoras and Parmenides no less than to Heracleitus and Anaxagoras. It persists in Plato and Aristotle. The other extreme of dualism is no less age old, *e.g.,* Gorgias, Protagoras, etc. A modern and able formulation of this dualist or "critical conventionalist" position may be found in K. R. Popper's *The Open Society and Its Enemies,* 2 Vols. For a critical examination of both the views, see S. N. Ray, *Explorations.*

through which the causally determined laws of institutional masses operated. Society was believed to have certain "natural" laws ; these were universal, immutable, causally determined ; they had the perfection of a geometrical theorem. The less there was any interference in the working of these laws, the more harmonious would be the pattern of relationships among individual units. And as with the optimism of new enterprise and science the liberals tacitly believed that God has ordained natural processes to subserve human ends, the perfection of a geometrical theorem was invested with a moral perfection, thus taking away from the human individual his distinctive attribute of moral endeavour. Starting with the individual as his end, the liberal in the complete working out of his philosophy finally reduced individuality to atomic inertia ; taking reason as the ultimate means to freedom and happiness, he attenuated rationality into the recognition of the causal determinism of institutional masses. This reduction of individuality and reason into elements and "natural laws" in the name of science was also taken over by the "scientific

socialists" even after they had given the theoretical *coup de grace* to liberal institutions and values.

The fallacy of the position is quite obvious. Basing itself on the prevailing mechanical materialism of the "natural sciences", liberalism could not explain its own cherished values. The values had to be dogmatically assumed as "natural", given, absolute—of the same nature as the laws of the physical phenomena. This was done by postulating a moral character to the entire physical process. Newton and Grotius did so by implication; even Kant, "the greatest European philosopher since Plato", oscillated between pure reason and practical reason, between the phenomenal or "natural" and the moral or "human", and could not grasp the evolutionary link; and Hegel, who, like Sankaracharya in India, is the grand dialectical culmination and annihilation of the preceding materialist-liberal tradition in philosophy, elaborately worked out what was inarticulate and unco-ordinated in the *Aufklarung*, and established on the liberal pedestal a total Absolute, who contained within himself the

entire evolutionary process and transcended it, who combined both mathematical and moral perfection, causal determinism and providential teleology. In the process of this omnibus unification, the contingent human individual with his limited empirical rationality and will was utterly annihilated.

Yet this was not necessary. The Universe is surely law-governed ; but there is no evidence to think it is moral. Morality is postulated on will, feeling and consciousness. The human individual, because he can feel, can choose, and know (even though in all this he is essentially limited and never absolute) is alone capable of becoming a moral agent. Morality is a differential quality of human nature ; and it needs no sanction from any providential absolute. It is empirical, and, by the measure of " natural law ", contingent. Yet it is not inconsistent with " natural law "; indeed within that framework, it is the evolutionary appearance of a novel quality in a certain sector of the physical Universe. But the liberal did not think in these terms.*

* Except possibly a few like Helvetius who visualised a hazy perspective of the evolution of the moral quality

And there were certain disastrous practical consequences issuing from this false identification of man and nature in his philosophy.

The first of these consequences is seen in the liberal theory of the state. Of course the state is an empirical creation of human ingenuity, devised to help in the growth and development of the individuals composing it. But the liberal dissociated state from society; society was based on "the natural laws" of providence; the state was only a limiting agency to see that these laws were not infringed or obstructed in their operation. Theoretically this is of course inconsistent, because if the "natural laws of society" are immutable and absolute like, say, the law of gravitation, then they need no enforcement. But the liberals were rarely disturbed by this inconsistency; an inconsistency which derived from the fundamental contradiction between their values and their "mechanistic" *Weltanschauung*. The liberal thought of the state as a negative or restric-

in a physical process. See, for example, Helvetius' two volumes, *De l'Esprit* and *De l'Homme*.

tive agency—kind of police or censor institution to see that the contingent individuals obeyed the laws of universal reason which were not only true in an absolute sense but were also morally perfect. This is the basic assumption of *laisser faire* social philosophy. The state is a necessity because individuals are imperfect ; the non-interference of the state in social life is an index of individual rationality. The state is a contingent and negative institution ; society, moved by its "natural laws of inertia", is the ultimate human reality. Such a theory of state had two possible implications, both of which were later on worked out by people who gave to liberalism its *coup de grace*. On the one hand, it lends countenance to the communist-anarchist historiology of the withering away of the state ; it suggests that the state is a coercive institution and not essential to social life ; that the state is the expression of contingent human reason and has no roots in the eternal absolute reason of "natural law". On the other, it suggests that the sanction of state is force and power, not the reason or moral sense of man, and thus prepares the

ground for the totalitarian power-states. Empirically state being a necessity, the totalitarians logically claim that this necessity can be best served if the state is all-powerful—if the police state becomes a military state ; and on the premises of liberal politics, the only answer, which is obviously irrelevant and useless answer, is to do without any form of state. By advocating a theory of state in which the state was not seen as the evolving creation of co-operative endeavour of individuals to run social life on the principle of free, peaceful and happy living, but was described as a coercive and yet necessary agency, liberalism sapped the foundations of its own democratic political institutions and prepared inadvertently for chaos and totalitarian goosestep. The logical culmination of the liberal theory of state was first anarchism and then totalitarianism. These divergent developments are already indicated in the two apparently contradictory forms that liberalism assumed quite early in its history ; the typical example of the first is Godwin, of the second is the line of thought from Rousseau to Hegel.

The second weakspot of liberal philosophy was its concept of "economic man" as forming the nucleus of the truly "rational" social pattern. Liberalism, we have already noted, wanted to posit human progress on certain "natural laws" of society. In their endeavour to establish such laws, the liberal of the 18th/19th centuries was deeply impressed by the regularity in the development and expansion of the new economy. In the quickly evolving system of capitalist civilization, trade, industry and monetary exchange were indeed playing an obviously decisive role. That there have been a number of other equally important influences and processes at work in the rise and development of the modern democratic society, has been established beyond dispute by modern students of post-renaissance history. But in the 18th and early 19th centuries the phenomenal growth of the new economy demanded elaborately analytical study of its principles and processes ; the traders and industrialists (inspite of the long drawn conflicts among themselves) had come to displace other pivotal social groups in the control of the social

order ; and in consequence, not only did the liberal pursuit of knowledge achieve a science of economics ; it also developed a social philosophy in which the "natural laws" of social mechanics were reduced primarily to economic terms. Between the physiocrats and Malthus, Western Europe constructed the new departmental science of economics ; it also developed a social outlook oriented by what has since been made notorious as the economic interpretation of history. Marx, on his own admission, only gave the finishing touch of a master theoretician to the ideas which had come to hold together the social understanding of the average intelligent man of Western Europe since Vico and Locke..

Liberal economism was based on two assumptions. The abiding relationships which effected rational order in society were basically economic and the laws of production and exchange which, like physical laws in the field of inorganic matter, determined the change, direction or movement in these relationships were what gave to human history any rational coherence. Secondly, it was assumed that the only non-variable

"essential" element in individual character on which social coherence is to be based was economic drives and impulses; all the other impulses were contingent, variable and ambiguous. This is the content of the idea of economic man. Both to the empiricist and the "essentialist" liberal, these relations, laws and impulses were absolute categories, or the nearest approximation to them. Liberalism, which had developed out of the multifold creativeness of the men of the renaissance, artists and adventurers, scholars and trader-industrialists, philosophers and social "revolutionaries", scientists, technicians, explorers and legislators, attenuated into an attitude of sterile indifference to all human activities except the economic, and thence into a fast-losing defence of the concepts of private ownership, profit-motive, effective demand and "free trade".

The obvious error of this economic philosophy was to confuse the totality of man with one of his facets, to overlook the variegated and complex variables of human history in the anxiety for systematisation, to reduce the multifold potentialities of *homo sapiens* to

one of its more obvious expressions. Further on, liberalism by emphasising the natural laws of economic processes and by deriving the absoluteness of these laws from the "economic essence" of human personality tended to forget that the economic activities of man were themselves made possible by man's creative power, that the entire evolving system of production, distribution and exchange bore the stamp of human brain co-ordinating desire to data, transforming the slender resources of the given environment to everchanging forms of satîsfaction and happiness. The economic man became a cog in an automatic machine of "natural" relationships ; he learnt to deny his creativeness ; the range of his values narrowed down to the exchange value of economic commodity ; and his obligation to fellowmen formalised into a passive allegiance to the pattern of the social status quo.

Centring round the concept of the economic man was evolved a moral outlook which ultimately denied the original spirit of liberal ethics and prepared the psychological background for modern totalitarianism. The

economic man is no more regarded as the *substantive* individual of the early renaissance; he is a *functional* 'element'. Not the growth of personality, but the appropriateness of conduct to social equilibrium became the end of law, education and morality. Further the creative happiness of the artist became suspect; what was more valuable was economy in the achievement of a purpose. And consequently, the economic man began to develop a preference for short-term programmes of activities; long-term processes came to be derided as impractical and utopian. The economic man developed the psychology of the "carrot-before-the nose" mule. Abstract speculation, theoretical enquiry, wide-ranged imagination, patient and adventurous pursuit of distant goals—all became symbols of romantic eccentricity. The "economic" liberal demanded quick return for his investment, shortest circuit from stimuli to response, from content to form; he prided in his myopic realism and practicalness. And as instinct and reflex conditioning and habit are the best ways to such economy in organic adjustment, they came to replace theoretical reason, aesthe-

tic contemplation and creative vision as the basic psychological modes of human conduct. With this total displacement of *gnosis* by *praxis,* of adventure by cash return, of art by economy, of science by technic, of the creative individual by the efficiently functioning social element—the liberal movement identified itself with capitalism and prepared the psychological conditions for that most irresponsible state of human depravity in which the highest aspirations of even the utopians have been reduced to the dream of a well ordered "animal farm" where socialised control and ownership of human creativeness is believed to be the panacea for all personal and social disorder.

In its institutional application, liberalism had to be worked out under the handicap of this mental orientation in its own architects. Under such conditions principles were bound to get formalised. Prof. Hallowell in a recent monograph (*Decline of Liberalism as an Ideology*) has taken pains to describe the process of this ideological formalisation as seen particularly in the field of German jurisprudence. The description largely applies to

other fields too as also to other liberal societies. In liberal institutions the precarious equilibrium of inter-personal adjustment constantly tended to break down, on the one hand atomising individuals into lonely and ineffective units, and on the other driving them in their lonesomeness to mass life. If state be a necessary imposition and economy an automatic natural process, then neither the individual could seek fulfilment by participating in the administration of his politico-economic public life, nor was it the necessary task of society to educate individuals in such purposive, deliberate and voluntary participation. Liberal polity is formally democratic and formal democracy has its undoubted merits ; but administration in liberal polity is not, in reality, a responsibility of the entire membership of the community ; it is the affair of the socalled permanent bureaucracy. In the most advanced liberal polity, the entire adult population is entitled and expected to participate in government only once in several years by casting votes. The day to day work of public life is done by a small set to whom, in the name of efficiency and competence, all admin-

istrative power is democratically delegated. Democracy, which is the political expression of liberal philosophy, is reduced to a formal recognition of equal rights and responsibilities in social life ; the rule *for* the people never becomes rule *of* the people or *by* the people but is reduced to mere rule for the people (which every government can and does claim to be).

Further, by reducing the state to a negative institution and deriving its sanction from concentrated coercive power, liberalism in practice reduced political activity to scramble for power. This had several ruinous consequences. It repelled the more detached and enlightened members of society from participation in political life ; it reduced administration to governance ; it created an atmosphere in which the *demos* developed a lust for power without any sense of responsibility or desire for creative work through the state. The formalisation of democracy marked the beginning of the process of its own dissolution ; for, in this atmosphere, unscrupulous demagogues and power-politicians came to wield enormous control by inciting mass-violence ;

and by using the fact of economic inequality and political injustice, they accentuated the forces of discord and conflict in society and subverted those "natural laws" to which to the end the honest liberal pathetically looked for succour and salvation.

Finally, what hastened the collapse of the liberal order was the obvious existence of gross economic inequality in liberal society under the credo of non-interference in the "natural process" of social adjustment. The natural process only accentuated the inequality; more and more men became proletarianised and unemployed while increasing wealth accumulated in fewer hands. This affected both the economic structure as well as the psychological foundation of a stable social order. Economically, it led to underconsumption, falling rate of profit, destruction of unused surplus and trade crisis. Psychologically, it resulted in increasing labour unrest, in growing dissatisfaction with the given order, in intensification of the negative feelings of violence, distrust, self-torture and aggressiveness—and thus in preparing the grounds of a subversive psychology which

social revolutionaries, whether out of misplaced idealism or power-lust, freely made use of. The "natural laws" of liberal economy recognised only effective demand; and as the disparity between the effective demand and human needs tended to widen, the common man began losing his confidence in and loyalty to the structure of laws, conventions, morals and institutions which were based on such inhuman "natural laws" of society. In these circumstances liberalism had either to restate its philosophy and radically reconstruct its institutional frame-work or succumb. In most countries during the period between the two wars in the present century liberalism succumbed before the onslaught of aggressive totalitarian forces.

THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

If the reconciliation of individual liberty and social determinism was the chief concern of liberal thought, the aspiration of Socialism has always been to achieve equality between man and man in institutional life. Not that

there is any necessary contradiction between liberty and equality as has been maintained by thinkers like de Tocqueville, Elie Halevy or Hayek; nor, as we shall see, is Socialism antithetical to liberal philosophy in all its essentials. Still Socialism has ever been the perennial alternative to liberalism in the endeavour to bring about social adjustment; and the ideal and practice of democracy has always been uncertainly placed between these two trends in social thought and organisation.

In a recent appraisal of the *Communist Manifesto* Ignazio Silone has described Socialism "in its more permanent meaning" as "the poor people's aspiration to social justice and equality, to be achieved by suppressing economic and political privilege." That is all, he says, there is nothing more to it. If really that were all, then there would be little either to appreciate or to deprecate in socialist philosophy and practice. But Silone here makes an over-simplification. Socialism is not merely an aspiration but also a method; it is still more, it is a definite philosophy concerning human relationship and conduct, and because it is so, it has wielded such enormous

influence and caused such great havoc in recent human history.

The basic ideal of Socialism is obviously human equality. But it is empirically difficult, if not impossible, to prove that all men are or can ever become equal ; and the mere desirability of an ideal has not always been considered enough reason to try to achieve it. To alleviate the suspicions of the calculating, the modern "scientific" socialist has been led to make assumptions, to construct philosophical systems, to outline methods of interpretation and action so that this desire for equality may not appear as a mere utopia but be accepted as predetermined and practical.*

The three essential devices of socialist thinkers to invest the value of equality with a practicable character have been : to conceive of society as an organic unit, to reduce individuals to functional units in that organism and to advocate ruthless planning to eliminate all divergences and sources of conflict. These

* Prof. Alexander Gray's book *The Socialist Tradition : Moses to Lenin* is a scholarly and critical introduction to the history of socialist thought.

elements are common to both "utopian" and "dialectical" Socialism. They may be seen no less in the philosophical Communism of Plato and Sir Thomas More than in the economic Communism of Marx. Society is the basic ultimate unit endowed with the perfection of a circle. It may then be imagined as divided into a large number of small arcs with the help of some centre and radii. The arcs are the individuals, and with the employment of strict numerical or quantitative calculations the arcs can be made to be of the same size. The arcs have no existence except as parts of the circle. The individual must have, as Socrates explained in the third book of *Republic,* a definite place and function in a just society. The task of planning is to calculate and devise formulæ by which the circle may be divided into a number of equal arcs or the individuals allotted their definite status and functions in the social whole. This obviously makes the problem of equality, at least in theory, quite simplified. Starting from the homogeneity and wholeness of the social organism it is optimistically expected that such functional division of society can be

made with the exactness of a geometrical construction.

It is apparent that Socialism from the very beginning had, like liberalism, two basically distinct trends ; but in this case the trends are more sharply differentiated and the more dangerous trend has received greater emphasis. This may be best seen in the case of the latest and most influential form that Socialism has taken during the last century, Socialism as formulated by Marx and his more orthodox followers. On the one hand, there is in Marxian Socialism a radical-liberal trend largely derived from the English utopian socialists and the French materialist philosophers, the trend which underlies the libertarian aspirations of Marxists, their championship of the oppressed people, their ideal of a cosmopolitan brotherhood and their endeavour to abolish all forms of exploitation in our formally democratic society. There is, on the other hand, the second and more influential and emphasised trend derived from German transcendentalists and an extremely tendentious interpretation of Darwinian biology, that trend which seeks to reduce the

variegated processes of human history into *a priori* dialectics ; which in the name of scientific realism reduces individuals to functional elements of social groups, called the classes ; which considers conflict as the source of progress, and economic factors and impulses as the ultimate foundation of human creativity ; and which advocates the method of class polarisation and transitional dictatorship as the means to achieve a libertarian social order. This contradiction in Marxism, often described by its scholiasts as evidence of its dialectical nature, has been the basic source of conflict between the orthodox and the heretics in modern socialist movement. The former, while demanding wholesale acceptance of this demonstrably self-contradictory system, has in practice emphasised its pseudo-scientific theological postulates and its totalitarian positivist trend. The latter, mostly self-divided and uncertain, has however generally attempted to disentangle the moral inspiration of Socialism and to devise new means, methods and technics to reach a just and equitable social order.

Socialism thus is a mixture of two conflict-

ing trends in human history. Modern "scientific" Socialism took over from liberalism, along with its aspirations for a just society, the concept of "Natural Law" as determining social progress, the theory of economic determinism and the psychology of economic man, and the essentially negative interpretation of state as a coercive creation of man to iron out all the contingent and irrational impulses and activities of individuals in society. In doing this it was more thorough and consistent than liberalism. To the orthodox scientific socialist the "first person singular is no more than a grammatical figment." Socialism, in its anxiety for equality between man and man, reduced man into a cog in the social wheel, and in its desire for efficiency and planning, took away from man his supreme distinction as a moral being. Socialism thus theoretically prepared the conditions for a totalitarian social order, intolerant of individual differences, ruthless in its elimination of conflict, based upon the essentially economic impulses of human beings and reducing all the various cultural manifestations of human creativity into directly purposive reflec-

tions of economic processes. And what it visualised theoretically was corroborated to the last letter by the practices of the Communist parties of the world during the last three decades and the national and international policy of the Soviet Union, particularly since its abandonment of the New Economic Policy of Lenin towards the end of the 'twenties.*

This is not to deny either the incipient moral urge of the socialist movement or its achievements in the field of social investigation. It is true that Socialism, even in its latest and most menacing form, derives a large part of its appeal from the promised utopia of a free, just and egalitarian society to come after the dialectical process of violent class-conflict and the transitional stage of ruthless class-dictatorship. In this, its appeal has been

* For detailed examination of Marxism, communist practice and the Soviet experiment from the above point of view, see among others, M. N. Roy & Philip Spratt, *Beyond Communism*; M. N. Roy, *New Orientation, Russian Revolution* (second enlarged edition); and S. N. Ray, *Radicalism* (the first two parts). All these books have been published by the publishers of the present volume.

of the same nature as of any religion which promises salvation and heaven after the necessary tribulations and sufferings of this contingent earthly life are over. It is also true that Socialism, particularly of the Marxian variety, has thrown a deal of light on the processes of social change. Though many of Marx's pointers regarding Capitalism have proved inadequate and false in the light of subsequent development and enquiry, his study of money fetishism, of the operation of accumulated profit, of crisis resulting from the disparity between production and consumption, of the tendency of industrial economy to form economic groups and classes in society—these have been generally recognised as extremely important pointers towards a more comprehensive and scientific analysis of human society.*

But neither the moral appeal of Marxian Socialism nor its achievements in the field of social enquiry can make serious students of Socialism blind to the fact that Marxism, more

* In this connection see J. Robinson, *An Essay in Marxian Economics.*

than any other ideology in recent times, has been responsible for the popularity and success of totalitarian movements in the inter-war period. Marxian Socialism by its emphasis on function and the trans-individual determinism of social processes, by its pseudo-scientific reduction of moral sense to a recognition of the inexorable, by its emphasis on the organic homogeneity of class groups, by its confusion of the state with mere coercive activity and its advocacy of dictatorial method, reduced its own adherents into fanatic and intolerant members of monolithic political groups determined to cause greater discord and disintegration in society in the hope of a quickened social mutation ; inculcated the spirit of a neo-Calvinist sin-complex and self-flagellation in the educated middle class ; sanctioned the negative attitude of destructiveness, coercion and unthinking loyalty to group directives ; and in this way created, firstly, totalitarian and fanatical communist parties ; secondly, in reaction to and imitation of them equally aggressive and monolithic fascist parties ; and finally led to the rise of a number of totalitarian dictatorial states which today have

brought human civilisation to the verge of an unprecedented catastrophe.

With the best of intentions, therefore, Socialism has come to mean, at least in its rigid communist form, a negation of that perennial endeavour with which human history began. Its dialectical metaphysics is a rejection both of science and aesthetic creativeness. It is also the end of all morality. Its reduction of man into elements, economic units, parts of the social organism or cogs in the social wheel, with a view to achieve equality, justice and harmony in social life, has resulted only in bringing about a most inequitous, unjust and aggressive social order in the country where Socialism has been raised to the pedestal of state religion. It is not necessary to catalogue even the most obvious charges that can be made against the Soviet Union and the communist parties of the world today. There is however no denying the fact that Socialism no less than Capitalism has created a state of mind and a historic situation in which war, aggressiveness, blackmail, regimentation and total extermination of every recalcitrant opinion or voice have come to be

recognised as the only means to peace and order. But then, it is the peace of the grave ; it is at best the order of the animal herd. In the perspective of the gathering clouds of another war which may mean the complete collapse of human civilisation, it has now become transparent to the despair of many honest and erstwhile socialists that so-called scientific Socialism holds out even lesser hope than liberalism and utopian Socialism of a just, free and egalitarian social order in which adjustment of human relationships will make for unlimited creativeness of individual human beings.

The failure of scientific Socialism to provide a more adequate approach to the problem of freedom in our time may therefore be broadly traced to certain basic features in its philosophy. First and foremost is its inadvertent forgetfulness of the aim of all social adjustment, the freedom and happiness of the individual, a forgetfulness which gradually hardened into contempt and derision of that aim and its negation in the means, method and process in the name of realism and practicability. The second damaging factor is the

adoption of dialectics as the key to history, dialectics which is a rare and most esoteric combination of scholasticism, dogma, sophistry and blind faith, and is a rejection of that scientific spirit of enquiry which the European Renaissance had reintroduced to the modern world. Besides this disastrous return to the pre-scientific magico-religious attitude which dialectics engendered, in its application to human history it involved an organic theory of society which further consolidated the self-abnegating attitude towards individual personality. Simultaneously with this dialectical metaphysics, scientific Socialism also took over and elaborated upon the economic fundamentalism of earlier historicists and sought to reduce the multifoldedness of man's creativity into automatic movements fatally determined by economic impulses and laws of production relationships. The hybrid product of this combination of dialectics with economism has been the preposterous theory that class conflict is the main lever of human progress and the moral corollary deduced therefrom that the accentuation of that conflict is our chief task and means to salvation.

To crown this destructive and fatalistic philosophy, Socialism further adopted and popularised the interpretation of state as an instrument of class coercion and advocated as a corollary from that theory the so-called revolutionary technic of social disorganisation, subversion and dictatorship. In this way, instead of improving upon formal democracy and making it real, effective and enlightened, Socialism sponsored (in co-operation with Capitalism) an age of wars and revolutions, of mental and social disorder, and finally degenerated into a plea for totalitarian society.

Because, Socialism in its strong reaction to the hypocrisy and injustice of capitalist economy concentrated almost exclusively on the subversion of that order and became indifferent to the need for providing the alternative picture of a better society. It emphasised abstract perfection in the means and methods of subversion and held in contempt all serious discussion about the end of revolution. It confused democracy with Capitalism because for it the economic structure was the only reality and all other expressions of human creativeness were but *demiurges*. It could

not rescue the achievements of liberalism, which indeed were very great, and carry the positive pursuit of freedom further. For it, freedom was merely the recognition of necessity. Yet necessity has no moral bearing; it does not tell one of what is good or bad. The logic of a process can only tell about the most effective means to achieve a certain end; it cannot itself throw any light on the problem of moral discrimination between end and end. Marx, following the tradition of amoral politics, introduced to modern Europe by Niccolo Machiavelli, gave sanction to the growing positivist attitude to social technic and engineering that was coming to prevail towards the end of the last century. Thus did he belie his original moral inspiration.

Socialists, particularly of the "scientific" brand, claim not to be concerned with the immorality of the present order; they are proud to be interested only in the "contradiction" or inconsistency of Capitalism and in its "law of motion." They advocate Socialism not because it is morally better, but because by the dialectical logic of change, Socialism is

the inevitable next stage of history; because the "integuments of Capitalism" will of necessity "burst asunder" under pressure of production forces; because Socialism shall reconcile the forms and forces of production and achieve formal coherence in the present social structure. It will thus constitute the dialectical synthesis; hence it must be accepted by all who care not to be destroyed.

The above attitude explains the socialist's craze for planning; planning which has today become the new fetish as private property and enterprise were in the capitalist order; planning for inner coherence in the institutional pattern and not with a view to some moral end. Socialist planning in consequence today has effected unsurpassed discipline and fanaticism within its party organisation but completely paralysed the spirit of enquiry and moral consideration in its advocates; has raised production in a socialist state but also its destructive employment; has achieved simultaneously full employment and total slavery of the common population; and brought about great efficiency in administration on the basis of an omnipotent bureaucracy

and a regimented population. If liberalism reduced freedom to formality, Socialism has reduced equality to goose-step. That has been the grand finale of that glorious enterprise which promised a fascinating utopia, and which, alas, in the process of its approximation has guiled its own followers, and sought to bully its opponents, to the acceptance of new and more formidable chains of serfdom.*

* Besides the writings of Marx and Engels, the following books may be consulted, among others, to appreciate the pros and cons of the socialist alternative:

Kirkup, *History of Socialism*; Janet, *Origins of Contemporary Socialism*; K. M. Bober, *K. Marx's Interpretation of History*; E. Bernstein, *Evolutionary Socialism*; K. Kautsky, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* and *Economic doctrines of K. Marx*; Loria, *K. Marx*; G. Sorel, *Decomposition of Marxism*; Sombert, *Socialism and Social Movement*; Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*; Wilde, *Soul of Man Under Socialism*; H. W. B. Joseph, *The Labour Theory of Value in K. Marx*; P. Sweezy, *Theory of Capitalist Development*; Lenin, *Teachings of Karl Marx* and *State and Revolution*; B. Croce, *Historical Materialism and the Economics of Karl Marx*; S. Hook, *From Hegel to Marx* and *Towards an understanding of Marx*; S. H. Chang, *The Marxian Theory of State*; Bukharin, *Historical Materialism*; Plekhanov, *Fundamental Problems of Marxism*; Thalheimer, *Dialectic Materialism*; M. Eastman, *Marxism, is it Science*; E. Halevy, *L'Ere*

RADICAL DEMOCRACY

Neither liberalism nor Socialism thus has solved the problem of reconciling individual freedom with social organisation. This may seem to justify the prevailing attitude of cynicism and despondence which maintains that no such reconciliation is possible. It is now being widely believed that the choice before man is between chaos and dictatorship, and the best that a wise man can possibly do is to refrain from any kind of political activity whatsoever. While this despondency may be partially justified by the experience of the two world wars and the disastrous decades in between, there is no reason to believe that man will not be able to overcome the present catastrophe and resume his endeavour for a rational and free society which underlies the story of human civilisation.

des Tyrannies; W. H. Chamberlain, *A False Utopia;* M. Polanyi, *The Contempt of Freedom;* Stalin, *Leninism;* Leningrad Institute Publication, *Textbook of Marxist Philosophy;* Levy, Bernal etc., *Aspects of Dialectical Materialism.*

Such an endeavour must begin with a recognition of the achievements and deficiencies of both liberalism and Socialism. Liberalism was perfectly sound in maintaining reason to be the abiding source of all voluntary cooperation. It was however wrong in its indifference to the need of economic equality and participation of the common people in the administration of social affairs. Socialism was fully justified in pointing out the inconsistency between liberal profession and liberal practice, in demanding social and economic equality as a necessary pre-requisite of freedom and in protesting against private ownership of social wealth. It was however wrong in depending on group solidarity and class conflict for the resolution of social inequality, and its method of dictatorship was fraught with great dangers. The resumption of the endeavour to achieve freedom in social life can be fruitful if the importance of both economic equality and individual liberty are equally recognised; if the influence of both economic and moral-cultural factors in social change and progress is appreciated; if individuals can be persuaded to develop a

sense of personal dignity and social responsibility; and if a close co-operation between the educated few and the uneducated many can be brought about in such a way that, in the process of dissemination of knowledge, more and more individuals can be made to develop discriminative ability, moral sense and co-operative spirit.

In an earlier part of this essay we have discussed in some detail the method by which democracy can be approximated even in the present condition of social inequality, backwardness, conflict, privation and restraints. We propose to offer in these concluding pages only a very brief outline description of a truly democratic society growing out of the achievements and limitations of the present civilisation. Democracy however is not a static ideal or a distant utopia ; it is a way of living which can be increasingly made more real and widespread in the process of our endeavour. Freedom is an experience which accumulates increasing wealth of meaning and content as more and more people become alive to its value and endeavour to enjoy it. The aim of a free society is the harmonious

and creative unfoldment of individuals; its method is education and co-operation; and it is an unending process.

One of the main obstacles to co-operative living is the limitation of resources in a community. Not that even in a community of limited resources democratic organisation is altogether impossible. But non-fulfilment of basic requirements puts a great strain on the moral and co-operative impulses of an individual. It is therefore necessary that a community should reach a high level of productivity to ensure that the psychological conditions of a democratic order may prevail against both herd habit and aggressive competition. A moral society requires freedom of individuals from the menace of physical privation and non-fulfilment of basic needs. A technologically advanced society is naturally more feasible to the democratic spirit. It is true that effective democracy depends more upon a high level of culture than on the volume of material resources. Yet the volume of such resources, when it provides for an increasing social surplus, makes it possible for culture to percolate into the life of the entire community.

Developed technic, therefore, is necessary to the functioning of a democratic society.*

But surplus production or introduction of technic by itself does not mean necessary advancement of a democratic way of living. There must be proper arrangement for equitable distribution of social wealth. In liberal economy production and distribution were

* The æsthetic-moral recoil from industrial technic and the advocacy of a return to primitive methods, which form the basis of the principles of social reform of men like Gandhi, are, even if sincere, derived from an unfortunate confusion of means and ends. The logical end of the Gandhian ideal will be the denial of man's multifold growth and creative expression. That means throwing the baby with the bathwater. Technic can certainly provide ampler opportunities for human happiness and growth if it is consciously related as means to that end. Mere recoil from its perverse employment, however genuine, is short-sighted, and the negative approach of its abolition conveys irresponsibility, fear and intellectual naivete.

See for a systematic presentation of the Gandhian approach, N. K. Bose, *Studies in Gandhism*. For criticism, M. N. Roy, *Problem of Freedom*; P. Spratt, *Gandhism*; and S. N. Ray, "Gandhism & Radicalism" in *Independent India* weekly, 18 May, 1947 and review of N. K. Bose's book in *The Marxian Way*, quarterly, Vol. III, No. 3.

regulated by profit motive, "effective" demand and the so-called price mechanism. These have evidently failed to achieve or even to further economic equality in social life. Socialism proposed the method of nationalisation of the means of production which however in practice became state monopoly, and only accentuated the already existing inequalities in the distribution and enjoyment of social wealth. State ownership by itself can mean nothing unless, firstly, the state is effectively owned and run by the common people and, secondly, the distribution of the resources as well as the production of wealth are guided by the consideration of human requirements. A democratic economy shall of course be a planned economy.* But the planning shall be guided by the principle of social

* In reaction to the experience of totalitarian planning in the Fascist and Socialist states, a number of economists, who should have known better, have gone to the other dangerous extreme of advocating a return to *laisser faire*. But their equation of planning with dictatorship is as unfounded as the communist equation of democracy with capitalism. The consequences of *laisser faire* economy depending for equilibrium on price

welfare and shall be so executed as to bring about conscious and discriminative participation of the actual producers and consumers (*i.e.* the entire adult membership of a society) in its formulation and execution. In the place of private profit, the principle of social welfare must constitute the main lever of planned economy. Human demand shall replace "effective demand" (*i.e.,* demand backed up by purchasing power measured in

mechanism are too wellknown. On the other hand, planning with a view to social welfare, and controlled and worked out through democratic bodies, need not entail dictatorial developments. For a statement of the revived *laisser faire* theory, see Hayek, *Road to Serfdom ;* Chamberlain, *Collectivism ;* and L. von Mises, *Socialism.*

For criticism, H. Finer, *Road to Reaction* (a somewhat excited and drastic, but on the whole sound and well-informed, refutation of Hayek). Also see Keynes, *General Theory of Employment, etc.;* Robinson, *Theory of Imperfect Competition* and G. D. Parikh, "Planning and Freedom" in *The Marxian Way* II, 2.

For concrete suggestions re : specific aspects of welfare planning through democratic methods, see the writings of Beveridge, Cole, the Webbs etc. For an examination of this issue in the context of present day India, see M. N. Roy and G. D. Parikh, *Alphabet of Fascist Economics ;* and M. N. Roy, *Poverty or Plenty.*

terms of money). And what is possibly the most important of all, the social surplus must be distributed in a planned way in the form of free and universal social utility services ; for example, in education, medical service, town and rural planning etc. A truly democratic economy shall endeavour to replace progressively the system of wages and prices by the system of universal social utility services working out through a network of co-operative institutions.

The basic institutional unit of a democratic economy shall be the co-operative. This can be of various nature, but the fundamental principles will be the same : to try to bring about co-operation of the entire adult population of the locality in the formulation of plans and the administration of them, covering multifold aspects of social life, especially the production, distribution and exchange of social wealth. On the one hand, the introduction of technic and scientific knowledge in production, transport, exchange etc. and, on the other, the system of distribution of surplus through utility services sustained by the institutional framework of co-operatives—

these shall constitute together the main structure of democratic economy.*

The principles followed in the economic reorganisation of society shall have to be complemented by their simultaneous application in political life. In fact, economy cannot be democratically planned unless it derives its life from a politically democratic order. Without political democracy economic planning would mean dangerous concentration of power in the hands of cartels and combines functioning under the auspices of an all-powerful state. This is what has happened in Soviet Russia. Confronted with the problem of social reorganisation, Lenin, the most fanatical theoriser of Marxism, had in his New Economic Policy to abandon the orthodox method of dictatorship, and tried to base planning on wide popular participation and support. If that policy could be pursued, we might have witnessed in Soviet Russia a grand experiment in organised democracy which, while repudiating the incorrect and dangerous

* For application of these principles in the form of a draft plan in the context of Indian social reconstruction, see Parikh, Tarkunde & Banerjea, *Peoples Plan.*

methodological directives of Marx, would have benefitted from his analysis of capitalism and his egalitarian aspirations, and developed novel and most valuable principles and technics of democratic social engineering. But this did not happen. In the frenzied endeavour to increase production at any cost and to obtain sufficient surplus for the consolidation of the new state, Stalin and his followers abandoned the path opened rather inadvertently by Lenin, and achieved planning at the price of human freedom.* Taking lesson from that tragic experience, it is necessary for the democrats of today to recognise that vital dependence of planning for welfare on democratic organisation of social life. The fundamental problem of this organisation is to bring about in the *demos* both the desire and the competence to administer their social affairs themselves. This means making more and more men and women develop discrimination, initiative and a spirit of co-operation and self-help. That

* For details, see M. N. Roy, *Russian Revolution* (second enlarged edition).

obviously cannot be achieved overnight. The socalled short-cut method of dictatorship, even when advocated or employed by sincere "revolutionaries" is neither short-cut nor practical (if the aim of such practice is individual growth and social harmony), and is the expression of clumsy impatience, intellectual short-sight and moral coarseness in the face of a most delicate and complex and persistent problem of human history.

The central programme of democracy is education of the people. But education requires qualified educators. There must also be an atmosphere of eagerness to learn and grow if education is not to become stereotyped. The true task of any serious democrat today is to devote himself to bring about that atmosphere and to develop competence to help educate people in co-operative living. That competence is no esoteric monopoly of a chosen few; it is to be acquired through experience and education. The idea of the "philosopher king", which Plato placed in the centre of his republican utopia, is essentially valuable, although without other democratic safeguards the "philosopher kings" may also

degenerate into closed castes of power-hungry and superiority-complex ridden intellectuals. It must be recognised that today, no less than in the earlier periods of history, a certain disparity exists between the highly educated professionals and the common people ; but this disparity can be overcome if those who are alive to the crisis of our time would take upon themselves the task of social education, thereby shortening the gulf between the so-called intelligentsia and the so-called masses. In fact even in the obviously defective system of liberal society, adult literacy, largescale publication and facilities of education, however inadequate in volume and quality, have done much to reduce that appalling cultural stratification which prevailed in Europe as late as early nineteenth century, and which still prevails in the India of today and other backward states of Asia, Africa, Southern America and Eastern Europe in varying degrees. Education for democracy shall have to be a comprehensive movement simultaneously helping the intelligent few to shed off their narrow sense of superiority and feeling of helplessness in the face of general ignorance

and callousness, and developing in larger and larger number of common people the competence to judge social activities and functions for themselves and to discriminate between right and wrong, and the desire to share their own responsibilities in social administration.

There have been in recent years a great deal of criticism of Plato's conception of " philosopher kings." Much of this criticism derives from the apprehension that Plato's *Republic* is a plea for a static caste-society based on monopoly of control by the intellectual *elite*.* Taken in the context of the structure of the society which Plato had planned—its functional approach to individuals in society, its obtuse puritanism and strict regimentation of personal life, its glorification of Spartan discipline, its division of the ideal

* A recent and formidable attack on Plato from the pragmatic-democratic point of view may be found in K. R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies,* Vol. I (The Age of Plato). For criticism of this point of view, and for detailed discussion of the role of philosophy in democratic society, see S. N. Ray, *Explorations; essays in Philosophy, Democracy and Art.*

society into functionally immobile groups etc. —this apprehension seems justified. Nevertheless, unless one is perverse, the Platonic philosopher can by no stretch of democratic purism be considered as a near relation of Nietzsche's blonde supermen or even Pareto's elites. The philosopher in the Platonic sense is a person characterised by his love of truth and virtue, his ability for detached objective judgment, his disinclination to possess or accumulate any wealth and his desire to share freely with others whatever knowledge he may have come to acquire in course of his inquiry. In this, essentially opposed to the magician who is a monopolist and wants to keep secret his knowledge so that he may have an advantage over others in action; and the priest whose *forte* is faith, not reason, whose "wisdom" is inspired and not attained through analysis and training;—the true philosopher is a scientist in whom knowledge is the guide for action and dissemination of knowledge the truest foundation of a good society. Interpreted in the sense in which we have described him earlier, the onus of oracular wisdom and puritanical discipline which

makes the philosopher of Plato repugnant to modern democratic mind, may be removed. That onus has been due largely to the theological preoccupation of most philosophers. If philosophy can become the science of sciences as we think it most certainly can be, then the true philosopher can also be free from his pontificial tendencies and work as a competent friend, educator and technician in democratic development. The philosopher is a combination of the scientist and moral reformer, informing science with a moral purpose and morality with a scientific orientation without obscuring the distinct nature of either pursuits, and consequently a true democracy shall have to be a society of philosophers working in co-operation and not a society divided into the intellectuals and the masses, the "logical" and the "non-logical", with a relation of hatred, suspicion and superiority-inferiority between these two strata.

Education for democracy must therefore, as we have said, start from two fronts. Of course, the beginnings shall have to be made by those who, in the present society, have

already had the opportunity of some education and of developing a comparatively larger outlook of life. But it will be most injurious if they start with a contempt for the unenlightened common man, and seek consolation in some intellectual privacy of their own. Such isolation, as was obscurely felt by the sensitive liberals of the nineteenth century, shall be a constant menace to their own moral equilibrium ; unenlightened people living in a restrictive, inequitious and unjust society are bound to develop the essentially destructive spirit of hatred against the prevailing order, and will naturally be susceptible to the persuasions of unscrupulous demagogues. Hence, philosopher democrats shall have to take upon themselves the responsibility of creative and co-operative education of the common people ; education thus becomes the main programme of a truly democratic movement. This is what we have described towards the close of our last section as the movement for social renaissance.

Simultaneously with this broad cultural movement, democratic institutions based upon the participation of more and more people in

the administration of social affairs shall have to be built up. These institutions, which we have called the Peoples' Committees, shall be the effective centres of organised democracy, bridging in the process of their growth and development the existing gap between state and society. Growing out of the co-operation of discriminative individuals, and drawing in more and more local people into its functioning, these committees shall simultaneously be units of the state and central social institutions of the local people. They shall also be the media through which experiments in co-operation between the educated few and the common people shall have to be made. And, as in the process, more and more people shall develop ability and desire for administration of social life, the danger of state becoming omnicompetent at the expense of individual liberty shall be gradually reduced.

The constitution of a democratic state shall have thus to incorporate initially two distinct types of institutions working in co-operation and complementing each other.* There shall

* We have here only mentioned the general principles. The way in which these principles may be worked out

have to be advisory councils or similar bodies of educated intelligent people with special and comparatively more developed aptitudes —scientists, technicians, medicalmen, teachers, economists, artists, etc. At the same time there must be representative assemblies based upon universal adult suffrage with legislative as well as executive functions working with the help of these advisory councils. The function of the first type of bodies will be to guide and not to control social conduct, to study existing problems, draw up plans, and more than anything, to help in the development of discrimination and initiative of the common people through widespread education in the needs and problems of a free society. The task of the latter bodies will be to draw in more and more people *directly* in the work of deciding policies of the state and in their execution—to provide for forums where available knowledge and opinions may be placed

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in a society of large populations has been indicated in detail in *A Draft Constitution of Free India* by M. N. Roy. Though intended for India, it is a model constitution for a democratic society built up on these principles.

without any censorship at the disposal of the entire people, so that through mutual discussion they may decide about the various draft plans themselves. And the basic condition for co-operative work of these two bodies will be the general programme of social renaissance by which the margin between the two will be narrowed as more and more people become equipped with knowledge, competence and initiative.

The aim of democratic politics is to build up a state based upon popular initiative, social co-operation and increasing participation of the people in the administration of all political affairs. This can be possible only through the development of the spirit of liberty in more and more members of the society. The index of democratic development is the minimisation of the coercive functions of the state and the maximisation of the voluntary co-operation of the people in administration and legislation. The prevailing misconception about the nature and function of the state is due largely to the fact that in most modern states administration is run by a small permanent bureaucracy and

legislation is the responsibility of a small group of representatives. In the first sphere, power is obviously concentrated in few hands without popular sanction. In the second sphere, power is delegated with the formal sanction of popular sovereignty. In neither case, however, do people themselves as a whole exercise political power except, as in representative governments, by a mere casting of votes once in a while. This divorce of the common people from the functioning of the state lends countenance to the theory of the state being primarily a coercive institution, a theory which in the hands of Marxists and anarchists has come to maintain that the state only represents the interests of the dominating economic class in a society. This, however, is only a partial truth as even a superficial scrutiny of the history of any formally democratic state will prove. The state becomes a coercive instrument because the people have not developed a democratic consciousness. To mistake certain contingent tendencies of a human creation for its essence is a common and yet a most harmful error. It is on the basis of a similar argument that industrial

technic has often been considered the source of all evils in modern society. But neither technic nor the state is in itself harmful or inimical to human interest ; besides, both are equally essential for the growth and development of communities. What is really to the point is to devise ways and means by which these potentially useful creations of human intelligence can be safeguarded against perversion and misuse, and made to serve their human purpose to the best of their potentialities. In the case of the state, this has been sought to be done through the various important and valuable provisos in the constitutions of various democratic states; for example, those about freedom of opinion, equality before law, right of trial in open courts of justice, separation of executive and judiciary, superiority of law to any individual or group of individuals including the government, and, in more recent times, the idea of the right of the electorate to recall their delegates etc. The four freedoms of the Atlantic Charter, the growing demand for a more comprehensive Bill of Essential Human rights than those provided for in capitalist

democracies—the rights to employment, education, security, medical treatment, etc.—are expressions of the endeavour to realise and enrich the true content of democracy. All these provisos are extremely important, and as men have learnt with years the various pitfalls in political administration, they have devised newer guarantees against the degeneration of the state into a coercive institution.

While these formal technical guarantees demand further improvement and are of great importance in the development of democratic polity, the essential condition of a truly libertarian state is enlightened and democratically active citizenship. Without the prevalence of democratic outlook and habits in the adult population of a society, no juridical proviso can achieve true democratisation of the state. The main source of sustenance and growth of democratic institutions is a democratic tradition, and the vitality of such tradition depends upon the quality and number of responsible and discriminating individuals in a society. The fundamental task therefore of the leadership of a democratic movement, as Aristotle realised long ago, is

to bring about widespread democratic education of the people. That education, by developing initiative and discriminative power in the citizens of a state, will, first of all, make concentration of power in whatever form in the hands of a few more and more difficult ; secondly, more and more weaken the hold of unscrupulous demagogues and create an atmosphere in which the truly detached and culturally developed individuals may find proper opportunity to participate in organised social activities ; thirdly, reduce the existing incidence of inequality between man and man and make the functioning of co-operative democratic bodies possible. The aspiration of democracy therefore, in its political aspect, is to bridge up the existing gulf between state and society—not by making the state all-powerful, but by drawing-in the entire society in the administration of state affairs, so that in no form social power remains in the exclusive and concentrated control of a few, but is shared and effectively used by the entire adult population to help maximum unfoldment of individual potentialities with minimum conflict and restraint. This aspira-

tion can most effectively be approximated through the education of the people in democratic living and through the rise and development of democratic institutions like co-operatives and peoples' committees as crystallisations of the democratic educational movement.

And finally, as is obvious, such a society of enlightened co-operation, a society in which the people will consciously and deliberately work to achieve greater equality and freedom, will require a congenial cultural-moral atmosphere. The atmosphere which prevails today, the atmosphere of collective loyalty, aggressiveness, intolerance and fear, of cynicism and destructiveness, is the least suitable for a democratic society. It is an atmosphere in which highly coercive totalitarian states, pursuing a policy of regimentation and war, controlled by fanatics and unscrupulous demagogues, can alone grow. This atmosphere shall have to be changed before any stable foundation for democracy can be laid. The cultural atmosphere of democracy shall have to be one of cosmopolitan humanism in which the scientific spirit of enquiry, open-

ness, toleration and precise thinking must guide human behaviour, an atmosphere in which scientific knowledge shall have to be made available to all, and this knowledge shall have to be employed to the purpose of individual happiness. The atmosphere of democracy shall gradually remove all false divisions and boundaries between man and man, geographical, racial, political, economic and cultural. It is only when a new renaissance movement spreads over the world, based upon a wide recognition of the abiding importance of scientific attitude and individual freedom in social organisation, that a radically democratic world order shall come to prevail.

FOR FURTHER READING

Besides the books mentioned in the foot-notes the following may also be consulted by the advanced readers of this book. This list is not at all comprehensive; it is selected to provide an idea of the contemporary philosophical context and not authority for our argument:

P. Frank — *Between Philosophy & Physics.*
H. Weyl — *Mind and Nature.*
W. Kohler — *The Place of Value in the World of Facts.*
N. O. Losski — *Value and Existence.*
J. Laird — *Idea of Value.*
J. B. Bury — *The Idea of Progress.*
J. E. Boodin — *Man in His World.*
Klibansky and Paton (Ed.) — *Philosophy and History.*
J. Breasted — *The Dawn of Conscience.*
R. Linton — *The Study of Man.*
A. N. Whitehead — *Adventure of Ideas.*
Lewis Mumford — *Technic and Civilization.*
C. D. Broad — *Scientific Thought.*
M. C. Otto — *The Human Enterprise.*
C. J. Ducasse — *Philosophy As a Science.*
L. T. Hobhouse — *Mind in Evolution.*
L. T. Hobhouse — *Metaphysical Theory of State.*
C. D. Broad — *The Mind and Its Place in Nature.*
M. Planck — *The Universe in the Light of Modern Science and Philosophy.*

J. BURCKHARDT	*Force and Freedom.*
M. N. ROY	*Science and Philosophy.*
N. A. BERDYAYEV	*The Meaning of History.*
J. MARITAIN	*True Humanism.*
V. VENABLE	*Human Nature, The Marxist Point of View.*
M. R. COHEN	*Reason and Nature.*

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