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THE RELATIONSHIP OF DISSOCIATION AND REPRESSION  
CONSIDERED FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF  
MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGY.

by

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THE RELATIONSHIP OF DISSOCIATION AND REPRESSION  
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OBJECT OF THESIS.

The object of this thesis is to consider the conceptions of Dissociation and Repression with a view to determining in what way, if any, the processes are related to one another. These two conceptions have played a part of unrivalled importance in modern psycho-pathology, but no satisfactory attempt seems to have been made to determine the exact nature of their relationship to one another. The conclusions reached in this thesis regarding their relationship constitute, so far as the writer is aware, an original contribution to the subject.

MEDICINE AND PSYCHOLOGY.

The task imposed by the aim of this thesis involves an exploration of ground which is common to medical science and psychology. While these two sciences are rightly differentiated from one another both as regards aim and subject matter, an unnatural divorce between them is detrimental to the interests of both. The subject matter of medicine is disease in the human organism, and its aim is twofold:-

(a)/

(a) to understand the nature of disease (The Science of Medicine); (b) to devise and apply methods of cure (The Art of Medicine). On the other hand, the subject matter of psychology is the behaviour of the organism; and its aim is to interpret behaviour in terms of inner experience. The "mental processes" of which the psychologist speaks are the laws of behaviour interpreted in such terms, and the study of these processes constitutes the science of Psychology. Corresponding to the Art of Medicine we may also recognise an Applied Psychology, the object of which is to apply knowledge of mental laws to the solution of various problems of life. Although the science of medicine and the science of psychology are thus distinct, there is a considerable area of common ground in their respective provinces. After all, disease is not an entity. When disease is present, it is the organism that is diseased; and the presence of disease affects the organism's behaviour, which is the subject matter of psychology. Further, there are certain types of disease in which the chief symptoms are aberrations of behaviour. Conspicuous among such diseases is that group which is commonly designated "Functional Nervous Disease": a group which includes the psycho-neuroses and certain of the insanities. It is in relation to this group of diseases that a knowledge of the laws of behaviour is/

is of particular value to medical science. As a matter of fact, whatever debt medicine already owes to psychology is due largely to the light which psychology has thrown upon the nature of these diseases. It may be added that the debt is not one-sided, and that the study of this group of abnormal phenomena by clinicians has exercised a profound influence upon the psychology of normal mental processes.

Although during the last thirty years there has been unmistakable evidence of a rapprochement between medicine and psychology to the mutual benefit of each, it is none the less true to say that the two sciences have not yet recovered from the effects of an unnatural divorce. The divorce between medicine and psychology is of comparatively recent origin. If we trace back the history of both sciences, we find that they have a common origin in Religion. Among primitive peoples the doctor is the witch-doctor. Disease is attributed to the influence of "spirits", and treatment proceeds on lines conforming to this belief. The measures which are taken to combat disease are such as are calculated to influence the spirits concerned. Since these spirits are anthropomorphically conceived, it is easy to understand that primitive medicine is ultimately based upon the conceptions of human mental process prevalent in the community.

Medicine/

Medicine and psychology are thus seen to derive their lineage from a common source. They are both children of the primitive animistic conception of the universe. Even after the day when physical science began to evolve out of magic and the effects of physical forces in causing disease began to be realised, the animistic theory of disease was only very gradually abandoned. The physical and animistic theories existed side by side, and the former only gradually grew at the expense of the latter. In Greek and Roman times it is true that a medical science based on physical conceptions reached a high degree of development, but the medical man had a formidable rival in the priest of Aesculapius. Even after the dawn of the Christian era medicine remained intimately connected with religion. The development of Arabian Medicine perhaps constitutes an exception to this generalisation, but this was only a more or less localised interlude. In Christian countries medicine remained a prerogative of the Church. It was only after the Renaissance had stimulated interest in physical science that a proper science of medicine based on physical conceptions began to establish itself on a solid foundation. This movement reached a climax towards the close of the XIXth Century, when the rise of physiology and neurology inclined medical men to interpret all forms of disease, including mental disease, in exclusively physical/

physical terms. This phase has by no means passed, but in the latter part of the XIXth Century a reaction against extreme materialistic conceptions of disease began to make itself felt in the medical world. This reaction was the outcome of considerations resulting from the study of two groups of phenomena:- (a) the phenomena of Hypnotism, (b) the phenomena of Hysteria.

The scientific study of hypnotism may be said to have begun when Mesmer astonished the cultured circles of Vienna in the latter part of the XVIIIth Century by introducing them to the phenomena of so-called 'Animal Magnetism'. The prejudices of the medical and scientific world and the extravagances of the Mesmerists themselves led to the discrediting of the whole subject, but it is interesting to note that the explanation put forward by Mesmer to account for the phenomena was a physical one. He attributed them to the action of 'magnetic fluid'. No further light was thrown upon the subject until the time of James Braid, the Manchester surgeon, who in 1843 embarked upon an investigation of the phenomena of mesmerism. These he was at first inclined to regard as the effects of fatigue, and the explanation which he offered was couched in physiological terms. Later, however, he substituted a psychological explanation, in accordance with which "suggestion" was regarded as the main agent in producing the hypnotic state. The view that the hypnotic/



hypnotic state was due to suggestion created little interest until it was revived by Professor Bernheim of Nancy, who, under the inspiration of Liébeault, published his book "De la Suggestion" in 1884.

The Nancy School held that hypnotism was simply normal sleep induced by suggestion and that it could be produced in any individual by suitable methods. There arose, however, a school of investigators in Paris who took up a somewhat different view. This was the school of the Salpêtrière Clinique, among whom the leading figure was J.M. Charcot (1825-93).

Charcot's investigations were conducted among the nervous patients who attended the clinique, and this fact doubtless explains the conclusion which he drew as to the nature of hypnotism. He recognised the intimate connection of hypnotism and suggestion, but he regarded both as pathological. He regarded them as phenomena of hysteria. The acrimonious controversy which arose between the Nancy and Salpêtrière schools as a result of the divergence of their views is happily now an affair of the past. It is now generally agreed that both views embodied a truth, but that neither view was wholly true. It is to the Nancy School that we owe recognition of the facts that suggestion may take effect in a normal individual and that there is an intimate connection between suggestion and hypnotism. It is to the Salpêtrière school, /

school, on the other hand, that we owe the knowledge that increased suggestibility is a characteristic of certain pathological states, of which hysteria is the most notable. It is to the Salpêtrière also that we owe those researches which have led to recognition of the part played in functional nervous disease by psychological processes.

The outstanding figure of the Salpêtrière School was undoubtedly Charcot (vide Freud, 'Collected Papers', 1924, Vol. I, Paper on 'Charcot'). While Charcot was essentially a neurologist, his clinical insight led him to recognise that it was impossible to disregard the importance of mental processes, so far, at any rate, as hysteria was concerned. In his introduction to the famous work on hysteria by his pupil, Janet, he expresses his opinion in these words:- "L'hystérie est en grande partie une maladie mentale". It was, however, in the influence which he exerted upon two of his pupils rather than in his own views upon functional nervous disease that his importance for psychopathology chiefly lies. These pupils were Pierre Janet and Sigmund Freud. It is upon the work of these two men that the whole structure of modern psychopathology is founded.

Although Janet and Freud both owe their inspiration to a common master, their researches have led them along different paths. The starting point for the researches of both was the disease to which Charcot's/

Charcot's clinical teaching had directed their attention, viz. hysteria; but Janet in Paris and Freud in Vienna each pursued his own path more or less indifferent to the other. Both modified Charcot's pronouncement that "Hysteria is in great part a mental disease" into the proposition that hysteria is essentially a mental disease (Janet, "L'Etat Mental des Hysteriques", 1911, p. 447; Freud, "Collected Papers", Vol.I., p.55). Each reached the conclusion that all the hydra-headed symptomatology of hysteria was the expression of one fundamental psychological process. They differed, however, in their views as to the nature of this process, as well as in the terms which they adopted to describe it. Janet developed the conception of "Dissociation", while Freud developed that of 'Repression'.

The independence of the paths, which, as a matter of history, these two investigators have pursued in the formulation of their views, has led to a situation which is not altogether satisfactory so far as medical science is concerned. It has led to a division of medical thought into two camps, so far as functional nervous diseases are concerned. Between these two camps there is very little coming and going. One school interprets functional nervous disease in terms of the process of dissociation, the other in terms of the process of repression. The two conceptions are thus/

thus generally regarded as alternatives for purposes of explanation, though, as Rivers points out ("Instinct and the Unconscious", 1924, p.71.), some writers seem to use the two terms indifferently, without considering whether the conceptions involved are identical or not. In psychological circles, on the other hand, the situation is different. Both conceptions have been widely adopted into psychology, but, as far as psychologists are concerned, it would be as untrue to say that they are regarded as alternatives as it would be to say that they are regarded as identical. It remains true, however, that little attempt has been made, either in medical or psychological circles, to consider what relationship, if any, exists between the two processes of dissociation and repression. It is the aim of the present thesis to attempt to supply this want.

#### DISSOCIATION AND REPRESSION.

While it is true to say that little attempt has been made either by medical writers or psychologists to consider the relationship of dissociation and repression, it would be incorrect to say that no such attempt has been made at all. Of the attempts made the most notable are those of Dr W.H.R. Rivers and Professor William Mc Dougall. It is interesting to note that both these psychologists are also medical men.

Rivers' /

Rivers' views upon this subject are to be found in Chapter X of his "Instinct and the Unconscious". There he expresses his view that dissociation is essentially a state resulting from "suppression":- "suppression" being the term Rivers employs to describe the process of "repression" as ordinarily understood. He thus uses the term "dissociation" to describe a state in which suppressed experience may persist. He conceives it not as a passive state, but as a state characterised by independent activity of the repressed elements. He further assumes that this independent activity carries with it independent consciousness (Rivers, "Instinct and the Unconscious", 1924, p. 76.) From this summary it is plain that Rivers had a very definite idea of the relationship of dissociation and repression, but his view of this relationship cannot be regarded as satisfactory. It is unsatisfactory for several reasons:-

1. The first point which invites criticism is the narrowness of his conception of dissociation. The fact that this narrowness is the result of a deliberately imposed limitation in no way minimises the defect. That it was deliberately imposed is evident from the following quotation (Op. cit. p.76) -

"I propose therefore to use the term 'dissociation', not merely for a process and state in which suppressed experience acquires an independent activity, /

activity, but shall assume that this independent activity carries with it independent consciousness. In some cases in which we have obviously to do with independent activity as shown by behaviour, it may not be possible to demonstrate the existence of independent and dissociated consciousness, but I believe it will be convenient to limit the term 'dissociation' to cases where there is evidence of this independent consciousness."

By thus limiting dissociation to cases where there is evidence of independent consciousness, Rivers excludes many phenomena which seem best explained in terms of this process. The undesirability of confining the use of the term 'dissociation' to cases where there is evidence of independent consciousness will be shown in due course.

2. If Rivers' conception of dissociation is subject to criticism, the same holds true of his conception of repression, or, as he prefers to call it, 'suppression'. 'Suppression' is conceived by Rivers as the psychological correlate of that physiological function of inhibition, which the higher and later evolved elements of the nervous system exercise over the lower and more fundamental structures.

"The suppression which I have been considering in the last two chapters", he writes, "is only one aspect of/

of the universal physiological property of inhibition" (Op. cit. p.31). This identification is perhaps the natural result of Rivers' researches in collaboration with Henry Head and J. Sherrren on the physiology of the nervous system; but that it involves a stultifying of the conception of repression will be shown later, when the nature of repression is discussed. That such a process of inhibition as Rivers describes does actually exist need not be disputed. The researches of Head and his colleagues leave no room for doubt about the existence of a physiological process of this nature; and psychologists universally recognise the existence of an analogous process, for which they too employ the term 'inhibition'. It must be insisted, however, that this process is not the process of repression.

3. The third great weakness of Rivers' position follows from those to which attention has already been drawn. It lies in the fact that he regards dissociation as a narrower concept than repression. That he does so is evident from the following passage:-

"I assume, therefore, that suppression often exists without anything which we can regard as dissociation, that in many cases the suppressed content exhibits no form of independent activity with no evidence that it is accompanied by any form of consciousness". (Op. cit. p.77.)

Since, /

Since, in his opinion, dissociation is a state resulting from repression, it is obvious from this passage that, of the two concepts, dissociation is taken by Rivers to be very much the narrower. It will be one of the main objects of this thesis to show that this interpretation of their relationship is the reverse of the truth.

The most recent attempt to formulate the relationship between dissociation and repression is that found in Professor McDougall's "Outline of Abnormal Psychology" (1926). The difference between McDougall's formulation and that of Rivers is well shown by the following quotation from the book in question:-

"There are good grounds for distinguishing the process of repression from that of dissociation, as also the state of continued repression from a continuing state of dissociation" (op. cit. p.234).

According to McDougall, therefore, the two processes are radically and fundamentally distinct. Indeed the distinction between them constitutes the keynote of his book. He erects upon it a tentative classification of the functional nervous disorders. In this classification he distinguishes two groups of disorders:- one group characterised by dissociation, the other by repression. The chief representatives of/



of the group characterised by dissociation are hysteria among the psychoneuroses and manic-depressive insanity among the psychoses. The group characterised by repression includes neurasthenia and obsessional neurosis on the one hand, and dementia praecox and paranoia on the other. In formulating his views upon this subject, McDougall appears to have been markedly influenced by the theories of Dr C.G. Jung of Zurich, and in particular by Jung's theory of psychological types. This theory was originally expounded by Jung in his "Analytical Psychology" (1916), and more recently in his work entitled "Psychological Types" (1924). As is well known, Jung distinguishes two main temperamental types:- the Extrovert and the Introvert.

A person, he says, "is extroverted when he gives his fundamental interest to the outer or objective world, and attributes an all-important and essential value to it: he is introverted, on the contrary, when the objective world suffers a sort of depreciation, or want of consideration, for the sake of the exaltation of the individual himself, who then monopolising all the interest, grows to believe no one but himself worthy of consideration." (Jung. "Analytical Psychology", 2nd Ed. 1917. p.288).

Jung's distinction between these two types was based upon/

upon a study of the mentality of hysteria and dementia praecox. His studies led him to infer a temperamental difference between these two types of patients, and, starting from this observation, he was led to extend this classification to normal persons. The extrovert temperament was regarded as predisposing to hysteria, the introvert temperament to dementia praecox. McDougall appears to have been impressed by the appositeness of this classification; and he proceeded to adopt it with this modification, that, instead of recognising two distinct types, he conceived a temperamental scale with the extreme extrovert at one end and the extreme introvert at the other. This modification, however, did not affect the broad lines of Jung's classification, and McDougall's further views appear to have been developed on this basis. Accepting Janet's observation that dissociation was a characteristic of hysteria, he looked around for a process which might be regarded as characteristic of dementia praecox. This he found in the Freudian process of repression. Once these two processes had been attached to Jung's two psychological types, a place was found in the scheme for other functional affections besides hysteria and dementia praecox.

The theory of functional nervous diseases, which McDougall was thus led to erect under the influence of/

of Jung, was not without support derived from his own findings. He regarded it as supported not only by the clinical observation of patients suffering from the various functional disorders, but also by striking experimental evidence. One train of evidence was derived from his experience that the extrovert type was more susceptible to hypnosis than the introvert type. This conformed with the statements of Charcot and Janet that dissociation and liability to hypnosis were both distinctive characteristics of the hysteric, and with his own finding that in neurasthenia and dementia praecox hypnosis was peculiarly difficult to produce.

Another train of evidence was derived from a consideration of the bearing of experiments which he had conducted in the years 1912-14 on the influence of stimulant and depressant drugs upon mental process (vide Op. cit. p.444). The experimental material used was a model windmill, the arms of which were rotated at a rate of three revolutions per second. When such a model is watched from an angle of about  $25^{\circ}$  to the plane of rotation, the arms appear to reverse their direction periodically. The first observation, which McDougall made, was that the rate of alternation varied with different subjects in conformity with the general rule that introverts experienced rapid alternations, extroverts slow ones. The/

The second observation was that the rapidity of alternation could be altered for any given subject by the exhibition of either stimulant or depressant drugs:- stimulant drugs producing an increase, depressant drugs a decrease of rapidity. Subsequently McDougall interpreted this in the sense that these drugs altered the position of the subject on the introvert - extrovert scale, the depressants, including alcohol, favouring extroversion, the stimulants favouring introversion. The special susceptibility of extroverted persons to extroverting drugs and of introverted persons to introverting drugs was a necessary corollary. These conclusions were then related to the findings of the Committee appointed by the Liquor Control Board during the recent war to investigate the effects of alcohol:- findings which McDougall interpreted as showing that alcohol favours dissociation. The susceptibility of the extrovert to alcohol was thus further evidence of the liability of the extrovert to dissociation. The inference that the introvert, on the other hand, was specially subject to repression was supported by the findings of psychoanalysts to the effect that repression and introversion are constant companions.

It is in considerations of this nature that McDougall finds support for his thesis that dissociation and repression are two distinct, or indeed opposed, /

opposed, processes. Both are methods of dealing with mental conflict, but they are different methods.

Dissociation terminates conflict by effecting a separation of the conflicting elements, and thus provides a solution of conflict, however poor. Repression, on the other hand, merely obscures conflict by preventing one set of tendencies from gaining direct expression in consciousness (vide Op. cit. p.226).

Whatever else may be said about McDougall's interpretation of dissociation and repression as two distinct psychological processes, it is certainly the most interesting attempt which has been made to define their relationship. Examination of the theory, however, reveals many difficulties in the way of accepting it; an indication of their general nature is all that is necessary. Everything depends upon his ability to preserve the distinction which he formulates so definitely; yet this is just what he finds it impossible to do. Following Janet, he regards hysteria as characteristically a product of dissociation. Yet it was from the study of this same disease that Freud was led to formulate his theory of repression. If McDougall finds in hysteria all that is typical of dissociation, Freud finds in it all that is typical of repression. Further, if McDougall is right in saying that dissociation provides a solution of conflict, then it would seem that hysteria is the last disease in which to find evidence of its presence; for/

for in no functional disease are the symptoms more changeable or more easily aggravated. As a matter of fact, McDougall is quite unable to preserve intact his distinction between the two processes. He is forced openly to admit that "Conflict and repression prepare the way for, and may produce, dissociation". (op. cit. p.226.) In another place, referring to a case of traumatic hysteria, he says:-

"In cases such as case 3, where recovery from some simple dissociative disability is slow and gradual, or long postponed, we have to believe, I think, that the continuance of the dissociation is favoured by an active repression" (Op. cit. p.238).

He even goes so far as to say:-

"It is possible, although in my opinion the evidence does not warrant this view, that no dissociation takes place without some previous repression that prepares the way for it" (Op. cit. p.238).

These admissions seem to render meaningless the distinction which he takes such pains to establish.

If the two processes of dissociation and repression are so intimately connected and interact so constantly, McDougall's differentiation seems to be theoretically unjustifiable and is contradicted even by many of his own clinical observations.

The/..

The unsatisfactory nature of the theories of Rivers and McDougall regarding the relationship of dissociation and repression has led the writer of this thesis to seek a solution of the problem in another direction. In spite of the failure of the two theories which have been examined, they have served a useful purpose in clearing the ground and in indicating by their very failure the lines along which a solution may be sought. Rivers regarded dissociation as a state which might result from repression. To distort his view slightly, one might almost say that he regarded dissociation as a special form of repression. McDougall, on the other hand, suggests that they are wholly distinct processes. The most obvious remaining alternatives are either:— (a) that the two processes are identical, or (b) that repression is a special form of dissociation. The former of these alternatives:— viz. that the two processes are identical:— is rightly rejected by McDougall (Op. cit. p.234). The impossibility of accepting it will be evident when we come to discuss the various phenomena in which the process of dissociation manifests itself. These include sleep, the hypnotic state and states produced by alcohol and fatigue — conditions which can hardly be said to provide evidence of repression, unless indeed, following Rivers, we equate repression and inhibition. That we cannot follow Rivers, however, /

however, in identifying repression and inhibition will be shown when we compare Rivers' theory of repression with that of Freud. For the present, it will suffice to say that we cannot follow him because one of the most obvious features of these states is the relaxation of repression. It is in a man's dreams, in his cups and in fatigue that repressed tendencies are most ordinarily released.

If then it is impossible to regard dissociation and repression as identical processes, the alternative remains that repression is a special form of dissociation. That this is the case will be the main conclusion of this thesis.

Before we are in a position to draw this conclusion, however, it is necessary to consider the nature of each of these processes separately in some detail. Until this is done, it is impossible to see in what way repression can be regarded as a special form of dissociation. The necessity for this task arises from the fact that the two conceptions were formulated largely in relation to the needs of clinical medicine. They were framed primarily to promote the understanding and explanation of symptoms met with in clinical work. Whether these conceptions were compatible with the general principles of mental process recognised by psychology was a purely secondary consideration. This is particularly true in the case of the idea of repression. After all, Janet, to whom we owe the theory of dissociation, was a psychologist as/



as well as a medical man; and, although he worked with a psychology which is obsolete, his ideas can readily be expressed in more modern form. On the other hand, Freud, to whom we owe the theory of repression, regarded general psychology with indifference, if not with contempt. Consequently his psychoanalytical theory has been developed in complete independence of psychological ideas, and it has been formulated in highly metaphorical and anthropomorphic terms. Of this the idea of "The Censorship" is a good example. The close connection of such a metaphorical concept as "The Censorship" with Freud's theory of repression illustrates the need to determine what the exact psychological nature of the latter process is. This need is intensified by the fact that, when Freud introduced his theory of repression, he made no attempt to relate it to Janet's theory of dissociation, although this was already on the field.

In what follows it is proposed to devote attention first to the process of dissociation, then to the process of repression; finally, when the nature of each has been discussed, it will be possible to consider their relationship to one another, and to show how the present writer comes to regard repression as a special form of dissociation.

DISSOCIATION.

The term "Dissociation" is ordinarily applied by both medical and psychological writers to cases in which elements of mental life, which are ordinarily conscious, become split off from the main body of consciousness and maintain a high degree of independence. The dissociated elements have been described by some writers as parts of the mental content (e.g. "ideas", "memories", etc.), by others as aspects of mental functioning (e.g. "tendencies", "habits", "emotions", etc.). Others again, preferring physiological to psychological terms have described the dissociated elements in terms of systems of neurons. Whatever form the descriptions take, however, the important fact remains that the dissociated elements seem to exist or function independently of the personal consciousness. It is this cutting-off of mental elements from the personal consciousness which constitutes the essential feature of dissociation.

The conception of dissociation was first formulated by Pierre Janet, who was Professor of Psychology in the Collège de France, and Director of the Psychological Laboratory in the Clinique of the Salpêtrière. Janet combined a considerable psychological acumen with eminence as a neurologist, and he holds an important/

important place in the modern movement to bring psychology into relationship with medicine. This movement, which began to be effective towards the close of the 19th century, is proving of incalculable advantage to both sciences; and Janet is one of the leading figures in the history of this important development.

The hypothesis that mental elements may exist outside the limits of ordinary consciousness was not a new one. As Dr Bernard Hart points out (British Journal of Medical Psychology Vol.VI. Pt. 4.

"The Conception of Dissociation"), this hypothesis may be found in one form or another in the writings of various modern philosophers, before the day when psychology differentiated itself from philosophy as an independent study. One form which this hypothesis took was to the effect that, outside ordinary consciousness, lay elements of a like nature to those which are conscious but differing from them in intensity. These elements were conceived as being of such a low degree of intensity that they escaped awareness. The "petites perceptions" of the philosopher Leibniz were of this nature. (Leibniz - "New Essays on the Human Understanding", Latta's translation, Clarendon Press, p. 371) Such elements correspond to what psychologists in later times have described as "The fringe" of consciousness (Prof. William James - "Principles of Psychology" 1891, Vol.I, p.258). In accordance with this conception we/

we may imagine a field of consciousness analogous to the field of vision. Items which occupy the centre of the field are in the focus of attention and are vividly conscious, but, as we pass outwards from the centre of the field, we encounter items which are progressively less and less characterised by awareness. Ultimately we come to items of which awareness is minimal, and, if we pass beyond these, we leave the field of consciousness altogether. In the case of the field of vision many images, which fall on the periphery of the field, ordinarily escape notice; but that we are not altogether unaware of such images is shown by the fact that change or movement or the appearance of some unusual character in the image at once attracts attention, and there is a tendency for the eye to move in such a direction that the image may fall on the fovea. Similarly the sensations derived from the pressure of our habitual garments upon the body are not ordinarily attended to; but, if our collar comes off the stud, we at once notice the absence of the usual pressure sensations; we cannot, therefore, have been wholly unaware of the tactual sensations which the collar previously produced. Such phenomena are perfectly familiar, and the conception of mental elements characterised by a minimum of consciousness has a recognised place in psychology. The conception of extra-conscious/

extra-conscious mental elements in this sense, however, is quite different from the conception of extra-conscious elements involved in the process of dissociation. The mental elements involved in this latter conception are elements of which there is no personal awareness at all (not even minimal awareness).

To those who, following Janet, recognise a psychological process of dissociation, the dissociated elements do not cease to be mental because they have no place in consciousness. To philosophers and psychologists of the older school who regard "mental" and "conscious" as synonymous terms, the conception of dissociation can, of course, only be accepted on the hypothesis that the dissociated elements maintain an independent consciousness of their own outside the main, personal consciousness. Whether this be so or not, the conception of dissociation remains, so far as its essential nature is concerned, relatively unaffected. There are certain medical writers and certain schools of physiological psychologists, of whom the American Behaviourists are the most notable, who reject the theory of extra-conscious mental processes in this sense altogether. Such authorities prefer to substitute a purely physiological theory of dissociation, explaining the phenomena concerned purely in terms of synaptic resistances and inhibition. There does not, however, seem any reason, to deny the/  
the/

the existence of dissociated mental elements because there are dissociated paths in the nervous system. After all, the relationship between body and mind is intimate, and one would expect a certain analogy to exist between mental processes and the physiological processes to which they are related. Further, if extra-conscious mental processes are excluded from the purview of physiology this holds equally true of conscious processes. Indeed the Behaviourist school are logical enough to recognise this fact, and make an attempt to describe human behaviour without any reference to mental states at all. The task of physiology, of course, is to interpret the physical aspects of life in terms of physical conceptions; but, if any attempt is to be made to interpret the mental aspects of life, it is legitimate to introduce those psychological conceptions, which the mental facts to be explained appear to demand. The psychological conception of dissociation is of this nature.

The hypothesis that there exist mental processes, quite outside the personal consciousness, and which are not merely processes exhibiting a weak or minimal degree of consciousness, seems to be implied in the philosophy of the XVIIIth Century philosopher Immanuel Kant ("Critique of Pure Reason", 1781). A definite conception of "Unconscious" mental states finds a prominent place in the philosophy of Schopenhauer ("The/

("The World as Will and as Idea", 1819), and about the same time it is given a definitely psychological setting by Herbart ("Text-book of Psychology", 1816). These processes are conceived as different in character from those occurring in consciousness, but are regarded as capable of influencing and modifying the conscious processes themselves. It was to explain certain phenomena of conscious life that the existence of these unconscious processes was inferred. It appears to be through the medium of von Hartmann that the conception of unconscious mental processes was kept alive until modern times. The importance of von Hartmann (1842-1906) lies chiefly in the influence which his writings exercised upon Freud in the formulation of his well-known theory of the Unconscious. That the time was ripe for a conception of extra-conscious processes is evident from the fact that, in the latter half of the XIXth Century, Edward Carpenter, Höffding, F.W.H. Myers, William James and Janet, as well as Freud, all began to turn their attention to the consideration of "unconscious" or "sub-conscious" processes. Of the writers mentioned, Myers, James, Janet and Freud were all led to the hypothesis of extra-conscious mental states through the consideration of abnormal phenomena. Myers was led to this hypothesis through the study of the phenomena of spiritualism, James through the study of

of unusual religious experiences, Janet and Freud through the study of hysteria.

The clinical interest in the phenomena of hysteria, which directed the attention of both Janet and Freud to the existence of mental processes outside personal consciousness, was largely due to the inspiration of their teacher Charcot. The debt which these writers owe to Charcot's clinical teaching at the Salpêtrière has been explicitly acknowledged by both. Janet, however, does not seem to have been subject to the philosophical influences which affected the course of Freud's thought. The dual influence of philosophy and clinical experience upon Freud's views may be gathered from his paper on "The Unconscious" published in 1915 (vide "Collected Papers", Vol. IV No. 6.) Speaking of the justification of the conception of the unconscious, he says:-

"In many quarters our justification is disputed for assuming the existence of an unconscious system in the mind and for employing such an assumption for purposes of scientific work. To this we can reply that our assumption of the existence of the unconscious is necessary and legitimate, and that we possess manifold proofs of the existence of the unconscious. It is necessary because the data of consciousness are exceedingly defective; both in healthy and in sick persons mental/



mental acts are often in process which can be explained only by presupposing other acts, of which consciousness yields no evidence. These include not only the parapraxes and dreams of healthy persons, and everything designated a mental symptom or an obsession in the sick; our most intimate daily experience introduces us to sudden ideas of the source of which we are ignorant, and to results of mentation arrived at we know not how. All these conscious acts remain disconnected and unintelligible if we are determined to hold fast to the claim that every single mental act performed within us must be consciously experienced; on the other hand, they fall into a demonstrable connection if we interpolate the unconscious acts that we infer." (Pp. 98, 99).

It is thus evident that Freud's conception of the unconscious is not a mere generalisation based on observed clinical facts. It is a hypothesis on a grand scale, postulated in order to explain these facts. As Dr Bernard Hart points out ("Psychopathology", 1927, pp. 44 & 59f.), this hypothesis differs from a generalisation, just as Newton's hypothesis of gravitation differed from Kepler's generalisation that planets move in ellipses round the sun. It is here that we see the influence of the philosophies of Schopenhauer and von Hartmann upon/

upon Freud's thought. Although it was clinical interest that directed Freud's attention to the phenomena which led him to frame the hypothesis, he formulated it as a general law of the human mind.

Like Freud, Janet was led to formulate his conception of dissociation from a consideration of the clinical facts of hysteria and allied conditions, but his conception was of the nature of a generalisation rather than a hypothesis strictly speaking. From his observation of what he calls "The accidents of hysteria", such as anaesthesiae, paralyses and amnesiae, he came to the conclusion that in all cases there was a narrowing of consciousness. He did not formulate a general law of the mind, but contented himself with making a generalisation about a limited class of facts, which came under his notice in clinical work. This he frankly admits in the chapter entitled "L'Hystérie au point de vue psychologique" in his work "L'Etat Mental des Hystériques". His observations shewed him that certain functions, memories or ideas, which are present in the normal person, are absent in the hysteric, and that consciousness is thereby impoverished. From this he concluded that these elements are cut off from consciousness. Further, he noted that, though these functions, memories and ideas have escaped from consciousness, they do not cease to give evidence of their activity.

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He therefore inferred that they persist in the mind in independence of the main body of consciousness, and called them "sub-conscious".

The class of fact which led Janet to formulate his conception of dissociation is too well known to require more than a brief description. An example is the freedom from accidental injury which a hysterically anaesthetic limb enjoys. This phenomenon stands in striking contrast to what occurs when the anaesthesia is of organic origin. Janet's inference was that the sensations were not abolished but only cut off from personal consciousness. The "Yes or No" phenomenon, also found in cases of hysterical anaesthesia, received a similar interpretation. To elicit this phenomenon the patient is blind-folded and told to say "Yes" when he is touched on a normal limb, "No" when he is touched on an anaesthetic limb. It is frequently found that such a patient responds as appropriately to a touch on one limb as to a touch on the other. This indicates that sensation from the anaesthetic limb is not altogether absent from the mind, although it is absent from consciousness. Similarly, a hysterically blind patient is usually able to avoid obstacles placed in his path. In cases of hysterical paralyses, the power to move the paralysed limb by voluntary effort is lost, but its position changes in a manner impossible for a limb affected/

affected by organic paralysis. If the patient falls, the paralysed limb may be used in such a way as to save the patient from injury. In hysterical paralysis the appearance presented is thus what one would expect if the power to move the limb remained and the patient had forgotten how to move it. Further, it is found that lost powers of sensation and movement may be regained under hypnosis, the inference being that these powers have never been properly lost but only cut off from ordinary consciousness. The amnesiae of hysteria are likewise recoverable under hypnosis; and, although a hysteric may have an amnesia for a certain group of facts, his actions are often influenced by these facts in the absence of conscious knowledge.

In all such phenomena as these Janet concluded that the mental processes concerned were not abolished but only cut off or dissociated. Somnambulisms and fugues were likewise explained as the result of dissociation; here, however, the dissociation is on a vaster scale. When simple amnesia occurs, there is no wholesale impairment of the continuity of personal consciousness; in somnambulisms and fugues, on the other hand, the continuity of consciousness seems to be cut across abruptly and a new consciousness, apparently having nothing in common with the normal consciousness, is substituted for a period. At the end/

end of this period the old consciousness re-emerges as suddenly as it disappeared, and the temporary consciousness vanishes. Similarly, in the hypnotic trance the normal state of consciousness is replaced by an artificial state in which forgotten memories, inaccessible to normal consciousness, may be revived. When the normal state is restored, on the other hand, any events which took place in the hypnotic trance are immediately forgotten, unless the hypnotiser has given an injunction to the effect that they should be remembered. The phenomena of hypnotism were thus classed by Janet with somnambulisms, fugues and other symptoms of hysteria. All were explained as illustrations of the same process of dissociation, whereby certain mental elements are cut off from the personal consciousness without thereby ceasing to have a place in the mind.

It is not altogether clear from Janet's writings whether or not he regards the mental elements, which have suffered dissociation, as maintaining an independent consciousness of their own apart from the consciousness of the main personality. The word "sub-conscious", which Janet uses to describe such dissociated elements, implies on the face of it that they do not possess the characteristic quality of consciousness. There are passages also in which he speaks of the dissociated elements as if this were his/

his real view. Such a passage may be found on p. 66 in his work entitled "L'Etat Mental des Hystériques" (Paris, 1911), where he says:-

"Sans insister sur ces questions purement psychologiques, je me contente de faire remarquer que les études sur quelques formes particulières d'anesthésie, et en particulier l'étude du champ visuel, sont venues confirmer notre conclusion générale. Dans tous les cas, même dans le dernier, les sensations n'ont pas disparu absolument, elles sont simplement devenues subconscientes parce qu'elles sont sorties du champ de la conscience."

From this passage there can, of course, be no doubt that Janet regards the missing sensory elements in hysterical anaesthesia as preserved in the mental sphere; i.e. his theory is one of psychological not of physiological dissociation. This must be his meaning when he says that the sensations have not disappeared absolutely but have simply become sub-conscious. If the sensations, however, have not disappeared, the question arises whether they have preserved an independent consciousness of their own. From this passage taken at face value, it would appear that they are regarded as being properly unconscious:- "They have left the field of consciousness." The passage quoted, however, proceeds in a fashion which modifies/

modifies this interpretation of Janet's meaning.

It proceeds thus:-

"Le rétrécissement du champ visuel peut être considéré comme l'emblème de la sensibilité hystérique, en général. La perception personnelle, la conscience que nous avons nous-mêmes des faits de conscience est moins large; elles ne parvient plus à réunir la quantité normale des faits ordinairement perçus."

These further sentences indicate that Janet is using the word "consciousness" in two senses:- (a) as the quality of consciousness in general, (b) as the personal consciousness. It would appear that he is using it in the latter sense when he says that "the sensations have become sub-conscious simply because they have left the field of consciousness". If this be so, it follows that in speaking of "sub-conscious" sensations Janet merely means sub-conscious in relation to the main personal consciousness. He does not mean to imply that the sub-conscious elements have not some consciousness of their own. Indeed, the general tenor of his views seems to suggest that an independent consciousness is maintained by the dissociated elements. While it is difficult to find a passage in which Janet states this view explicitly, it is certainly the logical inference of his conception of dissociation. This, at any rate, is how  
Dr/

Dr Bernard Hart interprets him, in his article "The conception of the Unconscious" in the British Journal of Medical Psychology Vol. VI. (p.248). Contrasting Janet's "sub-conscious" with Freud's "Unconscious", he expresses the opinion that the divisions of the mind included under dissociation are divisions of consciousness.

"Janet's 'sub-conscious'," he says "comprises those instances of dissociation where the lack of integration is such that there is a lack of mutual awareness between two streams, but in every other respect the processes concerned have all the attributes of consciousness. The division of dissociation is, therefore, a division within consciousness."

The present writer has been unable to find an explicit statement by Janet to this effect, but at any rate it is the logical outcome of the conception of dissociation as he framed it.

What Janet leaves to be inferred from his views has been explicitly formulated by other writers, who have derived their inspiration from Janet's work. Among these may be mentioned Professor Morton Prince, who is perhaps the most notable of those who have applied the idea of dissociation to the explanation of abnormal mental states. Most of his attention was devoted to the study of cases of multiple personality, which/



which he explained as due to a dissociation of consciousness. These cases, of course, lend themselves more easily than any other phenomena known to psychopathology to an interpretation based on the division of consciousness. This is evident in the case of Miss B. whose mental state is studied in Morton Prince's work "The Dissociation of a Personality". Miss B.'s life history was characterised by periods in which her normal personality appeared to be replaced by the totally different personality of "Sally". The two personalities had mental characteristics as different as any two individuals, and they had a separate set of memories. Miss B. was not aware of Sally's existence, but Sally was aware of Miss B. as an external personality. Cases of this nature led Morton Prince to formulate the view that the individual personality was capable, under conditions which favoured dissociation, of being split up into two or more separate entities, each of which had a consciousness of its own. The evidence led him to the conclusion that, when one of these personalities occupied the stage, the other personalities or personality persisted in a state which was none the less conscious because dissociated. To this state he gave the name of "Conscious". Where the dissociation involved elements too few to constitute a separate personality he believed that there resulted such phenomena as the anaesthae, /

anaesthesiae, paralyses, amnesiae etc., to which Janet had called attention; in all cases, however, the dissociated elements have, in his view, a detached consciousness of their own, and they are described as co-conscious. Accordingly, he divided those phenomena, which appear to influence behaviour without appearing in the personal consciousness, into two groups:-

1. The unconscious, which consists in neurological dispositions and processes,
2. The co-conscious, which consists in dissociated mental elements, which, while outside personal awareness, are yet characterised by a consciousness of their own. (Ref. Morton Prince, "The Unconscious", 1910, Preface p.X.) The Co-conscious he regarded as identical with Janet's "Sub-conscious". (Op. cit. p.252).

Rivers adopts an essentially similar view regarding dissociated mental elements. Taking the fugue as the most characteristic product of dissociation, he concludes that the existence of an independent consciousness is the most characteristic feature of dissociation. ("Instinct and the Unconscious" p. 76). Rivers, however, differs from Morton Prince in that he recognises the existence of mental elements which, while inaccessible to the personal consciousness, are yet unaccompanied by a consciousness of their own. Such elements, as already indicated, he describes as "suppressed experience", and in this category he includes/

includes many of the phenomena which would be described by Janet as "sub-conscious", and by Morton Prince "co-conscious". "Suppression", as he conceives it, is a wider concept than "dissociation", which, for him, amounts to a special form of suppression. It is that form of suppression in which the suppressed elements retain a consciousness of their own.

Rivers' view of dissociation raises the question whether the existence of independent consciousness in the dissociated elements is a satisfactory criterion for differentiating dissociation from other mental processes. McDougall, discussing dissociation in his "Outline of Abnormal Psychology", disputes the advisability of adopting this criterion. Not that McDougall denies the fact that such an independent consciousness may exist. On the contrary, in discussing automatisms, such as fugues, somnambulisms and hysterical fits, in Chap. XII, he brings forward considerations which, to use his words, "point strongly to the view that in all automatic actions we have to do with expressions of a subsidiary stream of conscious mental activity, which we may best describe by the term 'co-conscious activity', following Dr Morton Prince." (Op. cit. p.255.) McDougall believes, however, that the existence of co-conscious activity is not an essential or necessary feature of dissociation. Accordingly, in the following passage, he protests against the use of the phrase "dissociation of/

of consciousness", and suggests "dissociation of the personality" as a substitute:—

"Many authorities write of 'dissociation of consciousness'; Janet has used more frequently the expression 'disaggregation of consciousness'. This way of speaking is, it seems to me, unfortunate; for it begs two of the great questions raised by the phenomena: first it implies the questionable assumption that consciousness is an aggregation, that the stream of normal thinking is, somehow, compounded of elements of consciousness capable of independent or separate existence; in short, it assumes the truth of some form of the atomistic psychology. Secondly, it implies that, in the dissociated state, elements of consciousness that should have become aggregated in the main stream have some sort of existence or subsistence in a collateral stream; and this also is a disputable assumption. It is better, therefore, to speak of dissociation of the personality." (Ref. Op. cit. p.234.).

McDougall's contention appears to be well-founded. One cannot help feeling that to seek the differentia of dissociation in the presence of independent consciousness is to pursue wrong lines. What is distinctive about the dissociated elements is not independent/

independent consciousness but independent activity. That consciousness may accompany this activity is theoretically possible, and the facts of certain conditions, such as multiple personality, indicate that this may sometimes be the case. This, however, is mainly a matter of theoretic interest, and leaves on one side the essential problems of dissociation in their more important and practical bearing. It is without doubt this fact which explains the absence from Janet's writings of explicit statements regarding the presence or otherwise of an independent consciousness accompanying dissociated states. Janet's attention was focussed upon the essential features of dissociation, and he did not find the presence of an independent consciousness in the dissociated elements to be one of them. Hence the problem involved did not attract his explicit attention. Co-consciousness is implied in his view, but that is all.

It is to another feature of the process of dissociation that Janet looks for its essential nature. This feature is independence of activity as against independence of consciousness. This is perhaps due to the fact that it was the study of the ordinary symptoms of hysteria rather than of the fugue and the multiple personality that led him to the idea of dissociation. In one of his lectures at Harvard University/

University in the autumn of 1906, he summarises his view of hysteria as follows:-

"Hysteria is a form of mental depression characterized by a retraction of the field of personal consciousness and a tendency to the dissociation and emancipation of the systems and functions that constitute personality." (Ref. "The Major Symptoms of Hysteria", 1907, p. 332).

In this definition Janet singles out two processes as constituting the essential features of hysteria:-

1. Retraction of the field of personal consciousness,
2. A tendency to dissociation and emancipation of the systems and functions that constitute personality.

These two processes are, however, merely two aspects of one and the same process. This single process is, properly speaking, the process of dissociation itself. It is a process whereby certain mental elements or functions are excluded from personal consciousness, and this inevitably involves a narrowing of the conscious field. Whether the excluded elements or functions themselves may retain a certain consciousness of their own, and, if so, whether they invariably do so are questions about which we need not concern ourselves unduly. These are secondary considerations which do not affect the fundamental nature of dissociation itself.

It seems desirable, therefore, to look for the characteristic/

characteristic feature of dissociation where Janet found it:— in the exclusion or cutting off of certain mental elements from the field of personal consciousness, which is thereby narrowed. This may also be expressed by saying that it is a narrowing of the conscious field whereby certain mental elements are cut off; but it is the cutting off that is the characteristic feature.

The value of Janet's conception of dissociation as a process whereby mental elements are cut off from personal consciousness has been widely recognised by psychologists, and indeed may now be said to have found a place in orthodox psychology. There are, however, certain features of Janet's formulation, which, although they may escape the notice of medical clinicians, yet prove unacceptable to most psychologists. Fortunately, they do not affect the conception in its essential nature; but, if inconsistency between medical and psychological ideas is to be avoided, it is essential that they should be recognised.

The chief weakness of Janet's formulation, which are two in number, have been admirably pointed out by Bernard Hart in the article already quoted ("The Conception of Dissociation", British Journal of Medical Psychology, Vol.VI. p.242f.). The most important of these weaknesses is dependent on the fact that Janet set out with a psychology which is now recognised/

recognised on all hands to be misleading. This is the so-called "Associationist Psychology", which traces its ancestry to the philosophers Locke, Berkeley and Hume, and which dominated psychological thought in France and Britain until the opening of the present century. Indeed, although it is now discountenanced, its influence is not even yet dead. According to the Associationist School, the content of the mind is made up of a number of separate items or ideas, which are compounded together to form more complex products, but which are in themselves simple and indivisible. This atomistic conception of mind-stuff is untrue to the facts of the mind, just as an analogous idea would be untrue of the physical organism. The organism functions as a whole, and, while various aspects of its functioning may be distinguished and separately described, the organism does not consist in a collection of separate functions, one of which may be subtracted without vitally affecting all the others. Thus it is inconceivable that the bile-secreting function of the liver should be "dissociated" from the rest of its functions, leaving the liver's activity unaffected except for the loss of this one function. Similarly, the mind does not consist in an aggregation of separate elements or functions, one of which can be split off from the rest without any effect except its loss. Yet this is the atomistic conception of the mind which Janet accepted from the Associationists, /



Associationists, and it introduces a weakness into his formulation of the process of dissociation.

The other great weakness of Janet's formulation was due to his enslavement to the spatial metaphor. He modelled his conception of the field of consciousness upon the field of vision, which has a spatial reference. He observed in hysterics a concentric narrowing of the visual field, which resulted in the exclusion of peripheral images from conscious perception (Vide "The Major Symptoms of Hysteria", p.197). Yet one of his patients with a visual field of  $5^{\circ}$  could be reduced to a paroxysm of terror, if the image of a lighted match fell on the peripheral field (p.198). Such cases led him to assume a dissociation of the peripheral field of vision. Janet ascribed to consciousness in general a field based on the analogy of the visual field: "Le Rétrécissement du champ visuel peut être considéré comme l'emblème de la sensibilité hystérique, en général." (L'Etat Mental des Hystériques, p.67). He thus described dissociation in general as if it involved a cutting off of part of a spatial field. This is a useful metaphor, but, since the mind is not in space, the metaphor, if pressed too far, leads to an over-simplification of facts too complex to be expressed so simply. Janet is not the only medical psychologist who has been misled by applying the spatial metaphor too rigidly to/

to mental processes. Freud has committed the same mistake. His original division of the mind into the Conscious, the Pre-conscious and the Unconscious, and his later division of it into the Ego, the Id and the Super-ego are both conceived too much in spatial terms, and this constitutes one of the chief weakness of his theory, as it does of Janet's.

Under the influence then, of the Associationist psychology and an enslavement to the spatial metaphor, Janet conceived dissociation as the separation of a mental element or a group of elements from the main aggregation of such elements which he conceived to constitute the mind. The unsatisfactory nature of this view is best realised when we consider such a large-scale dissociation as is involved in cases of multiple personality. In such cases it is often found that certain elements find a place in more than one of the dissociated personalities. Sometimes, too, the barrier raised by the dissociation is, so to speak, permeable in one direction only. This is best seen in cases which exhibit "Co-conscious" phenomena. Here we have not merely an alternation of personalities, but evidence suggesting a co-existence of the personality which is in abeyance at the moment. Thus in the case of Miss B., recorded by Morton Prince, the secondary personality Sally was aware of Miss B.'s thoughts and activities as those of another person, but/

but Miss B. was totally unaware of the very existence of Sally (vide Morton Prince, "The Dissociation of a Personality"). Similarly, in the hypnotic state a patient has access to the memories of the normal state, but no memories of what occurred in a hypnotic state are accessible to the normal consciousness, unless a suggestion is given to that effect. Such phenomena are hard to reconcile with Janet's description of dissociation as a process whereby a number of mental elements are separated 'en masse' from the totality of the mind. This is pointed out by Bernard Hart in his article on "The Conception of Dissociation" (British Journal of Medical Psychology, Vol.VI, p.243).

A further objection to Janet's notion of dissociated mental elements existing in an isolated state is raised by Dr T.W. Mitchell ("The Psychology of Medicine", 1921, p.33). As Mitchell points out, "Thoughts and feelings cannot be left floating about in the void, unclaimed by any thinker". He adds that "While the patient is awake and aware of some things, dissociated sensations or perceptions may provide evidence of a concurrent discriminative awareness of other things, as effective as that which characterizes the sensory or perceptive activity of the conscious waking self", (p.34). This fact may be illustrated by the "Yes or No" phenomenon of hysteria, to which reference has already been made. This phenomenon shows that, although sensations from the anaesthetic limb/

limb are not consciously appreciated, the function involved is not cut off from the structure of the mind - a fact which is obscured in Janet's formulation of dissociation. In this respect Freud's conception of "Repression" is more satisfactorily formulated; for, although, according to Freud, repressed elements are unconscious, he still regards them as part of the structure of the mind and as capable of influencing behaviour.

Janet's associationist and spatial preconceptions thus impose a profound limitation upon his conception of dissociation, and introduce insuperable difficulties in the application of the conception to many of the phenomena which it ought to be able to explain. To quote Bernard Hart:-

"Dissociation does not separate the mind into pieces, it only produces more or less independently acting functional units, each such unit comprising material which may be peculiar to itself, but which may just as well form a part of any number of other functional units. The distinguishing character does not lie in the material of which it is composed, but in the set or pattern. Instead of regarding dissociation as the splitting of conscious material into separate masses, it must be regarded as an affair of gearing, the various elements of mental machinery/

machinery being organized into different functional systems by the throwing in of the appropriate gear". (Article in B.J.M.P. Vol.VI, p.247).

The conception of dissociation, which Bernard Hart advocates as a substitute for the spatial conception of Janet, is described by him as "The functional conception". Interpreted in this sense, the conception of dissociation has been widely accepted by psychologists, but medical writers too often cling to the original spatial formulation. In the interests of clarity and conformity to the facts of the mind, it is desirable that medical thought should adapt itself to the "functional" conception of dissociation.

Interpreted in the functional sense, dissociation is a phenomenon of the mind which is not necessarily abnormal. Undoubtedly it is in abnormal mental states that the process is seen in its most striking form; but it may also be observed in perfectly normal individuals under certain conditions. The conditions under which dissociation occurs in normal individuals seem, therefore, to deserve some consideration, if the true nature of dissociation is to be properly understood. Attention must consequently be devoted to this aspect of the subject, and, for reasons which will appear shortly, the nature of the material dissociated will be specially noted.

Emotion in itself is a perfectly normal phenomenon  
of/

of the mind, but dissociation appears to be one of its invariable accompaniments. Since Professor William McDougall first formulated his theory of Instinct ("Social Psychology", 1908), it has come to be recognised that, when any deeply-rooted innate tendency is profoundly stirred, a feeling-state is liable to make its appearance. Certain of these innate tendencies have associated with their activity emotions which are quite characteristic - the instinct of pugnacity, for example, having associated with it the characteristic emotion of anger. When an instinct is powerfully appealed to, Nature appears to have provided that all other tendencies irrelevant to the situation in hand should be inhibited. The importance of this arrangement is evident when we consider how much the survival-value of the instinct of escape would be compromised, if, in a danger-situation, the activity of other tendencies were not temporarily suspended. In such a situation, it is of obvious advantage that all the activities of the organism should be directed to the end of escape, and to that end alone. If, therefore, the object of the instinct of escape is to be attained, it is of first-class importance that no competing tendency, e.g. food-seeking or mating, should be allowed any opportunity of expression. The emotion which tends to develop, when the tendency of escape is aroused, is, of course, the emotion of fear; /



fear; and its function would seem to be to reinforce the tendency with which it is associated by filling consciousness to the exclusion of all else. This involves the exclusion from consciousness of all that is not relevant to the situation. There is at once a narrowing and intensifying of consciousness - exactly what Janet showed to occur in the case of hysteria. In a word, the development of emotion involves a process of dissociation. What holds true of the emotion of fear holds true of emotion in general. To quote Dr James Drever:-

"The most interesting of the psychological effects of emotion is probably the narrowing and specializing of consciousness. When under the influence of a strong emotion we may become blind and deaf to everything which is not relevant to the end determined by the emotion; we may forget principles and resolutions; we may even temporarily break away from what might be described as characteristically the whole trend of our life activity. In all these cases the psychological process known as 'dissociation' is involved, and some kind and degree of emotional dissociation is a matter of everyday experience. This is more than the mere regulative function of feeling. It is a definite blocking of those connecting paths in the nervous system - and in the mind - which normally/

normally ensure the due balance and control of our various interests and activities. In extreme cases an individual may lose control of fundamental muscular and sensory mechanisms. Speech may be lost, and the control of still earlier and more primitive functions and co-ordinations may disappear. Usually this dissociation is merely temporary, and normal conditions are restored as the emotion passes away. Occasionally, however, more or less permanent dissociations may take place, when the case becomes distinctly pathological. Numerous instances of such pathological dissociation occurred during the war, and in their various forms were all popularly included under the designation 'shell-shock'." (James Drever, "The Psychology of Everyday Life", 1927, p.35.)

From this statement it is evident that, although the development of emotion may result in an abnormal degree and extent of dissociation, a tendency to dissociation is a perfectly normal accompaniment of emotion. Further, if we consider the nature of the elements or functions which tend to be dissociated under the influence of emotion, they are seen to be those elements or functions which are irrelevant to the situation with which the organism is faced at the time.

The influence of emotion in producing dissociation/



dissociation did not escape the notice of Janet. Indeed, he drew particular attention to this phenomenon. Thus Chapter VI in Part II of his "L'Etat Mental des Hystériques" is entitled "L'Amnésie et la Dissociation des Souvenirs par L'Emotion". In this chapter he studies the case of Irène, a young woman of twenty-three, who for two years had suffered from a hysterical state characterised chiefly by hallucinatory somnambulisms and a profound amnesia. These phenomena were traced by Janet to the influence of intense emotions experienced at the death of her mother. He concludes that in this; as in other cases which he studied, emotion was responsible for the dissociation which had developed. Thus, towards the end of the chapter in question he says:-

"Enfin la précédente étude mettait en évidence le rôle considérable de l'émotion pour produire cette dissociation de la synthèse mentale." (Op. cit. p. 532).

The phrase "Dissociation of mental synthesis" draws attention to a feature of Janet's views to which reference will be made later:- the view, namely, that dissociation is the result of a failure of mental synthesis. Janet interprets the rôle played by emotion in producing dissociation in terms of this general conception. This is not the place to criticise his conception of mental synthesis, but his observation/

observation that emotion favours dissociation admits of no dispute.

Another group of phenomena, which Janet attributes to failure of mental synthesis, are the phenomena of suggestion. (Vide Op. cit. p.237). Influenced by the clinical studies of Charcot and Babinski, he regarded the phenomena of suggestion as specially characteristic of hysteria. He did not go so far as Babinski, whom he quotes as saying "A phenomenon is hysterical when it can be produced through suggestion and cured through persuasion". (Vide Janet, "The Major Symptoms of Hysteria", p.325). But Janet did regard suggestibility as a pathological phenomenon, and he classed it as one of the great stigmata of hysteria (p.279). He says "A tendency to suggestion and subconscious acts is the sign of mental disease, but it is, above all, the sign of hysteria", (p.289); and again "I have never seen a finely suggestible subject who was not clearly hysterical" (p.290). This view is undoubtedly an exaggeration, although there can be no question about the suggestibility of hysterical patients. Janet himself admits, albeit somewhat grudgingly, that suggestion may take place with subjects who are not hysterical. In the "Revue Philosophique" of 1888, he himself described a case of remarkable suggestibility in a man convalescent from acute delirium. He admits that the conditions, which/

which makes suggestion possible, arise in various infective diseases, in intoxications and alcoholism, in nervous diseases like neurasthenia and chorea, and also in the case of imbeciles (L'Etat Mental des Hystériques, p. 237); but he is careful to add:-

"Il faut avouer qu'il y a une maladie particulière qui réunit d'une façon merveilleuse les deux conditions essentielles de la suggestion, la conservation de l'automatisme et la diminution de la synthèse personnelle: c'est l'état hystérique".

It is impossible at the present time to follow Janet in the opinion that suggestion is an abnormal phenomenon. While it must be admitted that, in certain abnormal conditions like hysteria, suggestibility assumes a pathological form, the psychology of rumour proves beyond question that normal individuals are amenable to the influence of suggestion. The fact is that suggestion is a phenomenon of dissociation. The reason that suggestibility was found by Janet to be such an important stigma of hysteria lies in the fact that hysteria exhibits dissociation in such a marked degree. Dissociation is not, however, necessarily an abnormal phenomenon. It is only abnormal when it gets out of hand. We have already seen that it is a necessary accompaniment of emotion, and, although excessive emotionality is pathological, emotion/

emotion itself is not. Similarly, suggestion in itself is a perfectly normal process due to dissociation; it only becomes pathological if dissociation is excessive.

Suggestion, in the psychological sense, has been defined by McDougall as "A process of communication resulting in the acceptance with conviction of the communicated proposition in the absence of logically adequate grounds for its acceptance" ("Social Psychology", 21st Edition, enlarged, 1921, p.83).

Rivers regards it as a process corresponding to the cognitive aspect of the gregarious instinct (Vide "Instinct and the Unconscious", 1924, p.91; but, be that as it may, it is essentially a social phenomenon involving a personal relationship.

It is a "Method of exerting personal influence by which one individual is brought to accept from another a statement, opinion, or belief, and to act upon it, without having, or seeking to have, adequate logical grounds for its acceptance".

(Drever, "Psychology of Everyday Life", p.51).

Drever goes on to say:-

"The general condition upon which suggestion depends may be best described by saying that, when any idea presents itself in our consciousness, which involves believing or acting in a certain way, any factors which prevent opposing ideas rising in consciousness will tend to make us believe or act/

act in accordance with the idea presented, and so far therefore make us suggestible. The extent to which opposing ideas can be prevented from rising in consciousness will be a measure of suggestibility. This prevention of the rise of opposing ideas is of the nature of dissociation, which we have already met with as a characteristic phenomenon of emotion. Suggestion might therefore be described as a means of producing dissociation, and suggestibility as the tendency for dissociation phenomena to manifest themselves under certain special conditions. .... Conditions which favour suggestion are in the main conditions which, directly or indirectly, inhibit opposing ideas."

(p. 52-53).

This passage shows with admirable clearness the part played by dissociation in the phenomena of suggestion; it also gives us some insight into the nature of the material which is dissociated when suggestion becomes effective. The nature of the dissociated material becomes evident from the statement that "the extent to which opposing ideas can be prevented from rising in consciousness will be a measure of suggestibility". It is "opposing ideas" that are dissociated in suggestion. Every idea that is incompatible with the suggested idea is cut off from acceptance and from motor expression. In the case of suggestion, therefore, /

therefore, it is incompatibility with the content of the suggestion given that determines what ideas and tendencies shall be dissociated.

Allied to the dissociation which occurs in suggestion is that which occurs in hypnosis. As we have already seen, the Nancy School went so far as to say that the hypnotic state was simply ordinary sleep induced by suggestion. This view is certainly an over-simplified explanation of a complex phenomenon, although, under Bernheim's influence, suggestion is now universally employed to produce hypnosis. Whatever be the fundamental character of the hypnotic state, however, exaggerated suggestibility is certainly one of its most characteristic features. This being so, we should expect to find evidence of dissociation in the hypnotic state, and indeed hypnosis furnishes us with perhaps the most remarkable example of a dissociated state. It is familiar knowledge that almost any dissociation of which a human being is capable may be produced in a hypnotised person. Anaesthesiae, paralyses, rigidity, contractures and all the host of phenomena familiar in hysteria may be induced or removed at the word of the hypnotist. The subject may also be made to exhibit characteristics so foreign to his normal character as to remind us of the phenomena of multiple personality. That the hypnotic state is characterised by a process of dissociation/

dissociation may also be gathered from the amnesia, which, unless a suggestion be given to the contrary, prevents the subject, on the restoration of normal consciousness from recalling the events of the seance - an amnesia which is absolute, unless the hypnotist gives a suggestion to the contrary. Here again the nature of the dissociated material seems to be determined by incompatibility with the suggestions of the hypnotist.

The similarity of the hypnotic state to ordinary sleep is witnessed by the name "hypnosis", which, as is well known, is derived from the Greek <sup>σ</sup>ύπνος for 'sleep'. Whether the Nancy School are right or wrong in describing the hypnotic state as one of sleep induced by suggestion, at any rate ordinary sleep furnishes another typical example of dissociation. Whatever be the physiological conditions of sleep (and of these there appears to be no certainty among physiologists), in its psychological aspect sleep displays all the characteristic features of dissociation. As we sink into sleep, there is a progressive development of functional anaesthesiae, paralyses and amnesiae. The functions of sensation, perception, thought and memory quit the field of consciousness. Feelings and emotions vanish, and the powers of voluntary movement desert us. Attention lapses, and the field of consciousness becomes progressively/

progressively narrowed, until it is completely bereft of content and a state of unconsciousness ensues. All this is typical of dissociation as observed in the phenomena of hysteria and hypnosis. As in these conditions, the dissociated functions are not lost. The sleeper adjusts his position and makes more or less adapted movements such as pushing back the clothes if he is too hot. These activities occur, however, without the intervention of consciousness. Similarly, the sensory functions are not abolished with consciousness; otherwise, it would be impossible to understand how sounds could awake the sleeper. It is a significant fact, in this connection, that not all sounds do awaken the sleeper. He can sleep through sounds to which he is accustomed, however loud these may be; but even the faintest sound may awaken him if it is a sound which would have a marked significance for him in waking life, i.e. if it appeals to a powerful innate or acquired interest. Thus a mother may sleep through a thunderstorm and yet awaken at the faintest sound from her baby. Facts such as these show that the various mental functions are not abolished in sleep. They are merely dissociated. In normal sleep the dissociation is more massive than is usual in hysteria or hypnosis - although the hysterical and the hypnotic trance remind us that massive dissociation is not confined to normal sleep. When/



When sleep is deep, dissociation may be said to be total; but in the lighter degrees of sleep dissociation is less extensive - as is evident from the occurrence of dreams. That some degree of dissociation is present even in light sleep may be gathered from the ease with which dreams are forgotten. Here we have another example of amnesia dependent upon dissociation.

If we proceed to consider the nature of the mental elements which are dissociated in sleep, we are faced with a difficulty which did not meet us in the case of the dissociations produced by emotion, suggestion and hypnosis. In the case of emotion we find a dissociation of all those thoughts, interests and tendencies, which are irrelevant to the tendency activated by the situation with which the organism is faced. In suggestion and hypnosis we find a dissociation of all that is incompatible with ideas present to the subject. In sleep, however, there seems to be a dissociation of all mental content whatsoever. Sleep appears to be primarily determined by the need of the organism for rest, and, at first sight, it seems a pointless task to try to bring the dissociated material under any classification at all. A little consideration, however, shows that the task is not so hopeless. The fact that the need for rest determines the onset of sleep itself provides a clue. If we study the behaviour of a person seeking sleep, we find that he withdraws himself so/

so far as possible from all sources of sensory stimulation. He seeks a quiet and dark room, lies down in a bed where he is protected from extremes of temperature, and, by relaxing his muscles, renders himself as far as possible immune from kinaesthetic sensations. He thus takes measures to prevent the occurrence of stimuli which fill consciousness with content and stir powerful tendencies. He puts himself under conditions which favour a lapsing of the ordinary interests of the day. If, however, the last condition is not fulfilled, and his mind is occupied with thoughts carried over from the day's activities, sleep is likely to be deferred, even though the other conditions are secured. Normally, however, when the need for rest makes itself felt, the interests of the day automatically sink into abeyance. This may be interpreted as a dissociation of all mental content which is incompatible with the innate rest-seeking tendency. Another interpretation is, however, possible, when we further consider how naturally the interests of the day lapse when the need for sleep makes itself felt. This automatic lapsing of ordinary interests suggests that, under the influence of fatigue, the objects and thoughts which usually excite attention have temporarily lost their power of doing so. They have become irrelevant for the time being. Indeed, we may say that, when the need for/

for rest becomes acute, the whole world becomes irrelevant; hence the massive dissociation of sleep.

The truth of this interpretation becomes evident, when we consider the well-known fact that, if a fundamental tendency or deep-seated interest is appealed to by a situation of great emergency, sleep may be deferred for almost incredible periods. This was a common occurrence in the recent war. Another confirmation of the view suggested is to be found in the observation that a sleeper may be wakened by a minute stimulus bearing on a deep-seated interest, even when a much greater stimulus with no such significance leaves sleep undisturbed. Attention has already been drawn to the liability of a sleeping mother to awake at the slightest sound relevant to her interest in her child. Another example may be found in an every-day observation of war-time. The gunner, who sleeps undisturbed by the sounds of his own guns in action, may be wakened by an enemy shell-burst which is not so loud, or even by a whisper of warning from a comrade. Additional support for the view that sleep is a dissociation of the irrelevant may be found in the study of animal behaviour. McDougall, in a discussion of the states of fatigue and sleep, has drawn attention to the insight into the nature of these processes, which he gained from observing the behaviour of his dog. (Vide "An Outline/  
line/

Outline of Abnormal Psychology", Chap.III). His observations played an important part in leading him to the formulation of his "Hormic Psychology" in general. He observed that, in the absence of a situation which appealed to an instinctive tendency and thus stirred an interest in his dog, the animal tended to sink into a state of quiescence and sleep. Thus he writes:-

"My dog, left alone in a quiet spot, grows quiet; his nose sinks down upon his paws, and presently he dozes. But let any one of a limited number of things occur, and instantly he is all excitement and activity, putting forth a most copious flow of energy. And the things or events that provoke such sudden outbursts of energy are those that appeal to his instincts." (Op. cit. p.61-2).

McDougall interprets this observation in the sense that the dissociation leading to sleep tends to occur in the absence of circumstances that activate any powerful tendency (p.66). It would seem, therefore, that, when no strong interest is appealed to, the environment becomes irrelevant, and it is this irrelevance that determines the massive dissociation of sleep in its psychological aspects. This irrelevance may, of course, be determined either internally or externally. It may be determined, on the one hand, by the need for rest or by poverty of interest; on the other hand, it may be determined by monotony of the

the environment (a well-known cause of sleep among listeners, when a dull sermon is in progress). In either case, however, sleep appears to be a dissociation of the irrelevant.

A process of dissociation similar to that, which occurs in sleep, is witnessed in all states of fatigue which fall short of sleep. In its physiological aspects fatigue appears to affect the nervous system by raising the synaptic resistances. On the principle expounded by Hughlings Jackson, those functions of the nervous system which are latest evolved are the most unstable. Consequently, fatigue products may be conceived as affecting most easily the synapses involved in the association paths, leaving relatively unaffected those neuron-systems which correspond to fundamental activities. The physiological effects of fatigue would thus seem to result in relative isolation of the more stable neuron-systems, which thus tend to function independently, if activated by an appropriate stimulus. This is, of course, the phenomenon of physiological dissociation. When we consider the psychological aspects of the fatigue-state, we find the analogous phenomenon of psychological dissociation. In fatigue there is a tendency for activity to become automatic and unrelated to consciousness. The fact that activity tends to be withdrawn from awareness and from conscious control seems /

seems to account in some measure for the mistakes which a fatigued person is liable to make in the performance of a skilled activity, such as typewriting or driving a motor-car. It has been a frequent defence, when a signalman has been charged with negligence leading to a railway accident, that he was worn out as the result of nursing a sick person in his hours off-duty. In such cases it is common for the accused person to say that he did not notice that a signal lever was pulled back. This does not mean that the relevant visual sensations were absent; it means that these sensations were out of relation to the general consciousness. They had become irrelevant for the time being as a result of the need for rest. In fatigue, therefore, as in sleep, it is a case of dissociation of the irrelevant.

A similar dissociation to that produced by fatigue appears to occur as a result of the action of depressant drugs. Of these drugs alcohol may be regarded as typical. The effect of alcohol in producing dissociation has been investigated in considerable detail by McDougall, who makes reference to the result of his investigations in Chapters III and XXVIII of his "Outline of Abnormal Psychology". McDougall points out (p.69) that it is the blunting of the critical side of self-awareness by alcohol, which constitutes its charm for those who seek escape from/

from anxiety, care and mental conflict. As a result of its action considerations based on the higher sentiments are banished from the field of consciousness, and the more primitive instinctive tendencies gain an opportunity for expression. The removal of the critical functions from the conscious field leads to an absence of self-control, and the tendency of the moment fills consciousness. To quote McDougall (p.70), "both introspectively and objectively this lack of self-control is clearly discernible in every stage of alcoholic intoxication". In the first stage, this is evident in the fact that conversation loses its normal restraint. In the second stage, sense perception and skilled movements are disturbed. The significance of visual and auditory sensations is imperfectly realised, unless they are definitely relevant to the tendency of the moment. Movements are ill-adjusted, and the subject is often unaware that movements have taken place until he observes their results:- e.g. until he finds he has upset a glass or burnt the tablecloth with a cigarette. The drinker himself realises that many movements occur without his conscious initiation or intention. In the third stage, the impoverishment of consciousness is carried still further. The drinker becomes an automaton, almost wholly unaware of where he is or what he is doing; and the tendency is for consciousness to disappear/

disappear altogether and for sleep to ensue. It is evident, then, that the psychological phenomena produced by alcohol are characteristic of the process of dissociation. The higher sentiments and the ideals temporarily desert the conscious field, and various sensory and motor functions are cut off from consciousness. There is, further, a tendency to subsequent amnesia for the events which take place while the effects of alcohol are present. In a word, there is evidence of that narrowing of consciousness which Janet found to be typical of the process of dissociation; in the production of this phenomenon alcohol may be taken as representative of the depressant drugs as a whole, and, in certain diseases a similar effect appears to be produced by the action of toxic products.

If then we take alcohol as representative of the whole group of dissociating drugs and toxins, it is not difficult to determine the nature of the mental elements and functions which are dissociated. It is evidently a case of dissociation of the irrelevant. The drunken man is oblivious of all that is irrelevant to the tendency of the moment. Confirmation of this interpretation is found in the fact that a drunk man may be instantly sobered, if a situation arises which appeals strongly to some deep-rooted interest which had previously been in abeyance. Thus, the receipt of bad news or a serious threat to life has frequently been/



been noted to exercise a sobering effect. In such a case a large body of dissociated thoughts and functions cease to be irrelevant, and the effects of dissociation are overcome.

A particularly interesting example of dissociation is that which seems to occur in most people in the presence of illness in general. Attention has already been drawn to Janet's admission that suggestion may be a feature of other illnesses besides hysteria. The response, which patients admitted to a hospital for incurables make to any suggestion of an ultimate cure, has come under the personal observation of the writer. This holds true even when the suggestion is conveyed in subtle and unimpressive ways. Another aspect of this phenomenon is the dissociation in a patient's mind of knowledge that his condition is incurable or even that the hospital, in which he finds himself, is a hospital for incurables only. Another observation which the writer has made is the extraordinary dissociation of medical knowledge which doctors and nurses show in relation to their own condition when they are ill themselves. This, of course, occurs chiefly when their illness is of a menacing character:— e.g. when signs of cancer, which would be obvious to them in a professional capacity, are present in themselves. This extraordinary feature is particularly frequent among nurses. The reason that it is less frequent among doctors appears to be, that, in/

in their case, medical knowledge is more thoroughly organised, and, therefore, less liable to dissociation from the main personality. That it does occur in doctors, however, has come under the writer's observation. This form of dissociation is to be distinguished from the dissociation produced in illness through the action of bacterial and other toxins. It is not a generalised dissociation, but a dissociation of a particular group of facts, which, if brought to bear on the sufferer's condition, would lead to an acute degree of unpleasure. It is thus psychologically and not physiologically conditioned. Here we find ourselves confronted, so far as the dissociated material is concerned, with a type of dissociation different from any which has been hitherto considered. Our consideration of phenomena of dissociation has so far led us to recognise dissociation of the irrelevant and dissociation of the incompatible. Here we are confronted with an example of another and very important form of dissociation, viz. dissociation of the unpleasant.

In the course of our enquiry we have now been led to consider in some detail certain of the chief conditions under which the normal mind exhibits phenomena of dissociation. The conditions to which attention has been devoted are:-

1./

1. Emotion.
2. Suggestion.
3. Hypnotism.
4. Sleep.
5. Fatigue.
6. States produced by depressant drugs.
7. Physical illness in persons of normal mentality.

The study of these various conditions seems to indicate conclusively that dissociation is an everyday phenomenon of the normal mind, and that it can only be regarded as pathological when its action is ill-placed or excessive. It is perhaps natural that medical writers should have concentrated their attention upon its pathological aspects, because medicine is primarily concerned with disease; but exclusive concentration upon pathological phenomena does not always lead to clarity of thought. Physiology has learned many lessons from pathology, it is true; but pathology owes a debt to physiology also. Similarly in the mental sphere; although psychology is deeply indebted to psycho-pathology, psycho-pathology in its turn has something to learn from normal psychology. Indeed, one of the greatest needs of psycho-pathology at the present time is to bring its conceptions into line with what is known about normal mental processes. It is because it seems to the present writer that the current conception of dissociation has been based too exclusively upon the study of abnormal phenomena of dissociation that so much attention has been devoted in this thesis to a description of its normal manifestations. /

manifestations. Only when normal as well as abnormal dissociation is studied can the full significance of the process be properly understood.

The importance of recognising normal as well as abnormal manifestations of dissociation may be gathered, when we consider the theory which Janet advances to explain the dissociative process. While Janet's formulation of the conception of dissociation must put psycho-pathology (and psychology also) forever in his debt, the theory, which he puts forward to explain it, has serious limitations. These limitations would doubtless have been avoided, if Janet had paid more attention to the normal manifestations of dissociation. Had he done so, it is doubtful if he would have explained dissociation as due to a failure of mental synthesis. Yet this is the explanation which his study of the phenomena of hysteria leads him to offer. His observation of hysterical patients led him to summarise the various "accidents" and "stigmata", which they exhibit, under the formula "retraction of the field of consciousness" (The Major Symptoms of Hysteria, p.303). This he interpreted as due to "A special moral weakness, consisting in the lack of power, on the part of the feeble subject, to gather, to condense the psychological phenomena, and assimilate them to his personality" (Op. cit. p.311.) Hysteria thus comes to be regarded as "A malady of the/

the personal synthesis" (p.332), due to "a depression, an exhaustion of the higher functions of the encephalon" (p.333); it is the result of various circumstances in which the nervous tension is lowered. As a consequence of this lowering of nervous tension, Janet holds that "Consciousness, which is no longer able to perform too complex operations, gives up some of them" (p.334). This process of giving up complex mental functions because the personal consciousness has not strength to retain them is, for Janet, the essence of the process of dissociation.

Janet's theory, that dissociation is due to a failure of mental synthesis dependent on lack of mental energy, has two important implications:- both of which impair the usefulness of his conception of the process. These implications are:-

1. That dissociation is a negative or passive process,
2. That it is essentially an abnormal process.

These features of Janet's conception of dissociation set it in marked contrast to the conception of repression which Freud was led to formulate from the study of hysterical phenomena. According to Freud, repression is an active, dynamic process. It is not due to failure of mental energy as a result of which certain elements fall out of personal consciousness; on the contrary, to use Freud's words, "The essence of repression lies simply in the function of rejecting and/

and keeping something out of consciousness" (Collected Papers Vol.IV, p.86). Further, once the study of hysteria had led him to recognise the process of repression, it was not long before he began to seek for evidence of its presence in various phenomena of everyday occurrence among normal individuals. The first of such phenomena in which he recognised its presence were (1) the minor mistakes to which normal individuals are subject, e.g. slips of the tongue, the mislaying of objects, and the forgetting of familiar names, (2) dreams. The word "repressed" first occurs in Freud's writings in a Paper "On the Psychological Mechanism of Hysterical Phenomena" written in collaboration with Breuer in 1892 (Op. cit. Vol.I, p.33), but it was only in a Paper entitled "The Defence Psycho-neuroses" published in 1894 that he first formulated the idea of repression in a definite form. Yet, already in 1898 he had published a Paper on "Forgetting", in which he applied the conception of repression to the explanation of such ordinary experiences as when a name, the hour of an appointment or some significant fact appears, for no obvious reason, to slip out of the mind. This paper was later embodied in his "Psycho-pathology of Every-day Life", (1904). Meanwhile the year 1900 had witnessed the appearance of his famous "Traumdeutung", in which the conception of repression is applied to the elucidation of the problems of the dream.

Freud's conception of repression as an active, dynamic process stands in marked contrast to Janet's conception of dissociation as a passive process due to failure of mental energy - a contrast all the more remarkable in view of the fact that it was to explain the same phenomena that the two conceptions were originally framed. That the study of hysteria should lead Janet and Freud to such different ideas of the process involved is, however, not difficult to understand. It is largely due to the preconceptions with which they started. Janet's interpretation is influenced by the atomistic psychology which he inherited from the Associationists. Freud's interpretation, on the other hand, was influenced by the atmosphere created in Teutonic countries by the philosophies of Schopenhauer and von Hartmann. It remains true, however, to say that, if Janet had, like Freud, sought confirmation of his views among the phenomena of every-day life, he would probably have modified them considerably. If he had recognised the existence of normal as well as of abnormal dissociation, it is difficult to imagine that he would have explained it as due to a mere failure of mental synthesis. The study of normal phenomena of dissociation, which has been undertaken in the preceding pages, makes it impossible to accept the view that dissociation is essentially a passive process. The fact/

fact that it is an essentially active process is best realised when attention is directed to the nature of the material which is subject to dissociation. In the preceding study special attention has been directed to the nature of this material, and it was found that, in the phenomena considered, the dissociated elements and functions could be classified as falling under one of three categories:-

1. The irrelevant.
2. The incompatible.
3. The unpleasant.

The fact that in each case the dissociated elements fall under one of these categories seems to the writer to provide a key to the understanding of the process of dissociation.

It is mainly as a result of failure to pay adequate attention to the nature of what is dissociated, that Janet fails to do justice to the conception of dissociation, for which we owe him such a debt. His attention was directed mainly to a description of the process itself and, in a lesser degree, to a description of the conditions or "Agents provocateurs" which favour its development, e.g. emotion, physical disease, psychical trauma, etc. ("Vide L'Etat Mental des Hystériques", p.446). He devoted little, if any, attention to the dissociated material itself. In the case of Freud, on the other hand, it was reflection upon/



upon the mental content involved that led him to his conception of repression as an active and dynamic process. Both writers were struck by the prominence of amnesia in the symptomatology of hysteria. At the beginning of his book "The Major Symptoms of Hysteria", it is true that Janet asks his readers "To put in the first line, as the most typical, the most characteristic symptom of hysteria, a moral symptom - that is somnambulism" (p.23); but he adds later, (p.125) "It is amnesia that is the stigma of somnambulism". While recognising the importance of amnesia as a characteristic of hysteria, however, Janet was content to note that part of the mental content had been cut off from consciousness and to seek an explanation of this fact in the appearance of psychic weakness which the process in itself seemed to imply. Freud, on the other hand, while also recognising that consciousness had suffered a loss of content, found an explanation in the nature of the content itself. As the result of his efforts to revive the forgotten memories of his patients, he found that these patients had in each case "enjoyed good health up to the time at which an intolerable idea presented itself within the content of their ideational life." (Collected Papers", Vol.I, p.61.). It was in the intolerable nature of the idea that Freud found the key to the amnesia involved. It was for this reason that he designated hysteria as

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a "Defence Psychoneurosis" (1894), and that he came to regard repression as a dynamic process whereby consciousness is protected from intolerable mental content. Since, however, no one, even the most normal, is entirely exempt from the influence of intolerable ideas, Freud was able to extend the process of repression to cover many phenomena which cannot reasonably be regarded as pathological and to recognise repression as a process which occurs in the normal mind. From this point of view, repression is only regarded as pathological when, as in the case of hysteria, it gives rise to symptoms which unfit their victim for normal life.

In view of the fact that Freud framed his conception of repression in the light of the mental content upon which he found repression to be exercised, it has seemed desirable to remedy Janet's failure to adopt a similar procedure in the case of the conception of dissociation. It is for this reason that attention has been drawn in the preceding pages to the nature of the mental elements involved in the process of dissociation. The consideration of various dissociation-phenomena in the normal mind has led to the conclusion that, at any given time when dissociation occurs, the mental content which is involved is either irrelevant, incompatible or unpleasant in the light of the situation with which the organism is faced.

Dissociation/

Dissociation of the irrelevant was found in our analysis to occur conspicuously in states of fatigue and sleep and under the influence of depressant drugs. Dissociation of the incompatible was found to occur under the influence of emotion, suggestion and hypnotism. This type of dissociation is also seen in what may be described as "Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde" phenomena. The church-warden who overcharges his customers during the week without being conscious of an inconsistency is the subject of a dissociation of this kind. A similar dissociation is perhaps also involved in the stamping out of unsuccessful methods which is a feature of trial-and-error learning. Dissociation of the unpleasant was illustrated in our analysis by the failure of many persons suffering from organic disease to recognise the gravity of their condition, even when they possess the knowledge which would seem to make such an inference inevitable. In such cases it is the unpleasantness of the facts that cuts them off from the operation of the critical faculties. The tendency of the average person to shelve thoughts about his own death is another example of this form of dissociation, as is his tendency to speak of "the good old times", remembering the pleasant features of the past to the exclusion of the unpleasant. Another example of dissociation of the unpleasant is to be found in the frequently noted phenomenon that a person, faced/

faced with a grave emergency, may experience no emotion but impassively note trivial and unimportant features of the environment. David Livingstone records that an experience of this sort occurred to him, when a lion was mauling his arm. This instance is quoted by Rivers as an example of repression ("Instinct and the Unconscious", p.58), but it would seem to partake rather of the nature of a simple dissociation of the unpleasant. A certain group of "Shell-shock" cases so frequently seen in the war appear also to be best explained as due to a dissociation of this sort. This is particularly true of cases in which amnesia or functional blindness followed a traumatic experience.

Acts of forgetting furnish an interesting group in relation to the classification of dissociated material into the irrelevant, the incompatible and the unpleasant, because each of these categories may be illustrated in the forgotten content. Most of our forgetting perhaps, is forgetting of the irrelevant. This is due to the fact that, when we are faced with any given situation, our attention is selective. Professor William James drew attention to this point, when he described selection as one of the cardinal functions of consciousness. Consciousness, he says, "is always interested more in one part of its object than in another, and welcomes and rejects, or chooses, all the while it thinks". ("The Principles of Psychology", /

Psychology", 1891, Vol.I. p.284). Later he adds:-

"We do far more than emphasize things, and unite some, and keep others apart. We actually ignore most of the things before us"; and again, "Millions of items of the outward order are present to my senses which never properly enter into my experience. Why?

Because they have no interest for me. My experience is what I agree to attend to" (Op. cit., p.402).

In accepting these statements, we must recognise, of course, that the "agreeing" and "ignoring" of which James speaks are not voluntary processes, but spontaneous processes determined by distribution of interest. In this sense the ignoring process is simply an example of dissociation. When we forget the name of a person, whose name ought to be familiar, this is commonly due to a tendency in us to ignore his existence because we are not interested in him. This, indeed, is usually the way in which the person concerned is inclined to interpret it. Much of our forgetting, therefore, is due to selectivity of interest. What does not interest us tends to be ignored. In other words, what is irrelevant tends to be dissociated.

Not all forgetting, however, can be explained as due to dissociation of the irrelevant. Forgetting may also be due to dissociation of the incompatible. Many of the acts of forgetting, which Freud describes in his/

his "Psychopathology of Every-day Life" appear to be of this nature. Freud explains them, of course, in terms of "repression". That, in the writer's opinion, he is wrong in doing so follows from the view of repression which will be developed later; as the relationship of repression to dissociation has not yet been examined, it is sufficient to point out here that many such acts of forgetting are examples of dissociation of the incompatible. This seems to be the case when we forget where we have put a borrowed article, which we have been asked to return before we have finished with it. This common phenomenon appears to be due, not to the fact that the lost memory is irrelevant, but to the fact that it is incompatible with a desire.

An act of forgetting may also be due to dissociation of the unpleasant. The tendency to forget an unpleasant fact is so familiar as to need little illustration. The "nouveau riche" tends to forget the circumstances of his early life; the man in financial difficulties tends to forget about a bill; the fastidious patient is more likely to forget to take an unpleasant than a pleasant medicine.

Among acts of forgetting we thus find examples of dissociation belonging to each of the three categories. It must be remembered, of course, that certain phenomena may fall into more than one category. Thus, /

Thus, the forgetting of an inconvenient appointment may be due to the fact that its fulfilment is incompatible with our purposes and unpleasant at the same time. In such cases, however, it is usually found that one aspect is predominant, and it is possible to classify most dissociation-phenomena under one or other of the three categories.

The fact that acts of forgetting provide such a comprehensive field for the study of dissociation in its various forms accords well with the importance which the phenomenon of amnesia played in the development of both Janet's and Freud's views. "Amnesia" says McDougall "is one of the most common forms in which dissociation reveals itself. Without unduly straining the sense of the words, it may be said that every dissociation is an amnesia". ("An Outline of Abnormal Psychology", p.235). While it would be a mistake to regard amnesia as co-extensive with dissociation, as McDougall seems to do, it remains true that the process of forgetting is perhaps the most representative of all the manifestations of dissociation. The forgotten material may show any of the three characteristics which tend to provoke dissociation. It may be irrelevant or incompatible or unpleasant; but it always seems to possess one at least of these characteristics. The question now arises whether it is possible to find a comprehensive term which/

which shall embrace all three categories of dissociated material. To find such a term does not seem an easy task, but, for want of a better, the term "Unacceptable" may be suggested. Dissociation then may be defined in the following terms:— Dissociation is a mental process whereby unacceptable mental content or an unacceptable mental function becomes cut off from personal consciousness:— such mental content or function being regarded as unacceptable if it is either irrelevant to an active interest, incompatible with an active interest, or unpleasant in relation to an active interest.

From this point of view, Dissociation must be regarded as another aspect of that process of Selection, which James regarded as one of the cardinal functions of consciousness and which Drever describes as a fundamental "characteristic of the psychical", ("An Introduction to the Psychology of Education", 1925, p.29). This way of regarding dissociation has several implications, which may now be considered.

1. Dissociation is in itself a normal process, although, like other mental processes, it has a pathology of its own. This point need not be stressed, as many pages have already been devoted to a description of various normal dissociation-phenomena.

Attention may, however, be drawn for a moment to certain phenomena which occur in cases, which exhibit an/



an unusual absence of dissociation. Such a case came under the writer's observation, when he held the post of Assistant Physician in the Royal Edinburgh Hospital for Mental and Nervous Diseases. The patient was a man well up in years, who was of defective intelligence, and had spent a large part of his life in the Hospital. This patient showed a most astounding memory for details which would have been irrelevant to an ordinary person. He could name the birthday of practically every person who had been on the Staff of the Hospital since his admission, and he could name the dates on which each had come and departed. Other cases of a similar nature have frequently been noted in literature. In all such cases, memory is characterised by an absence of selection, and defect of dissociation which must be regarded as pathological. The phenomenon of "Total recall", which so frequently characterises the reminiscences of unintelligent persons, is another example of what happens in the absence of an adequate degree of dissociation. It may also be suggested that the prolific and disconnected nature of the conversational stream so characteristic of mania is due to the same cause. While, however, an inadequate degree of dissociation is abnormal, it none the less holds true that an excess of dissociation is abnormal also:— whether it be a general excess or an excess relating to certain material only. The researches /

researches of Janet render it needless to stress this point, which is generally recognised at the expense of the fact that dissociation is not necessarily abnormal

2. Another implication of the view of dissociation which has been reached is that it is an essentially active process. This fact has been largely obscured as a result of Janet's formulation. Janet's explanation of dissociation as the result of a failure of mental synthesis shows that he conceived it as a passive process:— something that tended to occur automatically unless considerable energy was expended in preventing it doing so. According to this view, dissociated mental elements would seem to "get lost" rather than to be "cut off". This point of view, as has already been pointed out, is the result of Janet's failure to study the nature of the dissociated material. If the analysis which has been undertaken in this thesis is correct, the characteristic feature of dissociated material lies in the fact that it is in some way unacceptable to the subject. This being so, it is difficult to regard dissociation as a passive process of lapsing. It seems more reasonable to seek a rationale of the process of dissociation in the nature of the material which is dissociated. It would be difficult to find a rationale of war, apart from the realisation that the combatants are hostile. Similarly, if what is dissociated is unacceptable material, /

material, it seems likely that it is because the material is unacceptable that it comes to be dissociated. Dissociation, therefore, in its psychological aspect, would seem to be a process directed towards an end: the end being exclusion from consciousness of the unacceptable. It is, therefore, essentially an active process, not a process such as Janet describes it when he says:-

"La synthèse étant trop faible, certaines catégories de sensations, d'images ou d'idées sont laissées de côté ...." (Italics not in original). ("L'Etat Mental des Hystériques", p.634).

Janet's way of representing the process in this passage obscures the real nature of the process of dissociation. It is not a question of elements passively dropping out of consciousness or of being left aside, but rather of their being actively cut off from consciousness. Perhaps it is better still to describe the process from the point of view of consciousness, and to say that it is a case of consciousness, so to speak, "turning away from" what is unacceptable. This metaphor of "turning away" is perhaps preferable to that of "cutting off" in that it brings the process of dissociation more in line with what we know of the process of selection. Either metaphor may, however, be usefully employed. We may avoid/

avoid a horrible sight either by holding up our hands to cut off the view or by looking in another direction. The effect is the same in either case, and in either case activity is involved. Whether, therefore, we conceive dissociation as a process whereby the unacceptable is cut off from consciousness, or as a process whereby attentive consciousness avoids the unacceptable, in either case it is an active process.

3. Brief reference may be made to a third implication of the view of dissociation at which we have arrived. It is an unconscious or unwitting process; that is to say, the subject is not aware that the process is going on, he can only be aware of the results of the process. That it is not a consciously controlled process is evident to anyone who has made an effort to go to sleep when sleep did not come. All that the would-be sleeper can do is to put himself under the best conditions for dissociation to occur. This is what we do when we go to bed. The process of dissociation is, however, not only not consciously controlled, it is not conscious at all. The hysterical patient may know that a limb is paralysed because he cannot move it, but the dissociative process itself is not in consciousness. Further, the patient may not even be aware that the dissociation has taken place. This fact has been pointed out by Janet:-

"When you watch a hysterical patient for the first time, or when you study patients coming from the country, /

country, who have not yet been examined by specialists, you will find, like ourselves, that, without suffering from it and without suspecting it, they have the deepest and most extensive anaesthesia". ("The Major Symptoms of Hysteria", p.161.)

From these considerations it is evident that dissociation is an unwitting process.

4. A fourth implication of the conception of dissociation, which has been reached, is that the process is in line with a fundamental biological process. Drever, in "An Introduction to the Psychology of Education" (Chap.III), describes three fundamental characteristics of the life-process of living organisms and points out that these are specially characteristic of that aspect of the life-process which we call "psychical". These three characteristics are 1. Conservation, 2. Selection, and 3. Cohesion. Conservation is represented by all that is involved when we speak of "learning by experience". If conservation is the basis of all mental development, selection is what determines the direction development will take. If all experience were conserved, learning by experience would be impossible. We should never learn to do a thing properly, if all our errors were conserved on equal terms with our successes. Selection is necessary if progress is to be possible.

The/

The most obvious psychical manifestation of selection is found in all that is signified when we speak of "attention", but "interest" more nearly expresses the range of its operation. Conservation and selection are, however, inadequate without cohesion. What is conserved under the influence of selection is not conserved as a mere aggregate, but as an organised whole. All the phenomena of "association" are to be included under the broader concept of cohesion.

Dissociation, on the other hand, comes under the category of selection, and is thus in line with a fundamental biological tendency. Dissociation is ultimately an expression of selection in its negative aspect, but, since it involves rejection, it is none the less active on that account. Rejection is determined by some ruling interest; and, whether it be a case of dissociation of the irrelevant, dissociation of the incompatible or dissociation of the unpleasant, in each case active rejection is involved. Of the three manifestations of dissociation, dissociation of the unpleasant must be regarded as the most primitive. The activity of the unicellular organism seems to consist either in approximation to food and favourable conditions or withdrawal from noxious stimuli. So far as we can imagine the psychical life of such an organism, we must regard it as characterised almost exclusively by states corresponding to pleasure and displeasure, /

unpleasure, according as its fundamental tendencies are facilitated or impeded. Selection at this level is selection of the pleasant; dissociation may be conceived as dissociation of the unpleasant. At a higher level of life, when the multicellular stage is reached and organs are developed, we may conceive that dissociation of the irrelevant is added to dissociation of the unpleasant. This may be conceived as occurring when the stage is reached at which the phenomenon of a life-cycle appears. When this stage is reached, what is relevant at one phase of life becomes irrelevant at another phase of life. Here perhaps we find the key to the development of dissociation of the irrelevant, whereby stimuli effective at one phase become ineffective at another. At a still higher level in the scale of life, when the nervous system has become organised in such a way as to render a variety of movements and co-ordinations possible, we may conceive the establishment of the third form of dissociation:— dissociation of the incompatible. By this agency functions incompatible with the prevailing activity are rendered inoperative, and stimuli which would produce behaviour incompatible with the prevailing interest are rendered incapable of producing a reaction.

Although the hierachy of dissociation-functions, which has been sketched in the last paragraph, is admittedly/

admittedly speculative, yet the writer feels that it gives some biological justification for the view of dissociation which has been reached in the present section of this thesis. This view may be summarised in a modification of the definition already given, as follows:— Dissociation is an active mental process, whereby unacceptable mental content or an unacceptable mental function becomes cut off from personal consciousness, without thereby ceasing to be mental:— such mental content or mental function being "unacceptable" within the meaning of this definition if it is either irrelevant to, incompatible with, or unpleasant in relation to an active interest.

### REPRESSION.

The conception of repression was originally introduced by Freud to explain the same group of phenomena which had led Janet to formulate his conception of dissociation. The history of the development of Freud's views shows that he pursued a path independent of that of Janet. As Mitchell points out ("The Psychology of Medicine", p.42), some years before the publication of Janet's first work, Freud's interest had been intrigued by the fact that some of the symptoms of a hysterical patient, whom Breuer and he were treating by hypnotism, were permanently relieved/



relieved after some forgotten episodes in her life were recalled in the hypnotic state (vide Freud, "Collected Papers", Vol. I, p.28). Breuer had for some time realised the therapeutic value of reviving forgotten memories under hypnotism, but it was left for Freud to develop from this observation the whole body of psycho-analytic theory, centring, as it does, round the concept of repression. It was this observation that led Freud in 1893 to state his conclusion "that hysterical patients suffer principally from reminiscences" (Op. cit. Vol.I. p.29). The two facts which attracted his notice about these reminiscences seem to have been, (1) that they were related to experiences of a distressing or traumatic kind (Vide Op. cit. Vol.I. p.27), (2) that they were "not at the disposal of the patient in the way that his more commonplace memories are" (Vol.I. p.31). In relation to this second point, Freud noticed that it was only under hypnosis that the memories could be restored in any but the most inadequate way (Vol.I, p.32).

The fact that memories withdrawn from the possibility of ordinary recollection could be revived with intense vividness under hypnosis led Freud increasingly to the belief that "That splitting of consciousness, which is so striking in the well-known classical cases of 'double conscience', exists in a rudimentary fashion in every hysteria and that the tendency to this dissociation - and therewith to the production of/

of abnormal states of consciousness, which may be included under the term 'hypnoid' - is a fundamental manifestation of this neurosis." (Op. cit. Vol.I, p.34).

Freud's reference to 'splitting of consciousness' and 'dissociation' as fundamental characteristics of hysteria reminds us at once of Janet's theory. Indeed Freud is careful to add, in the following sentence, that "this view is in agreement with those of Binet and the two Janets". This reference, in a paper written in 1893, to Janet's conception of dissociation raises the question whether Freud was not indebted to Janet for the conception which led subsequently to his theory of repression. This is what Janet himself claimed in a paper read before The International Congress of Medicine in London in 1913. While, however, Freud was undoubtedly aware of Janet's investigations as they were published, it would be wrong to say that he was inspired by them. On the contrary, what inspiration he received from the Salpêtrière was due to Janet's teacher, Charcot, with whom Freud studied in 1885-6. It was on his return to Vienna from Paris in 1886 that, in collaboration with his senior colleague Breuer, he made the observations about hidden memories which led subsequently to his theory of repression. These observations had been made and subjected to reflection (although they had not been published), before the appearance of Janet's first work. There is every justification, therefore, /

therefore, for regarding Freud's and Janet's theories as being independent developments deriving their impetus from the inspiration of a common teacher - Charcot.

The conception of repression has thus been developed by Freud in independence of Janet's conception of dissociation. Freud and his followers have usually regarded it as an alternative and more satisfactory conception elaborated for the explanation of a common body of facts. The actual fact that there exists, in hysteria and other pathological states, a body of mental elements cut off from personal consciousness is not in dispute between the two schools. In so far as the term 'dissociation' is used to describe the existence of such a state, Freud is prepared to recognise the existence of dissociation, and occasionally he uses the word itself. Thus in 1910 he writes "Psycho-analysis, too, accepts the hypothesis of dissociation and of the unconscious." (Op. cit. Vol.II, p.107). Where his theory differs from Janet's is in the explanation of this state of dissociation. According to Janet's theory the splitting of consciousness is a primary feature of hysteria; for Freud it is a secondary feature (vide Op. cit. Vol.I. p.60). What led Freud to regard it as a secondary feature was his consideration of the material which is dissociated. His observation of the painful nature of the/

the dissociated material led him to the view that the dissociative process was of the nature of a defence. Since defence is an active, not a passive process, he was unable, like Janet, to attribute the process to a mere failure of mental synthesis resulting from lack of mental energy. Freud's first difference with Breuer - the prelude to their final separation - appears to have arisen over this point. In a paper "On the History of the Psycho-analytic Movement" published in 1914, Freud expresses himself thus:-

"The first difference between Breuer and myself came to light in regard to a question concerning the finer psychical mechanism of hysteria. He gave preference to a theory which was still to some extent physiological, as one might call it; he wished to explain the mental dissociation of hysteria by the absence of communication between various psychical states (states of consciousness, as we called them at that time), and he therefore constructed the theory of 'hypnoid' states, the effects of which were supposed to penetrate into waking consciousness like unassimilated foreign bodies. I had taken the matter less academically; everywhere I seemed to discern motives and tendencies analogous to those of everyday life, and I looked upon mental dissociation itself as an effect of a process of rejection which at that time I called defence, and later called repression."

(Op. cit. Vol. I. p. 291-2).

The idea that the dissociative process was essentially one whereby consciousness is defended against unbearable ideas only came to Freud after he had given up using hypnosis as a method of reviving forgotten memories. In the earlier days of his association with Breuer, he followed his colleague in using hypnosis to effect that revival of memories which had been found to result in the relief of symptoms. As time went on, however, he found that there were some patients who were difficult or impossible to hypnotise. In attempting to revive memories in these unhypnotisable patients, he adopted the procedure which he had seen Bernheim use in trying to revive in the waking consciousness of patients events which had taken place in the hypnotic state. In the attempt to revive forgotten memories in unhypnotised patients after this fashion, Freud found himself compelled to exercise a certain element of pressure. This fact led him to conclude that there must be some force in the patient's mind actively opposing his efforts:— a force which he designated "Resistance". It was not long before he drew a further conclusion — the conclusion, namely, that the force which prevented the revival of forgotten memories was the very force that had originally banished the memories from consciousness. It was to this process that he gave the name of "Repression" — a conception which he regards as "The foundation-stone<sup>on</sup> which the whole structure of Psycho-analysis /

Psycho-analysis rests" (Op. cit. Vol.I. p.297), and yet "Nothing but a theoretical formulation of a phenomenon which may be observed to recur as often as one undertakes an analysis of a neurotic without resorting to hypnosis". (Vol.I. 298).

*Why not then also?*

For Freud, therefore, "The essence of repression lies simply in the function of rejecting and keeping something out of consciousness" (Op. cit. Vol.IV.p.86). This being the essential function of repression according to Freud, what are its other characteristics? From Freud's writings we may isolate two as the most important:-

1. Repression is conceived as an active process. This is evident from a remark which follows shortly after that which was last quoted:-

"The process of repression is not to be regarded as something which takes place once for all, the results of which are permanent, as when some living thing has been killed and from that time onward is dead; on the contrary, repression demands a constant expenditure of energy, and if this were discontinued the success of the repression would be jeopardised, so that a fresh act of repression would be necessary. We may imagine that what is repressed exercises a continuous straining in the direction of consciousness, so that the balance has to be kept by means of a steady counter-pressure." (Op. cit. Vol. IV, p.89-90)

2. Repression is an unconscious process - a fact which is better expressed in Rivers' terminology by saying that it is "unwitting" (Instinct and the Unconscious, p.16). This feature Freud's "Repression" shares with Janet's "Dissociation". That repression is unwitting is inferred by Freud from the ignorance which the patient shows of the fact that such a process is at work in his own mind. Not only is he unaware that repression has taken place at all, but he is unaware of the resistance which the therapeutic effort to revive repressed material to consciousness invariably meets (vide Freud, "The Ego and the Id" 1927, p.16).

If these, then, are the main characteristics of the process of repression, what, we may next ask, are the main characteristics of the repressed material according to Freud's scheme? These again are two in number:-

1. The repressed material in unconscious. Freud thus rejects the idea which seems to be implied in Janet's "Sub-conscious", that material which is cut off from personal consciousness has a consciousness of its own. "What is proved", he says, "is not a second consciousness in us, but the existence of certain mental operations lacking in the quality of consciousness" (Collected Papers" Vol.IV, p.103). The known cases of "double conscience", he holds, prove nothing against his view:-

"They/

"They may most accurately be described as cases of a splitting of the mental activities into two groups, whereby a single consciousness takes up its position alternately with either the one or the other of these groups" (Op. cit. Vol.IV, p.103-4).

2. The other great characteristic of repressed material, in Freud's scheme, is that it is unpleasant, or rather it is of such a character that, if it became conscious, it would cause unpleasure. Already in 1896, speaking of the "Defence Psycho-neuroses" Freud states that what is repressed is "an intolerable idea which was in painful opposition to the patient's ego". (Op. cit. Vol.I. p.155). It is essentially the same fact which he is expressing in 1920 when he says that the aim of the resistance is "to avoid the 'pain' that would be aroused by the release of the repressed material" ("Beyond the Pleasure Principle", 1922, p.20.)

Such being the main features involved in the Freudian conception of repression, "Repression" in his sense, though not in his words, may be defined as an active mental process essentially consisting in the exclusion from personal consciousness of certain mental elements whose appearance in consciousness would cause unpleasure.

The/



The next task which falls to our enquiry is to examine the process of repression with a view to determining whether or not Freud has conceived it in a satisfactory fashion. If now we turn to this task, we shall do well to direct our attention, not to the psychosis or psychoneurosis, but to a phenomenon which is not necessarily pathological, viz. the dream.

Freud was the first to realise adequately the importance of the dream in mental life, just as he was the first to formulate the concept of repression; and it is significant that in his "Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis", he makes the study of the dream (Book II) the basis upon which he develops his general theory of the neuroses (Book III). Further it was mainly through Freud's "Traumdeutung", published in 1900, that the medical and psychological world were introduced to the theory of repression. If, then, we turn to the examination of Freud's dream-theory, we find the whole crux of the theory to lie in the concept of distortion: a concept with which that of the "Censorship" is intimately connected. The importance of the concept of distortion is evident from a note in Chap. VI of the "Traumdeutung", where Freud writes:-

"I consider this reference of dream-disfigurement to the censor as the essence of my dream-theory."

(Freud, "The Interpretation of Dreams", Revised Edition, reprinted May 1919, p.287).

According/

According to Freud's theory,  
 "We should then assume in each human being, as the primary cause of dream formation, two psychic forces (streams, systems), of which one constitutes the wish expressed by the dream, while the other acts as a censor upon this dream wish, and by means of this censoring forces a distortion of its expression." (Op. cit. p.121.)

The dream, therefore, owes its distinctive character to two facts:-

1. that there is a barrier to the entry of the latent dream-thoughts into the dream-consciousness;
2. that this barrier may be passed, if the dream-thoughts are suitably modified.

The existence of the barrier and the necessity for distortion of the dream-thoughts, if they are to pass the barrier, are explained as an expression of the process of repression. The metaphor of the censorship (e.g. Op. cit. p.287) is designed to convey the impression that the barrier, which the dream-thoughts meet, is not merely a static obstacle but something dynamic - something more like a commissionaire turning people back from a door than a rail across the entrance. The dynamic nature of the barrier is to be inferred from the amount of dream-work which appears to be necessary to enable the dream-thoughts to enter consciousness (e.g. Op. cit. p.401). For many years previous/

previous to the publication of his "Traumdeutung", Freud had spent much of his time in the attempt to elucidate the meaning of both his own dreams and those of patients. The results of his analysis of the factors entering into dream-formation led him to the conclusion that, so far at any rate as the majority of adult dreams are concerned, the mental elements which seek expression in the dream are prevented from reaching consciousness in their original form owing to their incompatibility with the conscious aspirations of the dreamer (Vide Op. cit. p.120). It was this incompatibility which led to the resistance which the dream-thoughts encountered; and it was this incompatibility which made the process of distortion necessary, if the dream-thoughts were to enter consciousness at all. Freud had already reached the conclusion that the symptoms of hysteria were the products of just such a process of distortion, and that the rationale of this process was to be found in a similar incompatibility between conscious and unconscious elements in mental life. It would thus seem evident that any theory of repression conceived along the dynamic lines indicated by Freud must be intimately bound up with the process of distortion as illustrated in the dream. It is, therefore, a matter of vital importance to determine whether Freud is right or wrong in attributing the characteristic features/

features of the dream to a process of active distortion.

Of the modern theories of the dream which dispense with the idea of distortion, that of Rivers is the most noteworthy. Rivers accepts Freud's distinction between the manifest and the latent content of the dream ("Conflict and Dream, 1923, p.3.), but he finds himself unable to follow Freud in attributing the change of latent into manifest content to a process of distortion. For the term 'distortion' he substitutes 'transformation' (Op. cit. p.4). According to this conception, the manifest content is spoken of as coming into being through a transformation of the latent content. His explanation of the process of transformation is dependent upon the general view that mental life is arranged in strata or levels, comparable to those represented in the nervous system. In sleep, the higher levels are in abeyance, and only the lower levels are functioning. Like Freud, he regards the dream of the human adult as intimately concerned with mental conflict, but he goes further in this direction, and finds the essential function of the dream to be "the solution of a conflict by means of processes belonging to those levels of activity which are still active in sleep" (Op. cit. p.17). In sleep only the lower levels of experience are functioning, and, therefore, the attempted solution/

solution is necessarily mediated by those processes of thought which are typical of the lower levels. It is the translation of the conflicting elements into terms of primitive thought that constitutes 'transformation' (e.g. Op. cit. p.81). The apparent disguise of the dream-thoughts is, according to Rivers, due to the fact that the primitive ways of thinking released in sleep are unfamiliar to the higher, rational processes of thought which characterise waking consciousness.

Whether the characteristic features of the manifest dream-content are due to a process like Freud's "distortion" or to a process like Rivers' "transformation" is a matter of no small importance for our concept of repression. Indeed it is hardly an exaggeration to say that this question constitutes a vital issue. According to Freud, the nature of the manifest content is determined by the necessity of overcoming a resistance to the appearance of the latent content in consciousness. According to Rivers, the nature of the manifest content is determined by the primitive or infantile character of the mental processes which assert themselves when the inhibitory influences of more evolved mental processes are withdrawn in sleep. It is evident, then, that no two dream-theories could be more fundamentally opposed than those of Freud and Rivers. According to Freud, the necessity for transformation/

transformation is a function of the conscious; according to Rivers, it is a function of the unconscious. This fundamental opposition has its roots in a difference over the interpretation of the phenomenon which Freud describes as "distortion".

Among the advantages of Rivers' theory may be cited:-

1. Its greater simplicity; 2. The fact that it accords with the general impression which a dream gives of being of a piece with primitive modes of thinking. The use of symbols and the dramatic representation, which are such prominent features of dreams, are in line with what we know of the thought of children and savage races. It is unquestionable that some dreams are capable of being interpreted along these lines, particularly war dreams; and, after all, war dreams formed the bulk of the material which Rivers studied. On the other hand, any student of the subject, who has made a collection of the dreams of patients in civil life, must have come across innumerable dreams which are incapable of such an easy interpretation. An example may be quoted from a collection of many thousand dreams, which has been made by the present writer in the course of psycho-therapeutic practice. This dream, which may be called "The Spaniel Dream", has been selected because it illustrates the presence of distortion in an exceptionally/

exceptionally pointed and dramatic manner. It demonstrates the presence of distortion, in that the whole movement of the dream consists in a gradual break-down of the transformation-process. As the dream progresses, the transformation is undone under our very eyes. The gradual break-down of distortion, which is observed, enables us to realise that there really is distortion there at the start, and that the earlier phases of the dream are the products of just that dream-work, of which Freud inferred the existence, and of which he found the object to be the concealment of the real meaning of a dream from the dreamer. In this case the dreamer was a young woman suffering from a complex psycho-pathological state, which did not conform to any of the recognised groups, but which included obsessional and hysterical features of a very advanced kind. She described the dream as "a real nightmare", and it occurred when she was on holiday staying at a boarding-house, where she met a young man who attracted her interest and with whom she went for several motor-runs.

The "spaniel" dream. The beginning of the dream was not well remembered, but it had to do with being out for a motor-run. Later, the dreamer was in a house with some others. A young, black spaniel was there also. As the party turned to leave the room, the spaniel leaped up in a playful way at her bare arm/

x ?

arm or bare leg. She could not recall which of these limbs it was, but it was held out in a horizontal way. The dog was trying to take her limb into its mouth, but was prevented from doing so by the dreamer, who said to it pleasantly, "No, you don't". So far the dream was accompanied by no affect, but now the nightmare part began. Immediately after she had checked the puppy, it became seized by some terrible distress. It seemed as if its upper jaw had become inverted, and it writhed on the ground in terrible agony, wildly pleading by a dumb look in its eyes, and holding out its front paws for help. It was desperate to have its jaw turned back into the proper position. The dreamer felt that the desperate plight of the animal had come about because she had not let it do what it wanted; but she was also conscious of a certain feeling of aloofness. She felt very sorry for the animal, but she did not want to touch it in any way. She experienced a callous, "Fate-being-fulfilled" sort of feeling. All the time, the dog was writhing on the ground, making the most terrible sounds. Then a young boy appeared and tried to help by putting a stick down its throat several times. This was a horrible part of the dream, and unpleasant affect became pronounced. It became still more pronounced, when the dog, as such, disappeared, leaving behind only the throat into which the boy was thrusting his stick. /



stick. The throat then gradually changed its appearance and became just a big, fleshy opening, which, just as the dreamer awakened, she recognised as the vaginal opening. During the last phase of the dream, the unpleasant affect gradually increased in intensity, and, when she awoke, it was to find herself in a state of abject terror.

The interest of this dream lies in the extraordinarily clear way in which the undoing of the process of distortion is depicted. As we follow the progress of the dream, we are able to observe the dream-work being undone step by step. This enables us to reconstruct the process whereby the dream-work was originally effected. In the earlier part of the dream, the centre of interest is an apparently ingenuous symbol - a young, playful black spaniel. It is notable that in this part of the dream there is absence of affect. As the dream progresses, the dog's throat becomes the significant symbol; and this development is accompanied by the appearance of unpleasant affect. The dog's body then fades away and only the gaping throat is left. As the symbolisation progressively breaks down, unpleasant affect increases in intensity. Eventually symbolisation breaks down completely; the meaning of the preceding symbols is robbed of all uncertainty, and the patient awakes in terror. When such a dream is considered, it is impossible/

*as the levels  
rise*

*less & less  
symbolisation  
as the waking*

impossible to doubt that the manifest dream in its earlier phases is the product of the process which Freud describes as "Dream-work". It is equally impossible to doubt that this process of dream-work partakes essentially of the nature of "distortion" rather than of simple "transformation". Further, it is impossible to avoid the impression that the function of the earlier symbols of the dream is that of effecting a disguise, and that the object of this disguise is to hide from the dreamer's consciousness the true meaning of the dream-thoughts.

*All three  
beginning the  
function.*

Dreams like the 'spaniel' dream, in which the symbolism is seen gradually to break down during the course of the dream, are a much less common phenomenon than a dream-series in which each successive dream shows less and less evidence of distortion, as the dream-thoughts become more insistent. Such a dream-series may occur during the course of a single night or may be spread over several nights. A clear example of such a series is afforded by a sequence of two dreams, which another of the writer's patients recorded as having occurred on the same night. The patient in question was a middle-aged woman, whose career as a teacher had been seriously compromised by a succession of break-downs. These tended to occur after she had held any post for a time. The length of time varied, but in all cases she eventually found the/

the strain of teaching too much for her and felt compelled to resign. She was a good teacher, but she would stay up all night in an excess of conscientiousness preparing her lessons for the next day. The result was that, in due course, she would become completely exhausted and show irritability towards the children under her charge. Her memory would desert her in the class, and she would become dissatisfied with herself. She would struggle to continue her work to the end of the term, but usually found herself quite unable to do so, and had, reluctantly so far as her conscious intentions were concerned, to surrender altogether in a state of depression. This patient was attractive to men, but her case was complicated by a congenital defect which made marriage out of the question. She had neither a vagina nor a uterus, although it would appear that the clitoris was present and there was every reason to believe that the ovarian secretion was not absent. The two dreams in the short series to be quoted were simple in character, but this is perhaps no disadvantage for demonstrating the point, to illustrate which they are cited.

The first dream may be called "The hole in the stocking" dream. The dreamer was looking over her shoulder at the heel of her stocking. The stocking was thick and made of wool: "Like the old-fashioned hand-knitted/

hand-knitted stockings", to quote the dreamer's words. As she looked at the stocking, she noticed that it was a mass of holes and of run-down stitches. She experienced surprise at the condition of the stocking. There were some people present, and one of them gave a little laugh, whereupon she said apologetically, "These were new just the other day and they were strong because of being hand-knitted and being of thick wool; I cannot understand it".

The second dream may be called "The Nudity Dream". In this dream, the dreamer found herself standing naked before a young nephew. The two were seriously discussing something of grave import, but no memory of the subject of discussion could be recalled by the dreamer on awaking. All that the dreamer could remember was that she said to her nephew in a tone of reproach "Surely you don't expect me to go like this".

The deeper meaning of this dream-sequence need not be discussed here, but it had a bearing on the dreamer's physical disability. What is relevant to our discussion, however, is the fact that the holes in the stocking in the first dream appear to be the symbol of the nakedness which appears in the second dream, where symbolism has, partly at any rate, broken down. We cannot help regarding the symbolism of the first dream as the product of dream-work. It bears all the evidence of a process of distortion, and this distortion/

distortion would appear to be meaningless unless its function is to disguise the true meaning of the dream-thoughts from the dreamer's consciousness.

*Why not  
more primitive  
thinking*

When the significance of dreams such as those which have been instanced is considered, it is evident that the symbolisation partakes of the nature of distortion rather than of simple transformation. Its essence is disguise. The interpretation of such dreams puts a strain upon Rivers' theory which it is unable to bear. If dream-symbols are merely the natural expression of primitive thinking, it is difficult to see why, in the "spaniel" dream, the object symbolised successively by the dog, the dog's throat, and the throat as such should necessitate a process of transformation at all. The object symbolised seems to be itself a natural symbol for primitive thought - indeed it seems to be a more natural content of primitive thought than of any other kind of thought. It is primitive 'par excellence'.

*If the process of  
disguise is -  
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thought -  
this is a feature  
of the highest  
level of thought*

It is true that, according to Rivers' theory, dreams are not simply primitive thinking, but attempts to solve conflicts in terms of primitive thinking (vide e.g. "Conflict and Dream", p.17). Even so, however, the only solution which seems to be offered is that of disguise. The only function which transformation effects is to translate the conflict into terms in which its real significance is obscured.

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This may be easier to do on the plane of primitive thinking, and presumably this is why, in normal people, such phenomena occur typically in sleep - when psychological functions are eliminated from above downwards. None the less, the value of transformation in the attempted solution of conflict seems to be inextricably bound up with the distortion thereby produced. Any theory of dreams, therefore, which fails to do justice to the presence of an active process of distortion must be regarded as inadequate.

If this be true, we are driven to a dream-theory modelled more after the lines of Freud than after the lines of Rivers. We may accept from Rivers the view that the dream is a characteristic product of primitive thinking which occurs when the inhibition of super-imposed higher thought-processes is withdrawn; but we must recognise the presence, in a very large class of dreams, of a definite process of distortion. This process of distortion may be a special feature which only occurs when primitive thinking is occupied with mental conflict, but, in so far as it is present, we must regard it as evidence of a process of repression conceived after Freudian lines. Distortion, of course, is a process which occurs quite readily in primitive thinking, because primitive thinking is non-rational in character. When the higher thought-processes are active, perhaps "rationalisation" is a more natural process/

process than distortion; but, be that as it may, the essence of both processes is to be found in the resistance, which seems to oppose the entry into consciousness of mental content of a certain kind. When the higher processes are active in waking life, this resistance manifests itself in a most uncompromising way; it does not manifest itself at all readily as distortion, because distortion is not a natural expression of rational thought. When primitive thought-processes are released, as in sleep or in cases of psychological regression, the resistance manifests itself as distortion, because, although distortion is incompatible with rational thought, it is by no means incompatible with non-rational thought. Further, the resistance shows itself in less uncompromising form in distortion than in any process possible to rational thought; and it is for this reason that dreams "open up the straightest road to the knowledge of the unconscious" (Freud, "Collected Papers", Vol. I, p. 268). It is for a similar reason that the dream has been selected as a field for the study of the process of repression.

It is with a view to throwing light upon the process of repression that attention has been specially directed to the phenomenon of distortion in the dream. The dreams quoted seem 1. To prove beyond all question that distortion does occur in dreams; 2. To show that distortion partakes of the nature of repression as conceived/

conceived along the lines indicated by Freud. This is not to say that all dreams exemplify distortion, or for that matter, that repression is a necessary feature of all dreams. On the one hand, distortion may be absent because (despite Rivers) there may be no conflict finding expression in the dream-thoughts. Waking consciousness is not necessarily concerned with material involving repression; and there is no reason to suppose that the dreaming consciousness inevitably is so either (whatever Freud may say to the contrary in reference to adult dreams). On the other hand, distortion may be absent owing to the fact that repression has broken down. This is what seems to have occurred in the final phase of the 'spaniel' dream. It is to be noted that, when this break-down of repression occurred in the dream, the unpleasant affect became extreme and the dreamer awoke.

This raises the question of the relation of affect to the dream. It is a striking feature of dreams that situations, which would inevitably provoke emotion in waking life, frequently appear to provoke no emotion in the dream; but it is a still more striking feature that situations, which would be indifferent in waking life so far as affect is concerned, may be accompanied by intense emotion. Thus one of the writer's patients dreamed about jumping from one rock to another across a roaring torrent of considerable breadth, yet this dream/



dream was free of the fear which would undoubtedly have been felt if the necessity for such a feat had arisen in waking life. On the other hand, in another dream the same patient was filled with terror at the sight of an ordinary cushion lying on the floor. Such phenomena are interpreted by Freud as indicating that "the dream is less rich in affects than the psychic material from which it is elaborated" ("The Interpretation of Dreams", p.371). Whenever emotion appears in the manifest dream, it is derived from the latent dream-thoughts; but absence of emotion in the manifest dream does not necessarily imply its absence in the thoughts from which the dream is elaborated. Suppression of affect thus comes to be regarded as a feature of dream-formation, and this feature, like that of distortion, is attributed to the action of the censorship, (vide "The Interpretation of Dreams" p.372). Suppression of affect and distortion are thus both products of repression in the dreamer's mind. The appearance of affect in the dream-consciousness must, therefore, be regarded as a failure of repression, just as a breakdown of distortion has a like significance.

Rivers agrees with Freud "that affect may be absent or at any rate inappreciable in the manifest dream when it is evidently present in the deeper dream-thoughts of which the manifest dream is the transformed/

transformed expression" ("Conflict and Dream", p.65-66). His views on the significance of affect in the dream were based on his study of anxiety dreams in soldiers suffering from war-neurosis. In bad cases the nightmare generally occurred as a faithful reproduction of some terrifying scene of warfare without evidence of any transformation. As improvement in the patient's condition occurred, it was noticed that transformation began to make its appearance. Such cases suggested to Rivers that:-

"There is a definite relation between the amount of transformation and the intensity of the affect. They suggest that the intensity of affect is inversely proportional to the amount of transformation, a suggestion in harmony with the view of Freud that one of the results of the transformation of the latent into the manifest content of the dream is to lessen or inhibit its affective character." (Op. cit. p.67).

He took exception, however, to Freud's theory that every dream is a disguised wish-fulfilment. The study of war-dreams suggested, on the contrary, that terrifying dreams were the expression of painful experience which the patient desired not to experience again. From this he concluded that "so far as desire enters into causation, the dream is the direct negation of  
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a wish, the wish not to be subjected to the repetition of a painful experience." (Op. cit. p.68). There was thus a conflict "between a process in which an experience tends to recur to memory and a desire that the experience shall not recur" (Op. cit., p.68).

Attention has already been drawn to Rivers' theory that the dream is an attempted solution of a conflict in terms of the primitive thinking, which is the only thinking available in sleep. In accordance with this theory, the anxiety-dream is necessarily regarded as "a failure of solution" (Op. cit. p.69).

We have already seen that Rivers' failure to recognise the presence of disguise in dream-transformation vitiated his theory that the dream is simply an attempt to solve mental conflict in terms of primitive thinking; but it is a notable fact that both he and Freud agree in regarding the appearance of affect in the dream as due to a failure of repression. The rationale of the sudden waking of the dreamer from an anxiety-dream seems to be that, when the repressive processes at the disposal of the dreaming consciousness are overwhelmed, the more extensive repressive resources of the waking consciousness have to be called in. The awakening of the dreamer under such conditions is of interest for two reasons. First, it is of interest because it suggests that distortion functions as a process protective of consciousness against/

against inroads from the unconscious. It thus has its 'raison d'être' in the conscious (as Freud's theory implies), not in the unconscious (as Rivers' theory implies). Secondly, study of the conditions of waking from anxiety-dreams leads us to see the superiority of a theory of repression conceived on the Freudian model over Rivers' theory of repression. According to Rivers, repression is really equivalent to inhibition conceived after the model of modern neurological theory ("Instinct and the Unconscious", p.31). The later evolved mental processes repress more primitive modes of mental functioning, just as the later evolved cortical functions inhibit those of the thalamus and sub-cortical structures. When the higher control is removed, the repressed functions manifest themselves. This way of regarding repression has two implications which it is impossible to accept.

First, if Rivers were right, dream-distortion would become a phenomenon, not of repression, but of lack of repression. The unsatisfactory nature of this position need not be elaborated. It follows from the conclusion, which has already been reached, that disguise constitutes the essence of distortion.

Let us turn to the other implication of Rivers' view. It is to the effect that repression depends upon a distinction between higher and lower mental structures. Repression becomes characteristic of the action/

action of higher processes as such upon all primitive processes which fail to be assimilated by fusion (vide Op. cit. p.32). The importance of this distinction need not be denied, but it is not a distinction which helps us to understand repression. We have seen that the symbolisation of the anxiety-dream is characterised by disguise. It was this fact of disguise that gave Freud the clue to a distinction of infinitely greater value for the understanding of repression than that between "higher" and "lower": viz. the distinction between "conscious" and "unconscious". Study of the anxiety-dream shows that the function of repression is not to prevent primitive mental processes from interfering with higher mental processes, but to prevent certain unconscious mental processes from disturbing consciousness:— whether it be the primitive consciousness of the dreamer or the higher consciousness of waking life.

The most striking feature of the anxiety-dream would seem to be (1) the tendency of distortion to break down, (2) the tendency of the dreamer to awake. The implications of these facts would seem to be:—

1. That the function of distortion is to prevent the appearance in consciousness of mental content, the appearance of which would be accompanied by unpleasant affect;

2. That, when distortion breaks down and unpleasant affect does appear in consciousness, this is a sign that/

that the process of repression has failed at the primitive mental level of the dreaming consciousness;

3. That, when repression fails at a primitive level, the higher mental processes, which have been in abeyance during sleep, are mobilised and the dreamer wakes;

4. That, when the higher mental processes of the waking consciousness become active, the repressive functions of the sentiments and ideals serve to check the further development of the repressed content in consciousness.

In the light of these inferences, Freud's dictum that "the dream is the guardian of sleep, not the disturber of it" ("The Interpretation of Dreams", p. 197) must be interpreted as meaning that distortion serves the purpose of preserving consciousness from the unpleasant affect which would result, if repressed tendencies succeeded in manifesting themselves in recognisable form. We are thus led by the study of the anxiety-dream to the conclusion reached by Freud, that repression is a process whereby consciousness is preserved from unpleasant affect. (Vide "Collected Papers, Vol.IV, p.92).

This conclusion does not require us to follow Freud in adopting a general theory of psychological hedonism. It merely involves our recognising that repression is essentially a hedonistic process. It is a process whereby unpleasant mental content is kept out/

out of consciousness, or, to express the same fact in another way, it is a process whereby consciousness is enabled to avoid the unpleasant. That a tendency to avoid the unpleasant may be a determining factor in conduct is too common an observation to make it necessary to stress the point. Behaviour determined in this way is described by psychologists as "appetitive" in character (e.g. Drever, "The Psychology of Everyday Life", p.21). It is a primitive type of behaviour, which in the human being is normally subordinated to the "reactive" type of behaviour, which characterises the activity of the more highly evolved instinctive tendencies, such as aggression, flight and sex. It would seem to be appetitive behaviour to which Freud refers, when he says that the "primary" mental processes obey the "pleasure-principle". (vide "Collected Papers, Vol. IV, p.14). No one who has any experience of neurotics will deny the possibility of finding persons whose conduct is largely determined by a tendency to avoid unpleasure. Their inability to face the sterner facts of life, their liability to break down under strain or responsibility, their diletantism and their inability to tolerate a frustration of their desires are all evidence of an exaggeration of the natural tendency to avoid unpleasure. Yet these are the very people who exhibit the symptoms which have led to the recognition of the process of repression. Such phenomena provide striking/

striking confirmation of Freud's view of repression as a process whereby consciousness is spared un-pleasure. Repression is thus seen to be an expression of the general tendency of the organism to avoid the unpleasant.

With this conclusion our enquiry into the essential nature of the process of repression comes to an end. The result of our enquiry is to show, that, in general, repression is best conceived along the lines indicated by Freud, who originally isolated it as a distinct mental process. Repression will accordingly be defined as follows:-

Repression is an active mental process whereby certain mental elements, the appearance of which in consciousness would cause unpleasure, are excluded from personal consciousness without thereby ceasing to be mental.

#### THE RELATIONSHIP OF REPRESSION TO DISSOCIATION.

The conceptions of dissociation and repression have now been subjected to such analysis as has seemed necessary to determine their essential nature and to enable satisfactory definitions of the two processes to be formulated. It now remains to consider the relationship between the two processes. Now that the ground/



ground has been cleared, this task should not prove difficult. If the definition of repression, which has just been given, is compared with the definition of dissociation previously reached, it is evident that repression is just a special form of dissociation.

Dissociation was defined as:-

An active mental process, whereby unacceptable mental content or an unacceptable mental function becomes cut off from personal consciousness, without thereby ceasing to be mental - such mental content or mental function being "unacceptable" within the meaning of this definition if it is either irrelevant to, incompatible with, or unpleasant in relation to an active interest.

Repression has just been defined as:-

An active mental process whereby certain mental elements, the appearance of which in consciousness would cause unpleasure, are excluded from personal consciousness without thereby ceasing to be mental. It is, therefore, obvious that repression is in its essence just dissociation of the unpleasant.

While, however, repression must be regarded as dissociation of the unpleasant, it does not follow that all dissociation of the unpleasant is necessarily repression. As a matter of fact, the two processes are not co-extensive. Dissociation of the unpleasant is the more extensive process of the two, and repression/

repression is just a special form which it takes under certain definite conditions. The problem that remains is to discover what these special conditions are. When we have answered this question, we shall have determined the exact relationship between the two processes. In seeking the answer to our question, we shall do well to look in the direction which has already proved so fruitful in our enquiry, and devote our attention to the nature of the material involved in the process under consideration. Our remaining task is, therefore, to enquire into the psychological nature of the material involved in the process of repression. It is here if anywhere that we ought to find the differentia of repression from simple dissociation of the unpleasant.

In his earlier writings Freud described repression as "arising through an unbearable idea having called up the defences of the ego" ("Collected Papers", Vol.I, p.207). Writing in 1905 of the views which he propounded in 1894-6, he says:-

"I had put it forward as a condition of the pathogenic effectiveness of a given experience that it must seem to the ego intolerable and must evoke an effort towards defence. To this defence I had referred the mental dissociation - or as it was then called, the dissociation of consciousness - of hysteria. If the defence succeeded, then the unbearable experience and its affective consequences /

consequences were banished from consciousness and from the memory of the ego." (Op. cit. Vol.I. p.278).

It is thus evident that in his earlier writings Freud regarded the repressed material as consisting of unbearable ideas and unbearable experiences with their affective consequences. This is in line with his original dictum that "hysterical patients suffer principally from reminiscences" - a dictum which appears in the same paper in which he first uses the word "repress" ("On the Psychological Mechanism of Hysterical Phenomena", written in 1892 and published in 1893 under the names of Breuer and Freud). That Freud should have originally regarded the repressed material as consisting of ideas and memories is what we should expect from the circumstances under which he came to formulate the conception of repression; for, as Freud points out, it was the resistance of un hypnotised patients to the recall of memories that led him to recognise the presence of such a process (vide Op. cit. Vol.I. p.297-8).

In Freud's later writings, however, we notice a significant change in terminology. In his later works, he speaks less of "ideas" and "memories" and more of "impulses", "instincts" and "unconscious tendencies". Thus in a paper on "Repression" in 1915 he writes:-

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"One of the vicissitudes an instinctual impulse may undergo is to meet with resistances the aim of which is to make the impulse inoperative. Under certain conditions, which we shall presently investigate more closely, the impulse then passes into the state of 'repression'". (Op. cit. Vol. IV, p.84).

In his later description of repression, therefore, what is described as being repressed is not an unbearable idea but an instinctive impulse, which, by the "attainment of its aim", would "produce 'pain'" (Loc. cit.) This change of terminology, which is a feature of Freud's later as contrasted with his earlier writings, is highly significant. It indicates a movement in the direction of regarding repressed material as consisting not in parts of the mental content, but in elements of mental structure. This is well illustrated in a passage from "Beyond the Pleasure-Principle" (first published in 1920), where Freud says:-

"It over and again happens that particular instincts, or portions of them, prove irreconcilable in their aims or demands with others which can be welded into the comprehensive unity of the ego. They are thereupon split off from this unity by the process of repression, retained on lower stages of/

of psychic development, and for the time being cut off from all possibility of gratification. If they then succeed, as so easily happens with the repressed sex-impulses, in fighting their way through - along circuitous routes - to a direct or substitutive gratification, this success, which might otherwise have brought pleasure, is experienced by the ego as 'pain'." ("Beyond the Pleasure Principle", 1922, p.6.) ("pain" = German "Unlust").

The realisation that repressed material is composed not so much of ideas and memories as of tendencies having their ultimate basis in the instinctive endowment of the individual was, in large part, due to an observation, which the exigencies of psycho-analytic technique made increasingly clear, as experience was gained. It was found that the aim of bringing the content of the patient's unconscious into consciousness was not fully attainable:-

"The patient cannot recall all of what lies repressed, perhaps not even the essential part of it, and so gains no conviction that the conclusion presented to him is correct. He is obliged rather to repeat as a current experience what is repressed, instead of, as the physician would prefer to see him do, recollecting it as a fragment of the past." (Op. cit. p.17-18).

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This observation, the truth of which has been confirmed by the present writer in his own experience, naturally led to a concentration of interest upon repressed tendencies, as against repressed mental content. Another fact which contributed to this change of view-point was the fact, that not only the repressed elements, but also "the motives of the resistances, and indeed the resistances themselves, are found in the process of treatment to be unconscious". (Op. cit. p.19). Realisation of the significance of the fact, that the resistances are as unconscious as the repressed elements, led Freud to amend an inadequacy in his mode of expression. "We escape ambiguity", he says, "if we contrast not the conscious and the unconscious, but the coherent ego and the repressed .... We may say that the resistance on the part of the analysed person proceeds from his ego" (Op. cit. p.19). The "coherent ego" is, of course, part of the mental structure not of the mental content. It corresponds to what is described in more orthodox psychological terms as "The organised self" - a hierarchical organisation of the sentiments and ideals based on the fundamental instinctive tendencies. If, then, the conception of repression is to be satisfactorily formulated, it must be expressed in terms of mental structure rather than of mental content. This being so, repression is to be regarded as a process /

process whereby certain mental tendencies are denied conscious expression, if their incongruity with the structure of the organised self is such that the conscious expression of these tendencies would cause unpleasure.

Although Freud in his later works (e.g. "Beyond the Pleasure-Principle" and "The Ego and the Id") has been led to realise that repression primarily involves elements of mental structure rather than elements of mental content, it must be recognised that his realisation of this fact has been somewhat inadequate. This is largely due to the fact that his views have been elaborated in too great an independence of general psychology. Thus, instead of using ordinary psychological terms, he speaks e.g. of "Repression of an instinct-presentation", understanding by this expression "an idea or group of ideas which is cathected with a definite amount of the mental energy (libido, interest) pertaining to an instinct". ("Collected Papers", Vol.IV, p.91). He thus comes to divide the manifestation of an instinctive tendency into a "group of ideas" and a "charge of affect", which may be separated from it and attached to another group of ideas. This way of speaking of affect as if it were a form of floating mental energy which could be attached to this or that part of the mental content is highly misleading, and it obscures the fact that mental/

mental content is only significant in relation to an active tendency. The true interpretation of phenomena of repression, so far as mental content is concerned, appears to be that mental content is only liable to be repressed in so far as it is the expression of instinct-interest which is repressed. Thus we can only speak of "repressed memories" in the sense that memories activated by repressed tendencies tend to be kept out of consciousness because the tendencies which activate them are themselves denied conscious expression.

The reference which has been made to Freud's division of "an instinct-presentation" into "a group of ideas" and "a charge of affect" raises another question besides that of the bearing of repression upon mental content. This is the question of the relation of repression to affect. Psycho-analytic literature is full of such expression as "unconscious hate", "unconscious love", "unconscious sense of guilt". In so far as such expressions imply the existence of an emotional state which is unconscious, their validity must unquestionably be denied. An emotion is a feeling-state, and to speak of an unconscious feeling-state is to give voice to an absurdity. Freud has discussed this question in a paper on "The Unconscious", published in 1915. In this paper he writes:-

"We/



"We know, too, that to suppress the development of affect is the true aim of repression and that its work does not terminate if this aim is not achieved. In every instance where repression has succeeded in inhibiting the development of an affect we apply the term 'unconscious' to those affects that are restored when we undo the work of repression. So it cannot be denied that the use of the terms in question is logical; but a comparison of the unconscious affect with the unconscious idea reveals the significant difference that the unconscious idea continues, after repression, as an actual formation in the System Ucs, whilst to the unconscious affect there corresponds in the same system only a potential disposition which is prevented from developing further. So that, strictly speaking, although no fault be found with the mode of expression in question, there are no unconscious affects in the sense in which there are unconscious ideas. But there may very well be in the system Ucs affect-formations which, like others, come into consciousness." (Op. cit. Vol.IV. p.110-111).

From this quotation it is evident that Freud recognises the psychological absurdity of speaking of an unconscious or repressed affect, though he gives his sanction to the usage for descriptive purposes. The usage/

usage is certainly convenient, but it must none the less be deprecated, unless it is clearly understood to be nothing more than a "façon de parler". Many medical writers - not only psycho-analysts - have confused the issue by speaking as if pent-up emotion could be held under repression in the unconscious. It must be insisted that, in cases to which such a description applies, what is repressed is not emotion but a tendency, which, if it reached conscious expression, would give rise to an emotional state.

If then we must conceive "the repressed" as consisting essentially of tendencies belonging to the structure of the mind rather than of parts of the mental content, such as "ideas" and "memories", the question arises: how does this help us to differentiate repression from simple dissociation of the unpleasant? It helps us, because it directs our attention to the source of the repressed material. We have already noted the fundamental tendency of the organism to withdraw from the unpleasant. All organisms tend to avoid unpleasant stimuli. In an organism with a primitive mentality this process of withdrawal seems simple enough. An unpleasant sensory stimulus is received, and withdrawal takes place. Even at quite a primitive mental level, however, it must be assumed that an unpleasant experience leaves some sort of memory-trace, so that, when a similar stimulus is received again, the organism's experience is different from what it was on the first occasion. One must assume/

assume that the second experience of the organism includes at least a dim sense of familiarity, and that behaviour is in some way modified as a result of the first experience. Only so is it possible to explain that adaptation of behaviour, which is one of the differentia of living organisms from inorganic matter. Only so, can learning by experience be conceived as possible. Only so, can the establishment of such a phenomenon as a conditioned reflex be envisaged. The mental level, at which memory-traces influence behaviour solely in virtue of the modification which they introduce into the second or subsequent experience of a given situation, is described by psychologists as the "perceptual level" of mental development. At this level, memory consists at best in recognition. There is no such thing as a memory-image. This is the level of mental development which characterises the vast majority of living species. For such an animal, there are unpleasant perceptions and unpleasant situations, and these activate behaviour of withdrawal; but there is no such thing as an unpleasant memory or an unpleasant idea.

A complication is, however, introduced at the next level of development, which is characterised by the possibility of memory images, and which is described by psychologists as the "ideational"/

"ideational" or "imaginative" level. If the human race is excluded from consideration, it would seem from experimental evidence that only some of the higher animals reach this level of development. At this level, behaviour may be modified by the explicit revival of memory-images of former experiences. It is only when this level is reached that dissociation of unpleasant mental content can be conceived in any sense other than is involved in mere withdrawal from an unpleasant stimulus when it is presented. Once this mental level is reached, however, the conditions are present, which render dissociation of unpleasant mental content possible in the sense in which the phrase would commonly be understood. At this level, it is correct to say that an unpleasant memory or idea may be "dissociated". It would be incorrect, however, to speak of mental content as being "repressed".

Repression would only appear to be possible when the highest - the "rational" or "conceptual" - level of mental development is reached. This stage, so far as we know, is only reached in the case of man. The chief characteristic of mental development at this level is that ideas can be related to one another, concepts can be formed, consequences can be envisaged and general principles can be inferred or applied. It is on account of his possession of these capacities that/

that man's ability to learn by experience is so infinitely superior to that of all other living species known. It is in virtue of these capacities that man is able to adapt his behaviour in a manner superior to that of "trial and error" learning. It is only when this level is reached that it is possible for an organism to attain self-consciousness, to appreciate the existence of various tendencies within the self and to recognise incompatibility between its own conflicting tendencies. It is, therefore, only at this level, if our analysis of repressed material has been correct, that repression becomes possible. Repression is only now possible because it is only at this level that the conscious expression of a tendency incompatible with that organised body of sentiments and ideals, which constitutes the self, can be recognised as such. It is only when such a tendency is capable of being recognised as incompatible with the self that its recognition can cause unpleasure.

These considerations lend point to the suggestion already made that it is to the source of the repressed material that we must look, if we would understand what it is that differentiates repression from simple dissociation of the unpleasant. In simple dissociation of the unpleasant, what is dissociated is part of/

of the mental content which is felt to be unpleasant because of its relation to a prevailing tendency. In repression, what is dissociated is part of the mental structure which is felt to be unpleasant because of its relation to the organised self. It is only in the latter instance that we can properly speak of "conflict" - a term which is generally used to describe the state which provides the essential condition of repression. This difference between repression and simple dissociation in relation to the source of the material involved may perhaps be expressed more pointedly in another way. Whereas in simple dissociation of the unpleasant the dissociated material is of external origin, in the case of repression the dissociated material is of internal origin.

At first blush it may seem incorrect to say that in simple dissociation of the unpleasant the dissociated material is of external origin, if we include under this heading dissociation of unpleasant ideas and memories. These are part of the mental content; is it not absurd, it may be asked, to say that these are of external origin? The answer to this question is that it is not absurd, because ideas and memories have their origin in the experience of events which happen to an individual. All the examples of dissociation of the unpleasant, which were cited in the section of this thesis devoted to "Dissociation", showed a dissociation of mental content/

content determined by events. When we speak of "The good old times", what are dissociated in our minds are the memories of unpleasant events. The same holds true of many of the dissociations witnessed in "shell-shock" cases. Our shelving of thoughts about our own death is determined by our experience of the deaths of others. The failure of patients suffering from fatal disease to recognise the gravity of their own condition is a failure to recognise the significance of an event which is happening to them. The dissociations of the kind which occurred to Livingstone, when he was being mauled by a lion, are all dissociations determined by the unpleasantness of events.

Repression, on the other hand, is exercised in relation to tendencies springing from the innate instinctive endowment of the individual concerned. These tendencies may, of course, be activated by situations in which the individual is placed, but the menace, against which defence is directed, has its roots in the nature of the individual himself. It is the tendencies which he possesses that are intolerable, rather than the situations which provoke these tendencies. The danger is internal, not external. It is endo-psychic. This is well illustrated in the case of the patient whose 'spaniel dream' has been recorded. What provoked the distortion in this dream/

dream was the presence in the dreamer of sexual desires which were in conflict with her ideals and sentiments. The object of repression in such cases is to preserve consciousness from the unpleasant affect which would result, if the presence of strong impulses irreconcilable with the organised self were to make itself felt in consciousness. In the dream in question the impulses did eventually reach conscious expression, with the result that the patient awoke in terror - fear being the natural emotion in the presence of any danger whether external or internal in origin. The object of the distortion in the earlier part of the dream was to prevent conscious realisation of the unacceptable tendency, which was too insistent to be denied expression altogether. So long as the significance of the impulse involved was concealed by distortion, unpleasant affect was avoided, but, as soon as repression began to break down, unpleasant affect began to make its appearance. It is just the appearance of such unpleasant affect that the process of distortion is calculated to prevent; and it is in the possibility of preventing the development of such unpleasant affect that the rationale of repression is to be found.

These considerations lead us to a conclusion which is at first sight paradoxical: the conclusion, namely, that what is unpleasant to consciousness about the repressed tendencies is the fact that they are/



are pleasant. This paradox is realised by Freud, as is evident from the following passage:-

"It is not easy in theory to deduce the possibility of such a thing as repression. Why should an instinctual impulse suffer such a fate? For this to happen, obviously a necessary condition must be that attainment of its aim by the instinct should produce 'pain' instead of pleasure. But we cannot well imagine such a contingency. There are no such instincts; satisfaction of an instinct is always pleasurable. We should have to assume certain peculiar circumstances, some sort of process which changes the pleasure of satisfaction into 'pain' ..... Such a satisfaction is pleasurable in itself, but is irreconcilable with other claims and purposes; it therefore causes pleasure in one part of the mind and 'pain' in another. We see then that it is a condition of repression that the element of avoiding 'pain' shall have acquired more strength than the pleasure of gratification." ("Collected Papers", Vol.IV, p.84-85). ('Pain' = 'Unlust' in German).

What makes the satisfaction of an instinctive impulse painful is, of course, the fact that it is irreconcilable with the organised sentiments and ideals, which constitute the main body of the personality. The satisfaction of repressed tendencies is pleasurable/

pleasurable in itself', but the mere fact that it is pleasurable makes it all the more intolerable from the point of view of the organised self, with which the tendencies are in conflict. The prime condition for the possibility of repression would thus seem to be the existence in the mind of instinctive tendencies which have not been organised into the hierarchy of sentiments and ideals which form the self, although they may exhibit a minor organisation of their own. This seems to be the state of things to which Freud intends to refer, when he speaks of a "fixation" (vide e.g. Op. cit. Vol.IV, p.86). Another term, which is commonly used in this connection in psychopathological literature, is the word "complex". This word was originally introduced by Jung of Zürich to designate minor organisations of instinctive tendencies which are out of relation to the main personality and which thus remain unconscious. The word has since been used by McDougall, Bernard Hart and others as equivalent to "sentiment", but it seems to be more usefully employed in its original sense, as indicating a minor organisation of tendencies out of relation to the sentiments and ideals, and so liable to repression. Where such independent organisations as the complex assume a more extensive form, they would seem to constitute those "secondary personalities" to which Morton Prince and others have/

have devoted so much painstaking investigation. It would seem that any instinctive tendency is theoretically capable of leading to complex\_formation and so provoking the process of repression, but, since the sex instinct is, of all the instinctive tendencies, that most difficult to assimilate into the personality in the modern civilised world, it is the tendencies related to this instinct that seem to be most frequently involved. Freud goes so far as to say that the sex\_tendencies are involved in every case; but, although the psycho\_neuroses of civil life seem to afford evidence in favour of his view, the experiences of war seem to show that tendencies of self\_preservation are capable of functioning in a manner so much at variance with the organised self as to provide occasion for repression.

Whatever the exact nature of the tendencies involved, however, the essential feature of the process of repression remains unaffected. Its nature is best understood in the light of the term, which Freud originally employed when he first isolated the process - viz. that of "defence". Defence, however, is a feature which repression shares with all forms of dissociation of the unpleasant. The difference between repression and simple dissociation of the unpleasant lies in the fact, that in the first case the menace, from which protection is sought, is of internal/

internal origin, whereas in the second case it is only of external origin. In simple dissociation of the unpleasant, the defence is directed against mental content determined ultimately by events that happen to the individual. In repression, the defence is directed against tendencies which form part of the mental structure of the individual himself.

The distinction, which has now been established between repression and other forms of protective dissociation, enables us to understand two characteristic features of repression, which have led many writers to regard it as a completely separate process. They are:-

1. The relatively permanent character of its effects.
2. The high degree of activity which it seems to involve.

As regards the first of these features:- the relatively permanent character of repression as compared with other forms of protective dissociation is readily understood, once we recognise that, in the case of repression, the source of danger is endo-  
psychic. The source of the unpleasant affect which is threatened, and from which defence is sought, is to be traced ultimately to the instinctive tendencies, and these form part of the permanent structure of the mind. Freud picturesquely describes the source from which/

which these tendencies spring as the "Id" ("The Ego and the Id", 1927, p.28), but this term merely exemplifies the confusion which results, when attempts are made by medical writers to explain mental processes in independence of general psychology. The "Id" is an unnecessary and redundant term for what are familiar to psychologists as the innate instinct-dispositions. It is the permanence of the instinct-dispositions, which gives rise to the impression of the relative permanence of the effects of repression.

As regards the high degree of activity which strikes the observer as characterising the action of repression, this is also traceable to the source of the material. It was probably the contrast between the enormous amount of activity, which appears to be involved in repression, and the relatively small amount of activity, which appears to be involved in simple protective dissociation, that led McDougall to remark "Dissociation terminates conflict; but repression, in itself, does not" ("An Outline of Abnormal Psychology", p.226). We have already indicated that "conflict" is only applicable where repression is concerned; but, be that as it may, the high degree of activity involved in repression is readily intelligible in the light of the enormous amount of energy with which the instinct-dispositions are /

are endowed by nature. It is because these instinctive tendencies are, biologically speaking, the dynamic of all action, that, when any of them is repressed, repression must necessarily involve a degree of activity which is found in no other form of dissociation.

### CONCLUSION.

Now that the relationship between repression and dissociation has been determined, the task which the writer set before him in his thesis is concluded. All that remains to be done is to summarise the conclusions reached.

### SUMMARY.

1. The conception of dissociation has been subjected to examination, and the conclusion has been reached that dissociation should be regarded as:-  
An active mental process, whereby unacceptable mental content or an unacceptable mental function becomes cut off from personal consciousness, without thereby ceasing to be mental - such mental content or mental function being regarded as unacceptable if it is either irrelevant to, incompatible/

incompatible with or unpleasant in relation to an active interest.

2. The conception of repression was then considered, with the result that repression was found to be:-  
An active mental process, whereby certain mental elements, the appearance of which in consciousness would cause displeasure, are excluded from personal consciousness without thereby ceasing to be mental.
3. On the assumption that these conclusions regarding the essential nature of the two processes are correct, it follows that repression is to be classed with dissociation of the unpleasant.
4. The consideration of various phenomena illustrating repression and dissociation of the unpleasant showed that repression is a special form of dissociation of the unpleasant:- viz., that form which occurs when the dissociated elements consist of tendencies belonging to the instinctive endowment and thus forming part of the structure of the mind itself.
5. This last conclusion led to a modification of the definition of repression, as a result of which it came to be regarded as:-  
A process whereby certain mental tendencies are denied conscious expression, if their incongruity with/

with the structure of the organised self is such that the conscious expression of these tendencies would cause unpleasure.

6. This final definition of repression suggests that, whereas the term "mental conflict" is applicable to conditions giving rise to repression, it is not applicable to the conditions which give rise to other forms of dissociation.

#### ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS THESIS.

Attention may be directed to certain features of this thesis, which the writer believes to constitute original contributions to the subject under discussion. These are:-

I. The analysis of dissociation-phenomena into three categories depending on the nature of the mental elements dissociated. These categories are (a) dissociation of the irrelevant, (b) dissociation of the incompatible, (c) dissociation of the unpleasant.

II. The view that repression is:-

(a) a special form of dissociation of the unpleasant.

(b) differentiated from other forms of dissociation of the unpleasant in virtue of the fact that, in/



in the case of repression, the dissociated elements consist essentially in tendencies belonging to the mental structure, whereas in other forms of dissociation of the unpleasant the dissociated elements consist in part of the mental content.

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