

the personality and so dissociated. Confirmation, too, is found in dreams, and often baldly so without much or any distortion.

Let us then not unscientifically assume the falsity of these Freudian conclusions without good reason, for any theory which throws light upon the essential meaning of mental symptoms must be to some extent welcome. Psycho-analytical principles have in this way revolutionised so much of our psychiatric work, in that in the wards, instead of regarding our patients' utterances and actions as grotesque because emanating from a disordered brain, we see our patients as individuals taking refuge from reality, building up a world of their own, and to all their strivings some important significance is attached if only we have the psychological eye to read.

Sadism and Masochism. By W. REES-THOMAS, M.D., M.R.C.P.
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SADISM is conceived as including anything from an impetuous attitude towards the sexual object to the stage in which sexual gratification is exclusively dependent upon the complete subjection and ill-treatment of the sexual victim.

Masochism, on the other hand, includes mere subjection to the sexual object at one extreme and the suffering of physical or mental pain as a condition of sexual pleasure and gratification at the other.

In this short discussion sadism and masochism are taken in their broadest sense.

The wide-spread occurrence of sadism and masochism is such that we see its effects and workings in diverse forms. Ivan Bloch refers to the "occurrence of sadism and masochism as affecting mankind in the mass—a fact of particular importance. To give some examples: Campaigns, gladiatorial combats, man-hunts, beast-baiting, bull-fights, sensational dramas, public executions, inquisition and witch trial, lynch-law as practised to-day in North America, in the behaviour of the crowd of onlookers at the former punishment of the pillory, especially also in revolutions, of which to-day once more we have the most horrible example in Russia, in the primeval custom of marriage by capture, in cannibalism and the scourges of the middle ages, the horrible 'satanism' of the same period, and asceticism and martyrdom. These facts suffice to prove that among all nations sadism and masochism in all the forms we still observe to-day were most widely diffused; and to prove that they arise from certain instincts deeply-

⁽¹⁾ Paper read at the Annual General Meeting, Buxton, July 28th, 1920.

rooted in the soul of the people, the existence of which, even to-day, manifests itself everywhere."

But cruelty impulses, active and passive, are not necessarily abnormal. They find their normal counterpart in the masterly attitude of the male and the passive attitude of the female. This attitude may have arisen from the one-time necessity for capture of the female by the male, and this is still reflected in certain old customs in our own kingdom. In the early seventies it was still the custom in certain parts of Wales for the bride to set out on horseback on her wedding morn for an unknown destination. The bridegroom gave chase, and he was obliged to capture her and bring her back before the wedding ceremony could take place.

It is interesting to note that among certain aboriginal tribes of Southern India the word for war means the struggle for bullocks, and that amongst these tribes the purchase price of a wife is always paid in bullocks.

In the animal world we find many instances of ill-treatment of the female by the male as being a normal occurrence during courtship. Perhaps the best examples would be the cat and the horse.

In the present state of our knowledge it is impossible to trace the cruelty impulse to its origin. We can only indicate certain possible sources and certain events which may be factors in reinforcing and making dominant that tendency. The baby is conscious of its power over the external world, and it makes every effort to maintain this sense of power. Hence every event which is not pleasing is subject to aggression until the child learns its limitations—that is, acquires its "sense of reality."

Pain we conceive as a form of intense emotional excitement. In its original form it appears to the child as a direct negation of its "sense of power." The infliction of pain on others is an attempt on the part of the child to maintain its omnipotence. And this constitutes cruelty because the act is unconditioned.

This attitude of the child is a source of pleasure. Freud has expressed the opinion that possibly the association of cruelty with the libido is primary. On the other hand he doubts whether the passive cruelty tendency appears as primary, and states that it is often recognisable as arising from the active cruelty impulse through repression.

The infliction of pain on others will retain its actual pleasure component until the child later develops the impulse to suspend action which is likely to cause, or before it causes, pain to others. And this development of sympathy occurs as a secondary impulse, and until it has effectually appeared there is always the danger that the connections between cruelty and the erotogenous impulses formed in early life cannot be broken.

The influence of muscular activity on sexual excitement has been

pointed out by Freud. It is certain that movement is a source of pleasure to the child as it is to the adult.

During the excitement of a contest it is common for children to experience a pleasurable feeling in the genital zones.

In both intense muscular activity and sexual excitement there is that feeling of intensity which may cause overflow to other impulses. If this connection between exercise and sexual activity acquires some importance to the individual it may be a factor in the later formation of sadistic impulses.

The sexual act, if witnessed by very young children, must be regarded by them as a contest in which there is overpowering on the one hand and submission on the other.

The following case is of interest in this connection :

C. W—, æt. 19. A vagrant. When first seen he was subject to outbursts of excitement with aggressive tendencies towards the attendants in charge of him. These occurred about once a fortnight, and in the intervals he was always solitary and depressed. He frankly admits that he is a homosexual, and is a vagrant mainly for the purpose of satisfying his homosexual desires. During a short analysis I was able to bring out the following memory : At the age of two and a-half to three years he witnessed normal coitus between his parents, and during childhood he was much disturbed by the knowledge that other men beat his mother. He now realises that his mother was a prostitute. The recall of the scene between his parents produced an attack of acute mania lasting six to eight hours, during which time I had to seclude him in a padded room.

Since that time he has been much more cheerful and has not during five months attacked his attendants. His homosexual tendencies remain and I have not been able to attempt further analysis.

It would appear as though his aggression represented the conflict with his father. Further analysis may modify this opinion, but it certainly shows that the cruelty impulse can acquire force from the child's too close association with the intimate life of his parents.

During the course of the development of the sexual organisation we pass through what Freud terms the pre-genital stage, *i.e.*, the stage in which the libido seeks an object before the primacy of the genital zones is finally established. One phase of this stage is known as the sadistic-anal erotic. In this we have hate or cruelty associated with anal erotism. This association may occur as the result of training. The pleasure that the child seeks in its own excreta and its attempt to secure greater pleasure by retention is often frustrated by the mother or nurse. Thus the child comes into conflict with those around it and it expresses its attitude in hatred and defiance. Ernest Jones points out that there is an inherent connection between hate and anal eroticism in the genesis of the compulsion neuroses. Federn, quoted by Jones, lays special stress on the anal erotic sensations themselves as being associated with the earliest evidences of sadistic wishes in cases of sadism analysed.

The other pre-genital sexual organisation which is important to this discussion is the oral or cannibalistic. The mouth is originally con-

nected with the taking of nourishment, and this source of pleasure becomes differentiated during development from the sexual activity. In this pre-genital stage the sexual activity is not yet separated from the pleasure associated with the taking of nourishment.

Fixation with object-formation will explain the sadistic biting which is so common. As Freud so well expresses this, "The object of one activity is also that of the other; the sexual aim consists in incorporating into one's own body of the object; it is the prototype of that which plays such an important psychic *rôle* as identification." This desire to incorporate into one's own body the sexual object is so well seen in the expression of the lover, "I could eat her!" Here we find expressed in language the association between the nutritional and sexual activities.

It is easy to understand how the failure of the nutritional organisation to become separated from the sexual would be a potent source of sadistic tendencies in our sexual life. From the psychic attitude of the normal lover to that of the sadist is but a small step.

A source of the passive cruelty impulse is found in the sexual excitement associated with irritation of the skin of the gluteal region. The pleasure which some children take in whipping is well known. The following passage is quoted from Freud: "The sexually exciting influence of some painful affects, such as fear, shuddering and horror, is felt by a great many people throughout life, and readily explains why so many seek out opportunities to experience such sensations provided that certain accessory circumstances (as under imaginary circumstances in reading or in the theatre) suppress the earnestness of the painful feeling. If one might assume that the same erogenous action also reaches the intensive painful feelings, especially if the pain be toned down or held at a distance by a subsidiary determination, this relation would then contain the main roots of the masochistic-sadistic impulse into the manifold composition of which we are gaining a gradual insight."

The following case may possibly throw some light on the significance of self-inflicted pain :

A mental defective, *æ*t. 16, mental age 8, has, during the past four years while under detention at an industrial school and a State institution, on numerous occasions inflicted wounds on his own arm, neck and body, and on one occasion has attempted suicide by drowning. These attempts always follow reprimand by those in charge of him. His object is to spite the attendants and get them into trouble, and self-mutilation is always associated with "getting home to his mother." This latter reason is always given when he is questioned. He admits that this thought, which is uppermost in his mind, has no meaning to him, as he realises that good behaviour only leads to home. Partial analysis revealed the fact that during his youth he was constantly being reprimanded and beaten by his father, and on one occasion his skin was broken and he bled profusely. Still, as a young child he welcomed these thrashings because it was usually the occasion of a quarrel between his father and mother in which his mother took his part. His mother frequently talked to him of the cruelty of his father towards both. The patient has never attempted self-mutilation when at home. It is possible that this

self-injury represents the conflict with his father, and by this he places himself into the position in which he obtained most sympathy from his mother. Hence the origin of the thought that by injury to himself he would get home to his mother. It is distinctly masochistic in character. His sadism is shown by the fact that when a boy he was constantly teasing, chasing and ill-treating girls.

It would appear that sadism and masochism always exist side by side, and where sadism is found there are symptoms of masochism also. The prominence of one or the other represents only the predominating sexual activity. In connection with this I might refer again to Freud's opinion that possibly masochism merely arises from sadism through repression.

There are two other tendencies which show cruelty components. I refer to the childish desire for exhibition and its opposite, sexual curiosity. In exhibitionism we see the active cruelty impulse in the desire to give offence, and the passive element in the desire to acquire a reputation and the submission inferred. Exhibitionism in its various forms is so common among the insane that I need give no instances.

The use of obscene language has its sadistic element in the wish to offend. It is a verbal sadism, and its occurrence in the psychoses is more than common. Who can walk through the wards of an asylum without being greeted with abusive terms which are intimately intermingled in meaning with sexual matters and ideas?

When the cruelty impulse is present to consciousness and is of abnormal force relative to the individual it represents the perversion. But this abnormal sexual tendency may manifest itself by symptoms which are the converted expression of the perversion, but which are not recognised by the conscious mind as representing the cruelty impulse.

These symptoms form part of the symptom-complex of the psychoneuroses and psychoses.

I quote the following case from Brill :

B—, æt. 39, suffering from a compulsion neurosis. He was obsessed by doubts and phobias which referred to definite ideas about killing people. The most prominent factor in his infantile sexuality was the component of cruelty. B— was taught to use firearms at a very early age. His greatest pleasure up to the age of nine or ten years was shooting birds, squirrels and rabbits. At the age of puberty he became very sympathetic, and one day after shooting a squirrel he suddenly experienced feelings of compassion and remorse. Since then he found it hard to go out shooting. When his neurosis developed at the age of eighteen he also began to suffer from constipation, which has continued for fifteen years. No medication would relieve him until he accidentally discovered that the following process gave him a movement of the bowels. He once played with a spool of cotton on which was a picture of a child. He rolled it, and when the child's picture came his way he stuck a pin into it. After five minutes of such play he would have a movement. He then resorted to this practice, which he modified from time to time until he was cured. He carried a number of long pins which he sharpened from time to time, and every morning he drew the picture of a girl and thrust the pins into the region of the heart. When he was busy he could simply draw a target on paper and throw his pen at it, imagining it was a girl.

Sometimes he imagined himself fighting, which gave the same result. On one occasion while throwing his pins at a picture one of them fell through the window into the garden, and as children were wont to play there he soon became obsessed with the idea that one of the children might swallow the pin and die. This was the first obsession of this kind and it continued in different forms.

In the transformation of love into hatred which is characteristic of paranoia we see the union of the cruelty impulse with the sexual desire. In the delusions of persecution and in the attitude of the patient we see the sadistic and masochistic elements.

Ferenczi holds that active homosexual desire is a true obsessional condition, and has for its basis fixation in the sadistic anal-erotic stage.

He quotes the following case :

A patient, whenever he felt himself insulted by a man, especially his superior, had at once to seek out a male prostitute; only in this way was he able to save himself from an outburst of rage. The supposed "love" for a man was here essentially an act of cruelty and revenge.

Hence we see that active and passive cruelty may be recognised as almost universal, and acts in greater or lesser degree in influencing and colouring the sexual abnormalities and psychoses.

Criticisms of Present-day Psycho-analysis. By WILLIAM BROWN, M.A., M.D.Oxon., D.Sc.Lond., Reader in Psychology, University of London (King's College), Director of Psychological Laboratory (King's College).⁽¹⁾

In dealing with the subject of psycho-analysis I do not desire to be critical for the mere sake of criticism, but with regard to the work of Freud I might begin with a word of personal explanation.

As long ago as 1912 I was interested in Freud's views, and was reading some of his work in the original, especially his *Traumdeutung*, on which I published articles in the *Lancet*.⁽²⁾ Ever since that date I have spent a great deal of time in endeavouring to test the various statements which he and Jung have made and set forth. No doubt many of you now feel inclined to ask me, "Have you yourself been analysed?" because that is considered to be a pre-condition to being able to test Freud at all. In reply I may say, firstly, that I dream very copiously every night; in fact, I do not know a night on which I have not dreamt, and for many years I have been endeavouring to analyse those dreams. Secondly, I have handed myself over for psycho-analysis, not to Freud or Jung, it is true, but to someone who is a good psychologist and intensely interested in analysis. And I have thus discovered

⁽¹⁾ Read at the Annual General Meeting, Buxton, July 28th, 1920.