

## A PSYCHOLOGICAL VIEW OF THE DEPRESSION

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The depression is called an economic depression because its acute symptoms are economic. The name is inadequate. We have economic plenty but bad distribution and the basis of the latter is inadequate social and moral thinking.

Human culture started with original nature and its needs. That nature and those needs are basically unchanging. The latest baby born presents to our complex culture essentially the same nature that babies presented to incipient culture before the dawn of history. Culture is never "passed on"; it is created anew in each generation upon the original nature and needs of babies and growing youth. Original human nature started all culture and continues to be the basis of all sound cultural norms.

Man has a dual nature of '*feeling*' and '*sensation*' which function over definite and distinct mechanisms in his body. These basic factors of his nature and intelligence are the foundations respectively of his '*spiritual*' and '*physical*' experience and become generalized socially under the respective terms of *culture* and *civilization*. Feeling is the deeper element; it lodges close to the life of the self and responds to the sensory or physical world with accepting or rejecting reactions. It is the center of values and choice, viewed in common sense terms.

A well ordered culture must keep '*feeling*' and '*sensory*' factors in the same general relation to each other that they have by nature in the functioning of the human individual. Progress does not consist in a mere increase of material resources. It is a dual process depending upon the intrinsic duality of human nature and need. Social progress involves both a material advance and a progressive readjustment of this advance to human and social needs. When this latter adjustment lags a "moral deviation" occurs which threatens the stability of the whole culture.

The principle of coordination between the '*physical*' and the '*spiritual*' factors of human nature and human culture has the widest generality of all social principles. Religion (when not exploited) has addressed itself in all ages to the task of maintaining this basic cultural equilibrium. This is why all primitive religions consider their religion their "prosperity policy."

The Middle Ages overstressed *feeling* and built culture too much around it. They neglected *sensory* knowledge. Modern times reacted from this extreme and in time swung to the other extreme. There has been overweening interest in material progress to the neglect of values. This movement has in turn run its course and as there has been no adequate guidance back to cultural balance there has been going on a blind retreat back to feelings to be noted in individualism in thought, religion, and morals, and a lapse from the *head* to the *viscera* in expressionism in art, the cult of unintelligibility in literature, Emperor Jones in opera, and jazz in music. Material upper-structure cannot continue to rise while cultural foundations weaken and give way.