

into existence in an organic way. People do not produce society. It is not a sort of club, or some joint-stock company, or a registered cooperative society. In reality, society is an entity with its own “SELF”, its own life; it is a sovereign being like an individual; it is an organic entity. We have not accepted the view that society is some arbitrary association. It has its own life. Society too has its body, mind, intellect and soul. Some Western psychologists are beginning to accept this truth. McDougal has propounded a new branch of psychology called “group mind”. He has accepted that the group has its own mind, its own psychology, its own methods of thinking and action.

A group has its feelings too. These are not exactly similar to the individual’s feelings. Group feelings cannot be considered a mere arithmetical addition of individual feeling. Group strength too, is not a mere sum of individual strength. The intellect, emotions, energies and strength of a group are fundamentally different from those of an individual. Therefore, at times it is experienced that even a weakling, despite his individual weak physique, turns out to be a heroic member of society. Sometimes an individual may be ready to put up with an affront to his personal self, but is unwilling to tolerate an insult to his society. A person may be ready to forgive and forget a personal abuse to him, but the same man loses his temper if you abuse his society. It is possible that a person who is of a high character in his personal life, is unscrupulous as a member of society. Similarly, an individual can be good in his social life, but cannot be so in his personal life. This is a very important point.

If we analyse this situation, we shall discover that the modes of thinking of an individual and of a society are not always the same. These two do not bear an arithmetical relation. If a thousand good men gather together, it cannot be said for certain that they think similarly of good things.

### **Collective Mentality**

An average Indian student at present is a mild and meek young man. Compared to an average student of twenty years ago, he is weaker and milder in every way. But when a score of such students get together, the situation becomes different. Then they indulge in all sorts of irresponsible actions. Thus, a single student appears disciplined, but a group of students becomes undisciplined. We shall have to consider why this change comes about. This is known as mob-mentality, as distinct from individual mentality.