VOLUME 5

1940

No.1 Jan • No.2 Feb • No.3 Mar
No.4 Apr • No. 5 May • No.6&7 Jun/Ju
No.8 Aug • No.9 Sept • No.10 Oct
No.11 Nov • No.12 Dec

1941

No.1 Jan • No.2 Feb • No.3 Mar
No.4&5 Apr./May

REASON

KRC, SNDT W.U., Churchgate
P149.705 145319
Rea

P 149·705
Rea
145319

THE
JOURNAL
OF
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATIO
OF
INDIA.

THE LIBRARY



S.N.D.T.
WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY
MUMBAI

7 JUL 2003

12/12/2002
322P
Comp.

KRC, SNDT W.U., Churchgate
P149.705 145319
Rea

P149.705
Rea

145319



REASON

JANUARY 1940

VOL. VIII No. 1.

PRICE 2 ANNAS.



THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Objects of the Rationalist Association of India.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

RATIONALISM IN RELIGION
By R. D. KARVE.

SAVAGE CIVILISATION
By DR. G. Y. CHITNIS.

CULTURAL CONFERENCE
By T. J. GODIVALA

EXIT GOD!
By AKSHAYKUMAR DESAI.

NOTES AND NEWS ETC.

Editor :
R. D. KARVE, M. A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).

Rationalism in Religion

By R. D. Karve

MAN is such an incorrigible rationalist by nature that even apologists of religions do not think it incongruous that they should try to make use of reasoning to defend their creeds, while at the same time they proclaim that religion is beyond reason and that faith is much more important than reason. Consider, for instance, the remarks of Sir S. Radhakrishnan, the foremost exponent of Indian mysticism, in his lectures at the Oxford University which have recently been published with the title "Eastern Religions and Western Thought". On page 20, one finds the remark, "Hinduism adopts a rationalistic attitude in the matter of religion", which will certainly be news to rationalists, and they will be further surprised by the remark on page 23. "The Hindu thinkers warn us against rationalist self-sufficiency. The learned run far more risks than the unlearned." Is this the rationalistic attitude of the Hindu religion? And since the writer quotes these Hindu thinkers with approval, does it not prove that the learned lecturer himself is more likely to be wrong than the simpleton who has faith without reasoning? This kind of contradiction may not be noticed in a lecture, especially by an impressive speaker like Sir S. Radhakrishnan, but it is certainly risky to put it in a book. This is how, perhaps, "the learned run far more risks than the unlearned".

He says that religion is an experience and describes it thus: "When the individual withdraws his soul from all outward events, gathers himself together inwardly and strives with concentration, there breaks upon him an experience, secret, strange and wondrous, which quickens within him, lays hold on him and becomes his very being. Even if God be an idea and has no reality apart from one's ideation, that which frames the idea of God and strives to realize it is itself divine". If God is nothing but an idea, what does the word "divine" signify? It is originally derived from the Latin word for God, but the author apparently thinks that the adjective gives some sense even if there is no God. Further on, the reader finds that this is an attempt to derive the existence of God from this adjective applied gratuitously to a kind of experience, for the author says: "To say that God exists means that spiritual experience is attainable. The possibility of the experience constitutes the most conclusive proof of the reality of God." To postulate that a certain kind of experience is divine and then to infer that the possibility of this experience constitutes a proof of the existence of God, is indeed a logical feat! And this is the rationalistic attitude! A fine answer to people like Sadhu Santinath, who declare after undergoing these 'divine' experiences that they have not the slightest reason to think that their experience is related to anything outside themselves. But evidently they have no claim to the logical acumen of Sir S. Radhakrishnan!

His method of getting that experience assumes the existence of a soul, since the individual has to "withdraw his soul from all outward events", but in this particular case, the rationalist can easily interpret it to mean "attention". There is again no indication as to what you are to concentrate on. You are to "strive with concentration", but strive for what? All is mystery, but what is religion without mystery?

I have said above that man is an incorrigible rationalist by nature. This does not however, prevent him from starting with wrong premises and naturally reaching wrong conclusions. Very curious instances of these attempts at rationalism are to be found in religious literature. Only recently a religious book was reviewed in the columns of the "Kesari", a Marathi paper started by Tilak, which has always catered to orthodoxy, though Tilak was by no means orthodox himself. The book describes the 'importance of the name of God. Though the Christian God apparently does not like his name to be mentioned in vain, the Hindu Gods delight in it and so, I believe, does the Mahomedan God. To avoid monotony, Hindus have invented a large number of names for their gods, so that Vishnu, for instance, has a thousand names and the list is repeated every day by some religious Hindus. Now the book maintains that by reciting lists like this, you can get salvation without any trouble, and cites a number of mythological stories in support. For instance, a man who named

his son frequently, went to heaven because the name happened to be also the name of a god. Similarly, a beggar woman who had accidentally to starve one day because she did not get anything to eat, and finally found a leaf of the "bilva" tree and threw it away in anger because it was not food, and this leaf accidentally fell on a "Shiva-linga", she went to heaven too, because that particular day happened to be a day of fast consecrated to Shiva and the leaf falling on the Shiva-linga was counted as worship with the leaf which is his favourite. These stories are quite consistent with the theme of the book, which claims that mere recital of the name of God gives a claim to a place in heaven. But the reviewer finds fault with the author for including these stories, because they offend his sense of justice. Apart from the fact there is no justice to be found anywhere in nature, is there any justice in a man getting a place in heaven because he recites certain names, even if he does it intentionally instead of accidentally? On the contrary, there is very strict logic in those stories. If the recital of a name produces a certain effect, the writer of the story assumes that it must produce the effect even if the recital is accidental, just as a flame will burn, whether you put your finger in it accidentally or intentionally. It is precisely this logic that the reviewer does not like, though he says that the stories should not have been included because they are illogical. The kind of logic he has in mind is religious logic, while the writer of the stories has employed natural logic. In religious logic, it is faith that moves mountains, though this religious lever is hardly likely to appeal to rationalists.

The reviewer further advises the writer to select mythological stories with this point in view. This is rather dishonest advice, though it agrees with the similar opinion expressed in Plato's Republic, namely, that stories about gods should be chosen with a view to influence the public for good. But does not this kind of advice imply that these stories are no longer believed to be true, but that still they are to be told in order to influence the multitude? Are these stories then false in the opinon of the reviewer?

The reviewer evidently belongs to the large class of people who do not exactly believe these stories, but who are afraid to confess openly that they do not believe them. He disapproves of the selection made by the author on the ground that the stories do not look reasonable, but approves of the book on the whole, because it finds fault with the supposed tendency of modern girls to remain unmarried, or to go in for love-marriages, though heaven knows how all this is connected with the subject-matter of the book: the importance of reciting the name of God!

The rosary seems to be a feature of all the principal religions, and serves to count the number of times prayers or the names of gods are repeated. It is a mechanical business, not requiring much concentration and people can attend to other things as well with the rosary in hand. I once met a Mohamedan acquaintance with a rosary, who was hardly ever seen without it. I ventured to joke about it once and said: "You must surely know by this time how many beads that rosary contains. Why do you count them over and over again?" He took it quite coolly and explained that he was not counting the beads, but taking the name of God (Allah) with every bead, as he had to do it a certain number of times in the day. The praying-wheel of Tibet seems to be a much more convenient arrangement, but perhaps each God has his preferences!

Series of talks broadcasted from the Bombay Station of the All India Radio on 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 30th & 31st Oct. 1939.

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER

Represented by

His Grace Dr. Roberts
Catholic Archbishop of Bombay

His Holiness Khalifa Bashiruddin Mahomed

Dastur Kaikushru Mahiar Kutar
Parsee High Priest

His Holiness Jagadguru Shri Shankaracharya Dr. Kurtkoti

AND

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.,
President, Rationalist Association of India.

PRICE 4 AS. POST FREE.

Available from

The Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Savage Civilisation

By Dr. G. Y. Chitnis

"HITLER", says deputy Fuhrer, "would rather see Germany a union of soviets on Russian lines than surrender to the democracies." The same gentleman says elsewhere that "Hitler was a seventh member of the German Workers' Party and was as good a socialist as any other."

We in India have our own idea of socialism and it does not somehow fit in with the socialism that Hitler professes. Hitler's is essentially a Nordic type of socialism and believes in aggression as the sole method of introducing socialism in backward countries. Besides his socialism is not a commodity for general consumption: it is exclusively reserved for the Nordic races.

Dr. Gunther Hecht, the Nazi labour minister, has issued a very interesting pamphlet in which this National Socialist writes, "It is not desirable to introduce our European subject matter into the schools for Asiatic or Tropical peoples. This is not because other races have a different culture or a different outlook on life and may require a different basis of education, but simply because of their inherent inferiority Unusually gifted natives might be provided with simple forms of European civilisation and some might even be taught one or two European languages so that they could be used in the lower ranks of the administration. Natives should, however, definitely be barred from the higher schools and the universities on the ground that they have no creative contribution to make in the academic field and that the production of native pseudo-scholars will endanger European political security."

Further on, Dr. Hecht remarks, "While it is possible to use the native in industry and on the plantations without estranging him from his home and tribe, he should not, however, be allowed to strike or to form any trade union organisation."

This, in essence, is the theory of Nordic socialism, a theory which in their present mood, the British imperialists will repudiate with utmost indignation. The angry comments of the *Times of India* on these remarks of Dr. Hecht are an eloquent example of what the British Statesman would say about them. Yet curiously enough they have been practicing it in a more or less modified form in India during the last hundred and fifty years. Macaulay's minute on Education illustrates a veiled acceptance of this theory. In the late twenties of the last century the Government of India set apart a large sum of money for starting a university to study oriental languages. Raja Rammohan Roy, the father of Modern India, protested against this scheme and wrote his famous letter on education to the then Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck, in which he pleaded for starting universities on western lines to study western sciences. He carried on a good deal of agitation in this behalf and the modern universities that we see in India today are the results of his efforts; if the unversities are not what they should be and admit of a good deal of improvement it is simply because Lord Macaulay and men of his ilk made them subservient to the needs of the administration. The noble Lord could see that the universities would turn out men properly trained for filling junior posts in the administration and accordingly curricula were prepared to suit that purpose the universities in fact became so many machines for manufacturing clerks. That the universities produced men here and there imbued with the revolutionary spirit of nationalism was not Macaulay's fault nor does it belie the commercial motive with which the universities were started.

If, therefore, the *Times of India* is angry with Dr. Hecht it is not because he is propounding something which the British imperialists sincerely abhor, but principally because Dr. Hecht in his brutally frank manner has laid bare the ideas which are the main springs of both the fascist and imperialist policies towards colonial peoples. His brutal frankness exposes the real nature of imperialist system in a more effective manner than anything else. Fascism is after all the crudest and the most malignant form of imperialism; in this sense National Socialism of Germany indicates today what British imperialism is going to be tomorrow.

I am firmly of the opinion which is not based upon blind prejudice or false patriotism that Indians as a whole are intellectually superior to any other people in the west; and

if India were not suffering, thanks to imperialist domination, from various economic and political disabilities, our people could make a much richer and more lasting contribution to the progress of civilisation than any other people in the West. During my lecture tours in England I have found that in spite of a high percentage of literacy, an average Englishman is much more ignorant than an average Indian. The working class of an imperialist country tends to become parasitical and in proportion to its parasitism it loses its interest in wider culture. This is what has happened to an average Englishman; an average Indian student who secures an ordinary pass at an Indian university shines at an English university; and generally he is more studious than an English student who is more interested in sports than learning. Given therefore, the same opportunities and the same political advantages, Indians can surely produce a much better civilisation than people in the West have done.

But to satisfy the vanity of Nordic Socialists, let me take it for granted for the moment that we are racially and intellectually inferior. What type of civilisation have they produced? On the positive side the American Civil War which abolished slavery, the French Revolution which abolished monarchy and the Russian revolution which abolished capitalism, are three of the most outstanding contributions to human progress; these three events have tended to increase the dignity of man as man and also to introduce equality in human relations; in so far as they have succeeded they merely negate the theory of Nordic socialism; but these socialists will retort that they have not succeeded; the French revolution gave rise to Bonapartist reaction and the Russian revolution has succeeded in enthroning Stalinist bureacracy which contradicts the very idea of equality. I, therefore, bowing before the wisdom of the Nordic socialists, would not like any more to deal with the positive aspect of western civilisation; but what about its negative aspect which threatens today to wipe out the positive contribution of that civilisation?

The Armageddon that is now raging in the West and the Far East is a fairly good example of what the Nordic man has made of his civilisation. In the far east, Japan an Asiatic power has so thoroughly imitated the West that it has an army, navy and airfleet which can successfully match with any great power in Europe. Japan has, somehow, found out that the superiour culture of the West is based upon brute strength and nothing but brute strength and it has now organised its brute strength in such a thoroughly effective manner that Russia is afraid of her hostility and the Nordic Fuhrer has accepted her as a partner of the Fascist Axis. I do not think Dr. Hecht would like to apply his theory too rigidly to Japan. On the contrary, he would write a pamphlet written in a different note for Japanese consumption. And if Japan is exempted from the general application of the theory as is proved by the Rome-Berlin-Tokio Axis, then it only means that whosoever has organised brute strength belongs to the Nordic race and whosoever has not got that strength is an Asiatic. The vaunted moral and spiritual superiority of the Nordic man rests entirely on this foundation. This brings me back to the negative aspect of the Western Civilisation which is essentially militaristic. Whatever the fruits of arts and sciences that make for human progress they are simply nullified and destroyed by western militarism. The race in armaments which the present war has enormously accelerated is bound to end in mutual destruction. If the Germans have guns of enormous calibre, then the French, the English must produce still bigger guns. If Germany has invented poison gas, the Western democracies will produce a poison gas of greater potency. A vast proportion of national income is thus squandered on armaments by the powers who seek to produce a superior type of civilisation. If the present war is carried to its logical conclusions it would be very interesting to see what will remain of the moral and intellectual superiority of the Nordic races.

I wish Dr. Hecht had not produced his pamphlet at this time when the civilisation he represents is letting loose an orgy of massacre and bloodshed unparalleled in the history of the world. But he has produced the pamphlet with the profound belief that "the will of the Creator has made the humans profoundly different." Yes, yes, they are different, no doubt, and the difference is being manifest to-day more sharply than ever! But to whose benefit?

[Nordic race means the tall blond dolichocephalic race found esp. in Scandinavia and Northern Britain. But the National Socialists do not use the term in this restricted sense; they have made it almost synonymous with the Teutonic. I have applied it indiscriminately to all the races in the West].

Cultural Conference

ORGANISED BY

The Bombay Students' Brotherhood and The Muslim Students' Union held on the 9th December 1939 at the Jinnah Hall and on 10th December 1939 at the Blavatsky Lodge, Bombay.

BRIEF REPORT BY T. GODIWALA.

REALISING the need for establishing the real values of culture and civilisation through open and rational discussion on subjects touching the various phases of life, the Bombay Students' Brotherhood and the Muslim Students' Union jointly organised a "Cultural Conference" in Bombay. It was held on 9th and 10th December 1939, dividing itself into three sessions. The first session was presided over by Bar. M. C. Chagla, the second and the third by Prof. H. Godiwala, M. A. (Oxon).

The conference was a great success and proved intellectually stimulating. Among the interesting subjects discussed were "Culture and Religion", "Culture and War", "Culture and Poetry", "Culture and Science," etc. Among the speakers were Mr. M. C. Chagla, Bar-at-Law, Madame Sophia Wadia, Prof. H. Godiwala, Dr. Raman C. Vasa. Poet Harindranath Chattopadhya, Prof. G. C. Banerji and others.

The organisers of the conference deserve warmest congratulations for the success of the conference.

The sessions was opened with Poet Harindranath Chattopadhya's new song, "The day of deliverance is near, march ahead", and was sung by himself.

The first paper of the conference was read by Dr. R. C. Vasa. In the course of his speech on "Civilisation in Crisis" the speaker said, "There is a stalemate in the cultural life of the world. Humanity has progressed and is progressing but today all the means of progress are utilised for aggressive purposes by those who control the destinies of the nations. They are leading us to the path of destruction. Reaction seems to have been let loose. The world is heading for a crisis. Even a crisis is welcome provided we are on our guard and do not allow reactionary forces to use it for their own selfish ends."

Speaking on "Culture and Religion," Madame Sophia Wadia referred to the revolution in the consciousness of the Western people after the war. "In the pre-war days," she said, "material comforts were considered in the West as the high water-mark of human civilisation. Now they have realised that divorced from moral progress and religious perception, these comforts do not mean anything. Religion is a unifying current that brings together men and women as the citizens of the same world".

Prof. H. Godiwala spoke on "Culture and Bread": referring to Madame Sophia Wadia's speech, he said, "They were beautiful words, but I could not help wondering as I sat listening to those words, how they would impress the starving millions of India. He then referred to the renowned controversy between Tagore and Gandhi that took place about two decades back. Therein Gandhi said, "I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song...The hungry million cry for one song—invigorating food." He maintained further that 'Culture and bread' were not at all incompatible "People believe," he said, "that poets can write only in the retirement of their ivory tower. They need not be sent to the isolation or the ivory tower, nor need they be made to starve. Poetry is usually not written on an empty stomach....."

He referred to the "Racial" persecutions and concentration camps flourishing in the name of 'Culture', "while moneyed men grew more moneyed and murder was perpetrated on a mass scale 'in defence of culture'. But if culture implies a civilised way of living, if it meant the free growth of all that is best in man, it could not be altogether divorced from all thoughts of bread."

Bar. Chagla said, "Though war has given some stimulus to produce some great literature and art, it was doubtful whether culture could flourish in war. Artistic production as a result of war stimulus could only make a temporary appeal to emotions and such culture, on the whole, was far from leading humanity to its

onward mach". During his persidential address the previous day, he said, "As long as the war is going on, we may feel that we cannot do anything. But we must not forget that India has her own contribution to make to the world culture. There is the Indian Culture to which both Hindus and Muslims have lavishly contributed. Happily there are no separate electorates in matters of culture!"

Poet Harin's was a speech the like of which one rearely gets an opportunity to hear. It was inspired from the deepest depths of the poet's heart. The spirit of revolt permeated throughout his fiery words. After relating some bitter truths of his own life he went on to say, "I realise today that there is nothing at all romantic about the hut of a peasant or the slum of a worker. I realise that the smoke which rises out of the roofs, only speaks of scanty means and the absence of it, in some cases, tells one of such poverty as cannot afford either a fire or a morsel of food for the inmates. The point of view has changed—I have changed. A more intimate knowledge of life and its historic development of the class struggle which is growing around me.....has disturbed the mystic poet in me and I think and I feel more and more intimately with the real human beings... Today it seems impossible for me to write the poetry which I had written a few years ago and so fluently."

"It is impossible", he said, "to think in terms of one's own country today. One thinks in terms of two nations, if at all—the one of the exploiter and the other of the exploited."

He referred to the modern society as queer and said,....."the society of the class to which you and I belong has consistently used us artists and writers as instruments of their pleasure and propaganda and that when we refused to play upto them, we were out-casted, banned, hurt, derided and doors slammed in our faces....."

He dwelt at length on the question whether a poet is born or made. "We have been told for quite a long time now that poets are born, not made. But the statement is composed of a half-truth which is worse than a downright lie. That poets are born, no sensible person dare deny; but it all depends on where they are born, and when; in what period of history, into what family, what class, what society and to say that they are not made is far from the reality of evolution of a poet..."

At the third session, various other papers, were read. Mr. Charles Gerrard (Director: Sir J. J. School of Arts) in the course of his paper wrote, "Culutre through art is the finest achievement of man. It bears a truly religious significance for the appreciation of art is indeed a spiritual discipline for all of us.....In war or peace, the finest works of art have always been produced through some strong emotional feeling on the part of the artist.....Past history is one long series of wars; the dream of humanity to discover a Utopia on this earth is a long unfulfilled dream. But the urge within mankind to attain the unattainable through art and religion will continue to inspire all true artists to further the ideal of art and culture and prevent us from drifting into the depths of stark barbarism....."

Prof. R. N. Welingkar speaking on "Stage", stressed the need of a "National Theatre", while Dr. D. G. Vyas spoke on "Place of Art in Life."

Harbhai Treivedi, the eminent psychologist of Gujrat who was also present at the conference, related his observation on the role and potentialities of students in relation to culture.

Speaking on "The Film", K. A. Abbas, urged the claim of cinema to be regarded as the greatest, the most potent and universal art of mankind. It is really the "People's Art". "Today" he said, pictures require large sums of money to produce and thus have become the ligitimate progeny of cash. It would be the task of the builders of civilisation to smash this dependency....."

Winding up the conference Prof. Godiwala said, "the old values are changing; the old culture is tottering down and the world is witnessing the emergence of a new culture....."

Along with the conference, a small exhibition was also arranged. It depicted India, China, Japan and Russia—old and new. Though small, the exhibition was really a 'symbolic' one. One section graphically reproducing the horrors of war was named as "Mad Man's Culture". It is too true today to need comment.

WORLD UNION OF FREE-THINKERS

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

September 9-13, 1938—LONDON

Price 11 As. By Post 13 As.

A New Year Message

Another year has passed. It was a momentous one almost all over the world. In Spain, with the Civil War and in Central Europe with the political upheavels perhaps unparalleled in the history of that continent and which at last culminated in the present world war, one may say that 1939 A. C. (after Christ) has been the most unfortunate year known.

Here in India we have had our share of trouble. The dissensions among the communities, always a chronic disease with us, has become more accentuated owing to the activities of the Congress. When considered in all its angles one can safely say that the unfortunate dissensions which exist in this country have their roots in religion. One community is opposed against another simply because in matters of belief about the supernatural they differ diametrically. Why, even in matters of sports, one finds the influence of religion operating. We have a Muslim team, a Hindu team or a Catholic team in cricket, football, hockey, etc. It is stated that unless such designation is adopted matches would lose all interest with the communities concerned.

We again repeat that it is impossible for a country, which is still in the present state of culture of India, to advance unless all these religious susceptibilities are given up. The only way to remedy this state of affairs is to spread the gospel of Rationalism, the only philosophy of life likely to win the people on the side of common sense, tolerance, and free thought.

Strange to say that those who ought to know better do not appear to have given a thought to the potentialities of Rationalism in liberating a people from spiritual as well as political bondage.

It is the bounden duty of every Rationalist to work silently or actively in making more and more people realize the meaning and value of Rationalism in our struggle for human happiness.

C. L. D'AVOINE,
President, Rationalist Association of India.

INTER-COMMUNAL HARMONY IN INDIA.

The Bombay Rotary Club offers a prize of Rs. 250/- for the best essay on "PROMOTION OF INTER-COMMUNAL GOODWILL AND HARMONY IN INDIA."

1. Competition open to all irrespective of age, race or religion.

2. Essays to have not less than 6000 words exclusive of quotations from already published literature. (Correct references to sources should be given against all quotations).

3. Each Essay to give a short historical review of the growth of "Communal Malaise", leading to the present position in India.

4. Major portion of Essay to consist of concrete practical suggestions to achieve communal harmony within the existing Constitution of India.

5. Where special legislation is considered necessary for achieving the goal, such legislation to be indicated under :

   (*a*) Legislation within the Sphere of Provicial Legislatures:

   (*b*) Legislation necessary by Government of India.

6. Panel of Judges :

   (*a*) President, Bombay Rotary Club;

   (*b*) Chairman and one Member of the International Goodwill Committee of the Club;

   (*c*) One Judge.

If the best Essay does not reach the expected standard, Judges reserve the right to withhold the prize.

7. Essays to be submitted under a "Nom de Plume." Only the covering letter should show the name and address of the author, as also his "Nom de Plume."

8. Essays should be addrsssed to : The Secretary, Bombay Rotary Club, (P. O. Box 743), Bombay, and must reach him by 31st January 1940.

Admitting that all is true that has been said about the existence of God, I do not see what I can do for him; and I do not see either what he can do for me, judging by what he has done for others.

—*Ingersoll.*

REASON

(Estd. 1931)

The Journal of The Rationalist Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road,
Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).
Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 2/- & Foreign 3s. 6d. or $1.00 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Notes & News.

GREETINGS to fellow freethinkers and friends far and near.

The astronomers inform us that the earth has made another revolution round the sun. It may be remembered that the Catholic Church refused to let it do so for two hundred years. However, according to our not very rational calendar, this is the "year of grace" 1940 of the Christian era.

Considering that we are well on to the middle of the twentieth century the present state of the world is not at all very encouraging. To quote Thomas Hardy's oft-quoted words:

> "Peace on Earth" was said. We sing it.
> And pay a million priests to bring it.
> But two thousand years of Mass
> Have brought us as far as poison gas.

"The sins of the world and the sins of our fathers", say our Christian friends, "are the cause of all this." Indeed! To quote Hardy again. "……Though to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children may be a morality good enough for divinities, it is scorned by average human nature."

Anyway, the believers must admit that the present state of the world, which seems to have become one big play ground for power-drunk dictators and sauve politicians, does not reflect very well either on the power or the goodness of their deity.

Perhaps with prayers pouring in from all sides by radio and wireless, in single file and mass attack, the Almighty is in a dilemma.

x x x

FREETHOUGHT organisations everywhere are faced with difficulties which confront all progressive movements in times like these. Freethought journals like the "Freethinker" of London and the "Truth Seeker" of New York have made appeals for funds to meet the increased cost of paper etc. It is encouraging to note that the appeals have met with a generous response.

In times like these freethinkers alone can prevent the flickering light of reason from being totally extinguished, and hold aloft the torch of intellectual liberty. We sympathise with those fellow freethinkers who have to bear most, the brunt of the present situation and we draw inspiration from their courageous efforts for the cause of freedom of thought and sane thinking.

x x x

THE state of affairs in India is also not very encouraging. The communal problem, the bugbear of Indian politics, though very much exaggerated, again looms large on the political horizon. What a potent source of evil and mischief religion is!

x x x

"REASON" has appeared after a rather long lapse of time. Members and subscribers have already been informed of the reasons for this by a circular which was sent in December last.

x x x

THE series of talks entitled "Four Pastors and an Unbeliever" have been published in a special issue of *Reason* which is being sent free to members of the R. A. I. We hope they will also buy more copies for distribution to friends and interested believers. Each copy 4 As. Post free.

x x x

THE talk by His Grace Dr. Roberts, Catholic Archbishop of Bombay, which is one of the series, was published in the Catholic Weekly

of Bombay, the "*Examiner*" of the 29th Oct. Of course, neither Dr. C. L. D'Avoine's first talk nor his reply was published. We believe it has also been sold in a pamphlet form at local book-stalls. As there are many references to Dr. D'Avoine in that talk we wonder if some Christian readers will be prompted to know the other side of the question and read Dr. D'Avoine's reply as well. We doubt it.

x x x

IT may interest readers to know that our Editor Prof. Karve also broadcasted (in *Marathi*) two talks on "Birth Control" from the the Bombay Station of the A. I. R. on the 21st and 22nd of December last.

x x x

THE Indian Sociological Institute Reading Room and Library at R. L. Trust Building, near Opera House, Bombay, is free to members of the R. A. I. Those wishing to issue books are required to keep a deposit of Rs. 5 which should be paid to the Librarian at that place. The Library contains a large number of books on Rationalism and cognate subjects. We learn that a catalogue is in preparation.

The Reading Room is open every day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Books may be issued between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. on week days.

The R. A. I. will shortly arrange lectures and debates at the same place. They will be announced in local papers. Members are requested to attend with friends who are interested in intellectual discussions, and to help in increasing the membership of the R. A. I.

x x x

APART from lectures, etc., by well-known speakers who have made a study of particular subjects, we intend to arrange debates, discussions and study circles which will serve as training ground for young speakers. We hope all our young members will take an active part in these discussions.

x x x

WE are indeed very thankful to Mr. P. M. Wagle for donating Rs. 5 every month to the R. A. I. It is only due to the generosity of members like him that we are able to carry on our activities.

We also gratefuly acknowledge the following:-

Mrs. M. F. M. Phelips, Cape Town, S. Africa, £1; Lt.-Col. O. B. R. Dickey, Karachi, Rs. 20 Mr. J. N. Patuck Rs. 5; R. G. M. Rs. 5.

Abraham Solomon.

OBITUARY.

LAKHMIDAS ROWJEE TAIRSEE.

Pioneer and Philanthrophist.

(1877–1939).

IT is indeed with the deepest regret that we record the death of Mr. Lakhmidas Rowjee Tairsee. He took much interest in the Rationalist Association of India of which he was a member and also contributed some articles to *Reason*. An outstanding personality among Indian Freethinkers, he was as courageous as as he was fearless. It is well-known that he exposed the superstitions and immorality of certain Hindu sects though he knew full well that by doing so he was courting unpopularity. Among some booklets that he wrote are *Plagues, Priests and Parasites* and *Kursondas Muljee, Champion of Liberty*.

Many incidents in his life show his magnanimity of character and his love of truth and justice.

He was formerly a member of the Legislative Assembly and for many years a member of the Bombay Municipal Corporation where he worked zealously for the welfare of the people.

Mr. Tairsee died on 30th August 1939 at the age of 62. In his death we have lost a valuable and courageous colleague, and a citizen of whom the City of Bombay can well be proud.

He leaves behind three daughters to whom we offer our deepest sympathies.

A. S.

READ

THE ORIENTAL REVIEW

(A RADICAL MONTHLY)

Voicing the Political and Social opinions of all shades of thought.

Annual Subscription Rs. 3.

Single Copy 4 Annas.

21, Dalal Street, Fort,

BOMBAY.

EXIT GOD !

By Akshayakumar R. Desai.

EXISTING beyond the pale of Cosmos; Etherial and still the Author of the Material Universe which is dancing according to the law of Causality; complete and perfect, still the Creator of the Imperfect, Developing, World, Sentient, still free from the laws of living matter; cause of all causes, still uncaused; designer of the exquisitely complex phenomena of nature though designless; mysterious and slipping like quick-silver from any net of knowledge and still imposing his presence everywhere in protean forms—the great supernatural Entity, God, has haunted humanity from its infancy.

Turn the pages of the history of humanity from its childhood and what do we gather? The finest hymns of humanity have been devoted to God; the best portion, the very cream of art, poetry and literature has been consecrated to the adoration of this Mighty, Unknown and still most famous entity—God.

We shall inquire whether this curious perplexing entity, full of contradictory properties, does really exist or is merely a fancy, a mere complex of ideas arising out of man's ignorance of the universe around him and his social environment. Does God really exist or is it a mere hallucination conjured up by human fancy?

But first, *how* did the belief in God originate?

In early periods of human existence when humanity was in a savage state, it ceaselessly conducted a strenuous struggle (hundred times more strenuous than at present owing to the extreme technological weakness of the savage man) for physical existence against the hostile forces of nature which it neither understood nor could master. The idea of the supernatural emerged and increasingly pervaded the mind of the primitive man due to the oppression of the forces of nature such as thunder and lightning, floods and earthquakes, which disturbed his life. The dreams, those films by night in which he travelled and hunted, met his friends and enjoyed, in which he was opposed by terrible creatures or unknown faces and still at dawn found himself in the self-same state, strengthened his belief in some unknown etherial force, some type of existence different from ordinary physical existence, some supernatural life which was beyond his natural life.

Not knowing the causes which shook their lands by quakes, ignorant of the laws which caused floods and torrents of rain, thunder and lightning, the early savages attributed mysterious supernatural power to every unexplainable phenomenon. The mystery of life, the mystery of dreams, the mystery of death and the mystery of phenomena and processes of nature could not be explained with the little knowledge that they had. Biology, Psychology, Physiology, Organic Chemistry, Astronomy, etc., which explained these phenomena, were not developed then. Hence, they had to invent and resort to supernatural powers, "The Gods".

To quote a Materialist writer:

"God and the whole complex of Religious ideas, attitudes and moods were the product of man's terror, ignorance of and helplessness before the forces of natural and social worlds (these weaknesses orginated in the technological weakness of man). Primitive savage humanity, ignorant of the laws of movement, of its natural environs and its own social organization, terror-struck and mystified at the cataclysmic action of devastating forces of Nature like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, etc., which it did not understand as changes happening in the material world according to certain laws,.....this primitive savage humanity, by a process of psychological abstraction, abstracted and transformed into their opposites, its own qualities, of weakness and ignorance and named it God. The God-concept, for the primitive savage humanity, was only a transformation into its opposite, the positive deified interpretation of man's own negative qualities of ignorance and terror, wonder and helplessness, regarding the colossal, unmastered and undeciphered phenomena in the world around him and in which he lived.....So the God-concept and Religious ideology were the product of man's ignorance of the natural and social worlds, of man's capitulation before the forces of these worlds, of man's unawareness of the laws governing the development of these worlds and therefore also man's own development. In absence of scientific understanding, grotesque, bizarre, uncanny explanations occurred to the mind of man regarding himself, his origin, the natural and social worlds which sorrounded him and in which he developed. Such was the

origin of the God-idea and all Religious ideologies in primitive society."

Religious people may object to this analysis of the origin of the God idea. They may feel offended and be enraged at such a conception of the origin of the God-idea. How can those who have lived their whole life believing in God, a Supernatural, Almightly, All-good Entity permit such an origin of the God-idea? How can they tolerate the statement that God arose out of the ignorance of man?

They condemn such explanation of the genesis of the God idea as devilish, materialistic, low, satanic.

The author had an interesting personal experience of such an attack. Once he met a well-known astrologer and referred to the Darwinian theory of the evolution of man from lower animals. He asked the astrologer whether the theory was compatible with his astrological foundations. He announced, "Man is a special creation of God. He is taking births and rebirths according to his Karma. The idea of man evolving out of animals is a brute idea which can only occur to a satanic brain".

But, in spite of all the indignation of religious-minded people, history, with overwhelming evidence, proves that the idea of God, which originated in the conditions of primitive society, was merely the product of savage man's ignorance of the laws of development of natural and social environment.

Commonsense strengthened by historical evidence will also pronounce the same judgment. To primitive humanity, which was engaged in deadly struggle against nature, which had recently evolved out of lower species and which had very little equipment to fight against nature and also to understand the Laws of the vast processes which passed before its own eyes, what explanation was possible other than that of the explanation of supernatural causes?

This explains the worship of Thunder, Lightning, Rain, Sun, Winds, Water, Floods, Trees. This explains their deification of snakes and rabbits, monkeys and cats, dogs and cows, horses and rats. Otherwise what explanations can there be for the worshipping of these animals, trees and natural elements?

Here we find that wherever infant humanity found difficulties, it gave a supernatural explanation.

Inspite of all the violent words hurled at the historian for discovering the origin of the God-idea in man's ignorance, the truth stands unshaken.

The idea of God was not inherent in mankind, specially dropped by God into its mind. Man was not from the beginning spiritual as those God-believers argue. The God-idea, on the contrary, arose in the manner which we have described above.

II

"The idea of God, planted and germinated in the human brain by the unknown elements of the natural environment and the social environment, is not something invariable; it varies on the contrary according to time and place; it evolves in proportion as the mode of production develops, transforming the social environment." (Paul Lafarague.)

God has been seen by humanity differently, in different and various forms, in absolutely contradictory ways. There is never a single consistent idea of God among God-believers. Philosophers have quarrelled over the attributes of God, and have given different and opposite properties to God, have seen God in so many ways that it is difficult to say what exactly God means. But if we go deeply into the matter, we find one common element constantly running like a thread through all these conceptions of God. It is this, *that beyond this dead, material*, physical universe, there is some sentient being, some intelligence, some designer, some mover. Whether you call it God, or Absolute Idea, or

STUDENTS' CALL

JOURNAL OF THE INDIAN STUDENTS' MOVEMENT

Published Monthly.

Annual Subscription Rs. 2-0-0.

Foreign 3s.

Single Copy Three Annas.

Office:

21, Dalal Street, Fort,
BOMBAY.

Intelligence or some Spirit or some sentient vital Life Force, it signifies the same thing, the same idea, that behind this universe there is some mind. *Mind is prior to Matter while Matter is merely the product of Mind.*

Let us now try to see in how many ways God is perceived, in how many forms he is conceived by humanity.

There are about half-a-dozen schools of God.

(1) Polytheism, or belief in many Gods.

(2) Tripolytheism, or the belief in three Gods, one, the creator of the Universe, the second its sustainer and the third its destroyer.

(3) Amphitheism, or the belief in two different Gods, one who is good, the other who is evil, both rival emperors of the universe eternally at war with one another.

(4) Monotheism, or the belief where one God-idea is propagated.

(*a*) Anthropomorphic-mo n o - t h e i s m, where God is humaninzed and is made to feel, think, act, etc., *i. e.*, personified.

(*b*) Pure Monotheism—Absolute Idea of Hegel, Propertyless God of Aristotle, Consciousness, Spirit Incorporeal.

(5) Pantheism, or the belief where the Physical Universe and the Psychic Spirit run parallel, interacting on one another, where the Consciousness permeates the Universe.

(6) Vitalism, or the theory of Life Force, which proclaims that the Vital Force is parallelly existing with the Material Universe and at a certain stage making material combination an instrument to express itself.

(7) Physical Idealism:—The latest idealism in which scientific investigation comes to the conclusion that behind matter there is energy. The Universe has a beginning and will die. Hence some Intelligence, some mind is the cause of the material universe (the idealism of Professor Jeans), "God as a mathematician" of Eddington.

Polytheism or the school which believes in many Gods, has been exploded by the Monotheists and other exponents of God. How can the world be governed by many Gods at the same time? It looks like one state governed by five sovereign governments at a time. The monotheist exploded this by arguing that this concept was merely the product of man's ignorance, man's want of knowledge of the universe. He argued, how can many Gods create the same universe, govern the same world? In spite of the decisive refutation of Polytheism by the Monotheists and other exponents of God, we must still admit that the majority of human beings are still Polytheists. Just glance at a single country like India and we will be surprised to find that even to-day thousands of varieties of Gods are persisting in Indian Society, holding in their grip the minds of millions. Though absurd on the face of it, the belief in numerous and simultaneously existing Gods holds the greatest sway among the vast majority of human population. As we have alresdy said, this most preposterous conception of God has been effectively refuted by higher types of the God-idea. So we need not concentrate any argument on it.

Even Tripolytheism and Amphitheism which have brilliant conceptions at their bases, the former incorporating in itself the idea of the dynamic character of the universe, while the latter incorporating the idea of existence of the universe through struggle, are absolutely and decisively exploded. The very arguments which explode the Polytheistic conception of God apply to these two branches of the God conception.

We will now consider the Monotheistic conception of God, the most important of all conception of God, since most profound and subtle philosophers have clung to it.

By the Monotheistic conception, we mean

The Socialist Vanguard

with Socialist Forum

- ❋ It is a left-wing paper with an ethical outlook.
- ❋ It discusses urgent political and cultural questions in a fearless manner.
- ❋ It opens its Forum to all those who want to stem the decay of civilisation.
- ❋ It stands for united action against Imperialism, Fascism and Clericalism.

Subscribe to

The Socialist Vanguard now!

2s. a year (12 issues) Post free

Send for free specimen copies.

Inter national Publishing Co.

12 Gt. Castle Street, London, W. I. England.

the conception of one God as the cause or creator of the universe. It is the strongest citadel of God-believers. Some of the greatest of world philosophers, like Aristotle, Plato, Descartes, etc., have been monotheists or idealistic monists. The best of the Indian philosophers have also propounded monotheism.

The God pictured by the monotheist is of two categories, one attributing to him all the qualities of the mankind like thinking, willing, planning, designing. Moreover, the invisible God is claimed to be the creator, sustainer, designer and planner, in short the engineer, inventor and driver of this vast infinite machine called the universe. The picture before our mind's eye of such an entity full of these qualities which belong to the Vertebrates called human beings, is that of an invisible, etherial, Vertebrate, a 'Gaseous Vertebrate' as Haeckel called it. It is a curiously paradoxical position for God.

According to the monotheists then, the material universe is a vast machine designed by a gaseous-etherial God created out of nothing because God himself is a non-material entity and before the beginning of the material universe there was no matter, planfully moved by a personality without physical existence.

The mono-theist, the believer in a single God, puts forth various arguments, various theories to substantiate his position and to prove the existence of God. He exclaims, "Oh you atheist, you non-believer in God, listen! The universe is imperfect, it is changing, moving, is finite. Don't you feel, therefore, that there must be something ultimate, immutable, infinite and perfect? The very concept of the finite and changing universe suggests and is a proof of some perfect, ultimate, immutable existence, and that existence is God. "This is one of the strongest arguments which the God-believers produce to prove the existence of God, the Ontological argument or the argument based on the idea of the ultimate. But this argument breaks down as soon as we critically examine the reasoning on which it is based. It is not necessary that because a negative thought should occur in our brain, that negative must invariably exist. As modern science teaches us that movement is one of the basic properties of existence, all rest is relative. The whole universe is in constant flux. The property of existence is existence in time. Existence in time implies movement. Time is the apparel of existence. It is absurd to say that God exists because we get the idea of ultimate motionless existence. It would be just like saying that because we get the idea of a ghost or of a man made up of Nitric acid and Sulpur therefore they must exist. The ontological argument breaks down at the very outset.

There are five great riddles which have haunted the best minds of humanity.

1. The origin of Man.
2. The origin of the Soul.
3. The origin of Life.
4. The origin of the Universe.
5. The origin of Motion.

Let us try to distinguish between the solutions of atheists, the non-believers in God, and theists, the believers in God, regarding these riddles.

The riddle of the origin of man is clearly explained by the great scientist Darwin, who provided such convincing arguments and proofs that now there is no doubt as to his origin. The theists before the Darwinian evolutionary theory was propounded were asserting that humanity was a special creation of God in his image to rule the world. He was a chosen species which was spiritual from its inception and religious from its birth. Man has consciousness, he has intelligence, and is equipped with reasoning which distinguishes him from other animals. These things were adduced as the support of the theory that God made man as a chosen race. But Darwin exploded this convincingly. He showed how man has evolved out of the ape. He showed the similarity of Physiological processes; he showed how thought, consciousness, reasoning of man was nothing but the higher and evolved form of hazy perceptions and thoughts in lower forms, monkeys. Man was toppled down from his chosen throne and was simply linked up in the chain of evolving organic beings. God was driven from that sector. The riddle of man was solved.

As to the riddle of the origin of the soul or the psychic activity of human beings, the God-believers have their special arguments. Intelligence is a divine property. It is imparted to man as a special gift—a positive proof of the existence of God.

Still, the problem of the soul is a vexing problem. What is exactly the soul? What is exactly intelligence? What is meant by an idea? The problem of the soul or idea or psychic activities has created greater havoc and misunderstanding in the world of human beings than anything else. This abstract soul, this absolute idea, this pure consciousness are

applied to the Universe, are conceived as different from the universe and are advanced as the strongest agruments for God.

Can there be an idea without something to think about and somebody to think? Can there be thought without some organized material form to think? Can there be consciousness without somebody to be conscious and something to be conscious about?

This is the crucial point over which Idealism and Materialism have quarrelled. Scientists have proved almost without doubt that thought is a property of brain. Thought cannot exist without a material organ called brain. Intelligence is nothing but capacity to grasp and think. Intelligence is impossible without brain. Such an organ which has capacity to think is only found in certain higher forms of organic life. That means thinking is not common to all things. It is not an abstract property, but a property arising when matter is organized in a certain way. Only thinking beings can form plans, can become conscious of things around them, can purposefully act. This implies that soul or psychic activity which has reached a level of thinking, willing and planning, is only found in very high forms of organic matter, *only among man* who are equipped with a well organized brain. How can it then be that the universe which is infinite in space and eternal in time can have intelligence? How can there be thought without its material pre-requisite brain?* How can a non-material, brainless intelligence create the universe out of nothing and design it? How can consciousness exist without somebody to be conscious and something to be conscious about? Here we see the basic absurdity in the position of the theists. They abstract the psychic phenomena from its physical foundation. They abstract scent from the rose. The phenomena called conception, consciousness, thought, plan, are all observed in relation to the material organization called man. Scientists have shown by concrete examples that as soon as you take away brain from the man, he ceases to think. Brainless thought is an absurdity. Absolute intelligence, abstract absolute idea, pure consciousness, are all absurdities, like abstract scent without rose.

How can there be a universal consciousness, a universal designer, a universal planner, who exists beyond space and time, who is not material but still intelligent, who has no shape, no material existence and still possesses all psychic qualities of a vertebrate. Our friend the theist insults his God, the Almighty, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Eternal, Perfect, Immutable, by attributing the properties of a vertebrate to him and transforming him into a gaseous non-material vertebrate—an absurdity.

The riddle of the soul was thus completely solved by the nineteenth and twentieth century scientists. They showed fully well that man was not a body-soul organism where at the time of birth, the soul entered the body and at the time of death went out of it. Experiments have been tried by some scientists to investigate whether such a separate non-material entity like the soul did exist. They put a dying man in a glass box and tried to see whether any separate thing went out of it. But the absurdity was proved. The soul is nothing but the property exhibited by the matter organized in a certain way. The riddle was solved.

(To be Continued)

---

* Haeckel contrasts the materialist conception of the origin of thought with its idealisitc conception (Die Lebenswunder) thus:—

Monistic Epistemology	Dualistic Epistemology.
.....	.....
3. Knowledge is a physiological process, with the brain for its anatomical organ.	3. Knowledge is not a physiological, but a purely spiritual process.
4. The part of the human brain in which knoledge is exclusively engendered is a definite and limited part of the cortex, the phrenema.	4. The part of the human brain which seems to act as an organ of knowledge is really only the instrument which allows the spiritual process to appear.
5. The phrenema is the most perfect dynamo-machine whose constituent parts, the phreneta, are millions of physical cells. Just as in any other organ of the body, so also in this one, the (spiritual) function of the given part of the brain is the final result of the functions of its constituent cells.	5. The phrenema as the organ of reason is not autonomous but, together with its constituent parts (phrenetal cells), appears only as a mediator between the non-material spirit and the outer world. Human reason differs absolutely from the reason of higher animals and from the instincts of lower animals.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donations in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000/-.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer.

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

* If you recognise Human Equality,

* If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,

* If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrasy.

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office-Bearers:

President:— Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.

Vice-Presidents:—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. and Dr. G. Coelho, M. B., M. R. C. P. *Hony. Treasurer:*—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee:*—Dr. G. V. Deshmukh, M. D., F.R.C.S., Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. A. Husein, Mr. J. Doyle, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. S. B. Rath. *Jt. Hony Secretaries:*—Mr. Milton David, Mr. Abraham Solomon.

For further particulars please write to:—

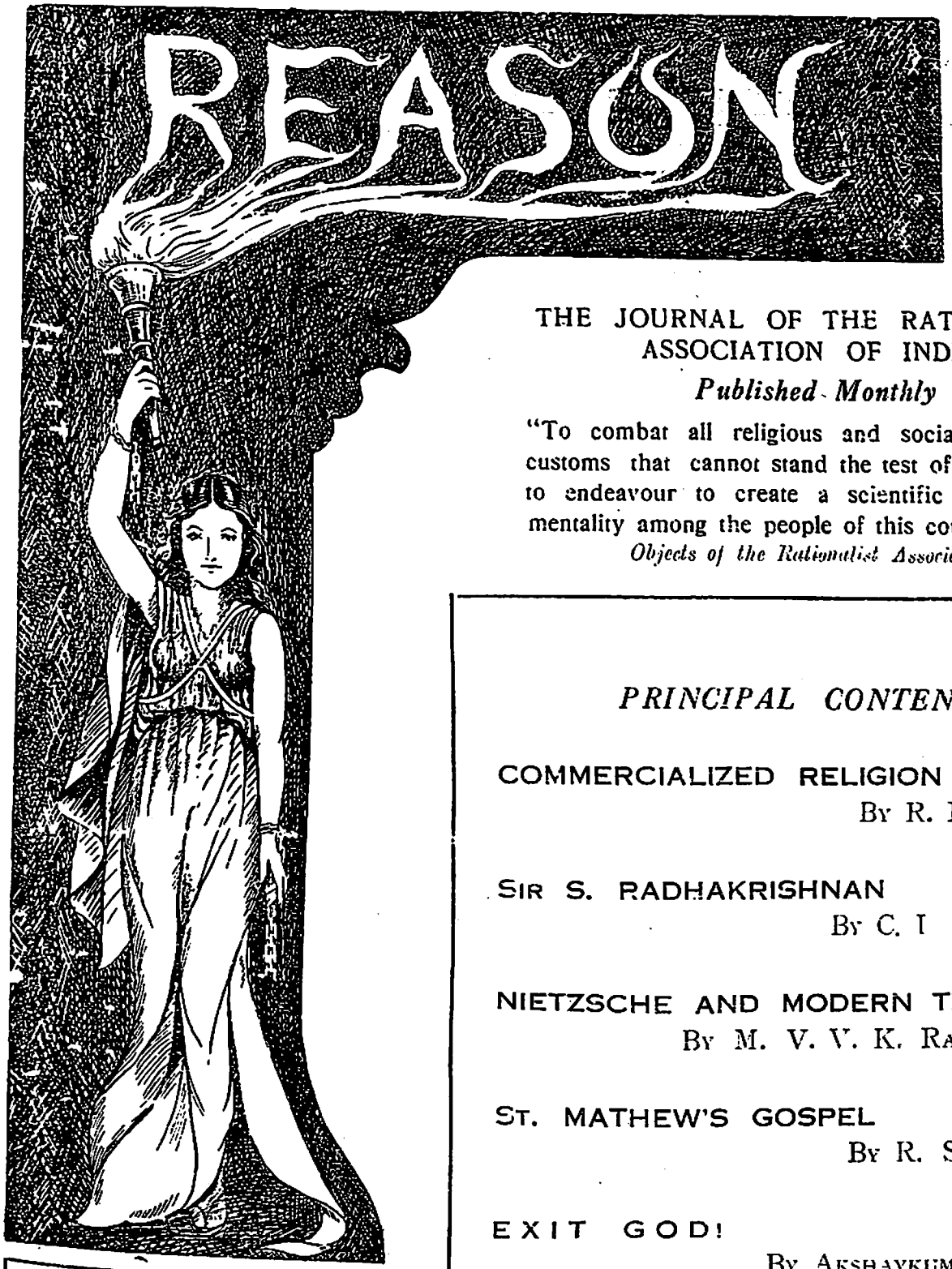
The Secretaries,

Rationalist Association of India,

5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,

BOMBAY 2.

Printed by B. M. Shet at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay 1. Edited and Published by R. D. Karve, M.A., for the Rationalist Association of India at 13, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.



FEBRUARY 1940

VOL. VIII NO. 2.

PRICE 2 ANNAS.

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Objects of the Rationalist Association of India.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

COMMERCIALIZED RELIGION
By R. D. KARVE.

SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN
By C. I D'AVOINE.

NIETZSCHE AND MODERN THOUGHT
By M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI.

ST. MATHEW'S GOSPEL
By R. S. FONTES.

EXIT GOD!
By AKSHAYKUMAR DESAI.

NOTES AND NEWS, ETC.

Editor :

R. D. KARVE, M. A.

Diplome d'Etudes Supericures (Paris).

Commercialized Religion

By R. D. Karve

SIR S. Radhakrishnan has been recently trying to instil his spiritual vagaries into the minds of the student population in Poona: speculations based on the supposed existence of God and Soul. I hope the students in question will profit by the object lesson of his great oratory and command of the English language, but will not be led away by the form without substance which his oratory represents. Sir S. Radhakrishnan is no doubt a distinguished man and some Poona institutions naturally followed the tradition in inviting him to preside at important functions. Of these, the philosophical Association of the Fergusson College is no doubt competent to judge his speculations on their merits, but the students of the New English School can hardly be expected to possess the same ability and it is a pity that they should be subjected to the insidious religious propaganda against which they have not yet had time to acquire much prophylactic knowledge in the shape of scientific training. Missionaries everywhere always try to catch their victims young and those entrusted with the education of the young should be more careful in selecting orators for their benefit.

If the report in the "Times of India "is correct, the distinguished professor asked the question "Is it possible to live without religion ?" and himself replied that some spiritual principle was essential for the development of the human soul. I should have replied that so many people are actually living without any religion and that these are some of the most distinguished thinkers of the world, so that the question is superfluous. It is possible to say that these thinkers do not possess a developed soul, but it is hardly possible to prove it, unless one defines a developed soul as one who indulges in religious speculation. The orator further said that India has solved the problem of how to overcome death and to find the purpose of life. I was unaware till now that Indians can avoid death, for what else can the phrase "to overcome death" mean ? More people die of hunger in India than anywhere else in the world except China perhaps, and is this a pleasanter death than any other variety ? And what is the purpose of life? Words without sense, form without substance.

"Replying to criticism of religion, the lecturer remarked that the critics assumed that scientific achievement would answer all problems of life." They must be very bad critics, not worth replying to. But when real criticism cannot be answered, the purpose of oratory is served if you assume critics to make some silly statement and then proceed to demolish it. There is no denying the fact that it was precisely this preoccupation with religious speculation which led to foreign domination of India for centuries, from which it is not yet free. What is the use of saying that the Bhagavadgita does not preach inaction, but prompted action ? When religion declares that this is an ephemeral life and that worldly things are of no importance, what sane person would risk his chances of salvation by thinking and acting for worldly interest? The lecturer practically admitted that religion is socially utterly useless, since he said that the human being must not be regimented or absorbed or sacrificed for social life. "An individual soul was a very important and vital unit, and must be preserved." The only qusction is whether there is any such thing as a soul and science answers "No".

The title of this article may perhaps lead some readers to think that I wish to charge Sir S. Radhakrishnan with some commercial motive in preaching religion. I have no such intention. In philosophical speculation, everybody has a right to his opinion and to expound it to the best of his ability. But the priesthood which lives on religion is naturally vitally concerned with the commercial aspect of religion. I went on a south Indian tour during the Xmas vacation with some friends and had occasion to visit the famous temple of Tirupati. I found that I could not visit the temple at all, because the journey from the station to the temple and back, a distance of seven miles, including seven hills to be climbed and descended, had to be done *barefoot*, as the hills were too sacred to be touched by any kind of leather footwear. The journey of fourteen miles on hills was quite

a job by itself, but barefoot, it was unthinkable, at least for me. So I decided that the hill was too sacred for me and stayed back at the choltry, while my friends did the journey to and fro in seven hours. The whole road is paved with stone steps and lit by electricity all the twenty-four hours. One of my brothers was of the party and did the journey on foot with his wife, not from any religious motive (he is a member of our association), but just to see the fun. He had not only to remove his shoes, as no leather was allowed on the hills but had to get into pyjamas, as trousers were forbidden! Besides he would have had to take off his leather belt, which would have been awkward. Old people and children who could not possibly go on foot were carried in "doolies", a sort of basket suspended from a pole carried by porters, with the risk of your head coming into violent contact with the pole if you tried to sit up straight. They did it fairly cheap too, charging only Rs. 3/- for the double journey.

On reaching there, our party found that the God whom they went to see had been sold to a Marwari for the day and was not visible. This cost him a few thousand rupees. but that is nothing to a Marwari trying to wash his sins and secure a comfortable place in heaven. Corners in various useful commodities are not uncommon, but I would never have imagined a Marwari trying to corner gods! We rationalists may not consider gods a useful commodity, but some consideration must be shown to those who do. There are times of course when the god is visible to anybody without payment and the faithful think nothing of waiting a day or two for such occasions, but if you want to see him when he is under lock and key, you have to pay through the nose! And the size of the padlock is something worth seeing, I am told, the jewelry of the god being easily worth a few millions, and it is not rare for some of it to disappear in spite of these precautions. What audacity to steal a god's jewelry! But these gods are unable to protect themselves even against Mahomedan iconoclasts and Indian history is full of instances of temples being looted and idols broken.

This particular temple has an annual income of fifty lacs and lends money to Government. It provides a well-managed choltry in front of the station free of charge and we got a special room to ourselves for eight annas a day. Various extras have to be paid for, but you get a receipt for every pie you pay. It is as well managed as any commercial enterprise. Indeed, what else is it but a commercial enterprise?

This god goes through a marriage ceremony every day, evidently not from any sensual motive, since he is made of stone, but entirely for the delectation of the faithful. All this is very far from the philosophical speculation indulged in by people like Sir S. Radhakrishnan, but priests make use of philosophical speculation for their own purposes, just as quacks make use of the latest scientific discoveries of which they have just heard the names and of which they know less than nothing. The influence of these tomfooleries is co-extensive with the ignorance of the multitude. Rational education will at least shield them from the rapacity of these priestly parasites, but the education has to be rational, not religious. It is found that only very exceptional people can break through the religious influences encountered in childhood. The child mind is plastic, but with most people the plasticity disappears very soon with age and childhood impressions become indelible. A great risk is involved in asking orators like Radhakrishnan to address students with immature minds.

The Socialist Vanguard

with Socialist Forum

- ❋ It is a left-wing paper with an ethical outlook.
- ❋ It discusses urgent political and cultural questions in a fearless manner.
- ❋ It opens its Forum to all those who want to stem the decay of civilisation.
- ❋ It stands for united action against Imperialism, Fascism and Clericalism.

Subscribe to

The Socialist Vanguard now!

2s. a year (12 issues) Post free

Send for free specimen copies.

International Publishing Co.

12 Gt. Castle Street, London, W. I. England.

Sir S. RADHAKRISHNAN

"ON THE NEED OF RELIGION"

By C. L. D'Avoine

IT is, of course, not possible to judge fully the true import of a lecture from a brief account of it in a newspaper report. If what the papers of the 5th January last reported about Sir S. Radhakrishnan's lecture at Poona, "On The Need Of Religion" is correct, one cannot help being surprised that a man of his culture and intelligence should have spoken in the manner he did about the need of religion in one's life.

One could understand a Jesuit or a Swami insisting on the need of religion, without which according to the one or the other, life is not only not worth living but one's "Salvation" is eternally doomed. But for a layman to make such a plea is rather unusual.

"Is it possible," he asked, "to live without religion?" Replying himself he said that some spiritual principle was essential for the development of the human soul.

A Rationalist would have asked him, first of all, to define what he meant by religion. The word "religion," in effect, has not the same meaning for all. Leaving aside the popular meaning of the word which is the worship of a god or gods and goddesses, saints, and the performance of ceremonies, to others, religion often means an ideal only and man believes in many ideals. A man without ideals, says Herbert Cesinsky, is a clod. The ideals, he says, may range from the highest appreciation of beauty or morality, faith in a mistress, down to the promise of a heavy meal next week. Ideals are of all kinds and all qualities. They have one characteristic in common. They are all beliefs not to be examined critically or they cease to be beliefs.

I am afraid that Sir S. Radhakrishnan's belief about the need of religion for the proper development of the human soul will not stand critical examination for a moment. In the first place, one has no idea of what he really means by religion. Does he, for instance, mean religion in the popular sense, namely, religion encumbered with dogmas about God? Does he mean that unless a person devotes a good deal of his time performing puja and repeating senseless prayers, it is not possible for him to see the full development of his soul? And in what sense does he speak of the "human soul"? Does he share the belief that it is an independent entity which is destined to survive the body?

Sir S. Radhakrishnan cannot be unaware that all these are questions which have exercised the best minds among thinkers and modern thought does not support the believers in such things.

Some may say that Sir S. Radhakrishnan was simply indulging in pure rhetoric which means really nothing. Sir S. Radhakrishnan is no doubt a philosopher and possibly he was only talking in the manner of philosophers using a good deal of verbiage with little or no meaning.

It seems to me, though, that Sir S. Radhakrishnan is a pure mystic, and a true Oriental one at that, an adept, like the rest of his confreres, in the art of spinning words. He seems to possess to the full the stock in trade of professional theologians who imagine that without a belief in the supernatural, God, queens of heaven and the rest of them, a person must be miserable, leading a stunted life without hope or solace.

Some one at that meeting must have criticized his idea of religion and opposed science to it, for he is reported to have said that certain critics assumed that scientific achievements would answer all the problems of life. "Even if everything was solved by science," he asked, would it solve the problems of how to get over death." Science, he said, could only explain one side of life, half of it, perhaps, but not the whole problem.

Perhaps it never occurred to Sir S. R. Radhakrishnan that he was, himself, assuming when he talked about the problem of how to get over death. To get over death! How wonderful!

Science, certainly, cannot attempt to solve a problem that does not exist. To get over

death may be a problem for the unfortunates who are obsessed with such stupid ideas, but what has science to do with such a silly question?

There is nothing in fact to get over when one is dead. Death ends all, though Sir S. Radhakrishnan may insist that it does not and a fresh career awaits one who is no mere. One fails to see how a non-belief in such a thing stunts the development of the human soul. Sir S. Radhakrishnan talked of the inability of science to enlighten us about the other life. Here again, he evidently expects Science to indulge in such nonsensical speculations. What is that other life that he speaks about? One would imagine that a monk was exhorting an ignorant gathering and not a man who was a professor in one of England's oldest universities.

Does he really believe that religion enlightens one on the "other life"? Religion has been doing this ever since it had begun to exercise the minds of men on the unknowable. Has it, however, succeeded in throwing even a feeble light on the question?

Like all mystics, Sir S. Radhakrishnan seems to be contemptuous of the achievements of science. "Science," he complains, "cannot explain the origin of life or the ultimate end of life." According to him religion seems to have done this. Well, a Rationalist can only smile and move along, after hearing such a remark.

For us, Rationalists, life is short and is more profitably employed in the pursuits of such achievements likely to enlighten and better our fellowmen rather than waste time in illusions and dreams. We can rest assured that in devoting our life to the betterment of humanity our soul will not remain stunted.

WORLD UNION OF FREE-THINKERS

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

September 9-13, 1938—LONDON

Price 11 As. By Post 13 As.

Review

Critical Examination of the Philosophy of Religion. *By Sadhu Santinatha, in two volumes. Published by the Institute of Philosophy, Amalner. Available from the Manager, Institute of Philosophy, Amalner (no price mentioned). Pp. Vol. I, 367; Vol. II, 712.*

OUR readers are already acquainted with a short work called "Sadhana" by the same author, which was reviewed in these columns and which is only a chapter from this larger work. This contains a thorough examination of all the so-called methods advocated by different religions for finding God or attaining absolution, or whatever the aim of religion is supposed to be. Further, it is not merely a theoretical examination. The author himself tried for a long time to follow these methods, and by personal experience, as well as by reasoning, came to the conclusion that these methods lead nowhere, that they give absolutely no results that are not due to the imagination of the man who practices these methods. In short, these methods are a waste of time and energy and ultimately lead to disappointment, unless one is prepared to indulge in illusions provoked by one's own imagination. In scientific terminology, there is no objective truth in any kind of religious mysticism. The so-called truth of religion is always subjective and therefore of no use to the rationalist. The book deserves to be widely read, especially by those who are inclined to believe in mysticism, but will they read it?

R. D. KARVE.

Also Received

On the Origin of Reason, *by Louis Zoul. Published by the Truth Seeker Co. 38, Park Row, New York City, U. S. A. No price stated. Pp. 24.*

"An essay setting forth the cause of the resemblance between the intellectual achievements of Man and the works of Nature".

To defy Power, which seems omnipotent; to love, to bear; to hope till hope creates from its very wreck the thing it contemplates; neither to change, nor falter nor repent.....this is alone Life, Joy, Empire and Victory.

—*Shelley*

Nietzsche And Modern Thought

By M. V. V. K. Rangachari.

IT becomes difficult to choose when eminent interpreters differ seriously on the philosophy of Nietzsche. Mr. Oscar Levy who edited the works of the German philosopher in English criticised (the *Hindu*, 23-5-1939) Dr. R. Nagaraja Sarma who traced the Rome-Berlin Axis in Central European politics to Nietzsche's *Ubermensch* (the Superman). Dr. Sarma had shown in his address to the Madras Christian College Philosophic Association (2-3-1939) that the law of the jungle: might is right, now prevalent in Europe, is the logical sequence of Nietzsche's teaching. Philosophy cannot disown responsibility when its central doctrines operate on social conditions. In that sense, Bismarck, Hegel, Karl Marx and most other European thinkers have had their share in moulding the social evolution of their time. Philosophers do not work in the vacuum. To the extent to which they relate their activity to the earth, they are bound to produce historical results. Even as they react to the society in which they lived, the latter too reacts in its turn to their direction. Whether Nietzsche would have admitted Hitler and Mussolini of the Power-Politics Co. into the garden of his philosophy is not so much an intriguing question as even the claim of the modern Vedantin to affinity to our ancient Acharyas. In Europe the historical continuity is not so much broken as is the case in India where several disruptive forces have disfigured the social background. We cannot be blind to the fact, that however much we may strive, our professions of loyalty to the hoary past betray us into the crude context of unrelated, if not irrelevant doctrinaire theorisings. Our philosophy is more distant from our life than western thought was ever divorced from concrete existence.

But that is not to give away the case set up by Mr. Levy that Nietzsche's Might is not identical with the jungle-rule. The German philosopher is certainly transvaluing values when he was talking of beauty, war, hardness, liberty and morality. These expressions which the Gita helped to lift up above the mundane level had their contents filled with superhuman significance long before German philosophers came by them. Sakti (Might) is the goddess no less for the oriental than for the westerner. If Dharma and Buddhi (justice and reason) are the mainspring of Might, it would be bringing the profound thinker down in bathos to identify his Superman with the sharp-shooters. We cannot accuse Nietzsche that he was manufacturing guns because he did not choose to estrange himself from the surrounding world after the manner of the Vedantin in his Dhyana of Brahma-Jignasa. In other contexts, Dr. Sarma would himself stoutly protest against such unworldly obsession passing current as any real approach to philosophy. Even Shankara believed in values that here obtain "Vyavaharartham", while Ramanuja and Madhwa who broke loose with Mayavada gave full face value to the physical content of the universe. Does Dr. Sarma believe that the Vedantin has necessarily to forego the things of life in all conditions and according to all schools of Vedanta? In the sense that philosophy looks to the essense of things, Nietzsche's Superman is as truly a Vedantin as any Indian brother of his. The Gnani, knower, is the seer of reality (Tatva Darshin) or Tatvagna. It does not pay in an already distracted world to multiply points of unessential discrimination between philosophies east or west.

Here is the real point of Dr. Sarma's basis of criticism of the German thinker. "Nietzsche speaks of Zarathustra: the godless!" writes Dr. Nagaraja Sarma in his rejoinder (the *Hindu*, 30-5-1939.) "A Godless Vedantin is a contradiction in terms in Indian thought". So, that is the offence of Nietzsche, his Zarathustra. But we are accustomed to hear: "Thus spake Zarathustra" in many a context as in Zoroaster, and the philosopher has no reason to be exercised over the mention of the Godless. The majority of the Indian systems do not rest on the foundation of God. Sankhya Yoga, Nyaya Vaiseshika, even Purva Mimamsa systems are sometimes criticised as Nastika disciplines. Even the Vedic ritualist may rely on works to produce results without the intervention of divine agency. It is open to discussion whether there is place for Theistic worship in the ambit of Adwaita Vedanta, where there is nothing beside Brahman. Thus if five and one third out of six systems in Hindu philosophy do not demand the presence of the Lord at one stage or other of their history, where is any contradiction in terms between philosophy and

(*Continued on page* 26)

St. Matthew's Gospel

(SOME INCONSISTENCIES)

By R. S. Fontes

"I question no longer the priests or the books;
I question myself and discern,
The answer lies then in the depths of my soul."

—*William Kingsland.*

THERE are many Christians and non-Christians alike who, whilst defending or attacking the Gospels, have never cared to examine these books for themselves; in my opinion, however, it is of the highest importance that these books, supposed to have been written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost himself, should be thoroughly examined, without any preconception or prejudice, so that we might arrive at a logical conclusion as to their authenticity and their much-advertised morality. Really, if we were taught from our childhood to read the Gospels with an open mind just as we read the history of Rome or China, we would certainly feel astonished at the complete absence of so-called historical criterion and data, and at the too constant discrepancies which makes of it the worst possible reading; truly, like a certain French philosopher, I find that the Gospels, a source of inspiration for thousands, make me fall asleep like the most potent narcotic. But in this article I do not propose to prove the usefulness of the Gospels as an antidote to chronic insomnia; what I want to prove to my readers is that in a single Gospel there are enough inconsistencies to convince us of its fallacy. In doing so I have kept as far as possible from such heretics as Holbach, Solomon Reinach, Renesse, Deshumbert, Renan and others. I will not even refer to Robertson, Drews, Kalthoff or any of the modern critics. My only task is to bring before your eyes bare facts and nothing else; facts that to our minds, which are aloof from the mystical contagion of Dmitri Merejkousky, appear as they are and destitute of any allegorical significance, because, to speak the truth, apart from the parables of Christ, the Gospels present to its readers all the facts in a most human and vulgar way; they all were written to the man-in-the-street by the poor "fishers of Galillee". For the time being I shall examine only the Gospel according to St. Matthew.

"And Jesne begat David the King; and David the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias." (Mtt. 1, 6).

The Sixth Commandment was ignored by good king David, unless we agree that the wife of Urias was a gay divorcee or a merry widow.

"When as his mother (Christ's) Mary was espoused to Joseph, *before they came together*, (italics mine) she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." (Mtt. 1, 12).

This is a very controversial subject and the "mystery" contained in it is rather difficult to swallow. The only possible door of escape for the Christian would be to admit that the Holy Ghost used Joseph as a vehicle for the fulfilment of the prophecies. But St. Matthew does not seem to abide by such argument. How is it then that the Virgin Mary became pregnant?.....Similar fables are found in almost all eastern mythologies. A reasonable critic will never admit it to be true.

"He that cometh after me (allusion to Christ) is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." (Mtt. 3, 11).

In this passage John asserts his belief in Christ and his divine mission and tells, therefore, that he (Christ) shall baptize the people with the Holy Ghost, whereas John's baptism was of pure, crystalline, water. It is disappointing, however, to see the same John asking:

"Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" (Mtt. 11, 3).

This is rather edifying. John who prophesied the coming of the Messiah is doubtful as to his identity, although he had seen "the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him". (Mtt. 3, 16).

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfil." (Mtt. 5, 17).

But the Mosaic Law is "destroyed" when Christ asserts further on:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

"But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." (Mtt. 5, 38).

So we have that Christ, according to the Evangelist, preaches as occasion suits him, His flagrant contradictions are not a good argument for his divinity. Perhaps, it is all "Ein welthistorischer humbug."

"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" (Mtt. 6, 31).

We need not discuss the various economic systems of the world to conclude that such indifference to the external world is simply dangerous. Such a state of mind is not advisable in the present world where the "meek" and "the poor in spirit" are ruthlessly crushed. But Christianity is a "force tending towards mental disorders and unwholesome views on life", to quote Bertrand Russell.

"Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." (Mtt. 8, 22).

So spoke Jesus to one of his disciples who wanted to bury his father. To us, freethinkers, it is rather greek; we cannot understand how a moralist like Christ does not allow a son to bury his father. Is it likely to prove that his doctrine is love? What then, of the duties of a son towards his father?...Christians my call it "mystery", but I call it nonsense.

"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the home of Israel". (Mtt. 10, 5 & 6).

It is left for us to conclude that the Gentiles were doomed to eternal destruction or, as the early Christians believed, that they would reincarnate as goats and the "believers" as sheep; the former would receive a passport to hell and the latter to the Abode of Salvation. As the reader must have noted, I have not entered into discussion as to the veracity of Drews' ("Die Christus-Mythe") or Robertson's ("Pagan Christs") views; I have solely drawn the attention of the reader to a few inconsistencies of the Gospel according to Matthew, and to do this, it is not necessary, in a brief article like this, to discuss the works of Bauer, Guignebert, Dupuis or those of the Dutch school, like Pierson Naber or Van Mannen. As a personal opinion, however, I must most emphatically state that L. de Grandmaison, ("Jesus Christ, Sa Personne, Son Message, Ses preuves") Merejkousky ("Jesus Unconu") and others fought a life-and-death battle to prove the authenticity of the Gospels and their much refuted divinity. However authentic they may be, one fact remains unchallengeable; the too frequent inconsistencies and absurdities coupled with their childish notion of ethics and history. There are minor stupidities in the Gospels and precepts not observed by the Church today (take the example of Christ's allusion to divorce, Mtt. 5, 31 & 32) to speak nothing of the Epistles of Paul whose ideas on marriage have been fully discussed in Russell's *Marriage and Morals*.

The motto of the Church and the clergy is "War to Freethinkers", ("I come not to send peace, but a sword", Christ's words, Mtt. 10, 34). It is, therefore, of urgent need to prove to the world the fallacies of the Church and the machinations of the priestcraft. The best thing to do is to autopsise the Gospels, a source of ignorance, fear and hatred, so that the power of the Church might fade away for ever.

R. S. FONTES.*

* Although we have published Mr. Fontes' article we would like to draw attention to the fact that the inconsistencies and contradictions to be found in the Gospels have been pointed out times out of number by many writers.—*Asstt. Ed.*

A HISTORY OF

FREETHOUGHT

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

by

J. M. ROBERTSON

COMPLITE IN

Two Volumes. Over 300 pages in each. Illustrated.

Rs. 5/- postage extra.

Write:—Secretary, R. A. I.

REASON

(Estd. 1931)

The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).
Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 2/- & Foreign 3s. 6d. or $1.00 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Notes & News.

THE Great War of 1914-18 caused many millions of children in Europe to remain without proper education besides imparing their growth and proper mental development owing to deprivation. It is the opinion of many thinkers that it is these people who are responsible for all the trouble in Europe at present. It is these people who enthusiastically rally round any demagogue with a glib tongue enough to stir them up. Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin found their greatest support among these people.

x x x

A writer in the *New Statesman and Nation* recently drew attention to this. He said that it is doubtful whether, if thinking were a popular pastime, human beings would ever have consented to live under dictators. Those who regard thought as one of the essentials of a civilized existence are inclined to look upon the subjects of dictators as a crowd of helpless and resentful serfs.

x x x

THE present state of affairs we feel is very critical and dangerous. Everybody is vague about everything. We all are fighting for "democracy and freedom". But these words seem to have long lost their meaning. Each one uses them for his own purpose. The present war is being exploited to the full by interested persons. And certainly not the least interested is the Vatican. The words "Holy Crusade" are being heard from expected quarters. Mr. Joseph McCabe's scathing exposure of Vatican intrigues in "*The Papacy in Politics Today*" (Watts s.) is still unanswered. It will well repay a second reading at the present time. A leopard never changes his spots.

x x x

A few weeks ago a disastrous fire took place in the Vatican and among some of the buildings which the fire destroyed was a well-known Church. It is reported that a Carabinier, at the risk of his life, rushed to save the Blessed Sacrment. Just imagine a simple soldier risking his life to save God! For non-Christians it is necessary to explain that the Blessed Sacrament is believed by Catholics to be God Himself under the appearence of a wafer. Just as in Egypt of old, the God Osiris lived under the appearance of the Bull Apis.

x x x

A few days after the Vatican fire an earthquake took place in Sicily in which some houses and churches were destroyed. We recently had a picture in the *Times of India*, of a Church struck by a Russian bomb and much was said about it. We are certainly not in favour of Russia's ruthless bombing of Finland, but here God goes on destroying his own houses and nobody says a word!

x x x

IN one of the plays of Moliere we read that when Sganarelle's daughter was ill and the doctors had failed to cure her, a number of interested persons visited her father and offered their services. The jeweller said that nothing but a pearl necklace would cure her. The shoemaker was of opinion that a pair of shoes would do the trick, while the lace merchant insisted that a beautiful dress trimmed with lace was the thing; lastly came the perfumer who said that only the sweetest perfume would cure the girl.

We are reminded of this when we see at the present moment some interested people advertising the best panacea to remedy the present state of the world. Among these are the priests who claim that religion and nothing but religion will save the world. It strikes us that these "Marchands D'Oremus" (hawkers of prayers) never lose the opportunity to advertise their ware.

x x x

AT Sitapur, Lucknow, a devotional film is reported to have so gripped the imagination of two schoolboys that they decided to embark on a life of renunciation. The boys went to the Himalayan jungle to "pursue a life of austere penance and attain salvation." One of them returned frail and weak and "wiser for the experience." Nothing is known of the other. Thus does God treat those who earnestly seek him. "But mysterious are the ways of the Almighty", so say the devout. For us Rationalists it is a reminder that fools always pay for their folly.

x x x

THE 10th Annual General Meeting and Reunion of the Rationalist Association of India will be held in the middle of March next. We expect our distinguished member, Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, to be the principal speaker at the occasion. We hope all our members will make it a point to attend.

x x x

THE next issue of *Reason* will be a Special Number commemorating the tenth Anniversary of the R. A. I. The January issue of *Reason* was out on the first of that month but we were unable to post the copies until the middle of the month due to difficulties regarding postal registration, etc. We learn that some readers did not receive their copies. Enquiries are being made into the matter and other copies have been sent. If there are still others who have not received it they should immediately let us know so that copies may be sent.

x x x

MANY members have bought extra copies of the pamphlet "Four Pasters and an Unbeliever" and are finding it excellent for propaganda. We hope others will follow suit. It will interest readers to know that the talks are being translated into some *Marathi* and other papers.

x x x

WE learn that Mr. Ernest Thurtle, M. P. and General Secretary of the Rationalist Press Association of London, is visiting India as a member of the All-parties Parliamentary Goodwill Mission. We hope to arrange an informal function so that Rationalists here may get an opportunity of meeting him and exchanging views in furtherance of Rationalism in India.

x x x

WE gratefully acknowledge the following:— A Rahim Beg Mirza Rs 5/-, Ardeshir Irani Rs 5/-, J. S. Warden Rs. 5/-, Dr. S. R. Jogalekar Rs 5/-.

Abraham Solomon.

The War Spirit

I hate that drum's descordant sound,
Parading round and round and round;
To thoughtless youth it pleasure yields,
And lures from cities, farms and fields;
To sell their liberties for charms
Of tawdry lace and glitterng arms,
And, when the ambitious voice conmands,
To march, and fight and fall in foreign lands.

I hate that drums discordant sound,
Parading round and round and round;
To me it speaks of ravaged plains,
Of burning towns and ruined swains;
Of mangled forms and broken bones;
Of widow's tears and orphan's moans,
And all that misery's hand bestows
To swell the catalogue of human woes.

—*Thomas Paine.*

(From "An Anthology of Revolutionary Poetry". Edited by Marcus Graham.)

Nietzsche and Modern Thought

(Continued from page 22)

godlessness? In fact, Dr. Sarma with his discriminative nose would hardly be led to ignore the perpetual charge of religion and theology, that metaphysical thought carried constantly the odour of Atheism, that it killed piety and devotion, that philosophy uprooted faith. It is a natural process of dialectical advance from the pure religionist to the theologian and thence to independent speculative reasoning or philosophy. The uncompromising hatred of humbug, sham, dogma and chaos marks out the real philosopher, and to that end all philosophers merit very high regard apart from Dr. Sarma's special consideration. We are not justified in reading history backward to the extent of seeing Hitler's weapons in Nietzsche's hand. How far the former derived his plans from the latter's philosophy is food for the psycho-analyst. But we may be assured that it is not always that a "definite ideology preceded a specific programme of action." Actions are not always bound by consciousness, for thoughtless even instinctive kicks are not unknown. There may be programmes for kicking as when the Fuehrer and Il Duce profess to be hitting back on Versailles. Whatever the bearing of philosophy on life, proof that Nietzsche's theory is the ideological basis for the Axis to-day is lacking in the scientific sense. As part of the general inheritance, the entire historical background is there for every country to partake in the dialectical movement whether of Supermen, Vedantins or Atheists.

EXIT GOD!

By Akshayakumar R. Desai.

(*Continued from page 15.*)

COMING to the third riddle, the riddle of the origin of life, we are faced with very grave difficulties. This is one of the strongest pillars of idealists or the God-believers. They ask atheists, how they accounted for life, how they explained the phenomena of life, how they solved the riddle of the living beings as compared to dead bodies. Here stood their God or the Life Force of the Vitalists or the biologists and philosophers who propound this force as existing independent of materiel existence. The profound mysteries of life and death have maddened many a philosopher. Confused and bewildered by this colossal and mysterious process, the process of birth and extinction which they see everywhere, the philosophers, the greatest thinkers, have devoted their lives to solve this mystery. The terrible ceaseless process has maddened many, but the slow and steady development of science has begun to explain the phenomenon of life which is a puzzle to humanity. The scientists have distinguished between those substances which are exhibiting the properties called life, and substances which do not exhibit this property. They have given the title organic substances to those which show life, and inorganic to those which do not possess that property.

The exhaustive research work done by biologists has proved that only those substances which are composed of carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen and a few others in a specific proportion constitute the organic world. Moreover the scientists have proved that the last unit which exhibits the property of life is protoplasm or albumen. Wherever there is life there is albumen. Scientists have come to the conclusion that life is the mode of existence of albuminous substances. That life is nothing but the way in which albuminous substances exist. It is true that, at this stage of scientific progress, it is not possible to prepare albuminous substances in the chemical laboratories. But there is already a positive and overwhelmingly convincing proof that albuminous substances have evolved out of the combination of those few definite elements mixed in a certain way. Humanity has not still developed its knowledge and technique so as to be able to manufacture albumen from those elements. It is this ignorance and inability that the vitalist makes full use of, in "proving" that there is a "Life Force" which exists independent of the material universe, and parallelly to it and which simply makes these specific compounds as its instrument to express itself. They argue, how can dead matter exhibit the property of life? Life must, therefore, be a separate and distinct entity.

But the discovery of the law of the transformation of energy, the discovery that in the process of development, matter at a certain stage takes qualitative jumps and evolves *new* properties explodes the arguments of the vitalist.

When two cold bodies collide, they generate heat, light. Does it mean that light and heat make this collision an instrument to exhibit itself. Certainly not. It is simply the transformation of mechanical energy into heat or light energy. Similarly, most of the scientists now believe that when the physico-chemical inter-action of those certain elements reaches a certain level, the compound takes a qualitative jump and exhibits the properties of life. The albumen is born. Of course, the scientists have not been able to find out the level of inter-action when the physico-chemical change transforms into biological change. "As soon as the composition of albuminous bodies shall have become known, it will be possible to proceed with the production of live albumen. But that chemistry should achieve overnight what Nature herself even under very favourable circumstances could only succeed in doing on a few planets after millions of years—would be to demand a miracle!" (Engels). There is, however, almost unanimity among the scientists regarding this hypothesis of the origin of life, due to so many proofs signifying this origin.

Thus God has no place here also. The riddle of the origin of life is almost solved.

What a revolution these ideas have made in man's whole outlook of the universe? The mystery of life, the mystery

enveloping man, the mystery regarding the soul, which were the strongholds of the God-Illusion, have been exploded. Life is not a property of the universe, but the mode of existence of albuminous substances.

Man is not a special creature with a special religious stamp from God, but is merely a link in the chain of the evolutionary process of living substances, a higher vertebrate, a species evolved from the monkey. Consciousness, intelligence, purposefulness, these are merely the qualities observed in the higher vertebrate, which is equipped with brain. Psychic processes are nothing but the properties, qualities, exhibited by albuminous substances organized in a certain way. Thus the arguments of the God-believers are shattered to pieces. There is no universal, non-material, immutable existence which exhibits the properties of human beings. It is absurd. Conscious, Intelligent, Etherial, Infinite God is a fancy of human beings who shift their qualities from themselves, deepen and magnify them and further fasten them on the universe and call it God.

This naturally explodes the pantheistc position. The pantheist affirms that God permeates the universe. But this is a very peculiar position. How can consciousness permeate the being? How can God or Universal Consciousness which by its very nature is complete and has not to evolve further, be present in the universe which is imperfect, and has, therefore, to evolve? Moreover, what is that consciousness which permeates the universe? Consciousness must exist either before or after the thing. The conception of consciousness before the existence of matter, leads to absurdity. Consciousness after the existence of matter leads to the materialistic position. Matter existed prior to the emergence of Consciousness (Biology). The co-existence of matter and consciousness is absolutely absurd as consciousness is merely exhibited by organic matter.

Let us now come to the first and second riddles. The riddles of the origin of the universe and the origin of motion.

There are two conceptions of the existence of the universe.

(1) The universe was created, it had a beginning and will have an end.

(2) The universe is eternal and infinite. It existed, it exists and will exist. It has no beginning, no end.

The conception of creation is an idealist conception implying that somebody created the universe. There are two different schools which have come to this conclusion by different routes.

(1) The old theistic school.

(2) The contemporary school of physical idealists.

As we know fully well, the God of the old theistic school is an existence other than and separate from the so-called material universe and is also the creator of the so-called material universe. To this God are attributed properties like Infinity, Omnipotence, Omniscience, Omnipresence, Intelligence, Perfect Goodness, Immutability.

The very conception is self-contradictory. This God is the creator of the material universe. The very conception of the creation of substance is absurd. Nothing can be created or destroyed, nothing can come out of nothing, something cannot be made out of nothing. "The words "creation" and "destruction" have no value except as applied to phenomena. You may destroy a gold coin, but you have only destroyed the condition, you have not affected the substance. "Creation" and "destruction" denote change of phenomena; they do not denote origin or cessation of substance.....God's existence being eternal and infinite, precludes the possibility of the conception of vacuum to be filled by the universe if created." (C. Bradlaugh)

The impossibility of the conception of creation is very beautifully shown by C. Bradlaugh in his famous aritcle, "A Plea For Atheism." To quote, "No one can even think of any point in extent or duration and say: Here is the point of separation between the creator and the created. It is not possible for the Theist to imagine a beginning to the universe. It is not possible to conceive either an absolute commencement, or an absolute termination of existence; that is, it is impossible to conceive a beginning, before which you have a period when the universe has yet to be; or to conceive an end, after which the universe, having been, no longer exists. The Atheist affirms that he cognizes to-day effects; that these are, at the same time, causes and effects—causes to the effects they precede, effects to the causes they follow. Cause is simply everything without which the effect would not result, and with which it must result. Cause is the means to an end, consummating itself in that end. Cause is the word we use to

include all that determines change. The Theist who argues for creation must assert a point of time, that is, of duration, when the created did not yet exist. At this point of time, either something existed or nothing; but something must have existed, for out of nothing, nothing can come. Something must have existed, because the point fixed upon is that of the duration of something. This something must have been either finite or infinite; if finite, it could not have been God, and if the something were infinite, then creation was impossible: it is impossible to add to infinite existence."

Thus, the conception of the creation of the universe is absurd. The Cosmological argument, the argument that the universe is the creation of God, is absolutely false. The universe exists eternally and is infinite. Thus the Theistic argument of God as the creator and the universe as the created, breaks down. The universe has existed from all eternity. It is beginningless and endless. God is hounded out from this position also.

But the strongest arguments which have supported the idealistic view of the universe have been advanced by modern scientists of international fame like Prof. Jeans, Eddington, etc.

With the discovery of electron and proton, with the breaking up of the atom into negative and positive electric charges, a profound mysticism is spreading among some of the scientists. They assert, the atom has disintegrated, motion remains, waves of electricity exist while matter has disappeared.

The famous professor Eddington bursts out about the material universe like this, "To put the conclusion crudely—the stuff of the world is mind-stuff."*

The destruction of atomic form of matter, the discovery of the electron and proton, that is, negative and positive electric charges, brought about a revolution in the natural sciences. The new laws of movement are very complicated. The laws of movement of electrons are almost still unexplained due to the terrible speed, the tremendous motion of the corpuscle. Scientists are bewildered. They feel that matter has disappeared, only waves have remained. Waves they forget of what? They proclaim, mere waves remain.

This is how T. A. Jackson attacks the idealist conclusions of the modern physicists like Jeans and Eddington:—

"The assertions that "Matter has broken down into Energy" and that "Energy has broken down into mathematical symbols" are exactly of this kind. Certain conceptions of Matter have proved to be of provisional validity only, others to have no validity at all. Energy and Matter have been empirically demonstrated to be only two different ways of looking at one and the same fact. That is true. *But this is the very fact for which Materialism has been contending all along:*

"*Motion is the mode of existence of Matter.* Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, nor can there be. Motion in cosmic space, mechanical motion of smaller masses on the various celestial bodies, the motion of molecules as heat or as electrical or magnetic currents, chemical combination or disintegration, organic life—at each given moment each individual atom of matter in the world is in one or other of these forms of motion or in

* In spite of their denial of the existence of the material world, all idealists, strikingly, behave as if the material world *did* exist. As T. A. Jackson, with a good-humoured satire remarks, "Even Sir James Jeans rises from his bed in the morning with the Faith that the integrity of his floor will remain unimpeachable—that his leap from his bed will not be a swift transition to the coal-cellar or the "fourth dimension." He dons his trousers sublime in his faith that their material reality and their physical properties (particularly their *opacity*) can be relied on *for all practical purposes*. He approaches his breakfast—egg, bacon, kipper, marmalade and toast—confidently filled with the "substance of hope" that thereby he will be specially filled and subjectively satisfied. Bacon may be in the Jeans *theory* an unintelligible congelation of "holes in a whirling field of electrical force"—none the less he likes it nicely fried, with another and a different "congelation" (called vulgarly an "egg"), fried with equal nicety, by its side. "Matter" may be in his theory a mere prejudice of the vulgar, but he will confirm closely to vulgar prejudices as he champs his toast, and his bacon "he doth visibly and carnally press with his teeth"!

"In a word, the actual practice of everyday life, and the actual practice of all men, alike those who live now and those who have lived in the past, is one long and overwhelmingly conclusive demonstration of the primary assumptions of Materialism—the objective existence of material universe, the subjective—reflex character of knowledge, and that *reliability* of proved and tested knowledge which is the basis of the formula, the *Unity of Theory and Practice*".

several of these forms at once. All rest, all equilibrium, is only relative, and only has meaning in relation to one or other definite form of motion."—Engels: Anti-Duhring.

"No Matter without Motion; no Motion that is not Motion of Matter—such has been the battle-slogan of all Materialism from Democritus and Lucretius in the past to Marx, Engels and Lenin in our own day. The empirical proof of their indissoluble connection is the final empirical proof of the truth of Materialism. The incapacity of the metaphysically-reasoning scientists to handle the fact when demonstrated is the final proof of the indispensability of the Dialectical mode of reasoning.

"What in fact was "exploded" when the atom "yielded up the ghost" of *absolute* impenetrability, *absolute* sphericity, and *absolute* rigidity, was not Materialism at all, but the anti-Materialism which staked everything upon the conception of Matter as essentially *dead*, inert, and incapable of self-motion. All these *qualities* of the atom, which modern physics has experimentally done away with, were the qualities attributed to the atom by *the pious Sir Issac Newton*, who saw in these very qualities the proof that they were in very deed "the bricks with which God has builded his Creation!" what has gone, in the going of these qualities is neither the atom itself (which is livelier than ever for its release!) nor Materialism (to which, in fact, these *qualities* were an obstruction)—but God's *bricks*, and the theory of Design built thereupon. Modern physics has in fact, killed the last excuse for the argument for Design in the Universe. The sheer completeness of chaos which Jeans, Eddington and Co. offer as a *theory* of the Universe is the last and the most final proof possible of the death of the "Great Architect of the Universe." And further:—"It is clear, for one thing, that the much-trumpeted assertion that "Science has proved that matter does not exist" is not only as we saw earlier, absurd *a priori* but also, on the evidence of the actual facts, totally without warrant. Even if the proof that matter is "composed of electricity" held good without qualification (as, for instance, by the case of *neutron*), the evidence tells as much on the side of proving electricity to be a *form* or *state* of matter as it does on the side of proving matter to be "composed of energy". The proof that light, for instance, in common with all varieties of radiation, has *mass* at once places these phenomena in the category of *matter* for everybody who does not insist upon restricting the term "matter" to phenomena above the level at which the atom appears. That the hypothetical "ether" has been, apparently, eliminated from the universe seems, for some inexplicable reason, to give great joy to anti-materialists. They do not seem to realize that the re-establishment of the "emission" theory of light as against the undulatory theory tells more heavily in favour of materialism (and "mechanical" materialism at that) than against it.....

Energy is the active aspect of Mass (which is the essential characteristic of matter but for sophisticators who seek to deny to sub-atomic substance the name of "matter"): *Mass is the inertial aspect of Energy*. Only thus, dialectically, as a unity of opposites, can the universe of objective Nature be conceived.

"The pesudo-scientist, who in the interests of clericalism and reaction tells us that "Matter" has been proved to be "composed" of energy, rivals the fabled hero who made a sword out of "*pure* sharpness". He outdoes in absurdity the Connemara fisherman who defined a herringnet as "a lot of holes tied togther with string." The *pseudo* scientist *wants to keep the* Holes *while denying the existence of the* String!"

A terrible crisis has occurred in physical concepts. As Lenin puts it, "The utilization of the new physics by idealism and the tendency to draw idealist conclusions therefrom, are the result not of the discovery of new kinds of substance and force, matter and motion, but of the attempt to conceive motion without matter".

The destruction of the atomic matter which seemed hard, immutable, impenetrable, absolute and its further redivision into still simpler elements, positive and negative electric charges, does not mean that matter has disappeared and waves that is, ultimately our mind-stuff remains, but as Lenin very well puts it, "Matter disappears"—means matter in the form of the limit which we have known up to now vanishes, as our knowledve penetrates deeper; those properties of matter which before seemed absolute, immutable, and primary (impenetrability, intertia, mass, etc.), disappear, and now become relative, belonging only to certain states of Matter. For the sole "property" of matter—with the recognition of which materialism is vitally connected—is the property of being *objective reality*, of existing outside of our cognition."

We discussed, in the initial stages, the distinction between the idealist who believes in some intelligence, mind, behind the whole universe and the materialist who says that

intelligence or mind is a later product arising out of certain conditions in the material universe. The materialist only claims that the objective universe exists in time, space and independent of our consciousness. Our consciousness is a later product.

The idealist philosophers are at loggerheads As Prof. J. B. S. Haldane very nicely remarks, the reasons advanced by these physicists to support the theistic idea, cancel out to a certain extent by their own conclusions. "Sir James Jeans tells us to believe in God because the universe is so orderly that it must have had an intelligent creator; while Sir Arthur Eddington says that the orderliness is contributed by our own minds. They certainly cannot both be right, and I have a strong suspicion that both are wrong."

Thus the modern physical idealism which is contradictory in itself and which gives reasons for God in absolutely contradictory fashion is untenable.

One of these idealistic physicists came to the conclusion that the universe is expanding, so it must have a beginning from where it must have started. Counting from the present rate of expansion they try to deduce the rate and period of past expansion and thereby find out the beginning. It leads to an absurd situation. The conclusion arrived at is that the origin of the universe is later than the origin of a star. Such an absurd conclusion results from the expansionist theory.

Another idealistic physicist in the same vein argues that the universe is slowly disintegrating and it will disappear. It must have a beginning and an end. Here also mathematical calculations lead to absurd conclusions.

At the international Congress of the History of Science and Technology, held in London in 1931, E. Colman, the famous soviet scientist, summed up this position thus:—

"A. S. Eddington, in *The End of the World from the Standpoint of Mathematical Physics* (in the March issue of Nature,) takes up the position that the world is spatially finite, has a beginning in time and is developing towards a greater lack of organization. To us Marxist-Leninists it is obvious that this physical theory merely reflects the general tendency in bourgeois ideology, which interprets the approaching and inevitable end of the capitalist system as the approach of anarchy.

"Nevertheless, viewed even from the theological, reactionary aspect, such a theory can offer little to the investigator. From the data adduced by Eddington himself:—An original world radius of 1,200 million light-years, a world radius to-day ten times as great, and the fact that the world radius doubles every 1,500 million years, it can be calculated without much difficulty, that God created the world about 5 milliard years ago. This, it is true, indicates some error in the Bible, but it also contradicts the period of billions of years, accepted by Eddington himself elsewhere, that is necessary for the origin of stars and chemical elements."

The conclusions which these physical idealists, who see the motion but not the corpuscle which moves, reach, are summed up in "Everything is mind-stuff", "The Universe is the complex of our sensation."

But this is absurd.

Lenin expresses very beautifully this crisis. He says, "To put the question from the only correct, that is, the dialectico-materialistic standpoint, we must ask: do electrons, ether, etc., exist as objective realities outside of the human mind? The scientists must answer this question without hesitation and the answer must be an affirmative one, for they recognize without hesitation the existence of nature prior to man and organic matter. Thus is the question decided on the side of materialism, for the idea of matter, as we already stated, epistemologically means nothing new, besides some objective reality existing independently of the human mind and reflected by it."

We have now critically analysed all schools of idealism, all varieties of God-concepts.

All these varieties and contradictory concepts confirm one thing. Whenever man fails to find out the causes of a phenomenon, he at once implants a fictitious cause, God. But slowly and steadily Mr. God is driven out from all sectors.

As natural sciences and with them scientific human knowledge develop, as humanity suffering from the present anarchy of social life under private property which baffles it and preserves its belief in God, understands also the laws of movement of society and further consciously utilizes these laws to abolish that anarchy, God will be hounded out from place to place and will be finally cornered and caged in one place, in the museum of Antiquity, where he will be exhibited as a fantastic illusion of earlier humanity which was ignorant of the laws of development of society and nature.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donations in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000/-.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer.

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

READ

THE ORIENTAL REVIEW

(A RADICAL MONTHLY)

Voicing the Political and Social opinions of all shades of thought

Annual Subscription **Rs. 3.**

Single Copy **4 Annas.**

21, Dalal Street, Fort,

BOMBAY.

Series of talks broadcasted from the Bombay Station of the All India Radio on 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 30th & 31st Oct. 1939.

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER

Represented by

His Grace Dr. Roberts
Catholic Archbishop of Bombay

His Holiness Khalifa Bashiruddin Mahomed

Dastur Kaikushru Mahiar Kutar
Parsee High Priest

His Holiness Jagadguru Shri Shankaracharya Dr. Kurtkoti

AND

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.,
President, Rationalist Association of India.

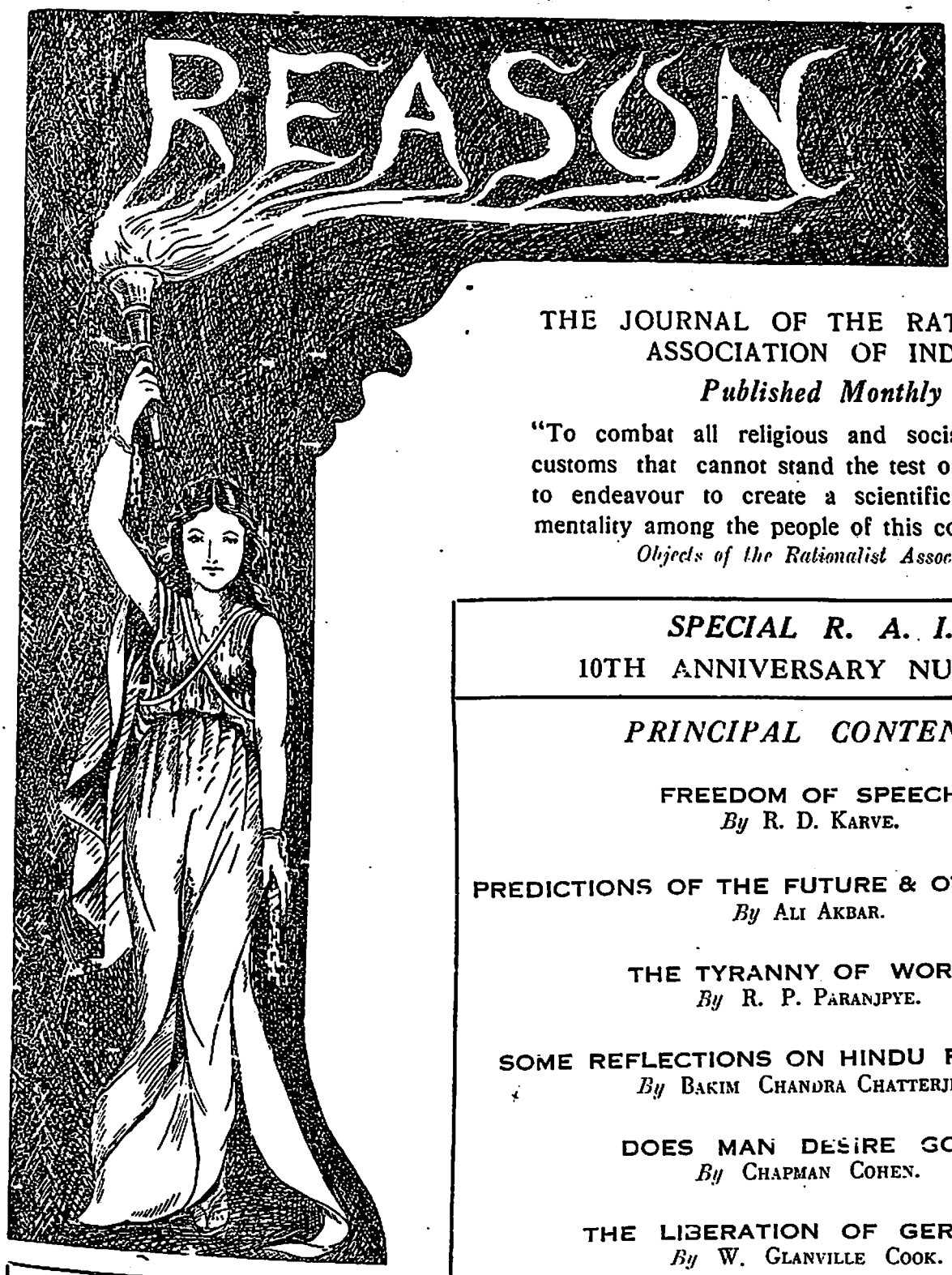
PRICE 4 AS. POST FREE.

Available from

The Rationalist Association of India,

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Printed by B. M. Shet at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay 1. Edited and Published by R. D. Karve, M.A., for the Rationalist Association of India at 13, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.



MARCH 1940

VOL. VIII No. 3.

PRICE 4 ANNAS.

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Objects of the Rationalist Association of India.

SPECIAL R. A. I.

10TH ANNIVERSARY NUMBER

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

FREEDOM OF SPEECH
By R. D. KARVE.

PREDICTIONS OF THE FUTURE & OTHER FRAUDS
By ALI AKBAR.

THE TYRANNY OF WORDS
By R. P. PARANJPYE.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON HINDU PHILOSOPHY
By BAKIM CHANDRA CHATTERJEE.

DOES MAN DESIRE GOD?
By CHAPMAN COHEN.

THE LIBERATION OF GERMANY
By W. GLANVILLE COOK.

REBIRTH OF AN ARTIST
By DR. G. Y. CHITNIS.

ETC. ETC.

Editor :

R. D. KARVE, M. A.

Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).

Rationalist Association of India

10th ANNUAL DINNER

AT

THE RADIO CLUB
Strand Road, Bombay
Near Taj Mahal Hotel

ON

Sunday, March 17, 1940

AT 8-30 P. M.

Chairman:
Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE

Principal Speaker
Dr. R. P. PARANJPYE, M.A., D.SC.

Those wishing to attend should inform the Secretaries of the R.A.I. on or before March 13, 1940, stating if vegetarian.

Tickets Rs. 3-8 each. Guests Rs. 3.

Dress Optional.

The Socialist Vanguard

with Socialist Forum

- ❋ It is a left-wing paper with an ethical outlook.
- ❋ It discusses urgent political and cultural questions in a fearless manner.
- ❋ It opens its Forum to all those who want to stem the decay of civilisation.
- ❋ It stands for united action against Imperialism, Fascism and Clericalism.

Subscribe to

The Socialist Vanguard now!

2s. a year (12 issues) Post free.
Send for free specimen copies.

International Publishing Co.
12 Gt. Castle Street, London, W. I. England.

Rationalist Association of India

10th ANNIVERSARY OFFER

THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM

BY

Dr. R. P. PARANJPYE, M.A., D.SC.
Late Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University

AND

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER

An interesting discussion on Religion and its precepts between Dr. C. L. D'Avoine and representatives of four different religions.

FREE TO ALL NEW MEMBERS ENROLLING BEFORE MAY 31, 1940

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION Rs. 5.
FOREIGN 8 SHILLINGS.

Members receive ***Reason,*** the monthly journal of the Association, free and are allowed the use of the Reading Room and Library of the Indian Institute of Sociology at R. L. Trust Bldg., Near Opera House, Bombay.

Write to the Jt. Hon. Secretaries

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

EVERY study of freedom is a plea for toleration; and every plea for toleration is a vindication of the rights of reason.

—HAROLD J. LASKI.

REASON

Vol. VIII | MARCH 1940 | No. 3

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

By R. D. KARVE

A very interesting lecture was delivered the other day by Mr. Aubrey Menon at the Taj Mahal Hotel at a meeting of the International Social Club. His subject was "I Shocked England; or Genesis 2". Mr. Menon is well-known in the literary world in England as a dramatist and a critic and had the distinction of collaborating with Mr. H. G. Wells in dramatizing "The Shape of Things to Come." Mr. Menon wrote a play called "Genesis 2", in which he represented Moses as a murderer, for which he said he could cite the authority of the Bible itself, but which the public will not believe because nobody reads the Bible. He also represented Eve as chasing Adam round in the streets with an apple in her hand, trying to persuade him to eat it, but Adam was adamant and would not yield, on the ground that he did not like apples. He also put God into the uniform of a Sergeant-Major, because, he explained, though he was not sure that God wore any clothes at all, it would not have been practicable to bring him nude on the stage. In addition to all this, he made somebody say "Heil!" to a character that could be identified with Hitler.

Obviously the censorship in England could not possibly tolerate such originality and Mr. Menon together with some collaborators were prosecuted for blasphemy and obscenity, and also, I believe, for joking at the expense of the head of a friendly state, as England was not yet at war with Germany. They found it cheaper to plead guilty rather than engage barristers to fight the case and were fined five pounds each.

It is difficult to see where the obscenity comes in, unless it lies in Adam's refusing to eat the apple (obviously Adam and Eve could not have been nude, since even God was not, on the stage). The blasphemy lay perhaps in putting God into a uniform, since the author says he has Biblical authority for making Moses a murderer, and there is no blasphemy in choosing a Biblical subject, as it has been done by celebrated authors. But apart from this, the legal procedure was at least a legitimate way of avenging the shocked modesty and religious feelings of the British public, however much the state of the law in these matters may be deplored by rationalists.

As a matter of fact, however, the British public had not been shocked at all. The play was never performed except privately, and still the police, in its executive authority, tried to stop these private performances, though the law of England does not in any way sanction such interference with the liberty of the subject. Even if a theatre is engaged for the purpose, it is a private place so long as it is not open to the public and the police has no right to interfere. The police can do practically anything in India and people are accustomed to take it lying down. But one does not expect that kind of thing to happen in England, where the Englishman's home is supposed to be his castle. It seems from Mr. Menon's experience, however, that it is nothing of

the kind. Even private performances were interfered with, people were unnecessarily harassed, and ultimately all available copies of the play had to be burnt by order of the Court. Still it appears that somebody succeeded in taking a copy to America and another copy reached Russia, where the book has been published, though it is by no means a communistic book.

Such is freedom of speech in England, and even there, people who are perfectly sure of their innocence find it less troublesome to plead guilty to absurd charges. This may be some consolation to people in a similar predicament in India, where much less freedom is naturally expected from a foreign government. Mr. Menon made the emphatic statement that there can never be any freedom of speech unless you have the power to dismiss those who are in authority for the time being, whether they are your own people or foreigners.

He also expressed in passing the opinion that it should be the business of any government to see that every individual subject has adequate food, clothing and shelter and that it should not interfere with anything else. Somebody from the audience raised the question whether Government should not provide education, especially technical education, and Mr. Menon pointed out in reply that England's greatest technicians were trained in private institutions and at a time when the government did not provide any education at all. Whether one agrees or not, there is no doubt that when government undertakes to provide education, it takes the opportunity of imposing its own opinions on the people for propaganda purposes. In India, under the British Government, I had to learn Indian history from text-books written by Englishmen, in which Shivaji, our greatest national hero, was called a "mountain rat," because he made use of the very effective tactics known as "guerilla warfare". The censorship of text-books still exists and the Congress Government not only did nothing to abolish it as it deserved, but tried to impose uniform text-books of their own making on all schools. The Congress policy may quite possibly require, in their anxiety to please Muslims, that facts in history must not be mentioned if they are displeasing to Muslims. Orthodox Hindus on the other hand insist that facts displeasing to them must not find a place in history. It is very well known that Bajirao the First, a great warrior, had a Muslim mistress and used to take meat in her company though he was a Brahmin, and even had a son by her. He is a deservedly popular figure in Maratha history and it is suspected that he committed suicide on account of the opposition of his family to his idea of bringing up this bastard boy as a Brahmin and performing his thread ceremony along with his legitimate son. Now orthodox Brahmins do not at all like this to be known about a popular hero and are irritated if anybody mentions these facts. But what is the use of teaching history if facts are not to be known? Are facts to be twisted for propaganda purposes? Now governments are known to have no conscience and no scruples and it does not make any difference whether the government is foreign or not. Under the circumstances, at least where the public has any say in the matter, governments should not be allowed to meddle in educational matters, except to see that no kind of coercion is allowed, such as making Bible classes compulsory, for instance.

So far as freedom of speech in general is concerned, it exists only in name even where it is supposed to exist, as in a free country like England, for instance. In Mr. Menon's case, there was not the slightest justification for stopping a private performance. Where there is any political danger, governments may possibly be justified in imposing restrictions, though even in this, governments often abuse their power. But apart from politics, there are usually so many embargoes on truth that freedom of speech remains only an idea. An opinion may not always be a truth, but even truth is not allowed in many cases. Truth may be labelled sedition, libel, blasphemy, obscenity at the discretion of magistrates who are supposed to be "learned", but who are very often only bigoted or biassed. Optimists can only hope that real freedom of speech will some day become possible. For the present, it is only an idea, an ideal very far from realisation.

IGNORANCE is the mother of religion, midwife to the gods, and she watches with jealous devotion those whom she has brought into being.

—CHAPMAN COHEN.

x x x

CIVILIZATION is man's method of remedying God's inefficiencies.

—CHAPMAN COHEN.

Predictions of the Future and other Frauds.

By Ali Akbar

"THE history of Spiritualism is a history of fraud", writes Harry Price in his interesting book "Fifty Years of Psychical Research" (Longmans, Green & Co). This book throws a searchlight on the working of Spiritualism and Extra-sensory Perceptions. Price is the Honorary Secretary of the University of London Council for Psychical Investigation. He has collected a vast library, has tested a number of mediums and has devised various instruments to test their performances scientifically. In sifting the claims made by the exponents of paranormal abilities he has found that very, very few of these have been able to stand repeated, controlled testing. Mediums that were hailed as genuine were ultimately exposed. This has been the history of Florrie Cook, Hope; Margery's finger prints are a matter of controversy; Eusapia Palladino cheated whenever she had the chance and at one of the seances it was found that Rudi Schneider had freed one of his hands. Of the thousands that claimed to have these powers only a handful showed these powers and they too only for certain periods of their lives.

Though a land of mysticism, yet in India Spiritualism has not made much headway. We occasionally read of seances where dead politicians appear and advise on the burning topics of the day. We likewise read of some Rishis who have travelled to the borders of Heaven. Selfless souls that they are, they have not stayed back like the crow of Noah's Ark but have come back to tell us of the delights of heaven. The last war roused great interest in Spiritualism in Europe. This was because of the large number of men that were then killed, leaving behind disconsolate widows and desolate parents. Though a number of Indian soldiers did die, still the class of people they were recruited from were generally not interested in Spiritualism. It is strange that a commercial-minded medium from the West did not roam the valleys of the Punjab and the deserts of Rajputana putting dead Indian soldiers in touch with their living relatives. May be it would not have caught, except perhaps with the Muslims and Christians, for the Hindoos believe in reincarnation and that the soul takes its abode in another body immediately after its departure from the dead body. I would very much like to know if the birth rate both among men and animals had risen proportionately during the last war to provide bodies for all these souls; otherwise there must have been tremendous unemployment amongst these souls.

Though Spiritualism has not spread still we are not lacking in other occult "sciences"—fraud would be the right word. Astrology is firmly established. Education has not made a jot of difference. Hindoos and Parsees and even some Muslims, believe in and cannot do without the horoscope. It is consulted on every occasion, be it a marriage, be it the launching of a new business and even be it a thread or a Navjote ceremony. I ask you has it made the least difference in the ultimate result of these undertakings? Are all marriages happy, all businesses successful, all children ideal? The answer is plainly "no" and what is more, the percentage of successes is not more here than in any other part of the world. Then why consult a horoscope? If the horoscope only tells you of events that are to come in your life, events that you cannot avoid, events good or bad, that will happen in spite of you, then why waste money on preparing a horoscope, why waste space in storing pages with figures that are as meaningless as abstruse? If the foreknowledge of good things is to brighten our lives, similar knowledge of disappointments will damp our enthusiasm and, generally, it is easier to be depressed than gay.

Astrologers ply a busy trade. You have only to give the hour and minute of your birth; they will tell you more than you want to know of your life! The data that they ask for, simple as it seems, is pregnant with possibilities of error. It is quite evident that clocks in all houses do not record the same time; only some of them record the correct astronomical time. Clocks are a great sources of error. Then I have not heard of doctors and nurses standing by with tested watches in their hands to mark the exact moment of delivery. If they are there they are too busy administering to the medical needs of the mother and child. And then which

moment of the delivery should be considered? Is it when the head is delivered, when the whole body is delivered or when the child has taken its first gasp? These points want elucidation. How many of these who seek the advice of astrologers care to see whether their primary data is correct? Very often it is impossible to supply the information. The majority of Indian children are, even today, born in dark, ill-ventilated rooms, under primitive conditions, under the supervision of an ignorant woman who knows neither asepsis nor time. If somebody does look at the watch the time is seldom written down so that its record is soon lost. And it is on such incorrect data that the events in a life are calculated. These calculations are supposed to be based on the position of the heavenly bodies. Knowing their velocity one can calculate by how many thousands of miles they will be displaced from their original position in the space of a few minutes. If the horoscope is to be drawn up from the position of the celestial bodies you can imagine the accuracy of a statement that is based on wrong timing. Yet judges, professors, lawyers and doctors, leaving aside the mill-hands and roadside coolies, all believe in these horoscopes and hesitate to act against their directions!!

Next to these are the fortune-tellers. They read your palms and sometimes even the soles of your feet. Walking along the streets of Bombay, particularly Apollo Bunder, you meet these prowlers with cat-like walk and down-cast eyes. They size you up through the corner of their eye. Then they come to you "Sab, very good fortune-teller sab" and then reel off ten flattering impressions. If the last "You are very lucky *barra sab*", tickles your vanity and you show signs of slowing down, out comes their dossier consisting of well-thumbed, greasy, amber-coloured certificates from colonels, private secretaries, and high government officers. They all tell of his uncanny powers. You fall a victim and edge to a corner. Then he reads your palm till he comes to a stage when he wants to read for you a very important future event. But for this you must give him buckshees and your future depends on that tip. If it is a four-anna coin, he wilts under its weight, his cerebration slows down and his saliva dries up. These people pester all and sundry and some of them ring your front door bell! After the publicity that some of the forecasts of Cheiro received from the press, people have begun to think that there may be something in palmistry. A study of any good book on palmistry will show you how broad and vague are the interpretations for each sign. To some extent they are like the generalisations that one reads in medicine A man with a barrel-shaped chest may have suffered from asthma or chronic bronchitis, one with a narrow costal angle is liable to suffer from some gastric trouble, one with a short neck may develop high blood pressure. These are at the best averages from observation of thousands of cases. When palmistry becomes the study of averages obtained after studying thousands of hands and correlating the signs with incidents in their lives, then it will be something "respectable". Today it is far from that. It is mostly practised by very ignorant people and by charlatans who claim supernatural powers to cloak their ignorance. They get the better of their clients because the latter have faith and the former have 'Brass'. In a city like Bombay it is a fairly good business. Only you have to put on a dirty *dhoti*, and besmear your forehead, shoulders and navel with ashes and pigment, or you have to take a corner next to a *pan-vala*, display a Chinese dragon, and various charts with hands and signs on them. If you want to be 'posh' and earn by tens of rupees, you must have a room in a leading hotel where you are booked for a very short stay, have an attractive lady secretary, have an unfamiliar, high sounding oriental name and advertise in the local papers. You draw your clientele according to your show, for credulous folks are found amongst colonels as well as *paliwalas*.

There is another vast array, hailing mostly from the South of India, who answer questions sent in a sealed envelope without breaking the seal...Writing on billet reading, Price mentions Mlle. Jeanne Laplace who, on holding between her palms an envelope containing a letter, gave fifty-three impressions of which forty-two were correct. He held other experiments with her and in each case "the lucidity was brilliant". He also mentions Anna Pilch Warsaw who exhibited similar mental powers. These having been scientifically tested, one has to admit that such powers exist though we cannot at the moment explain them. It is possible that the people in the south of India have these powers developed to a greater extent. In this connection the experience in other countries is interesting. Mrs. Garrett who did so well at Duke University, America, having secured 336 correct hits out of 625 trials at pure telepathy with Dr. Rhine, fared badly with Mr. Soal when she crossed the Atlantic and came to London. In the latter place in 12,425 guesses, nothing paranormal was

noticed in spite of the fact that Mrs. Garrett preferred "the quieter methods in London." This discrepancy has been ascribed by London workers to loopholes in the test as carried out in America while the American retort that the British are too sceptical and their approach to the subject "unfriendly". With this experience, one would like to know more of the clairvoyant powers of these gentlemen that advertise so largely in the press. While not denying the possibility of such powers, one is constrained to think that they seem to grow far too wildly to be true in every case...But in the absence of any investigation, the bad with the good carry on a very brisk business earning quite a good income. To this they add horoscopes and talismans as side lines. I have discussed above the value of the former and that of the latter is evident. How bits of bone, a piece of a peacock feather, a silver shell containing some powder or a script from a Holy Book, can prevent injury or influence success has not been explained. I am aware that all religions have encouraged talismans into which divine power has been infused by pronouncing a few words over it. I do not deny the psychological effect of these on the believer. But the point I want to make is that this psychologal effect cannot prevent somebody else dashing into your car, or your boat capsizing in a storm or your dying if you catch pneumonic plague. Therefore, even if the use of talismans is acceptable, it is only to a limited extent and the rest is fraudulent exploitation.

When common law has provision for burglars and those that commit breach of trust, why is it that all these swindlers who tell your fortunes, read your palms, prepare talismans, write horoscopes, and umpteen other things for which they have no qualification, allowed to go scotfree? We hear of prosecutions for gambling, for running lotteries, for betting on cotton figures, but we never read of the prosecution of the above, nor of those that give tips on cotton figures. Have we no laws for these and if there are, are they so inefficient?

It may be argued that there are some who honestly believe in these readers of the future. Even then, even these believers would like to be protected. They would like to know who are genuine and who are not. There are laws against bogus doctors, against unqualified motor drivers and electricians, then why not against those that suck such a lot of money from the poor? I would suggest that the local University should set up a Research Council where all those that claim paranormal powers can be tested. If funds are not available, Government should provide funds and we hope that when popular Governments are re-established this will be one of the steps that they will take to free the poor, ignorant people from these sharks. There is evidence that there are paranormal powers; let them all be investigated. If true and genuine, humanity will be richer by the acquisition of more power over its environment. But let us do something to rid this country of these parasites and charlatans.

The following is, to use a very expressive phrase, "right from the horse's month." It appeared in the September 1939 issue of *Prediction* in an article entitled "The Prophets still say there will be no war" by the Editor of that journal (page 317):

There Will Be No War.

"I am certain Britain will not be engaged in war during the next decade," forecasts the clairvoyant, Frank T. Blake

"No war involving Britain in 1939-40", predicts the astrologer, R. H. Naylor.

"No world war during the next few years," foreshadows the automatist, Geraldine Cummins.

"War will be averted—the future is for peace," foretells the blind seer, Cyril Holmes.

"The dictators will shout, but there will be no war," prophesies the Numerologist, James Leigh.

Spirit Forecasts.

There remain the "spirit" forecasts given through famous mediums.

"No war—the two Dictators will pass away..... like wisps of straw in the wind," foresees the guide of Sir Dudley Myers.

"You will not be engaged in war—the armaments race will cease", predicts W. T. Stead.

"Not only will there be peace in Europe throughout 1939 and 1940, but for some time to come," foretells Abdul Latiff.

There is plenty more but we have no space for it. And again these people had the blatant impudence to write "THE PROPHETS VINDICATED" in big letters on the poster advertising the November 1939 issue.

For the benefit of believers we may state that Britain declared war on September 3, 1939.

Asstt. Ed.

THE rule of reason is the only kind of rule which can afford the luxury of freedom.

—H. J. LASKI.

THE TYRANNY OF WORDS

By Dr. R. P. Paranjpye

HOW often do we see that even the leaders of public opinion in our country, and in fact everywhere else, are merely slaves to words? In the political field this is obvious; no political party can subsist without slogans and catchwords. The common man does not understand the philosophy, if any such at all exists, behind these words. He merely repeats them and thinks that by such repetition he scores against his opponent. Take *Ahimsa* which every Congressman swears by and thinks he is practising. Apparently it does not appear inconsistent with the use of the police or the military for the suppression of riots or with the continued existence of jails. It is now used only for brushing away any objection raised to the immediate declaration of Indian independence on the score of our unpreparedness for defence, and this cavalier process of shutting one's eyes to realities succeeds with many, simply because the consequences of such unpreparedness are hidden from our view by the existence of the British navy. But it is not my object in this place to discuss politics. The same tyranny of words is observable in all other fields. They have either no plain meaning, or if they once had it, it has disappeared long ago.

Take the names of religions. Some of them, like the Hindu, had never any definite meaning and a Hindu is now best defined as one in India who does not profess to be the follower of any other religion. But even Islam or Christianity do not convey exactly the same idea to all Muslims or Christians, and the dissensions among different sects are often more violent than the dissensions between the followers of different religions. But in India people are ready to break each other's heads simply because they go under different names. In Lucknow one section of Muslims wanted to sing the praises of some persons who died fifteen hundred years ago, while others wanted to damn them; and for this war of words the city was in a continued turmoil for several years. The word God similarly connotes quite different things to different men; to some it may mean an idol or a stone, to others an animal, to others again a historical or legendary personage and to a few it may be another word for the absolute which cannot be defined. But practically all will be prepared to die for their idea. Similarly, the word caste. A man may break almost every rule of the caste but still he will swear by it. In fact, caste may have lost every *raison d'etre* it may once have had, but still the whole of Hindu Society continues to hug the chains it imposes on almost every action in daily life.

Race is another such word. Hitler's main objective is to exalt the Nordic race to the supreme position in the world and subject all other people to it. But scientists have shown that there is no such thing as a pure Nordic race and in fact almost every so-called race is inextricably mixed up with others. Qualities or defects are attributed to race which should be more properly assigned to heredity and environment. A race can be more or less pure according to its geographical environment but a perfectly pure race does not exist. A curious example of the tyranny of words can be seen in the justification of the institution of caste from well-known biological laws. In the vernacular the same word is used for caste and for species, and even educated people are found defending caste for reasons applicable to difference of species only. It is assumed, for instance, that the well-known fact that the offspring from two allied though different species of animals is generally infertile will apply to the progeny from the marriage of two persons from different castes. Fate and Karma are two other such words. Although they cannot bear strict logical analysis, they serve as anodynes for vast numbers of presumably intelligent human beings.

Somewhat analogous to the tyranny of words is the tyranny of language. We are all subject to it. Fine writing will require the occasional use of foreign words or phrases when their meaning can be equally well expressed in ordinary language. Often it is used as a cloak for airing one's scholarship, sometimes to delude the ignorant. The Catholic prayers in Latin, the Sanskrit mantras used in various ceremonies of the higher Hindu castes, the Arabic Koran are all instances of the same tyranny. In most of these cases it is admitted that the same meaning expressed in ordinary language will not produce the same return in the form of happiness in the other world or blessings in this. Is it feared that the digni-

(Continued on page 52)

Some Reflections on Hindu Philosophy

By Bakim Chandra Chatterjee

This highly interesting article by the great Bengalee novelist was written as far back as 1873. The "Hindustan Standard" of Calcutta reprinted it in its Bakim Centenary Number of June 26, 1938. The article shows that together with English education the rationalist spirit of modern Europe did reach India, and not a few of the Pioneers of Indian intellectual renaissance were inspired by that spirit. But unfortunately the period of modern Rationalism was very short. Yet the work begun by these illustrious pioneers must be carried on. In the latter part of the article the author says that a critical estimate of Hindu thought being a task of gigantic magnitude was to be reserved for a future occasion. We hope this epoch-making article will prompt the progressive intellectuals of India today to devote themselves to this stupendeous task, which the intellectual fathers of modern India set before their progeny—*Asstt. Ed.*

AS yet no serious attempt appears to have been made to estimate the value of Hindu Thought and its influence on the progress of civilization. It is generally assumed that outside the limits of India, Hindu Civilisation has exercised little influence. Perhaps the assumption is, on the whole, correct. The intellectual relations of Greece and through it, of Europe, to India will, perhaps, never admit of being fully cleared up. But apart from the question of its influence on the world at large, the history of the Hindu Intellect has a value of its own which has been but imperfectly recognised. If Europe presents to the student the more perfect type of civilization, India offers to him the more instructive though less interesting study of arrested development and decay. The intellectual history of Europe bears to that of India the same relation as physiology does to pathology; while the one presents the richer field for investigation of the laws of the healthy and vigorous growth of civilization, the other furnishes greater facilities of studying it under the conditions of disease and death.

The study of Sanskrit is making its way in Europe, and the history and the literature of India occupy, it is satisfactory to know, a considerable share of attention of her scholars at the present day. But it is to be regretted that the literature of Indian mythology and ritual should engross the attention of the learned, to the exclusion of higher forms of intellectual activity which were developed at a later period of Hindu history. It must, of course, be admitted, that Hindu mythology is a subject of universal interest on account of its real or supposed affinity to the primitive belief of all the Aryan races, while Hindu Philosophy has no higher claim than that which arises from its being exclusively Indian. To us, indeed, who are the children of the soil, Hindu Philosophy is a far more important study than Hindu mythology. To us the nearer and more local is of greater interest than that which is the common property of all nations, and the real significance of which is lost in the dim shades of remote antiquity.

We have not, however, by any means shown any readiness to recognise Hindu Philosophy as an important branch of study. It is, indeed, still taught with reverence, and learnt with awe in the secluded tols of Nadiya and other seats of ancient learning, but the philosophy, of the tols is the most barren and unprofitable study in which the human intellect can engage itself. Philosophy as taught by the pandits, is simply a storehouse of verbal quibbles, and high proficiency in it is considered synonymous with high proficiency in the art of profitless wrangling. Why Jagadish should have used nine letters where he might have used five, or of how many significations an ambiguous word in Gadadhara's Commentary can admit, are regarded as the highest problems of which it is allowed to the human intellect to attempt the solution. The sum of useful human knowledge would in no way be diminished, if by some fortunate accident, the philosophy of the tols disappeared from the face of the earth.

There are two aspects in which the natives of India can regard the study of Hindu Philosophy. We can study it for its own sake,—for the philosophical knowledge which it will yield. We can also study it for the sake of the light it can throw on the past history of India,—on the great social changes of which it has often been the cause or often the consequence. It will be generally admitted that at the present day, in the full blaze of the light which the science and the philosophy of Europe pours upon us, the value of Hindu philosophy, for the sake of the knowledge of Nature which it can impart, is insignificant.

The principal value of Hindu philosophy consists in its bearings on history and on

sociology. As the great causes which have influenced the destiny of India, which have moulded the national character, taught the Hindu to despise the blessings of existence and to look upon inaction as the ideal of human happiness; as causes. in short, to which a very great deal of the characteristics of national life may well be referred, the importance of the philosophical doctrines of India cannot be overestimated. There are, however, no indications of any tendency among native scholars to take up the study in earnest. Natives of India, so far as they have hitherto interested themselves in its past history, have generally followed in the wake of Europeans, throwing little handfuls of materials upon the structures reared by the giants of another clime. It is a painful proof of the absence of originality and vigor in the intellectual character of the native of the present day that we little relish pursuits which are not sanctioned by the example and the approval of Europeans, that we dare not ascend heights which they have not attempted to climb. The traces of European footprints must encourage us in any journey we undertake; we lack the courage—not the ability—to venture upon an untrodden path. There is always present to us a morbid dread of failure which itself is a powerful cause of failure.

Hindu philosophy has not been wholly neglected in Europe. But its spirit has never been seized—it remains to be understood. Natives of the country alone can fall into grooves of thought which they imbibe with their earliest education, but which appear unintelligible and grotesque to the foreigner. The study of Hindu Philosophy in Europe has, therefore, been barren of results. It is, on the other hand, pursued by a certain section of native scholars with life-long devotion, but only as the science and the art of verbal quibbling. Here too, has the study of Hindu Philosophy been barren of result. Natives who have fitted themselves for the work by that wider culture which a complee acquaintance with European science alone can impart, are in a position peculiarly suited for giving to Hindu Philosophy its proper position in the history of human achievement.

But no study is likely to be fruitful of results if carried on without a system. The majority of those who pursue knowledge for its own sake pursue it after an aimless and desultory fashion. An aimless and desultory pursuit of knowledge may be productive of good in other cases, but in the case of Hindu Philosophy it can lead to no good whatever. Hindu philosophy must be studied with certain definite objects or not studied at all. My object in the present paper is to suggest some of the leading points on which attention should be bestowed in a special manner.

A sort of hazy perception that Hindu Mythology is in a great measure the parent of Hindu Philosopy is not wanting among those who have bestowed any attention on either. It is again believed, on the other hand, that the philosophical systems arose out of that reaction against the mythological religion which culminated in Buddhism, and that while some systems were aggressive and hostile to the national religion, others aimed at its conversion, and attempted to rebuild the fabric of superstition on rational foundation. All this may be true, perhaps is so, but the great problems of history still remain unexplained. How is it that we find a cumbrous mythology and an absurd ritual flourishing gaily side by side with enlightened rationalism and searching scepticism, nay, not only flourishing side by side with them but riding triumphant over both? Again, without questioning the general affiliation of philosophy to mythology, it is of great importance to trace how each individual myth developed itself into a philosophical idea. Lastly, it is of still greater moment to ascertain, if we can, the national modes of thought common both to philosophy and to mythology, which gave its distinctive character to each and which influence the national character even at the present day.

I will try to explain what I mean by an illustration. We find the principle of triple existence running throughout both Hindu Philosophy and Hindu Mythology. The Supreme Soul has, in philosophy, the threefold attributes of Goodness (satwa), Passion (rajas) and Darkness (tamas) Next, as separate impersonations of each of these three attributes of the Supreme Soul, we have the Pauranic Trinity,—Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. This trinity has no existence in Vedic literature, but there we find another trinity as the more primitive representatives of the Pauranic Triad, viz., Agni, Vayu and Surya.

These again, in their turn represent the Light. Agni the terrestrial light, Vayu the light of the atmosphere, and Surya the light of the sky. This triple light is traced through the Nirukta (XII, 19) to the three steps of Vishnu in the Rig Veda. The following is the explanation from the Nirukta:—

"Vishnu strides over this, whatever exists. He plants his step in three-fold manner, i.e., for

a three-fold existence, on earth, in the atmosphere, and in the sky according to Sakyamuni.'

The verse in the Rig Veda which is explained here is as follows:—

'Vishnu strode over this (universe); in three places he planted his step," etc.

So that here at least we can trace a philosophical idea to its source in a myth in the Rig Veda. No other intelligible explanation can be offered how philosophy came to announce so fanciful a doctrine as that of the three attributes of the Supreme Being.

He who will write the history of Hindu asceticism, from its first appearance in the Vedic Theology to its most complete development in the Buddhistic philosophy, will earn a title to the gratitude of India. Lecky has shown, with a power of gloomy narration rarely surpassed, the evil influence of asceticism upon the destinies of mediaeval Europe, but no country in the world has suffered more deeply from its baneful power than India. Both the mythology and the philosophy were intensely imbued with the ascetic spirit. Buckle has shown how the imposing aspects and unconquerable forces of nature create superstition. Imagination invests these mysterious powers of nature with human volition and superhuman caprice and aptitude for mischief. After man has once felt their unlimited capacity for taking offence, his next step is to assume that they are constantly offended at intentional and unintentional human actions. Hence arises the sense of Sin. The sense of Sin leads to Penance. Wrathful divinities must be appeased by suitable expiations. When man is unable to rise to the lofty doctrine of Repentance, the only form which penance can assume is that of physical privation. Hence the rise of asceticism in Hindu religion.

Philosophy, seeking a loftier ideal and proceeding on a more rational basis, discarded the notion of Sin. But the same causes were at work. The mighty energies of nature worked with impressive force on every side. With no more than the appliances of primitive life, existence was left to be a burden in a climate and a country which overpowered human powers and neutralised human energies. What had appeared to the theologian as the vengeful action of offended divinities appeared to the philosopher as the omnipotent but natural causes of human misery. Hence the philosophy, the sense of suffering took the place of the sense of sin. These two notions, the sense of suffering and the sense of sin, run side by side throughout Hindu Philosophy and Hindu Mythology respectively. The end and aim of Sankhya is the Cessation of Pain by the Cessation of all Experience. The Buddhist, not satisfied with the Cessation of Experience, aims at the Annihilation of the experiencing Soul as the only effectual means of securing freedom from misery to man. The Vedanta declines to believe that so much apparent misery can be real and resolves existence into a mass of illusions. The Yogi in the madness of despair constructs a fanciful machinery for conquering the powers of nature. Everywhere the philosopher labours under an overwhelming sense of human misery and directs all his efforts against it. The vast field over which these two leading notions, the notion of sin and the notion of suffering, have spread, giving rise to asceticism, to fatalism, to apathy in politics and to sensuality in poetry, is one of the most interesting subjects of study with which the Hindu can occupy himself.

It must be borne in mind that Philosophy in India had never the restricted signification attached to it in modern Europe, but was co-extensive in meaning with the knowledge of Nature. Philosophy, therefore, included Science. The Hindu laboured under the disadvantage of an erroneous method. An intense theological spirit rarely leads to anything but the deductive method, and the Hindu method was almost solely and purely deductive. Observation and Experiment were considered beneath the dignity of Philosophy and Sience. Nor is even deduction as a rule pushed on its legitimate consequences. First principles are assumed on no grounds, and with the most perfect weapons of deductive logic at his command the Hindu thinker contents himself with the most fanciful inferences. Mighty glimpses of truth reveal themselves to men of almost inspired intellect, but the Hindu sage will not follow them out to their legitimate consequence.

When the gardeners of Florence found that the column of water in the water-pump will not rise to any greater height than thirty-two feet, the idea of the atmosphere exerting a pressure upon the water outside flashed upon Torricelli like an inspiration. But Torricelli did not stop at the inspired thought. "If the pressure of the atmosphere sustained a column of air," he reasoned, "it ought to sustain a column of mercury also." He experimented with a glass tube filled with mercury, which verified his conclusion. Here was splendid triumph, but European energy

of thought would not stop here. Pascal argued, that if the atmosphere supports the mercurial column, the higher we ascend the lower ought the column to sink. Pascal took a barometric column to the Puy de Dome and the column sank.

A Hindu Philosopher in Torricelli's place would have contented himself with simply announcing in an aphoristic 'sutra' that the air had weight. No measure of the quantity of its pressure would have been given; no experiment would have been made with the mercury ; no Hindu Pascal would have ascended the Himalayas with a barometric column in hand. To take a parallel case the diurnal rotation of the earth is shadowed forth in the Aitareya Brahmana. Arya Bhatta distinctly affirms it "The starry firmament is fixed," says he, "it is the earth, which, continually revolving, produces the rising and the setting of the constellations and the planets." In addition to this the apparent annual motion of the sun and the periodical motion of the planets were well-known. The only legitimate deduction from the combination of these facts, viz.,, the diurnal rotation of the earth, the fixity of the heavenly bodies, and the apparent annual motion of the sun, was the heliocentric theory. But the heliocentric theory was never positively put forward, never sought to be proved, never accepted and-never followed out to the establishment of the further laws of the universe. In modern Europe, the announcement of the Copernican theory rendered certain the future discovery of the laws of Kepler and of the great law of Universal Gravitation. In India Arya Bhatta's remarkable announcement rendered certain that nothing further would come out of it.

Examples might be multiplied. But the point for enquiry is, did India make no contribution of value to the sum of human knowledge? Did no power of intellect suffice to neutralize the fatal error in method? Is the intellectual history of India nothing but the longest page in that unwritten chapter of the world's history, the history of human error? If not, if truth is still to be gleaned from the recesses of Hindu philosophy, where and how can we find it? What is in fact the real place of Hindu philosophy in the History of Science?

Those who follow with admiring reverence Mill's exposition of the Law of Causation must be startled to find that the Hindu Naiyayiks arrived at precisely the same result as Mill. The following is Mill's definition of Cause, the net result of his exposition:—

"The cause of a phenomenon" is "the antecedent or the concurrence of antecedents on which it is invariably and unconditionally consequent."

This is nearly identical with the Naiyayika's definition, which is as follows:—

Anyatha siddhi sunyasya niyata purvabartita Karanatwam." Literally translated it runs thus:—

"Being a cause is being the invariable antecedent of that which cannot be brought about without it."

There are two elements in Mill's definition, viz., the concurrence of antecedents, and the unconditionality of the consequent, which may at first be missed in the Sanskrit definition. But this defect is apparent only. The aphoristic form in which Hindu Philosophy was taught precluded the concurrence of antecedents being prominently brought forward in the definition; it was sufficient that the definition did not exclude such concurrence. But the point is explained and illustrated at great length in other texts. For the 'unconditionality' of Mill, the Nyaya substitutes an awkward periphrasis which, however, in reality signifies 'unconditionality,' and is elsewhere explained in the Nyaya to do so. Mill explains 'unconditionality' by the illustration afforded by the sequence of day and night. Night is the invariable antecedent of day, but it is not its cause, because if the sun did not rise there would be no day. Day is not, therefore, the unconditional consequent of night. Precisely the same thing is meant by "anyatha siddhi sunyasya." Day cannot be brought about without the rising of the sun; therefore, the rising of the sun and not night is the cause of day, though night is also the invariable antecedent of day. The identity of the two definitions is remarkable.

The point for enquiry is, what measure of sterling gold like this can be found amid the dross of Hindu Philosophy?

It is by no means so small as is generally believed.

This strictly philosophical conception of the law of causation suggests an important point, viz., the recognition of law as the only agency in the Government of the universe. That which specially distinguishes the superiority of modern Europe over the Europe of the past and over all other countries whatever, is this unflinching recognition of the absolute sovereignty of law. I have no space to dwell on the point, but I must indicate that the same spirit

(*Continued on page* 46)

RATIONALISM.

THE TRUE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.

By Abraham Solomon.

THIS month, the Rationalist Association of India completes ten years of its existence. The fact may not be of much importance to many. Ten years is not a very long period. But to those who have been closely connected with its work and activities, the vicissitudes through which it has passed, the difficulties it has had to face, this fact is of greater significance.

Associations and societies in this country have a way of starting with a flourish and then slowly vanishing into nothingness or shall we say attaining *Nirvana*. The R. A. I. also started with a flourish. The membership increased rapidly, then, after a few years it dropped. Many made it an excuse to drop out themselves. We are not sorry for it and we do not find anything strange in it. But they were mistaken in thinking that others would do the same. They are not likely to understand the meaning of Rationalism and what it implies. They cannot get rid of the false notion that the value of an idea or cause lies in the number of people who accept it. This only shows that though some people may give up outworn religious forms and ceremonies, very few are able to give up the religious mode of thought.

The poor response and small membership was also one of the reasons put forward for closing the Association. On the contrary, we think it is one of the strongest reasons in favour of keeping it alive and increasing our efforts. There is no credit in keeping a cause alive when there are enough people to support it. It is only when there are few that it connotes an amount of sincerity and conviction on the part of those who work to spread the ideas for which at stands and which they think are right and will make for the betterment of humanity. The primary object of our Association is the creation of an atmosphere hospitable for the spread of Rationalism.

The R. A. I., we hope, has passed through this crisis, if we may term it, which comes in the life of almost every organisation, which stands for an unpopular cause which is not endowed by some millionaire and has to exist on the merits of the ideas it stands for. It is a test as it were of the sincerity and conviction of those who profess to believe in it, and of the righteousness of the cause itself.

The Rationalist Association of India stands for freedom of thought and expression which is the condition of human progress. Rationalism is a mental attitude which is the outcome of scientific progress, and grows with the accumulation of knowledge. It stands for a comprehensive and harmonious philosophy of life. It represents an outlook which is consistent with facts and accepts the supremacy of Reason in all spheres of human thought and activity. It stands "for the assertion of truth, the unveiling of illusion, the dissipation of hate, the enlargement and instruction of man's hearts and minds." It does not deny emotion or impulse as one of the strongest motive forces in human affairs, but maintains that it should be subservient to common sense and Reason. A Rationalist is an idealist in the truest sense of the word. His idealism is on a higher plane than any emotional fervour or religious zeal. All his actions, aims, and ideals are based on the recognition of the reality of this life and no other, on the recognition of the right of every man and woman to the greatest possible happiness here and now, and the love of truth, justice and tolerance as the guiding principles in life.

We do not deny that there may be some who, while professing to be Rationalists, are still responsible for actions of which one cannot be very proud, but we do not see, as Mr. Chapman Cohen says, why only believers should have a monopoly of vices.

The progress of Rationalism in this country is necessarily slow. The appalling ignorance, the economic backwardness of our people, the diversity of languages, the vastness of our country and last but not least, the political state of India are some of the greatest obstacles to the progress of Rationalism in this country.

Again, freedom cannot flourish in an atmosphere of conflict. To have social and cultural progress we must have peace and security. In this country we have neither. The struggle for independence gathers strength, and bread is the crying need of millions. People have no time for philosophy and intellectual pursuits.

The last decade has been one of the most eventful periods in human history. It has been conspicious for "coups" and "crisis." We

(Continued on page 46).

MESSAGES 1930—1940

TO THE R. A. I.

Dr. P. R. Paranjpye

I am very glad that the Rationalist Association of India has completed ten years of its existence and hope that it will have a long life of useful work. The ideas it stands for are of the utmost importance to humanity in general and to India in particular. In our country any absurd idea is sure to find support, provided it is sufficiently absurd. Any man who makes high sounding claims of infallibility often gets numerous followers. No attempt is made by the ordinary person to put these ideas or these claims to the test of reason. Real progress thus becomes difficult. Every lover of the country should welcome the activities of the R. A. I. and lend it his wholehearted support.

Lt.-Col. K. C. Sanjana

The great defect in the system of modern education is that boys and girls are not taught to think for themselves and exercise their judgment in matters religious, political and social. The consequence is that they are easily led by shibboleths and slogans uttered by persons who have their own axes to grind. The Rationalist Association of India serves the laudable purpose of creating a mental attitude which accepts only such opinions, beliefs and practices which stand the test of Reason. I wish every success to the Association in its propaganda work in the cause of "Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom."

The Hon. Mr. Justice K. C. Sen

To-day seems to be a dark hour for Reason in Europe. But though no doubt the conflict is arousing intense passions and enthusiasms on the one hand, it is, on the other hand, compelling all people who can think, to think deeply and carefully and to resolve not to be deluded any more by catchwords and empty phrases. The result will, I have little doubt, be a distinct gain for Reason.

Similarly, pet theories and conventional doctrines are being put to a severe strain in this country also, and however much the senior generation may not like the questioning spirit that is being engendered in the breasts of youth, I hope that here also we may look forward to a strengthening of the forces of Reason against those of blind faith or antiquated tradition.

Prof. D. K. Karve

I wish long and useful life both to the Rationalist Association of India and to its organ *Reason*.

REASON

(ESTD. 1931)

The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).
Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 2/- & Foreign 3s. 6d. or. $1.00 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Notes & News.

WE thank all those who have sent messages to the R. A. I. on its 10th Anniversary.

x x x

THE 10th Annual General Meeting of the R. A. I. will be held on Sunday, March 17, at 7-30 p.m. at the Radio Club, Bombay. We hope all will make it a point to attend.

x x x

THE Announcement regarding the Annual Dinner appears elsewhere in this issue. The new premises of the Radio Club are one of the loveliest places in Bombay. The Dinner this time will be in the open air on the beautiful lawn in front of the Club just facing the sea. The sky will be clear and the moon more than half (well we'll see to that). Be assured the dinner will be excellent (the "menu" has been chosen by one whose judgment we have no reason to doubt). Our distinguished member Dr. R. P. Paranjpye will be the principal speaker. We think members and their friends will pass a very pleasant couple of hours and you will be sorry if you do not make it a point to attend.

x x x

THOSE wishing to attend should please inform co-secretary, Mr. David, as early as possible. If some are unable to attend even after sending in their names they should please try and let us know accordingly at least a day or two before the date fixed for the Dinner. Members are allowed to bring guests who will be charged Rs. 3/- only. Non-members wishing to attend and not knowing any member of the Association should write to us.

x x x

OUR old member Lt.-Col. K. C. Sanjana of Poona has become a life member of the Association. In sending a cheque for Rs. 100/- he writes:

> I am now in my 87th year of age. I have been a Rationalist for over 40 years and a member of the Rationalist Press Association since1908. Rationalism has been bred in my blood as it were. Since my 18th year of age I have been a sceptic and had ceased to believe in the dogmas and ceremonialism of the hybrid form of Zoroastrianism as practised by the present day Parsees.I have been a theist until I came to read Mathew Arnold's *Literature and Dogma* and Blatchford's *God, My Neighbour*. The books that influenced me most were Vivian Phelips' *The Churches and Modern Thought* and Fraser's *Golden Bough* of which I possess a complete set. The longer I have lived, the stronger has grown my freethinking. I cannot understand how people can talk of and believe in a benevolent Creator, in a God who is all love and a moral Governor, seeing how the world is devastated by earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, epidemics, bloody wars, and that this Deity does not move his little finger to protect humanity from such disasters.

We thank Col. Sanjana for the message he has sent to the R. A. I. on its 10th Anniversary and which is published elsewhere in this issue. We wish him long life and the best of health.

x x x

Members are requested to send in their renewals of subscription. As usual, the next copy of *Reason* will be sent by V. P. P. to all those who have not done so. We hope they will be good enough to honour the V.P.P.

x x x

WE gratefully acknowledge the following:— Lt.-Col. K. C. Sanjana, Poona, Rs. 100/-; Mrs. M. F. M. Phelips, Cape Town, South Africa, Rs. 5/-; Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, Rs. 5/-; Dr. Claude D'Avoine Rs. 5/-; Mr. R. I. D'Avoine Rs. 5/-; Mr. E. D'Avoine Rs. 5/-; Prof. R. D. Karve, Rs. 5/-; Prof. D. D. Karve, Poona, Rs. 5/-; Mr. C. C. Basu Rs. 2/-; Mr. Rahimtoola, Rs. 2/-; Prof. D. K. Karve Rs. 2/-.

RATIONALISM—The True Philosophy of Life.

(*Continued from page* 43)

witnessed a suppression of liberty and perpetration of brutatily unparalleled in the past. Only a little over two decades ago the world was in the midst of an appalling carnage, the consequences of which it is still suffering. The policies subsequently followed by the "great powers" made one believe that there is much truth in that witticism "we learn from history that we learn nothing from history." The struggle which was going on underground has emerged to the top. Unable to clear the mess made by power politics, intrigues and secret diplomacy, the world is resorting to the classic solution—War. We stand on the brink of another "dark age" which threatens to be more systematic in its suppression of human liberty than ever before.

Speaking at the International Freethought Congress held in London in September 1938 Mr. Joseph McCabe said, "ten years ago we could, on comparing notes, have boasted that more than 200,000,000 people had been won from the world's religions to Atheism in little over ten years. Today we have to report that nearly one half of them are silenced, and such Freethought Organisations as they had have been destroyed. In a battle of ideas and knowledge, in an atmosphere of free discussion, Atheism was sweeping the world. But we are no longer fighting ideas. We are fighting clerical corporations which in most countries have allied themselves with violence and brutality. We are back in the days of feudal tyranny which it cost half a million lives to break in the course of the nineteenth century."

In Europe the growth of scientific knowledge brought about a philosophical revolution. Men questioned the validity of established institutions. Freed from the fetters of blind faith and the belief that everything is preordained, Man gained confidence in himself and overthrew the yoke of the dark ages and ushered in an era of unparalleled social and cultural progress which has been only checked by Religion and reaction allying themselves with violence and brutatily in an effort to regain their lost power.

Here in India there has been a general awakening. But interested persons seek to exploit the ignorance of our teeming millions for their own personal gain. Religion has proved to be the greatest impediment to the social and cultural progress of our country. India stands in need of a philosophical revolution, a changed outlook on life. Our people must give up the religious mode of thought and adopt a scientific attitude to life, an attitude which accepts the supremacy of Reason in all human affairs. It is only then that our people will start questioning the validity of outworn social customs, beliefs and dogmas which cramp the human intellect, and make a conscious effort to remould our social and political institutions on a more rational basis. The struggle for independence must grow into a wider struggle for peace, for liberty and for cultural progress.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON HINDU PHILOSOPHY

(*Continued from page* 42)

reigns over the higher forms of Hindu thought, such as the Sankhya and the Nyaya. Whatever the character of inferior schools, such as the Mimansa, Law is recognised as supreme in the more advanced systems. No divine interposition, no especial providence, no miracle, not even the initial Creative Act is recognised here. Indeed, after the great law of causation has once been seized in a true philosophical spirit, the recognition of the Reign of Law must supersede all theological conceptions. So it did in the superior systems of Hindu Philosophy.

This is by far the most important point in the study of which the enquirer into the Hindu Philosophy can engage. A single question, such, for instance, as the share which philosophical systems like the Sankhya had in causing the birth and promoting the growth of such a stupendous social revolution as Buddhism, is alone of engrossing interest. But this portion of the subject is so important that it will not admit of being treated at the close of this paper. It must be reserved for a future occasion.

A HISTORY OF

FREETHOUGHT

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

by

J. M. ROBERTSON

COMPLETE IN

Two Volumes. Over 300 pages in each. Illustrated.

Rs. 5/- postage extra.

Write:—Secretary, R. A. I.

A Decade of Rationalism

A letter appeared in the *Bombay Chronicle* in December, 1929, under the signature of Dr. C. L. D'Avoine. Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Dr. S. R. Joglekar, Dr. A. S. Erulkar and others suggesting that the time was ripe to start a Rationalist Association in India. In the month of January, 1930, a meeting was held at the residence of Mr. D. R. D. Wadia and the preliminaries for an inaugural meeting to inaugurate an Association were discussed. It was decided to call the Association "The Anti-Priestcraft Association" with the object of combating all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country.

A meeting was held at the Students' Brotherhood Hall on a Sunday, in March 1930, under the presidentship of Dr. G. V. Deshmukh. The meeting was very largely attended by an enthusiastic gathering. After the formation of the Association, the first Office-bearers were elected. These were :—

President:—Dr. G. V. Deshmukh, M. D., F.R.C.S.

Vice-Presidents:—Mr. A. S. Tyebji and Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M.D.

Hon. Treasurer:—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law.

Hon: Secretaries:—Dr. G. Coelho, M.R.C.P. and Mr. J. M. Cooper.

Executive Committee:—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M.D.; Mr. M. A. Somjee, Bar-at-Law; Mr. P. Tricumdas, Bar-at-Law; Mr. M. R. P. Masani, Bar-at-Law; Mr. S. A. Brelvi, M.A., LL.B.; Mr. S. A. Megherian and Miss P. Nariman.

A few months after the inauguration of the Association, it was decided to start a quarterly journal called *Reason* to advance the objects of the Association and Dr. C. L. D'Avoine was appointed the Editor. The name of the Association was changed to "The Rationalist Association of India" as it was realized that the objects of the Association were wider than just combating priestcraft. The membership gradually grew and reached a figure of 150 by the end of the first year.

The first Annual General Meeting and Dinner was held at the Radio Club, Bombay. Nearly all the Bombay members with their friends attended.

Through gifts received from members, a library was started. Because of difficulties of publication and with the hope of earning some income, *Reason*, was made a monthly. The Association held public lectures on Rationalism and cognate subjects. Tea meetings were arranged with the object of establishing greater contact among the members and at the same time affording opportunities for discussing topics of interest.

The Association came into a good deal of publicity because of the arrest of the Editor of *Reason*, Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, by the Government of Bombay, on a charge of wounding the religious feelings of the people. Dr. D'Avoine was tried before the Chief Presidency Magistrate, the Hon'ble the Justice Mr. H. P. Dastur, who, after a very interesting hearing of the case, acquitted him. This acquittal was hailed by freethinkers all over the country and Dr. C. L. D'Avoine was the recipient of many felicitations. A well-attended dinner was held at the Taj Mahal Hotel, Bombay, to congratulate Dr. C. L. D'Avoine on his acquittal.

As years rolled by, it became plain that for the progress of the Association a more energetic plan of action was needed. The response to the membership was not very encouraging. The Association felt that to gather in more members, it was necessary not only to publish the monthly journal but also other Rationalist literature and various discussions, as is done by the Rationalist Press Association and the Secular Society in England. It was felt that the rationalist literature that was published in the West was very much confined to the criticism of Christianity which did not interest the Hindu or Muslim. The Association was handicapped for want of men who could produce works of studied criticism on the religions prevalent in India. Even if men were available, the money was wanting to finance these writers. The Association at the time badly needed some energetic workers who could give more time to this work. All work was and is still done honorary and in spare time.

During the end of 1935 and 1936, there were no activities and *Reason* stopped publication due to financial and other difficulties.

The young members were now lashed into

(*Continued on page* 50)

18

The LIBERATION of GERMANY

By W. GLANVILLE COOK

(*Reproduced from "The Rationalist," Australia.*)

The Liberation of Germany by Martin Abbotson Watts & Co., London, 3s. 6d.

IT has been said that when war is declared truth is the first casualty. Not only in the belligerent countries but also in neutral countries there is a flood of skilful propaganda, and to breast the current and win to the firm ground of sober reality becomes a task almost, if not quite, impossible of achievement. Very few are there who wish to do so and fewer still those who make any determined effort in that direction. The great majority, of all classes and with varying standards of education, are content to be swept away by the torrent, and to have their critical judgment drowned in the maelstroms of emotion and national prejudices.

This is not the way of the rationalist.

At all times it is his aim to maintain his intellectual integrity, to exercise a keen critical judgment, and to pursue the truth with unwearying devotion. This is the highest loyalty, and the finest service he can render his fellowmen.

It is with some suspicion therefore that we take up a book entitled "The Liberation of Germany" written, at least in part if not wholly, since the outbreak of war. It professes to be "a racy and authoritative account, based on German and other official sources, of the way in which Hitler and his Associates have impressed the stranglehold of Nazism on every phase of German life and culture. This succinct and crushing indictment of Hitlerism makes it clear that the war for the liberation of Europe from aggression is also a war for the liberation of Germany itself."

The last sentence does nothing to dispel the doubt that this may be inspired propaganda put forth as part of the war effort of the Allies.

A careful reading of the book does dispel that doubt. It is well documented, is factual rather than opinionative, and is written in a clear, convincing style with an absence of unnecessary rhetoric.

The essential message of the book is summed up in this passage:

> "It is time that we dropped all nonsense about the Nazi 'ideology' and the Nazi 'philosophy of life.' It is the most shameless and colossal system of graft that has been known since the palmy days of corruption in American cities; and even the Tammany hold on New York City was parochial in comparison with this exploitation of 80,000,000 people. Some of the best informed non-Socialist writers on Germany explain that the lower or middle Nazi officials are not content with their salaries but use their despotic power to exact tribute almost in the same way as the criminial gangs did in America. They demand commissions, fees for protection (from themselves), expensive presents, and so on."

Just prior to the rise to power of the Nazis there was an "Indian summer" of true culture in Germany, the home of so much that is valuable and eternal in music, science, art and philosophy.

> "The German universities once again became the intellectual leaders of the world. The brief flowering of German science was so rich in content and varied in scope as to constitute, even in a country with such a glorious scientific past, a renaissance in achievements of the mind. The music and opera of the great German masters were revived on a new and higher level. The German theatre became for a short time the pride of western Europe. German scholars and men of letters began to turn out what seemed to be almost a tidal wave of books, brochures, and periodicals on every conceivable subject. For a period of time German new-book listings were as great as those of England, France, and the United States combined." (Prof. R. A. Brady--"The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism."

Then came the depression and the rise of Hitler to supreme power. How did this come about?

Abbotson gives three factors to account for the remarkable fact that Hitler, who at the age of thirty-three, when any man of great ability has proved himself, was still a shabby beer-house brawler who had never yet earned two pounds a week and had rarely earned one," became the Dictator of Nazi Germany.

First of all the Catholic Von Papen influenced the Pope to order the German Catholics to

quit their opposition to Hitler and there was, says the Annual Register "a gigantic swing-over of the Catholic middle-class vote." The importance of this Roman Catholic support for the Nazis at this crucial stage is too often forgotten. It is a weakness of the book that it does not say why the Pope lent his powerful aid to this cause. The answer may be found by those who are interested in McCabe's, "The Papacy In Politics Today."

The second factor was the setting of the Reichstag on fire by Goering.

Thirdly, Hitler secured the office of Chancellor and could influence the election. Abbotson has already explained how Hugenberg, Thyssen and other big industrialists and aristocratic land-owners had financed the party on certain conditions.

We have heard much of the efficiency of Nazi government and of its material benefits. Whilst not giving an unrelieved picture of gloom, indeed Abbotson claims that our Press has been too apt to underrate "the attractiveness of a good deal of the scheme of social services" put forth, yet the conclusion is clearly that the Nazi system did not work.

> "The American World Almanac gives the annual production of wealth in Germany in the lamentable years (1927-31) from which Hitler 'saved' the country as 9,000,000,000 gold marks. In 1930-31 (the Budget Year), when the world-depression had fully set in, but the Nazis were not yet in power, the figure was 10,585 millions It dropped steadily to 7,806 millions in 1934-35, when the Government ceased to publish the statistics. In recent years at least one-half has been spent on preparation for war. The gold-reserve has shrunk to a shadow. Foreign trade and production have diminished. The wage of the worker was reduced year by year and subject to all sorts of deductions, and the social services were starved."

The obvious questions that follow are: "How then does Hitler maintain power? Why have not the people overthrown Nazi rule? A complete answer to these questions is found in this book.

"The first instrument of the slave drivers is education, and the supreme use of the instrument is to create a nation of soldiers." There follows a very complete review of the Nazi system of education, of which we can only give glimpses.

> "The number of primary schools per 10,000 of the population is 1291. In Poland, the Kultur of which the Nazis affected to despise, the figure was 1430. In France, which has no more ground of illiteracy to make up than Germany, it is – I take the latest available statistics—1368, and in Italy 1336.
>
> I may add here that this is true also of higher education. In Germany 12.7 per 10,000 of the population go on to it: in Poland 14.1, in France 19.3, in Russia 30.0. Of twenty-eight States listed in the Year Book of Education (1938) Germany is in respect of higher education the fourth from the bottom; and its higher education is to-day little more than direct or indirect war-education."

The whole system is designed to turn out a political robot. The whole machinery of the Roman Catholic Church is designed to turn out a robot of another type. Abbotson writes:

> "There is again a very close parallel to the Roman Catholic system, and that is the fundamental reason for the violent clash of the two systems."

The account given of the Adolf Hitler Schools for selected boys and girls, aged twelve and upwards, and of the Napoli Schools, boarding schools for adolescents, is extremely interesting. From these schools are drawn the "recruits for the vast army, at least half a million strong, of Nazi agents who form a network of spies and bullies over the entire country."

Rationalists will be keenly interested in the two chapters on "The Prostitution of Literature" and "The Degradation of Science." We are not impressed by such aphorisms as "Hitler is lonely, so is God, therefore Hitler is like God." (Hans Frank), and "To serve Hitler is to serve Germany, and to serve Germany, is to serve God."

After the triumph of the Nazi Party the following occurred:

> "Forty thousand students and citizens assembled in Unter den Linden, and, to the music of Chopin's Funeral March, made a bonfire of twenty thousand books. These included not only Hirschfeld's library, but humanitarian works of a high character like those of the Baroness von Suttner, and the novels of Zola and Proust, Jack London and the quite ascetic Upton Sinclair. It was symbolic of the destruction of culture upon which Germany was entering."

Abbotson says:

> "The Catholic bishops, at the command of the late Pope, ordered a cessation of Catho-

lic hostility to Nazism. The Evangelical and other clerical authorities had no message for the people. The various associations of teachers "kept out of politics." So Caliban fought on until he secured power and then trampled with heavy feet upon the whole world of culture."

The Nazi attitude to science is the exact opposite of the mental attitude we call rationalism. A leading Nazi, Dr. Ley, puts it quite bluntly,

"The new science is entirely different from the idea of knowledge that found its value in an unchecked effort to reach the truth."

Even Max Planck, the physicist, prostitutes his talents in the service of the Nazi Party and writes:

"The importance of a scientific idea is often due not so much to its truth as to its inner value . . . every science, just like every art or religion, grows upon national soil."

Abbotson comments:

"That is a double violation, in the interest of Nazism, of the ideal which science the world over set up in the eighteenth century and has loyally observed ever since. Its direct aim is to learn truth or reality; and it must be international."

We would like to go on quoting from the book but cannot and the best thing is to read the book for yourself.

Further chapters deal with Art and Social Service. The German Jew and His Achievements and The Nazis in Austria and Czechoslovakia.

Of particular interest to rationalists is the description of the role played by the Roman Catholic "clerical party" in Austria where it helped to establish Nazi rule.

There have been loud and often repeated demands for a definite statement of our war aims. These demands have been evaded. In the concluding pages we are given an outline-scheme which seems reasonable enough.

It is the opinion of the author that owing to the system he has described so fully, and the fact that fully a million men live on that system, that liberation cannot come from within the country. This may or may not be so. There is certainly a great difference of opinion on that issue. But we must be alert to see that, in the struggle we have embarked upon, none of the evil features of the Nazi system are introduced here. There are those in high places who would fetter free discussion and suppress minority movements they fear or dislike. It is reassuring to find that the official view is that any such action would be inconsistent with our war aims. Nevertheless, we must remember the vital truth in the old adage, "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." The rationalist is prepared to defend the freedom of thought of those whose views he believes to be obnoxious and harmful. Only by unfettered discussion can progress be assured. It was a very great rationalist indeed who said, "I do not agree with a word that you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

A DECADE of RATIONALISM

(*Continued from page* 47)

activity through the efforts of Mr. Roshan Mahomed and Mr. Abraham Solomon. They, under the inspiration of Mr. S. A. Megherian, formed a Rationalist Youth League in December, 1934, which was intended to serve the interests of the students and propagate Rationalism among the youth. This body did very good work. In the subsequent year, both Mr. Abraham Solomon and Mr. Roshan Mahomed were elected on the Executive Committee of the R. A. I., and it was not very long before Mr. Solomon was persuaded to become the Secretary of the Association. Since then, there has been one continuous effort to reorganize the Association.

In 1937, *Reason* was re-started under the Editorship of Prof. R. D. Karve. In 1938, the Association was officially represented at the International Congress of the World Union of Freethinkers held in September by Mr. Roshan Mahomed, the late Mr. Har Dayal and two other delegates. A report on Freethought in India sent by Mr. Abraham Solomon was read at the Congress.

The greatest difficulty of the Association has always been financial. In August, 1939, came a generous offer from Mr. R. B. Lotwala, one of the Life Members of the Association, regarding the publication of *Reason*. And now in 1940 the R. A. I. faces the future with increased strength and with the hope of putting forth greater efforts for the best of causes. Many and various have been the difficulties encountered by those who have helped to keep aloft the flag of Freethought in this country, but—

"Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it." (Thomas Paine).

C.

Does Man Desire God?

By CHAPMAN COHEN

FACTS are said to be stubborn things. So they are in the sense of commanding ultimate notice. In other respects facts are not so powerful as the saying would lead one to believe. For some facts are steadily ignored, and others are only pseudo-facts-that is, they are illusions which are taken for facts. They are accepted as such on no better evidence than constant advertisement or perpetual repetition.

To this class of pseudo-facts belongs the belief that man has an overwhelming desire for God. It is a vagrant belief with no visible means of support. True, it is quite easy, providing one starts early enough, to teach people to believe in God; but it is a commonplace of experience that the greatest watchfulness and the most strenuous exertions are required if the belief is to be maintained. Many thousands of men, for example, are engaged in keeping this particular belief alive. A much larger number expends their amateur energies in seconding these professional endeavours. "Society" patronizes the belief, and parents mistakenly force it on their children. And yet with all this care to keep the belief in God active, the number of educated and thoughtful men and women who definitely profess themselves to be without the belief in, or the desire for, God steadily increases.

Now, there is no reason whatever for assuming that man ever had, or has now, apart from education, any desire for God. The belief in gods begins because uninstructed mankind thinks the facts of existence point to their being. In early societies the gods are facts to be faced as are sunshine and health, disease and famine. If the gods could be abolished there is nothing in what is known concerning the psychology of primitive man which would lead us to assume that this would be thought undesirable. Primitive man has his good and bad deities, and he desires their favour because he believes in their existence. He does not believe in their existence because of some innate desire for their company. Disabuse the minds of a savage of the *power of* his gods and he gives them up with the utmost readiness and cheerfulness.

And when we get to societies in a somewhat advanced state of development, we note that the work of impressing the belief in God has to be done over again with each generation. Would a child born in a modern environment believe in God if the belief were not impressed by teachers upon its plastic intelligence? How little would be the desire for God is indicated by the clerical cry that in the absence of religious intruction children will grow up Atheists. Granted; but, in that case, what becomes of the desire for God? Is it any more than a consequence of education? Having been taught to belive in a God, that they need a God, and have a strong desire for God, the vast majority go through life expressing themselves in accordance with their education. The child rules the man as the past rules the present.

A great deal is said of the pain many people feel in giving up the belief in God. Well, there are many—the majority, perhaps—to whom the birth of a new thought is always more or less a painful operation. But apart from this, it is not the giving up the belief in God that men find so painful, so much as the sundering of social relations that it often involves. In ordinary cases, if a man changes his opinions in politics, or if he rejects the Lamarckian for the neo-Darwinian position in biology, there is no family council held at which he is lamented as a lost soul. No one finds that a change of opinion in these directions makes any serious inroad on the harmony of domestic or social circles. But in religious matters, a drastic change of opinion, more often than not, does involve a break of this kind. A man is forced to seek a new circle of friends; often domestic breaks result. His whole social career and outlook are changed. The interested and quite mythical association of character with religion comes into play, and he is treated as a less morally worthy man than he was before the change. It is all these circumstances that make the rejection of religious opinions a painful process—not because of their purely incidental associations. It is not the belief he is giving up that causes pain, but the social consequences which the religious world takes care he shall not escape. Place the formation and rejection of religious opinions upon the same level as other changes, and there is no reason for assuming that the change will be any more painful in the one direction than in the other. Religious

145319

people say it ought to be a painful process to give up one's religious beliefs, and to the best of their ability take good care that the result shall accord with their prediction.

If man really possess a desire for God, an organic need for belief in a Deity, why all this expressed fear concerning the growth of Freethought? Why are the clergy so fearful of allowing their people ready access to Freethought or anti-Theistic literature? I never yet heard of an Atheist who tried to prevent anyone reading a sermon. Why is it necessary to teach children to repeat formulas about believing in God long before they are old enough to understand what it is they are being taught? Above all, why is it that all over the civilized world the drift is away from the belief in Deity? Men do not need constant supervision and instruction in order to retain a strong "unconquerable" desire. At most, it only needs direction. But here is an assumed desire that needs not only guidance, but elaborate protection for fear it shall disappear altogether. This is a positively unique phenomenon. There may be various degrees of strength in the manifestation of a desire, but so far as it is a human quality, all men possess it. Religion is the one case, apparently, in which a human quality can be absolutely and easily got rid of by a growing number of human beings.

The explanation, we are informed, is that we have allowed our religious nature to atrophy, or alternatively, as the lawyers say, our religious natures have not yet developed. This is quite a comforting theory to the religionist, since it makes every believer a superior person—a kind of superhuman in the intellectual world. The only drawback to its acceptance is that it is not true. The Athesit cannot represent a case of arrested development for the simple reason that most of them have been where the religious man now is. The religious man's yearnings after God are not strange to the Freethinker. He has had them himself; and he has grown out of them, as he hopes the Godite will himself one day outgrow also. Nor is this a case of atrophy; for there is nothing to atrophy. There is no single power or quality of the mind exercised in connexion with religion that is not exercised in connexion with other matters. Godism does not call into existence new qualities; it merely uses—by perversion—those already existing. The Freethinker, with no desire for God, is at least as much a man as the person who believes himself consumed by such a desire. Generally, he is more of a man; because he is expressing human qualities in a human relation. He is neither the degraded nor the undeveloped representative of a species that receives complete expression in the Godite, but the representative of a more completely self-conscious human nature. That is why all over the civilized world Freethought is growing. And its growth is an illustration of the truth that once having created the gods, no small portion of human energy is expended in achieving their destruction.

THE TYRANNY OF WORDS

(*Continued from page* 38)

tories of the other world have not yet learned the modern languages and must, therefore, be addressed in a language they can understand? I have often speculated on the result of saying your prayers in the vernacular and I am sure that these will be much less frequent than they are. It is not intended to decry the knowledge of other languages, even ancient languages; they contain treasures of knowledge or sources of pure pleasure which cannot often he found in one's own language. But the language must be known sufficiently well to enable one to use those treasures or taste of those sources. Mere awe of an unknown language and the absurd veneration shown to outlandish words is what it is here intended to protest against.

Against such tyranny only a rationalist outlook will prevail. The habit of looking for substance behind words should be consciously cultivated if one is not to be a slave towords or language. From how many evils will humanity be saved if the burden of such slavery is fully realised!

ALL censorships exist to prevent any one from challenging current conceptions and existing institutions. All progress is initiated by challenging current conceptions, and executed by suppianting existing institutions. Consequently the first condition of progress is the removal of censorship.

—BERNARD SHAW.

x x x

WHAT I marvel at most in the world is the impotence of force to organise anything. There are only two powers in the world, the sabre and the intellect, and in the long run, the sabre is always beaten by the intellect.

—NAPOLEON.

Rebirth Of An Artist

By Dr. G. Y. Chitnis.

MR. P. Y. DESHPANDE'S new novel marks a distinct epoch in the history of Modern Marathi literature: his previous novels were certainly very good from the point of view of Hindu social reform; but this novel is far better and exceeds all the expectations cherished by the admirers of his previous works. Not that I am very sanguine about its proper reception by literary and art critics. One or two reviews I have seen of this work strongly express disapproval and disappointment; critics belonging to Gandhian school of political persuasion will certainly condemn Mr. Deshpande's literary effort, because the sharpest barbs of his criticism are levelled at the Gandhian view of life. The so-called progressive critics will, most probably, be puzzled by the author's castigation of art which culminates in the burning of the hero's novel; while the official communists will not dare to admire a really great work of art because it does not fit in with the Stalinist mould of Marxism; and yet I hope there is still a large intelligent section of the Maharashtrian reading public who will gladly read and appreciate Mr. Deshpande's novel although some of them may not agree to everything that the author says.

I have prefaced this review by saying that Mr. Deshpande's novel marks a distinct epoch in our literature. There are other novelists of good repute and high standing. V. S. Khandekar, Phadke, Mama Varerkar and Madkholkar have each of them carved a nitch of their own in the temple of learning. I like reading their works but if I were asked to pick out from among these five novelists one whom I like best, I would without hesitation pick out P. Y. Deshpande. In recent times no novel has moved me so much as *Vishal Jeevan*. It depicts the life of an intelligent sensitive young man who falls in love with a girl belonging to another caste and has to undergo terrible suffering and pain before he is finally united with her by a strong matrimonial bond. He ruthlessly tramples down the social tradition and customs that raise artificial barrier between caste and caste and finally achieves the object of his love; he is a lawyer by profession and artist by temperament. He carries on the lawyer's business for his living but his soul's desire was to create beautiful works of literary art which will poignantly express the beauty and richness of his experiences as lover and husband. He is an extreme individualist sublimely unconscious of the world around and is trying to achieve a greater perfection of love and a richer experience of beauty; his is a happy beautiful soul and thinks that the world is equally happy and beautiful. But all of a sudden he is brought in contact with the forces that make for injustice, ugliness and poverty in life; he is staggered by the spectacle; his essential humanity is stirred to its depth. He saw the helplessness and the grinding poverty of the peasants who had lost their all in the floods; he upheld their demand for exemption of tax and that automatically led to his entry into the whirlpool of politics. He sought the help of local Congress leaders who were in the midst of the second civil disobedience. The Congress leaders did not want to make the peasants' demand a plank in their programme; they concentrated on picketing of liqour shops, thus seeking to divert the revolutionary energy of the masses into harmless channels; our hero's blood started boiling and he decided to carry on agitation in behalf of exemption of land tax. While in the midst of this agitation he was arrested and sent to jail for one year; while he was in jail he wrote his most beautiful novel to escape the misery and oppression of jail life. In words of power and beauty he describes therein the most sensitive experiences of his life. That was his last literary effort belonging to an old world of art.

But when he came out he found that his old world of dreams had crashed round his ears. His income was gone, most of his property, beautiful furniture was confiscated and he found his house empty; that was the end of his world of dreams; he was violently brought in contact with stark reality. When he met his wife he found he had nothing common with her; he felt himself going further and further away from her; his wife, loving and sensitive as she was, found the prison standing between them. She decided to court jail in order

to unite with her husband in his new mood. But the husband was engrossed in his own thought and did not pay attention to her; this was the first of a series of cracks that were to dismantle their emotinal family life.

Our artist-hero really did not know what to do; he was puzzled; he tried to look at the world again through his individualist perspective but could not; his individualism was in ruins and did not know what to build in its place. He was groping in darkness and not a single ray of light was there to guide his foot-steps; while he was in despair he met a socialist friend who talked to him about the historical inevitability of socialist revolution that would usher in an era of peace, freedom and justice for all; he showed him the possibility of a new world being created out of the present chaos. Our hero's eyes were brightened and he decided to go to Bombay to study the socialist movement so that he may help in ushering in this new world. He puts up with a freind of his who is a worshipper of domestic happiness and judges man's humaneness by his attitude towards his wife and children; it is because he found this essential humanity in our hero that he became a great friend and admirer of his. These two friends are invited to the house of a celebrated advocate whose son is serving in the police department and whose only daughter has joined hands with the communists; the hero is struck by the humanity of the girl who does not hesitate to risk her life to save a tri-colour flag from being torn to pieces by the police and who on another occasion when she finds that a procession of a few workers headed by a youth with a red flag is set upon by a rival procession of congressmen, throws down the tri-colour and rushes to the rescue of the young man who was bleeding and takes the red flag in her own hands. It was thus that she became a communist. Our young hero also when he was taunted by the police officer that he was not a revolutionary but an artist, rushes into a procession of mill workers and gets his head smashed for his pain; the police officer brings the unconscious hero to his house and nurses him back to health. When the hero is on the way to recovery his wife comes running to him with the volume of his new novel; every body praises the novel very highly; the great advocate, his officer son, his friend, his own wife; to his wife it was like a dim light in the general darkness; she understood from that novel that her husband was still in love with her; what she did not realise, the poor thing, was that the novel was written by the hero when he was still dominated by his individualist ideals of art; she did not realise that the novel represented his past glorious dreams but did not possess his heart any more; he was now inspired by a consuming passion to remove the social wrongs and he was prepared to sacrifice his art on the altar of social revolution; that is why the praises that were showered upon him as a great artist really jarred upon his ears because he realised that if religion was the opium of the masses, the wonderful art that he created was the opium of the educated classes; he did not want to have anything to do with such an art; therefore he gets up from his sick bed and calmly consigns the novel to flames. In the general darkness of the room only the leaping flames of his novel are visible.

Thus the author has very beautifully indicated the complete break with his artistic past; no more does he write of beauty, love and goodness; he wants to dedicate his literary talents to the cause of social revolution; to the removal of injustice, ugliness and poverty in life; he wants to establish a kingdom of truth and freedom for every body so that the things of beauty which are available to the few may be available to the many also; when the conflict between the few and the many will subside; when each one will receive according to his needs and work according to his ability; when there will be no more social inequality between man and man, when there will be a new social order which will transform and transfigure all individual, family and social relations to a higher level, then perhaps we may see the rebirth of a new art which will be all-embracing and all-satisfying; in the meanwhile let the old art which builds its temple upon the misery and poverty of the people perish; the author will have nothing to do with it.

But curiously enough while destroying the old art Mr. Deshpande has created a new art of the transitional period; it is not a socialist art because no socialist art can develop without socialist conditions; but what he is trying to create today is far in advance of his time. The development of his theme, the minute psychological analysis, delineation of the tenderest expereinces with a tenderer pen, discovering the essential humanity behind formalistic behaviour, achieving the most difficult task of finding appropriate words for an almost inexpressible emotion, these are the chief characteristics that mark Mr. Deshpande out as the

(*Continued on page 56*)

Science and Social Limits.

By—M. V. V. K. Rangachari.

I do not question the claim made for science or philosophy to the disinterested pursuit of truth. But that is quite different from saying that scientists or philosophers are seldom free from bias, which is another mode of interest. Even their laboratories and views are not immune from the peculiar make-up of their individual lives. If Sir James Jeans cannot do without the Personal God, however shorn of all attributes save that of being the Great Mathematician eternally solving cosmic problems in His Immaterial Mind, we shall trace his calculations aright in the Christian upbringing. Again, we look to Quaker origins for the mystical surrender which characterises the teaching or Prof. Eddington, who fails to see anything strange in his own field of astronomical observation. The mathematical physicist and the astronomer, as such, do not leave any room for doubt, chance, accident, indeterminacy or God in their own field; all is law, order, exceptions being only temporary houses of ignorance to be soon vacated, like the irregular movement of Mercury. There is no will, much less free-will among the planets, stars, nebulae or other cosmic phenomena.

A profound study in specialised fields has thus the effect of driving mystery away from them. But there is the hangover of birth and upbringing, the relentless individual past demanding satisfactory expression. It comprises the faith into which one is born, the teaching that was imparted in infancy, the social, even the economic fabric out of which the life of the scientist is woven. Loyalty to the Trinitarian Creed requires that the Mystery of the Universe should be perpetuated and belief in the Soul as the foundation for moral choice needs the analogy of the free-will "Electron". We have thus the spectacle of eminent scientists migrating into strange quarters creating odd movements, and arriving at scientifically awkward conclusions. From physics and astronomy into biology, psychology and sociology is a very long jump, the experts in the one often exposing their amateurish failure among the rest. Anyway, the standing psychological problem of mental freedom cannot be resolved in terms of the alleged jumps of electrons outside their rings any more than by reference to the shifting of the perihelion of the planet Mercury, which baffled observers before Einstein.

To the physicist and the mathematician, life is a greater mystery than to the biologist like J. B. S. Haldane. That only means that we require more adequate knowledge to explain the phenomenon which we call 'life', than what is obtainable from the merely mechanical side of physical substances and the laws governing their movement. It would be an unwarranted presumption to expect that the laws governing the development, continuance and transformation of the vital process would have nothing in common with the known modes of natural behaviour, but would require the special intervention of an entity having no relation with the world as we know it, in other words that the human soul is the special creation of God.

The free-lance shooting of the electron is only the limit of present knowledge. Statistical determination is only the device for the nonce to explain a strange behaviour. Perhaps, very soon, fresh light will be thrown by physiscits themselves explaining the capricious 'jumps' from well-knit formulae; even as it is somewhat possible to analyse our throughts, feelings, and impulses to action by reference to our heredity, nurture, and present environment. Withal, the concept of man as being the special creature of God is logically related to the idea of the dominating State conferring special favours, say, the Knighthood. The parallelism of the Most High in some unknown way giving peculiar insight to the one or a few Chosen individuals, out of sheer Grace unconcerned with causality, points to the sequence of the capitalist order turning up its exponents of mystical preference, unequal treatment, and the maintenance of the *status quo* not only in the creed, but in the actual distribution of happiness and pain in this shadowy world.

Nor is the limitation of the personal element in scientists confined to the old World. Prof. Millikan who is on tour in India is reported to have ventured into the social field recently. Examining the "Cosmic Ray" from various stations in the country, he seems to have cast a beam athwart what he called "Socialism" from his observatory at Bangalore. "Socialism

is silly nonsense," according to him. Socialism makes all men equal, and is an evil thing. He would recommend the example of America where merit alone counted, and opportunity for individual uplift is unlimited. From British psychology and astronomical free-will, to the steel-trust and other trust-ridden sociology of the new World is again a great lead. We are not aware of any country where socialism "made all men equal," however much desirable or otherwise the idea itself might be. No social order can ignore the differences in capacities and qualifications, impulses and instincts attaching to either individuals or groups and communities. But to take note of them is not to deny equal opportunities to any among them. Given even chances, in some cases giving some start also, it should be the aim of social endeavour to bring out the best in all. Socialism does not cut down the tall trees, if the short ones do not add to their stature in any way. But it ensures equal facility for all to grow alike by providing the necessary soil and nourishment, by eliminating want and releasing social energies in pursuit of objects other than mere alimentary need. Experiment elsewhere in the line may have been attended with cruelty and bloodshed. But that is only a pointer to better sense, and the warning to try humaner means.

An investigator on the origins of extra-galactic radiation is surely a welcome visitor to the meteorological heights of Kodaikanal observatory and the Bangalore Institute of Science. Prof. Millikan is the world-reputed Nobel Laureate for light-transmission, the depth of whose acheivements can only be sounded by his peers like Sir C. V. Raman, himself another Nobel Prizeman. But when he indulges in ultra-sonics with damaging effect upon Sociology and the ordering of things economic and sundry in all parts of the world, and would advise us to hold fast to the "Trust" model of the American fat boy, we are perhaps justified in rubbing our eyes. We wonder why this trespass from interstellar space into the mundane currency should have been made.

POWER, like a desolating pestilence, pollutes whatever it touches; and obedience, Bane of all genius, virtue, freedom, truth, makes slaves of men and of the human frame. A mechanised automaton.

—SHELLEY.

REBIRTH OF AN ARTIST

(*Continued from page* 54)

most outstanding novelist of our time. And yet there is something which I am not able to make out that holds him back, that still makes him look longingly upon things of the past; does he find the sacrifice of his old art too heavy for his shoulders and are there still lingering some faint memories of deep affection and deeper love? Whatever it is, one thing is certain that once he has put his hand to the plough he cannot look back; he must look ahead from a glorious past to a still more glorious if uncertain future; therefore I would end this review by giving him a friendly warning in the words of Shelley that he should not "suborn the new light to give him a false shade." The new light that is dawning is going to take him to distant lands and he will merely betray his genius by refusing to go forward. I am hoping that a time will come when Mr. Deshpande will feel like burning this novel just as his hero burnt his most beautiful work of art.

IF indeed the world in which we live has been produced in accordance with a Plan, we shall have to reckon Nero a saint in comparison with the author of that plan. Fortunately, however, the evidence of Divine purpose is non-existent; so at least one must infer from the fact that no evidence is adduced by those who believe in it. We are, therefore, spared the necessity for that attitude of impotent hatred which every brave and humane man would otherwise be called upon to adopt toward the Almighty Tyrant.

—BERTRAND RUSSELL.

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER

An interesting discussion on Religion and its precepts between Dr. C. L. D'Avoine and representatives of four different religions.

PRICE 4 ANNAS. POST FREE.

Every Progressive Indian must read
THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM
BY
Dr. R. P. PARANJPYE, M.A., D.SC.
Price One Rupee. Post Free.
TO MEMBERS OF THE R. A. I.
Annas 8 only.

A Gramophone Record
THE MEANING AND VALUE OF FREETHOUGHT
BY
Chapman Cohen
Editor of the "Freethinker" and President of the National Secular Society
Price Rs. 2-8. Postage Extra.

Series of talks broadcasted from the Bombay Station of the All India Radio on 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 30th & 31st Oct. 1939.
FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER
Represented by
His Grace Dr. Roberts
Catholic Archbishop of Bombay
His Holiness Khalifa Bashiruddin Mahomed
Dastur Kaikushru Mahiar Kutar
Parsee High Priest
His Holiness Jagadguru Shri Shankaracharya Dr. Kurtkoti
AND
Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.,
President, Rationalist Association of India.
PRICE 4 AS. POST FREE.
Available from
The Rationalist Association of India,
3-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

STUDENTS' CALL
JOURNAL OF THE INDIAN STUDENTS' MOVEMENT
Published Monthly.
Annual Subscription Rs. 2-0-0.
Foreign 3s.
Single Copy Three Annas.
Office:
21, Dalal Street, Fort,
BOMBAY.

READ
THE ORIENTAL REVIEW
(A RADICAL MONTHLY)
Voicing the Political and Social opinions of all shades of thought
Annual Subscription **Rs. 3.**
Single Copy **4 Annas.**
21, Dalal Street, Fort,
BOMBAY.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donations in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000/-.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer.

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

* If you recognise Human Equality,

* If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,

* If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrasy.

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office-Bearers:

President:—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.
Vice-Presidents:—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. and Dr. G. Coelho, M. B., M. R. C. P. *Hony. Treasurer:*—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee:*—Dr. G. V. Deshmukh, M. D., F.R.C.S., Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. A. Husein, Mr. J. Doyle, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. S. B. Rath. *Jt. Hony Secretaries:*—Mr. Milton David, Mr. Abraham Solomon.

For further particulars please write to:—

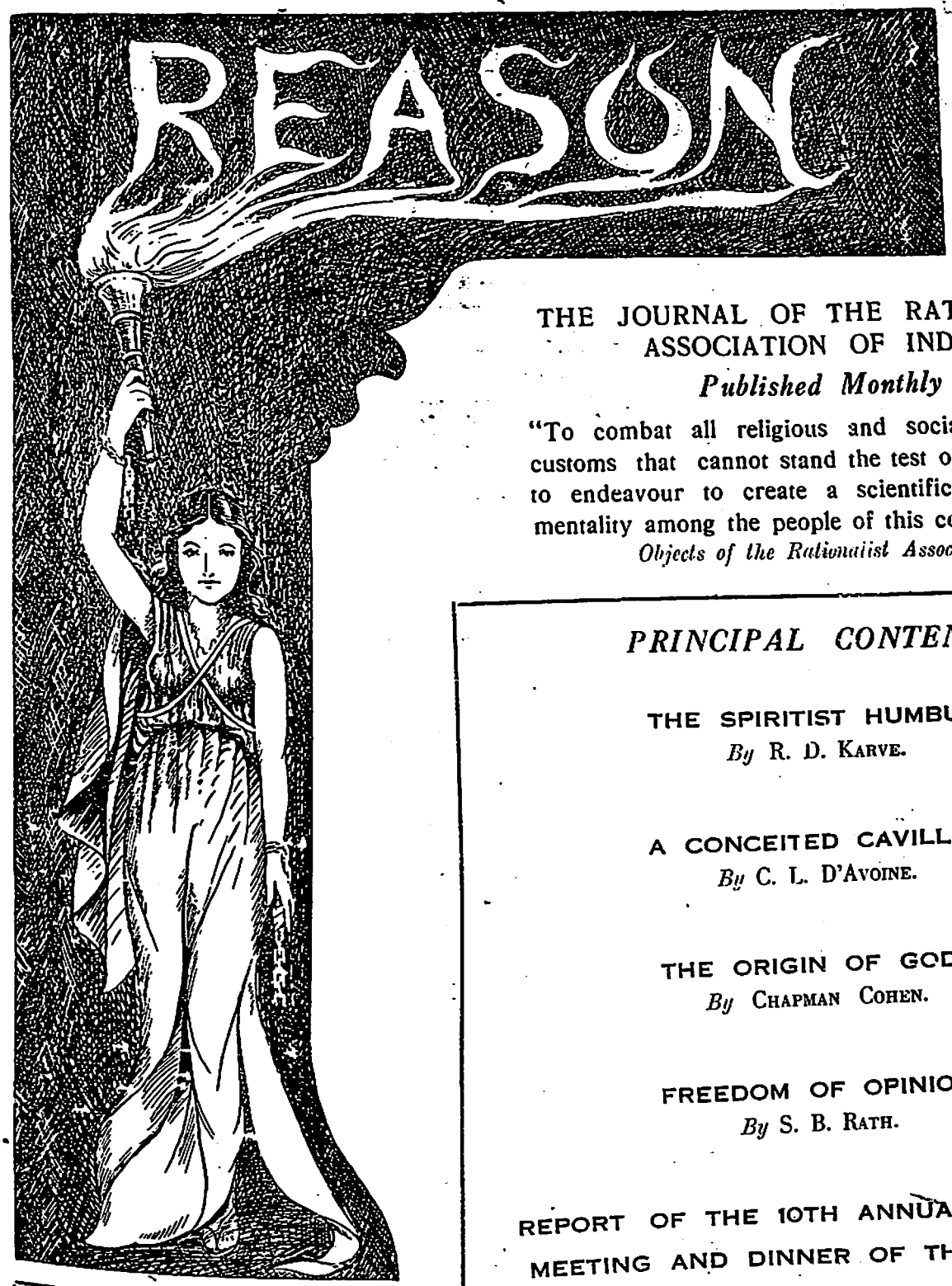
The Secretaries,

Rationalist Association of India,

5-12. QUEEN'S ROAD,

BOMBAY 2.

Printed by B. M. Shet at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay 1. Edited and Published by R. D. Karve, M.A., for the Rationalist Association of India at 13, New Bhatwadi. Bombay 4.



APRIL, 1940

VOL. VIII No. 4.

PRICE 2 ANNAS.

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Objects of the Rationalist Association of India.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

THE SPIRITIST HUMBUG
By R. D. KARVE.

A CONCEITED CAVILLER
By C. L. D'AVOINE.

THE ORIGIN OF GODS
By CHAPMAN COHEN.

FREEDOM OF OPINION
By S. B. RATH.

REPORT OF THE 10TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND DINNER OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

NOTES & NEWS ETC.

Editor :
R. D. KARVE, M. A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).

READ

THE ORIENTAL REVIEW

(A RADICAL MONTHLY)

Voicing the Political and Social opinions of all shades of thought

Annual Subscription **Rs. 3.**

Single Copy **4 Annas.**

21, Dalal Street, Fort,

BOMBAY.

The Socialist Vanguard

with Socialist Forum

* It is a left-wing paper with an ethical outlook.
* It discusses urgent political and cultural questions in a fearless manner.
* It opens its Forum to all those who want to stem the decay of civilisation.
* It stands for united action against Imperialism, Fascism and Clericalism.

Subscribe to

The Socialist Vanguard now!

2s. a year (12 issues) Post free.

Send for free specimen copies.

International Publishing Co.

12 Gt. Castle Street, London, W. I. England.

Rationalist Association of India

10th

ANNIVERSARY OFFER

THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM

BY

Dr. R. P. PARANJPYE, M.A., D.SC.

Late Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University

AND

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER

An interesting discussion on Religion and its precepts between Dr. C. L. D'Avoine and representatives of four different religions.

FREE TO ALL NEW MEMBERS ENROLLING BEFORE MAY 31, 1940

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION Rs. 5.

FOREIGN 8 SHILLINGS.

Members receive ***Reason,*** the monthly journal of the Association, free and are allowed the use of the Reading Room and Library of the Indian Institute of Sociology at R. L. Trust Bldg., Near Opera House, Bombay.

Write to the Jt. Hon. Secretaries

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

LIFE is so complex and tangled and full, that those who desire to abstain from the battle for freedom can always find ample excuse.

—H. J. LASKI.

REASON

Vol. VIII | APRIL 1940 | No. 4

The Spiritist Humbug

By R. D. KARVE

THE modern man in the street is often inclined to take any pronouncement by a scientist of note as gospel truth, though he may not believe in any particular gospel. This is, however, a very risky thing to do, because so many noted scientists have been found to be extremely gullible. The reason is not far to seek. The business of the scientist is to investigate laws of nature by means of experiment and observation combined with logical reasoning, but he has absolutely no experience of dealing with deliberate attempts to cheat, since nature does not practise such deceipt. The scientist is, therefore, utterly unqualified to detect the tricks which are the stock-in-trade of the so-called spirit medium, and pronouncements by scientists as to the truth of spirit phenomena ought not to be given any special importance. But the names of noted scientists have publicity value and the professional cheats known as 'spirit mediums' take full advantage of such names as they can enlist in their service.

It should, however, be perfectly plain to anybody who is willing to reason that since intelligence is known to be a function of the brain and the brain is a part of the body, the very idea of a "discarnate intelligence" is perfectly absurd. And still all spirit phenomena so-called are based on the idea that something survives after a human being dies and the body is even burnt, and this something—call it a soul or a ghost or anything else—is able to communicate its thoughts by various devices such as table-rapping, automatic writing and the like to living persons. But if this was all, it would not enable mediums to make a living. So the additional condition becomes necessary that the ghost can only communicate things through specially qualified persons called mediums. Thus a medium is supposed to be able to call up at will the ghost of a Red Indian and to make it reveal facts concerning persons in London with whom the Red Indian could not have had any contact at all in his lifetime. Honest scientific observation of the so-called 'phenomena' is made practically impossible by the conditions imposed, viz. that almost complete darkness is repuired at the seance and that lights must not be switched on at inconvenient moments! People who are not sceptics by nature, and who are anxious to communicate with dear departed friends and relatives, form the bulk of the clients and are particularly easy to cheat. Enormous fortunes have been made by some of these gentry, and even after knowing that most of them have been proved to cheat, people will still believe that they are honest on the particular occasions when they are not found out! The will to believe is so powerful that it will jump over any obstacles.

Mr. Harry Price, President of the Society for Psychical Research, is a case in point. He has just published a book entitled "Fifty Years of Psychical Research", in which he gives the history of Spiritism. He describes how different people, scientists and others, have been cheated by different mediums. He describes his own inventions made in order to circumvent the tricks resorted to by these adepts at cheating, and still he believes certain phenomena produced by them, because he considers that on those particular occasions, it was impossible for them to cheat. In a battle of wits between a criminal and a detective, who can guarantee that the criminal will not prove the cleverer of the two and succeed in hoodwinking the detective? But this is exactly what Mr. Price assumes when he believes these

phenomena on the strength of his precautions against cheating. Let us see what he has to say about different scientists on this point.

"Sir Oliver Lodge in the witness-box said, according to the *Times* report: 'I hear about fraudulent mediums, but I have not come across them.' Sir Oliver must have forgotten his seance in 1931 with Mrs. Duncan, who was thoroughly exposed that same year." This is evidently not a case of deliberate perjury, but a proof of the facility with which even a scientist can forget disagreeable truths. Again, "Sir Oliver was also unfortunate with his sittings with William Hope, the fraudulent spirit photographer. I caught this man surreptitiously changing my sensitized plates in 1922.....After my exposure of Hope, Sir Oliver wrote me: 'I don't see how your proofs of Hope's duplicity could be more complete.' And yet we find, in J. Arthur Hill's *Letters from Sir Oliver Lodge*, a reference to Hope in a letter to Hill, nearly seven years after he wrote to me: 'The probability to my mind is strongly in favour of simplicity and honesty, now that he has been going on so long.' Which is a curious argument." Apparently when one practises duplicity long enough, one becomes simple and honest! And still Mr. Price does the same thing himself. Later on he tells us, "Sir Oliver, like A. R. Wallace, could not always tell the difference between a phenomenon and a conjuring trick. David Devant tells us how on one occasion he performed a clever 'billet reading' trick on the stage and Sir Oliver afterwards refused to believe either Nevil Maskelyne or Devant that it *was* a trick." And these names are often cited as noted scientists who believe in spiritism!

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, though not a scientist, is also often quoted as an authority in these matters. The author says of him, "He sat with many mediums, some of whom deceived him. Thoroughly honest himself, he could not imagine his too sympathetic credulity being imposed upon. My own relations with Doyle varied from month to month. When I was not exposing his mediums, his letters were full of praise for my efforts in interesting scientific orthodoxy in psychical research.....His ridiculous book on the 'fairies' lost him prestige even among his own followers, and was a great blunder." No wonder scientific orthodoxy, as he calls it, was not interested!

In spite of this, Mr. Price does not stop at believing spirit phenomena himself. He proposes to introduce a Bill into Parliament for the purpose of enforcing registration of 'mediums' and preventing mediums from practising without registration. In effect, this will be a licence to cheat people until detected! Admittedly, mediums have succeeded in cheating even committees of experts appointed to detect them. How will be a committee appointed by law be more efficient than other committees?

He mentions a Bill that was introduced in the U. S. A. Congress to make fortune-telling illegal. In giving evidence Houdini, the famous magician, remarked: "There are only two kinds of mediums, those who are mental degenerates and ought to be under observation; and those who are deliberate cheats and frauds.....I would not believe a fraudulent medium under oath; perjury means nothing to them; I say that no human being possesses mediumistic powers.....I have examined 300 mediums..... if there are any genuine, I have never met one." "Those who testified against the bill included mediums, clairvoyants astrologers, believers, etc.....The inquiry was enlivened by Houdini doing a number of slate tricks and trumpet 'phenomena' and during the hearing of one witness, the magician dramatically threw on to the Chairman's table a roll containing $10,000 in notes which he offered to give to any medium present who could produce a phenomenon that he (Houdini) could not duplicate by conjuring under the same conditions."

Of course, the author does not at all accept Houdini's statements since he believes that some 'phenomena' are genuine. But he has certainly given no valid reasons for his belief. Electricity, photography, cinematography, the photo-electric cell, have all been called into service in order to prevent mediums from cheating and to detect them if they do. "They have been put into cages, or sewn up in bags, handcuffed, nailed down in boxes, trussed up like a roast fowl, and placed in one-piece tights, the openings of which were afterwards sewn together with multi-coloured silks forming a prescribed, intricate pattern. All these safe-guards have *not* prevented fakers from producing effects of some sort." After this confession, is it possible to believe that mediums will not find a way to escape any controls that may be devised? There has been no medium whose honesty has been unimpeached, who has not some time or other been caught cheating. After this, those who want to believe will believe anything, but can anybody be reasonably expected to believe in these things, which are based on the intrinsically absurd idea of a discarnate intelligence?

A Conceited Caviller

By Dr. C. L. D'Avoine

IN the Raggle Taggle columns of *The Rangoon Times* of the 18th February last, there appears a sally against Unbelievers in general and the late Mr. Llewlyn Powys in particular which has arrested my attention.

The attack, itself, is insignificant enough, though for sheer impertinence it is remarkable. It is a cheap sneer on Old and Modern Atheists and a condemnation of Mr. Llewlyn Powys' well-known and outspoken book: "The Pathetic Fallacy". The writer of that balderdash is evidently a Roman Catholic who writes under the pen-name of "Looker On". In it I find an example of the novel method adopted by certain Roman Catholics, in imitation of Jesuit writers, in dealing with Unbelievers. Gone is the way they once used to describe unbelievers. The Modern Atheists, it would appear, are no longer the brutal and uncouth fellows the Old Atheists were. "The Old Atheists," says "Looker On," "were crude and simple swashbucklers and bravoes who used to bludgeon the theologians and doctrinaires and the dogmatists, and derided their discords, contradictions and absurdities." In writing in this manner against the Old Atheists, it is clear that "Looker On" is full of the prejudices and misrepresentations created by his co-religionists against these people. It is, however, easy for him to make such generalisations and repeat parrot-like what he has heard others say. I am sure, though, that he will be hard put to it to point out only a couple of Old Atheists who were such ruffians. One has to note that a bravo, according to the New English Dictionary, means a hired assassin, a bandit, a desperado, for one to realize to what extent these Catholics can go when dealing with opponents. It is, however, refreshing to learn that the modern Atheists are no longer such dangerous characters! According to "Looker On", they are now more artful. "They explain Christ charmingly and reverently in order to explain him away." The New Atheists, says 'Looker On', are full of subtlety and sophistry which they express in their pseudo-scientific and psycho-analytical jargon."

I think there are two reasons why these Catholics adopt this new *modus operandi* against unbelievers. To begin with they have evidently found to their chagrin that it no longer pays to blacken the Unbelievers in the manner they did before. With the spread of modern knowledge, the number of Unbelievers has increased everywhere. The modes of life of many sceptics are too evident for these biassed and uncharitable people to slander and blacken them as they used to do before. People now cannot help admitting that many unbelievers live exemplary lives; that they are cultured and enlightened; are good friends, good neighbours, good husbands and fathers and that they are also good citizens. They have remarked that Unbelievers are generally straightforward and honest people who abhor the hypocrisy and sham of many pious believers. In other words, these religionists are obliged to admit that the Unbelievers are not the incarnate devils and dangerous people they were so maliciously represented to be before. So, now, the Unbelievers are described as charming and artful people, full of sophistry and subtlety, fond of pseudo-scientific and psycho-analytical jargon. So taken is "Looker On" by these charming and artful people, that he declares he loves to meet a Modern Atheist in order to enjoy his dogmatism and pseudo-scientific jargon. It is obvious that such a disarming attitude towards an erstwhile-hated opponent gives the believers such an air of intellectual superiority over the stupid unbelievers! Belittling an antagonist has, therefore, become now a new method of attacking unbelievers.

The late Mr. G. K. Chesterton adopted this bantering manner in order to show what simpletons those Unbelievers were who imagine they could do harm to the Church of Rome and its priests. An incident in Rangoon happened that gave "Looker On" a good opportunity to vent his spleen against Atheists, Old and New, and Mr. Llewlyn Powys in particular. It would appear that a Redemptorist Father, recently on a Mission stunt in Rangoon, approached a prominent person there to coax him back to Catholicism. The Prominent One *politely* refused to have anything to do with Catholicism and it was the polite manner of the Prominent One which struck "Looker On" and caused him to contrast the New Atheist with the Old. In alluding to the shallowness

(Continued on page 70)

The Origin of Gods

By CHAPMAN COHEN

(Reproduced from the Freethinker)

HOW many books have been written to prove the existence of God? It is not possible to say, but a good word in reply would be "prodigious." And how many sermons and lectures to prove the existence of God have been delivered? The reply here is "incalculable." The believer in God is apt to take this unending production of arguments to prove that God exists as evidence of man's unceasing need for God. Actually it proves the growing fact that man, if let alone, would gradually get rid of all the gods. It is also proof that no demonstration of the reality of the existence of God has ever been made. A soap manufacturer of a world-wide fame, and certainly of nation-wide advertising, decided some years ago that the name of the firm was so well established that the advertising expense might be cut considerably. It was done—with the result that sales declined and the old scale of advertising had to be resumed. Of course, this did not mean that less soap had been used, only that patronage had been distributed over a wider area. In the case of the belief in God the advertising has actually got less, and the consumption, so to speak, has declined. There is a still further difference in the two situations. Humanity did not begin by using soap, and then in spite of advertising, used it less and less. That occurs with the belief in God. There is a stage in human evolution where everyone believes in gods. They are taken for granted, something that can be reckoned as certainly as the rise of the sun. At that stage men do not discuss whether gods exist. They are more certain of them than they are of anything. The phenomena of the phases of the moon, and the nightly loss of the sun, breed in the primitive mind the possibility of the destruction of both. Primitive minds do not discuss whether gods exist, that is taken for granted; a basis for thought and action. One may summarize the situation by saying that gods are things that mankind believes in during its infancy, and of which a growing number rid themselves in maturity. The very existence of the output of books to *prove* that gods exist is, in itself, a demonstration that doubt is there *and grows*.

x x x

Is God Irrelevant?

I remember a debate many years ago in which I had to champion Atheism against Theism. My opponent, a clergyman, laid it down that it was my duty to prove either that God did not exist, or that there was not enough evidence to justify belief in his existence. I retorted that my duty was nothing of the kind. What I intended to prove was that God was irrelevant. It had no greater relevance to objective facts than witches, devils or fairies. The world has gone on for the past century learning more and more about the origin of religious ideas—the customary polite way of saying the origin of the gods—without many having the courage or the wit to apply that knowledge, logically, thoroughly, scientifically to the belief in God. People go on arguing as to whether there is enough evidence to prove God exists, without in the least realizing that we might as reasonably argue that while there is another explanation of an electric light or insanity, the real explanation is that the movement of a switch marks the entrance of a little demon into the bulb, and that the real cause of insanity is the presence of a demon in the body.

There is a saying that familiarity breeds contempt. It is accepted as true by many, but it is only true in relation to those who cannot command respect in virtue of their own quality. It belongs to a society in which status counts for more than character and intelligence, and where stiffness and ceremony is needful to establish a sense of superiority. But if familiarity need not breed contempt, it is certain that familiarity with certain words establishes a hold on the general mind, and hides the fact that changes in life often rob these—semi-magical—words of all real significance.

The very word "God" is an illustration of this. What is meant by it? Those who use it do so as though it carried as definite a meaning as gravitation. The truth is that not only the meanings attached to "God" are almost as various as those who use it, but no one appears to know what the word originally meant, or if they do, the original sense of it is carefully hidden by godites lest it should expose the very basis of religion. A standard dictionary says that the origin of the word is unknown, but that it is probably an Aryan word meaning that to which sacrifice is made; one of a class of powerful spirits regarded as controlling a department of nature or of human activity. Now I am strongly inclined to believe that this definition was intended to hide—to the godite—a very unpleasant truth. It does not quite

(*Continued on page* 69)

The 10th Annual General Meeting and Dinner of the Rationalist Association of India

THE 10th Annual General Meeting and Dinner of the Rationalist Association of India was held on Sunday, March 17th, at the Radio Club, Bombay. The attendance was the largest since the Association restarted its activities. Among the members and guests present were:—

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, Dr. A. S. Erulkar, Prof. R. D. Karve, Mrs. M. Karve, Dr. S. R. Joglekar, Mr. S. A. Brelvi, Mr. R. B. Lotewalla, Dr. W. N. Welinkar, Mrs. Manek Welinkar, Prof. D. D. Karve, Prof. S. K. Muranjan, Miss Alice D'Avoine, Dr. D. R. Chaubal, Mr. B. D. Karve, Dr. M. G. Pradhan, Dr. C. R. Athavle, Dr. Baliga, Mr. V. D. Satghare, Mr. N. M. Bhathena, Mr. J. F. Vapiwala, Mr. A. K. Divekar, Mr. R. I. D'Avoine, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. E. L. D'Avoine, Dr. S. B. Gadgil, Mr. A. Raptakos, Mr. G. C. Moolji, Mr. J. Ezekiel, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Dr. G. Y. Chitnis, Mr. M. H. Vakil, Mr. M. R. Kerawala, Mr. Milton David, Mr. S. B. Rath, Mr. A. Husein. Mr. Abraham Solomon and a few others.

General Meeting:—Opening the proceedings, Dr. C. L. D'Avoine said, "We meet this evening to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Rationalist Association of India. I regret to see that the number of people present tonight is not what one would have liked it to be after 10 years of existence of our Association.



Dr. C. L. D'Avoine
President

People probably find nothing exciting and sensational in being a member of the R. A. I. Today we find our numbers much less than what we reasonably expected when we started, but if we are few in number, we have lost none of our belief that Rationalism is a good cause that must be spread and encouraged. This belief is especially held by a few determined younger members of our Association who have worked like stalwarts to keep our flag flying. To them we owe all our thanks and gratitude. (Applause). So persistent have been their efforts that our Association after being almost moribund has revived sufficiently to enable us to meet here this evening. (Applause). Our membership has also increased so appreciably as to create new hope in us."

"It is not my intention this evening to discuss the reason why people here are so lukewarm towards Rationalism. In my opinion, it is not because they are not yet ready for this philosophy of life as because there are other causes which attract their attention. For one thing, people are too politically minded in this country to think of anything else."

"Among those who have helped our cause, we must not forget Mr. R. B. Lotewalla who has been most generous in the help he has accorded us (Applause). Without him it would have been very difficult indeed to publish *Reason*. To him we owe a deep debt of gratitude" (Applause).



Mr. R. B. Lotewalla.
Vice-President

"I thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for assembling here this evening. I hope all of you will take a renewed interest in the R. A. I. so as to help us to propagate the cause of Reason and to encourage people to

cultivate a scientific habit of mind in this great country."

The minutes of the last General Meeting, the Annual Report, and the audited Statement of Accounts were read and adopted. The following office-bearers for the year 1940. were elected:—

President:—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine; *Vice-Presidents*:—Dr. A. S. Erulkar and Mr. R. B. Lotewala; *Hon. Treasurer*:—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia; *Jt. Hon. Secretaries*:—Mr. Milton David and Mr. Abraham Solomon; *Members of the Executive Committee*:—Prof. R. D. Karve, Prof S. K. Muranjan, Dr. S. B. Gadgil, Mr. J. M. Cooper, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. S. B. Rath and Mr. A. Husein.

The following resolutions were unanimously passed:—

1 "This meeting views with grave apprehension the unfortunate spread of communalism and religious intolerance in this country and appeals to all progressive and enlightened people in India to do their utmost to curb this tendency which is the greatest obstacle to progress in any direction."

2 "This meeting views with alarm the increasing curtailment of civil liberties in India and appeals to all Rationalists and progressive-mined people in this country to resist with all their might, in every legitimate way, any encroachment on freedom of thought and expression. This meeting further asserts that whatever the aims and objects of the struggle this country is engaged in, victory will be too dearly bought if it means the loss or curtailment of freedom of thought and expression."

Dr. A. S. Erulkar moving the resolutions said, "There is no need to speak much on these resolutions as they are in keeping with the aims and objects of the Association. The more I watch modern separatist tendencies in Indian politics, our weakness, our communalism, the more I am convinced of the necessity of Rationalism in India. In India we are suffering from a surfeit of religion. We have an infinite number of gods and the best energies are wasted on the gods. No country in the world has worshipped and fed the gods as India has and yet India is the most miserable, the most wretched of all countries. Either the gods are impotent or ungrateful (laughter) and yet we have every god and every religion here. Why is India weak in spite of her four hundred millions and and her potential resources? She is miserable because of religion. What is the difference between the Hindu and the Muslim except religion? Their blood is the same, their history for centuries the same, their economic conditions, their diseases, all the same, yet we are told that their culture is different because their religions differ. If a Hindu becomes a Muslim we are told his culture changes. If religion can go to such extremes, if religion can divide the people of the same country, same blood, same habits, same customs; same history, then religion is a curse and the sooner it is done away with the better. India cannot be great, the Indian people cannot be one, the Indian Nation cannot prosper till we remove this curse of religion." (Applause)



Dr. A. S. Erulkar
Vice-President

Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, speaking after the Dinner, said:—

"Ladies and gentlemen, I feel it a very great honour to be called upon to speak this evening to this distinguished gathering. I consider it a gathering of intellectual people because they are adherents of the best of causes which is Rationalism. My own connection with Rationalism is now fairly long and perhaps it would be interesting to note how I came to be a member of the Rationalist Press Association in 1904.



Dr. R. P. Paranjpye

When I was quite a young man, I had written against religious education in India pointing out that religious education should find no place in our curriculum, and I was very strongly opposed by many Indian papers and some non-Indians. But some gentleman still unknown to me sent me the particulars of the R. P. A. which had already been established about three or four years before, which I joined, and since then I have been firmly associated with the Rationalist movement. It is a very great pleasure to me to see that you have a body of Rationalists in Bombay under the pre-

(*Continued on page* 67)

REASON

(ESTD. 1931)
The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road,
Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris)

Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 2/- & Foreign 3s. 6d. or $1.00 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Notes & News.

IT is interesting how aptly Dickens' opening words in his immortal classic *A Tale of Two Cities* describe our present age. It is as it were some future writer reflecting on the present state of the world:

> It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was an age of wisdom, it was an age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way——

x x x

HAPPENING to drop in at a local Blind School we watched the happy faces of little children, laughing and playing merrily, carefree, unmindful and perhaps unaware of "that thing called light", feeling their way from place to place with amazing ease. Guidingleach other with a spirit of mutual aid and friendship. Looking around we saw Notice-boards but the notices were all in *braille*. But there was a big panel on which are given the names of those persons who had contributed so that these unfortunate children may be happy—these children who had been deprived of one of the finest things in life for no fault of their own. But at the top of the panel are words which we do not think the greatest satirist could have improved upon. They are "To the glory of God." One can only exclaim: How long, O Man! How long!

x x x

RECENTLY there have come to light two instances of religious bigotry in the British Isles. The first is the banning of the popular magazine *Picture Post* by the Southern Ireland Government for a period of three months. The cause was the appearance in it of a summary of H. G. Wells' recent masterpiece *The Fate of Homo Sapiens* which contained a strong attack on Eire and its Catholicity. Catholic opinion in Ireland was enraged and demanded that *Picture Post* should be banned from the sacred towns and villages of Eire. In vain did the editor of that magazine offer space to the editor of *Irish Catholic* who had levied the charge that *Picture Post* is "filthy, immoral and suggestive", and to Archbishop Downey and Mr. Hilaire Belloc, to reply to Wells The Archbishop pleaded "pressure of work"; Mr. Hilaire Belloc replied that he was willing to review Wells' book in payment of £50 (the usual fee is 3 to 6 guineas). In Ireland, Catholicism has protected itself by the historical method of suppression. *Picture Post* is banned. Thus, bigotry marches on!

x x x

The second instance which we learn from the London *Freethinker* is a most ridiculous blasphemy case in Jersey. Mr. Arthur Reynolds Woodhall, hotel proprietor, was charged with having on November 3rd published a criminal libel. While sunbathing on the beach at Jersey, clad only in bathing trunks and while fast asleep, Mr. Woodhall was snapped by a beach photographer. The position of Mr. Woodhall was that of lying on his back with arms outstretched and feet crossed. Some time after this a visitor to the hotel gave Mr. Woodhall a copy of the portrait, on which he had drawn in red ink an outline of the figure with the heads of nails showing, and what was intended to be drops of blood. He gave the portrait to Mr. Woodhall with the comment, "That's what you look like" Mr.

Woodhall put the portrait in his pocket and thought no more of the matter.

At a later date, wishing to get his passport endorsed for a visit to England, he paid a visit to the Aliens Office, and when asked for his passport, took it from his breast pocket, in which there were several papers. Unfortunately, the portrait had got inside the passport and, when opened by the official, was examined. The official was "shocked", and showed it to others, including the Attorney General of the Island. The result was a charge of blasphemy. The case was twice adjourned; there were no precedents to go on, and the most recent case the prosecution could cite was in 1617. Finally, with the account of how the portrait came into existence, and the truth of the statement for the defence substantially admitted, Mr. Woodhall was at the Jersey Sessions on January 9th sentenced to one month's imprisonment.

Later Mr. Woodhall was released and the remaining portion of his sentence remitted on the efforts of Mr. Ernest Thurtle, M. P. and others.

x x x

IT is indeed a great pleasure to welcome another Life Member to the R. A. I. this month. Mr. N. M. Bhathena is a keen and enthusiastic rationalist and one of those who dare, as Dr. Paranjpye put it, to avow themselves as such. Mr. Bhathena has been a member of the R. A. I. since the very beginning and we take this opportunity of thanking him for the constant help he has given to the Association. We are also glad to find that he has succeeded in getting new members for the R. A. I. We have need for more fellow-rationalists like him.

x x x

We gratefully acknowledge the following:— N. M. Bhathena Rs. 100; J. B. H. Wadia Rs. 20; Prof. H. V. Hampton Rs. 10; Dr V. R. Khanolkar Rs. 10; Dr. C. R. Athavle Rs. 5; Dr. M. G. Pradhan Rs. 5; J. M. Cooper Rs. 10; V. V. Sohoni, Poona, Rs. 5; Dr. S. B. Gadgil, Rs. 5; Dr. D R. Chaubal, Rs. 5; Justice K. C Sen, Rs. 7; P. M. Wagle, Lahore, Rs. 10; R. N. Padwal, Rs. 5; G. B. Singh, Lahore, Rs 5; V. D. Satghare, Rs. 5; J. S. Warden, Rs. 5; Prof. S. K. Muranjan Rs. 10; A M. Zawani, Rs. 5; Homi N. Chinoy, Rs. 10; J. F. Vapiwala, Rs. 2; J. N. Barowa, Rs. 2; M. M. Senapati, Rs. 2.

—ABRAHAM SOLOMAN.

STANDARD WORKS BY FAMOUS FREETHINKERS

Thinkers' Library

Education: Intellectual, Moral and Physical by Herbert Spencer. A great book on a great subject.

A Short History of the World by H. G. Wells. In the pages of this book we review the pageant of earth, of life, of primitive man, and of civilisation, as seen by one of the most vivid writers of our day.

Anthropology (in 2 Vols) by Sir E. B. Tylor. This is the scientific "Book of Genesis." Vol. 1 describes the life of early Man and how he learned to talk and write. Vol. 2 deals with the arts of life and pleasure, and the growth of Knowledge and Religion.(Illustrated).

The Evolution of the Idea of God by Grant Allen. Twenty years were occupied in preparing and ten years in writing this standard work on the history of the God-idea—which is the history of religion itself.

The Churches and Modern Thought by Vivian Phelips. A frank, fearless, and fascinating study of the question "Is Christianity True?"

The Martyrdom of Man by Winwood Reade. Acclaimed as a classic of the nineteenth century, unequalled in artistry of language and lucidity of style.

The Evidence for the Supernatural by Dr. Ivor, LL. Tuckett. Surveys the answer of Science to the question "Is Spiritualism True?" Is the Supernatural credible?"

The Existence of God by Joseph McCabe. A scholarly and searching examination into the origin, history, and present position of the belief in God with a reply to Sir J. Jeans, Sir A. Eddington, and other apologists.

Psychology for Every Man (and Woman) by A. E. Mander. Gives a clear and concise introduction to the study of human character.

Letters on Reasoning by J. M. Robertson. A scholarly exposition on rational thinking.

Clearer Thinking; (Logic for Every Man) by A. E. Mander. A valuable and practical guide to clear and logical thinking.

Man and His Universe by J. Langdon-Davies. An excellent survey of Man's progress from a primitive outlook on life to a modern scientific one and the causes that contributed to it.

First Principles by Herbert Spencer (Rs. 2/-) A clear and orderly synthesis of knowledge.

The Rights of Man by Thomas Paine. A treatise in defence of those principles of freedom for which the author so valiantly fought and suffered.

The Universe of Science by Prof. H. Levy. An excellent book on the Philosophy of Science.

Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings by Henry Mandsley, M. D. Reveals the psychological processes by which man arrived at beliefs commonly attributed to mystical sources.

Price Re. 1/- each, post free.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

The 10th Annual General Meeting and Dinner of the Rationalist Association of India

(*Continued from page* 64)

sidentship of Dr. D'Avoine. I hope that this Association will get many more adherents, declared adherents, than at present it possesses. Of course, all of you know that among educated people there is a large number of persons who are really Rationalists at heart, but that is not quite enough, for if any cause has to prosper, all people who believe in that cause must go forward and co-operate with each other in propagating that cause. In India, as was said a little while ago by Dr. Erulkar, we suffer from a surfeit of religion. As he says, we have an infinite number of Gods and the Hindus profess to have possessed thirty-three crores of gods (laughter). I believe that this number was fixed because people thought at that time that the population of India was not likely to exceed thirty-three crores, and they believed probably that they had made ample provision for the future in the matter of gods. But even at the last census we have passed this limit of thirty-three crores (laughter) and in the next census it is reliably expected that we shall reach 40 crores. In order to supply this deficiency there are going on attempts at god-making in various quarters. We have various people, of course, pretending to a certain amount of godliness, but there are also along with them many who consider themselves—or whose followers consider them—as divine and so whatever they say must be followed to the letter. You know perhaps that among the Roman Emperors it was believed that when they died they were transformed into gods. One Emperor when he was dying is supposed to have said 'I am being transformed into a god now.' (Laughter). There are many of these gods of various kinds. Well, everybody has seen the influence which these so-called divine preceptors exercise over their misguided followers, and these followers are not always uneducated people but very often they are also so-called educated people. But part of their brain appears to be completely atrophied (laughter) and therefore they are not able to distinguish the truth from falsehood. We have various people of this kind and there are likely to be many institutions for the purpose of promoting their worship. There are many of these societies, many of these organizations for the promotion of their worship and in this way god-making is still going on in this country.

Now this kind of surrender of one's thinking faculty is not only common in religion, but unfortunately what is much worse, we are finding it in many other branches of life. Whether we look at politics, whether we look at many other things, we find that the surrender of reason is becoming somewhat more common in these days. In the totalitarian countries all freedom of thought is suppressed. In Germany nobody can give any expression to any opinion which is opposed to the prevailing political creed. In Italy also if anybody wishes to speak about political matters, even if it is true, must not be spoken if it is antagonistic to the state. In this way all freedom of thought has been completely done away with. There is a desire to have unity of opinion, or rather unity of expression of opinion, if not of opinion. Though this place is not one for referring to politics, I only utter this warning that in the political sphere and other spheres we can see signs of the same desire prevailing in this country also. Now this kind of suppression of liberty, this desire to bring about a unity of opinion is found everywhere in India, and where the people are uneducated or half-educated, has produced worse results."

Dr. Paranjpye further said that in our country we have many religions and different sects. Among the Hindus, it may be said that there is freedom of opinion. One is allowed to hold whatever opinions he likes provided he actually carries out the behests of society. In religion among the educated people, there is a certain amount of laxity so far as opinions are concerned. We find that there has been a great deal of change in our life, but at the same time there are a number of people who believe that religion is absolutely necessary for the proper order of society. There are people who interpret old doctrines in a new manner and if you look at many of these writings, they will probably be found to differ from what they used to write in olden days. They try to defend the existence of God and old ideas by means of many hypothetical words, the full significance of which, I believe, the writers themselves do not understand. Generally, of course, in the beginning many of these religious books were taken literally. But literal interpretation of these things is not possible and therefore they try to find out some hidden meaning in the old books and this process went on not only in our country but everywhere. They claim to give new explanations for all these facts. Wherever Science has not given a complete explanation of things

they find room for the existence of God. Science has done away with many false notions. Things which were supposed to be due to divine interference have been found to be merely due to natural causes. There are certain things which do not follow ordinary laws which can be explained mechanically, and are supposed to be the province of God. In the same manner, other things which at present Science is not able to interpret fully, are supposed to be the acts of God.

Continuing, Dr. Paranjpye said, "You might remember Laplace's famous work. *Mecanique Celeste*. An enemy of Laplace went to Napoleon and told him that Laplace had written a big book, but had not mentioned the name of God once in it. Napoleon asked Laplace why this was so. Laplace, although not very scrupulous in other matters replied, "Sire, I have no need of that hypothesis." This way of trying to explain the infinite by means of another hypothesis is a thing which a rationalist should refuse to accept. Some people find a mental satisfaction in having such a hypothesis. Of course, one cannot quarrel with them, but we know that its existence cannot be proved. But we rationalists are content to remain in ignorance about final causes and we also feel that to limited human intelligence, however developed it may be, the final cause is bound to remain unexplained. Finite human intelligence is not able to give a final cause to everything. It is, therefore, much better to remain with our ignorance instead of making some other hypothesis which is equally indicative of ignorance.

In this country we are suffering from a surfeit of religion. It has had an effect on our whole national life. In politics, in society, in industry, everywhere we are suffering from what is said to be religion. Religion, in fact, enters into everything. In India we shall be much happier, much more prosperous, much more progressive, if religion had a little less influence upon our people than it has. I have no wish to play the role of dictator, but if I were asked to do so even for a day, there are a few things I would like to do. I would make unpunctuality a criminal offence. Anyone who claims preferential treatment on account of his religion should be subjected to a prosecution. In this gathering it may not be proper to say it, but these people who claim to be gods in human shape have an idea which is entirely different. It is either to make money or enter into the good graces of women. Money and women are the two real objectives of life for them.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, I hope that a body like this will be more energetic in its efforts to get adherents, declared adherents, and propagate rationalism all over the land. What is required is not merely strength of numbers but strength of mind to act according to rationalistic views Prehaps for a time it may make one unpopular, but I think following one's own reason will be far better than following what so many so-called popular and noted people are supposed to do. I think if India were to be rid of this millstone of religion from round its neck, India will be a very much better and more prosperous country. The task before rationalists is very important, and I hope that this body of rationalists in Bombay will rise from strength to strength and will have adherents all over India. One thing is necessary, that they must always dare to avow themselves as rationalists and not take part in anything that does not appeal to their rational views. There must be liberty not only in the political field, but liberty must exist in all aspects of life and unless you are devotees of liberty in all aspects of life, you are not true lovers of liberty at all. Thank you once again for having honoured me by asking me to speak before this gathering this evening"—(Applause).



Prof. R. D. Karve, Editor, *Reason*.

Prof. R. D. Karve during his speech said that he had found a practical difficulty in giving up his religion. On being approached by a Hindu organisation with a request to join it, he told them that he did not do anything which was likely to show that he was a Hindu. But he was told that that did not matter. When he said that he does not believe in a God, he was told that that did not matter either e. g. Charvaka was an Atheist.

A vote of thanks was passed to Dr. Paranjpye, the principal speaker of the evening, for his instructive and interesting speech.

The ORIGIN OF GODS

(*Continued from page* 62)

succeed because it lets loose the enlightening fact that whatever the origin of the word it stands for a belief in someone or something to whom, or to which, sacrifice was made. But, of course, no savage was ever so unthinking as to offer sacrifice to a stone that was no more than a stone, or to the sun if he did not think that the sun was more than a mass of heated matter. Sacrifice implies the belief that the thing to which sacrifice is made desires the sacrifice and is pleased with it; and the one who sacrifices does it out of thankfulness for favours received, favours to come, or for fear of punishment if the sacrifices are not made. This is the very A.B.C. of human motive, but when dealing with godites, particularly with the well-educated literary ones, one must make things as simple as possible if one is to be understood.

Our definition is illuminative on a very important point when it states the subsidiary clause of the definition: God is "one of a class of powerful spirits controlling a department of nature." In that we get to the very core of the matter. We have been admitted to the inner sanctury of the laboratory in which the gods are made. But if that had been stated plainly, and with nothing else, if the introductory clause concerning the word had been omitted, we should have been left with the sentence "that to which sacrifice is made," etc. And that, as the screen American would say, "spills a mouthful." The idea of gods has been maintained under false pretences. Familiarity has played its part. People have accepted the idea for so long, it has bitten so deeply into human thought and social institutions that the majority have been content with a mere name. The idea of the savage has been perpetuated. The environment of the savage has been dissipated, but the magic of a word induces large numbers to behave as though we still live in a forest clearing and science was unborn.

x x x

The Cradle and the Grave

The definition of "God" we have cited is as near an understanding as one can get. It implies the conditions in which the idea of gods originated. It assumes a society in which nothing is known of the constitution of nature, when man believes that he is at the mercy of a number of powerful spirits on whom he is dependent for everything. He bribes them with sacrifices, with prayers, with ceremonies. If his sacrifices and petitions are followed by good results he has all the proof possible that these spirits exist. If good results do not follow, that is still evidence to the same end. This is a plain account of all the gods, ghosts, angels, devils, and "spiritual" existences that have ever bothered the minds of men and women from the dawn of humanity until 1940.

Consider the situation. Nearly seventy years ago E. B. Tylor published his great work on comparative anthropology, *Primitive Culture*. There were, of course, many anthropologists before Tylor, but one must start somewhere, and to avoid controversy I will say only that we may fairly date from the publication of Tylor's work the first clear expression of a science of comparative mythology. The vital principle of Tylor's work was to show how, in relation to religious ideas, the belief in spirits and gods arose from a sheer misunderstanding of the nature of the forces to which man found himself exposed. Tylor said, in the clearest possible language, that his purpose was to set forth the "animistic philosophy of religion." If words mean anything at all, there is in that statement the assertion that all ideas of religion may be traced back to an animistic origin. The later conclusion, probably a correct one, that there existed a pre-animistic period, does not alter the substantial fact. The philosophy of religion begins and ends in animism. The ethical and philosophical arguments for even the probable truth of the belief in God are mere excuses for an animism dressed in modern clothes. I say deliberately that the man who does not recognize this is incapable of drawing the logical inference from the position of Tylor and his successors.

There is also these amongst other significant phrases used by Tylor: "The animism of savages stands for and by itself, it explains its own origin. The animism of civilized man..... is in great measure only explicable as a developed product of the older and ruder system." What is this but saying that we can only understand modern religious belief when we relate it to the animism of the primitive savage? And after a survey of primitive origins and customs he concludes his great work with a confession that while it may be painful to expose the remains of crude old culture which have passed into harmful superstitions, and to mark these out for destruction, the work is urgently needed for the good of mankind.

About twenty years after *Primitive Culture*, another great worker in the field

of anthropology, Sir James Frazer, in the preface to *The Golden Bough*, rather more timidly, restated Tylor's conclusions. In the preface to that book, after pointing out the obvious significance of his work, he says that "sooner or later it is inevitable that the battery of the comparative method should breach these venerable walls, mantled over with the ivy of a thousand and one tender associations. At present we are only dragging the guns into position; they have hardly begun to speak."

It is a pity that public men in this country should be so timid in pointing the logical inferences to be drawn from their own researches. For, mark, the conclusion to be drawn from Frazer's work, and from the great mass of modern writers, is the same as that which Tylor drew, namely, that the origin of religious belief is to be found in the ignorance and fear of primitive humanity. If their researches do not mean this, they are without meaning, and are of no greater value than a child's hoarding-up of cherry-stones. To find men who imagine themselves capable of understanding the significance of modern science, explaining that they cannot decide whether God exists or not, and at the same time profess themselves followers of leaders such as Tylor, Frazer, Westermarck, Marett, and scores of others at home and abroad, is enough to make one despair of human sanity. If the whole work of modern anthropology does not mean that ideas of gods have the same origin as ideas of devils and witches and fairies and spirits in general, what does that work mean? When we *know* that a belief began in a mistaken interpretation of experience, what ground have we for saying it may after all be true? To say we cannot decide one way or the other, that we must suspend judgment, is to garnish heresy with hypocrisy, and to sacrifice courage on the altar of expediency. We *know* that the history of religion is the history of a delusion.

For over fifty years I have been asking the defenders of established religion, and those who stand outside the ranks of religious organizations, to face this issue, without meeting with any response. I get no answer to the simplest and plainest of questions. All I get are wise looks and foolish answers. I get no answer because the only possible one is carefully avoided. The answer given is as relevant to the situation as demonism would be in modern medicine. There is no more room for the belief in God in genuine scientific thought than there is in psychiatry for demons as the cause of insanity. To-day God is a sheer irrelevance.

A CONCEITED CAVILLER

(Continued from page 61)

of Atheists in general, he referred to Mr. Llewlyn Powys as an instance of a Modern Atheist's incompetence, to argue reasonably and clearly. 'Looker On' particularly finds fault with Mr. Powys for saying in his well-known book, 'The Pathetic Fallacy' that Christianity was a moribund religion and that the spiritual teachings of Christ have no validity in the outer spaces (meaning the vast universe). For Mr. Powys (who was one of the most eminent Free Thinkers in England) to have said this was enough to upset completely "Looker On" who burst out that "there is no dogmatist more dogmatic than your high-brow Atheist." He evidently cannot forgive Mr. Powys for also saying that Christianity is impotent. He thinks that Mr. Powys has no title to talk about the vision of truth in the galaxy. Has he ever been there ? he asks. Well, since Mr. Powys has not been there to know anything about it, one must assume that 'Looker On' has, because he insists that the spritual teachings of Christ have much value there. He is equally scornful of Mr. Powys' saying that Christianity is a moribund religion. How can that be, he asks, when Christianity has lasted 2000 years? One remarks that these Catholics always seem to think it wonderful that Catholicism has lasted 2000 years. Well, what about the other religions which are now in the cemetery of the past? Some of them lasted more than 3000 years, and among the living religions now prevailing, Hinduism has more than 4000 years existence and Buddism 2500 years. Even Islamism, despite the Crusades and other persecutions by Christianity, is now 1300 years old, a rather respectable age, I should say.

'Looker On' expressss the wish to have a chat with a Modern Atheist because he loves to hear his pseudo-scientific jargon and dogmatism. It is obvious that 'Looker On' has not strayed far from Rangoon and the Catholic Fathers there. He should try and get out of Burmah for a while and travel a little; he may soon meet some enlightened and cultured Atheist who would surely disillusion him, confound him and cure him of his conceit.

I am a nuisance dedicated to sanity.

—DAVID LOW.

Freedom of Opinion

S. B. Rath

IT is a matter of common experience that when one enters into discussion particularly on subjects like religion, social customs or sex, and if one's ideas happen to be progressive or new, not only are such ideas not given due consideration, but the speaker is refused the right of being heard or denied the free expression of opinion. He is condemned as a man devoid of any moral principles or an ignorant fool by a majority of the people.

Every properly educated and thoughtful man will admit that an individual should be given freedom of opinion even if his ideas and opinions differ from those of the rest of humanity. History demonstrates that a vast majority of people have been sadly mistaken in rejecting the opinions of any one person or persons. Men of science and of progressive thought were not only laughed at or ridiculed, but they were hunted out, tried and condemned to death because they differed from the majority of the people. Men like Galileo, Newton and many others were persecuted mercilessly because they dared to think for themselves and did not always agree with the ideas of the other thinkers of their time.

Nothing is more shocking than to rush to conclusions without listening to what the opponent has to say, or to condemn or abuse him merely because he happens to differ. Such conduct is childish and amounts to nothing but an open confession or absence of reasoning and understanding.

Further, it is because of human frailty that free expression of opinion is needed and decisions have to be revised in order to adapt them to changing times. It is not enough for a person to merely exercise his own mental faculties and rely on them, he must also listen patiently to what others have to say and to consider whether after all he may not be mistaken.

Many an advocate of the unrestricted expression of opinion may not be prepared to accept the position that it needs to be unrestricted under all conditions and all circumstances. For according to him there may arise a situation so full of dangerous possibilities and contingencies that it may then become necessary to restrict or check individual freedom of opinion. But such restrictions have always done more harm than good and therefore unfettered expression of opinion would be more beneficial to humanity. Furthermore, not only because it is an inherent and inalienable right of the individual to be heard that freedom should be allowed, but it should also be granted because human judgment is bound to be all the more correct by the consideration of different points of view.

Without full freedom of opinion there cannot be liberty of criticism and suggestion of new ideas which are the life blood of human progress. I should think it is one of the flagrant crimes against humanity to prevent the birth of new ideas by gagging or muzzling free expression of opinion. Let the ideas be as productive as fish. Then only the severest struggle for existence among the ideas will decide their fate. And in that struggle only the fittest will survive. A society that suppresses and checks freedom of opinion strangles itself.

Many are of the opinion that it is not good for men to have too much liberty of opinion. For according to them anything too much is bad and therefore too much liberty is also bad. But I should think that the maximum liberty that you and I can think of today will still fall short of the ideal of perfect freedom of speech or opinion. It is perhaps futile to discuss the limits of such liberty, because freedom of liberty is and must be by its very nature unlimited. To talk of limited liberty is to talk of a four-angled trangle, and any restriction on freedom means no freedom at all.

In order to consider how futile a task it is to limit freedom or liberty of opinion, we can do no better than to consider the laws and customs of the nations. As an example, in England you are held to commit blasphemy if you talk or write against Christ. In Russia you are allowed to commit blasphemy against Christ but not against Stalin. From this we conclude that the only rule the nations follow is that they stop or put a penalty on those practices and ideas which are supposed to be harmful to the individul or to society at any particular period. But there is no science behind this method. It is applied according to the interests, prejudices, whims, or superstitions of the governing bodies or of the vast majority of the people.

In conclusion we cannot do better than quote the words of John Stuart Mill, "If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would no more be justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind."

The Faith Of Our Fathers

"J'ai declare la guerre a l'ideal anemique du christianisme—" *Nietzsche.*

By R. S. FONTES.

THE great Nietzsche has said in his famous book *Thus Spake Zarathustra*: "War and courage have done greater things than love," and than faith, we may safely conclude. In the world we live in today, where the faith of our fathers or rather the simulacrum of faith that is waved like a banner-rag of salvation, in this world of organized barbarism and ruthless warfare, more than ever before we need courage to withstand the tremendous attacks from the Catholic Church in particular and from religion in general; if we are going to cling to the crumbling edifice of religion we shall no doubt perish. We need *that war* spirit of which Nietzsche spoke; we have got to fight for our ideas and ideals. with calm in our hearts and peace in our minds; we have got to fight a valiant fight, not with the weapons of modern warfare, but with the crushing weapons of reason. And we ought to fight with courage to the bitter end in order to destroy once for all the faith of our fathers, the faith that has been ever since its birth a source of trouble and misery, a source of everlasting ignorance and perdition. But we should not destroy for the sake of destroying only; we have to destroy and build; over the ashes of the dying creeds and religions we have to erect a new edifice of faith and culture—a faith in humanity and ourselves, a faith for the betterment of mankind without utopian promises and lingering hopes, a faith where Man is God himself and the world a heaven for his benefit. It is time we "transvalue our values".

For ten years the R. A. I. has declared a life-and-death war against priestcraft and fanaticism in India, and all that cannot stand the test of Reason. The plethora of difficulties has been great, greater than our strength perhaps, but we have known how to overcome them best. In this great battle I have taken part with a determination never to recoil—however feeble may have been my efforts, however insignificant my contribution. Reviewing these past ten years, what do we see? True, much has been done in this land of mysticism and superstition, but it is almost nothing in comparison to what is to be done. The forces of the clergy are great and powerful, they command the press and the platform, so that they have *their way*. We should not, however, be discouraged; our ultmate victory is assured, and the idols of clay will finally fall, never to rise again.

Freethinkers throughout India! Let us redouble our energies and look forward for future ceaseless fights against superstition and fanaticism that have been an opiate to the masses of this country. Let us prove, therefore, to the masses that the faith we have unfortunately inherited from our fathers is a poisonous drug that runs in their blood—they have to discard the time-worn faith which is the symbol of ignorance, fanaticism and hypocrisy, and let us remember that "whatever be God's future, we cannot forget his past"

Freethinkers of India! It is time that the useless cloak of religion be thrown off by every Indian from the Himalayas to Comorin.

March, 1940

Reviews.

The Oriental Review. This monthly organ of the Indian Institute of Sociology had ceased publication for some months, but is now appearing again under the able editorship of Dr. G. Y. Chitnis. It publishes original articles as well as selections from other periodicals, dealing mainly with sociology and politics, and which make quite interesting reading. Our readers may find it worth while to join the Institute, which is situated in "Ranchod Bhuvan", near Opera House Tramway Terminus, and which possesses a good library and reading-room. The subscription is only Rs. 3/- per year, which includes the 'Oriental Review.'

R. D. KARVE.

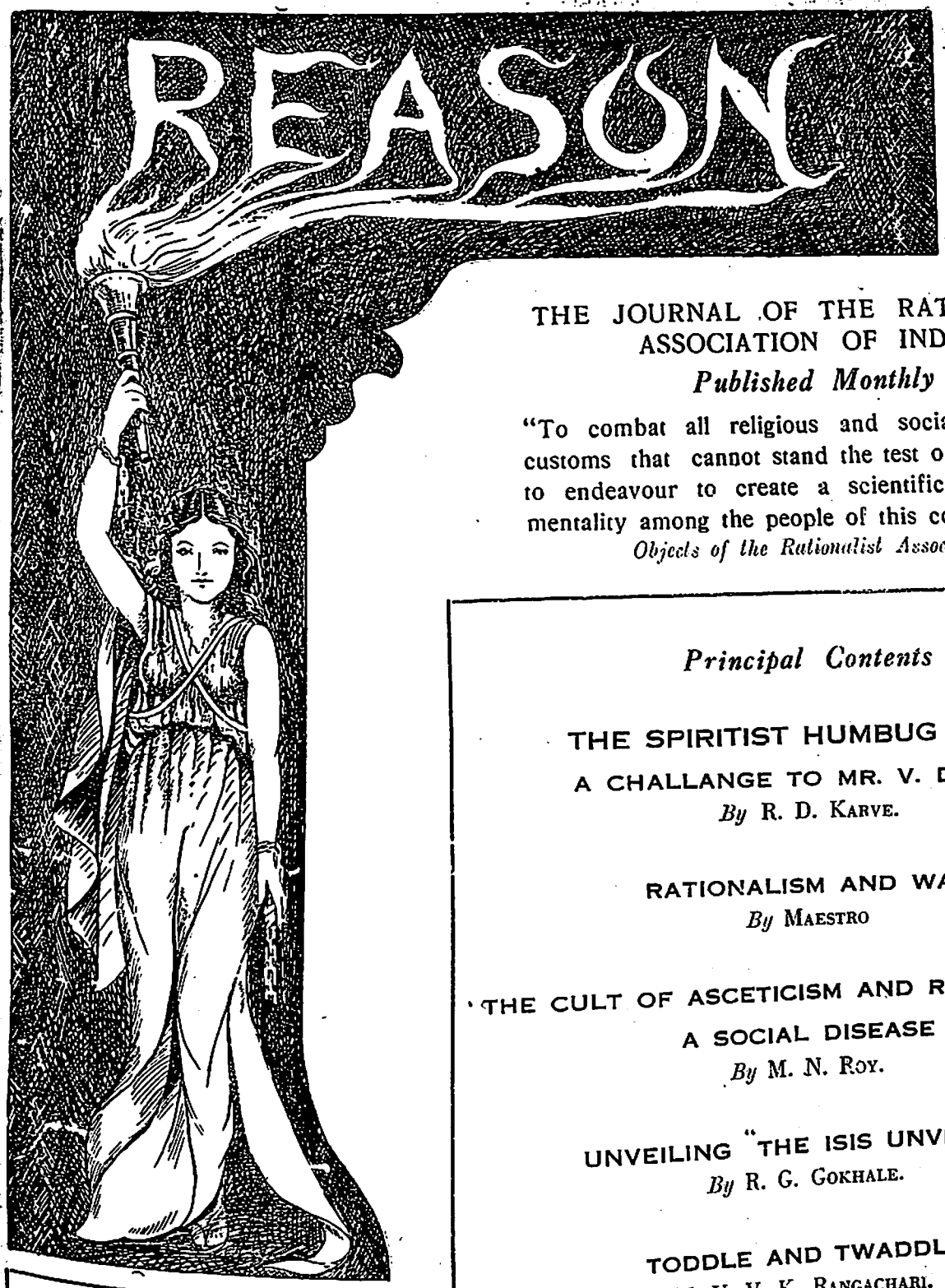
Prachya-Darshana-Samiksha. We have received for free distribution ten copies of this Hindi version of the review of Oriental Philosophies by Sadhu Santinath, which has already been revieved in these pages. Members of our Association knowing Hindi and interested in philosophy may apply for copies. We thank the author on behalf of the Association. For mofussil members, the postage will be As. 6.

R. D. KARVE.

To rest content with what has been done is to convert a stepping stone into a couch.

—CHAPMAN COHEN.

Printed by B. M. Shet at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay, and published by R. D. Karve, M.A., for the Rationalist Association of India



MAY 1940

VOL. VIII NO. 5.

PRICE 2 ANNAS.

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Objects of the Rationalist Association of India.

Principal Contents

THE SPIRITIST HUMBUG AGAIN
A CHALLANGE TO MR. V. D. RISHI
By R. D. KARVE.

RATIONALISM AND WAR
By MAESTRO

THE CULT OF ASCETICISM AND RENUNCIATION A SOCIAL DISEASE
By M. N. ROY.

UNVEILING "THE ISIS UNVEILED"
By R. G. GOKHALE.

TODDLE AND TWADDLE
M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI.

NOTES & NEWS ETC.

Editor :
R. D. KARVE, M. A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).

READ

THE ORIENTAL REVIEW

(A RADICAL MONTHLY)

Voicing the Political and Social opinions of all shades of thought

Annual Subscription **Rs. 3.**

Single Copy **4 Annas.**

21, Dalal Street, Fort,

BOMBAY.

The Socialist Vanguard

with Socialist Forum

* It is a left-wing paper with an ethical outlook.
* It discusses urgent political and cultural questions in a fearless manner.
* It opens its Forum to all those who want to stem the decay of civilisation.
* It stands for united action against Imperialism, Fascism and Clericalism.

Subscribe to

The Socialist Vanguard now!

2s. a year (12 issues) Post free.

Send for free specimen copies.

International Publishing Co.

12 Gt. Castle Street, London, W. I. England.

Rationalist Association of India

10th ANNIVERSARY OFFER

THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM

BY

Dr. R. P. PARANJPYE, M.A., D.SC.
Late Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University

AND

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER

An interesting discussion on Religion and its precepts between Dr. C. L. D'Avoine and representatives of four different religions.

FREE TO ALL NEW MEMBERS ENROLLING BEFORE MAY 31, 1940

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION Rs. 5.
FOREIGN 8 SHILLINGS.

Members receive ***Reason,*** the monthly journal of the Association, free and are allowed the use of the Reading Room and Library of the Indian Institute of Sociology at R. L. Trust Bldg., Near Opera House, Bombay.

Write to the Jt. Hon. Secretaries

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

ONE must combat ceaselessly. When one has destroyed an error there is always someone who resuscitates it.

—VOLTAIRE.

REASON

Vol. VIII | MAY 1940 | No. 5

The Spiritist Humbug Again

A CHALLANGE TO Mr. V. D. RISHI

By R. D. Karve

I AM obliged to write on the same subject again this month on account of the renewed activity shown by the local protagonists of spiritism after my recent articles on the subject. Mr. V. D. Rishi who calls himself the Founder of the Indian Spiritualist Society has written about his own activities in the *Sunday Chronicle*, and two of his disciples have written in the *Chitra* in praise of the same gentleman, ostensibly in reply to an article of mine which appeared in the same weekly.

One of these disciples deplored my attack on spiritism and blamed me for writing on the subject without sufficient knowledge instead of convincing myself by attending Mr. Rishi's seances. He stated as a proof of Mr. Rishi's sincerity that this gentleman had given up a post of "Nyayadhisha" in order to take up the study of this subject purely from a philanthropic point of view. Even supposing that this is true, it would not prove the truth of spiritism, but I found on inquiry that Mr. Rishi had already retired in due course from his post and was not at all obliged to give it up. As for attending seances personally, I am reminded of the reply made on a similar occasion by the famous mathematician Henri Poincare (quoted in the Literary Guide): "I am persuaded that all this (levitations, the moving of objects at a distance) is nothing but fraud. Therefore, I could assist at the experiments only if I had the hope of discovering the means employed by Eusapia for example—in a word, her tricks. Now, for this, an attention always on the alert and sharpened senses are necessary. Such senses I do not posses; I would, therefore, be beaten".

It will be seen that the great mathematician had much more common sense and a more exact conception of his limitations than the English scientists so frequently quoted in support of spiritism, Lodge and Wallace, who thought themselves quite competent to judge and still were cheated times out of number if we are to believe Mr. Price, the President of the Psychical Research Society.

As for Mr. Rishi, his purely philanthropic activities in this line enable him to make annual trips to Europe, which he had never done as a Nyayadhisha. On one of these trips, Dr. Mrs. Irawati Karve (at present a reader in the Deccan College Research Institute) happened to be a passenger on the same boat, and hearing that Mr. Rishi was going to give some seances on the steamer, she requested him to let her know when he did it, as she was very anxious to witness the so-called phenomena. In spite of the fact that Mr. Rishi gave several seances on the boat before reaching Europe, he had not the courtesy to inform her even once. When she asked him the reason at the end of the voyage, Mr. Rishi replied that he wanted to tell her every time, but he could not find her on the steamer! To any one who has not the credulity of a spiritist, this must seem a terminological inexactitude, to use parliamentary language. However vast a European liner may be, it should not be difficult to find a passenger in the same class if one wants to. I can only conclude that Mr. Rishi is not very anxious to have sceptical witnesses. I may also mention that sceptical people do sometimes attend his seances and I have received very unsatisfactory reports from them. But in

such cases, if Mr. Rishi is asked for an explanation, he gives the stock reply that there is never any guarantee that any phenomena will occur on any particular occasion. If the answers given by the spirits are wrong, the explanation is that some bogus spirit attended instead of the one expected and that spirits sometimes deliberately cheat. Since, according to Mr. Rishi, "the other world is the counterpart of the earth and most of the earthly things are found there", it is quite natural that there should be some liars there too!

The serene assurance with which these people will make the most absurd statements is enough to stagger anybody. When a boy studying in the fourth standard died, Mr. Rishi assured his relatives, on the strength of information received from spirits, that he had been duly promoted and was now in the fifth standard in the other world! Commenting on this, I had asked a series of questions like "Do the schools in the other world use Indian Standard Time or any other, and why? Do they use chairs and tables, and are these the spirits of similar articles gone out of use on the earth?" and so on. Mr. Joshirao, who tried to boom Mr. Rishi in the *Chitra*, finds these questions ridiculous. I am unable to see why. If they have schools, they must have courses of study and time-tables, class-rooms and furniture. Since the other world is a counterpart, there must be an India in the other world and a Great Britain, so I asked what are their relations there? Since Gandhi is not yet dead, his spirit cannot be there yet, so who does the "Satyagraha" and the fasting? To anybody who can think logically, these questions are bound to occur and it is merely a subterfuge to call them ridiculous.

Mr. Joshirao also makes another point against me. He says that Mr. Rishi's seances are conducted in broad daylight (or at least in a lighted room) and so my criticism as regards the darkness required at seances does not apply to Mr. Rishi. Evidently it depends on what kind of phenomena are produced by Mr. Rishi. For a medium to talk nonsense, darkness is obviously not necessary, and it only shows that Mr. Rishi does not think it worth while to go in for the more complicated effects, which no medium has ever produced without the aid of darkness.

I am reliably informed, however, that even in the simple matter of calling up spirits and getting verifiable responses, Mr. Rishi has often miserably failed. It appears that a seance was arranged in Poona in the office of the late Mr. Tilak's paper, the *Kesari*, in the presence of Mr. N. C. Kelkar the present controller of the paper. The spirit of Mr. Tilak himself having been invoked and questioned, it was unable to give satisfactory replies. Naturally, Mr. Rishi attributed this as usual to the alleged fact that spirits sometimes cheat! At one of the seances, a Mahomedan spirit was invoked and somebody in the audience insisted that since the hand of the medium was guided by the spirit, the replies should be written in the Urdu script. Mr. Rishi replied that this could not be done, because his wife, who serves as medium, did not know that script. Now it is very often given as a proof of spiritism that mediums write or speak languages with which they are not acquainted. Mr. Rishi's medium at any rate does not seem to have reached that stage of perfection!

Another alleged power of mediums or rather of spirits is clairvoyance, that is the faculty of seeing things without the help of the eyes. They pretend to read sealed letters and astounding tricks of this kind are often performed on the stage by professional magicians, so there is no doubt that this can be done by trickery. But it is alleged that when mediums do it, it is by their extraordinary powers and not by trickery. When I wrote about Mr. Rishi a few years back, one of his disciples came to argue the matter with me, and I proposed a simple test for Mr. Rishi. I said I would attend a seance myself with a book in my pocket and would ask the medium to read a particular page of the book. The correctness of the reading could be verified on the spot and everybody, including myself, would be convinced. That gentleman promised that he would let me know when Mr. Rishi was ready for this test. I have waited so many years and still Mr. Rishi is apparently not ready!

It is very easy indeed to foil these people, if it were not for the various subterfuges they have at their disposal. In such a test, it might easily be argued that the medium failed (as is bound to happen) because her powers had deserted her for the time being. A medium is as slippery as an eel and exceedingly difficult to catch, at least so as to convince people who are inclined to believe. In fact, the will to believe is the foundation of their success, and I am told Mr. Rishi is always in demand for getting into touch with the souls of departed people in different parts of India, the relatives of the dead being usually in a state of mind in which they will believe anything.

Mr. Price has verified that spirit photographs are a fraud, and still Mr. Rishi publishes one in the *Sunday Chronicle*, in support of his thesis. Mr. Rishi also tells us some interesting things in the same article. He says the chief ideas underlying this knowledge are:— (It is to be noted that the knowledge is *based on ideas*, though Mr. Rishi also tells us that they are based on observed facts and phenomena!)

1. Existence of God as the supreme cause of everything. 2. The existence of the etheric body which is the counterpart of the physical *in all its details* (italics mine). 3. Its separation and survival after the disintegration of the corporal envelope. 4. Continuity of consciousness in another state of existence. 5. Possibility of communication with those who have gone over. 6. Law of personal responsibility. 7. Law of progressive evolution through multiple existence.

All these utterly baseless hypotheses (Mr. Rishi calls them 'ideas' himself) are necessary if you wish to believe in spirits. Who will say that these have any scientific value, or are at least consistent with known scientific facts? Apart from the idea of God, it is well known that consciousness is a function of the material body. Any desire too is a function of the brain, and when this disappears with death, how can the spirit, if there is any such thing, have any desire to communicate? This necessitates the entirely gratuitous assumption that there is an etheric body which is the counterpart of the physical. God and anything else can be imagined to suit the convenience of mediums whose material existence and prosperity often depends on cheating the gullible public.

Of course, it is not my intention to allege any fraud against Mr. Rishi, but as a natural consequence, my estimate of his intelligence is considerably lowered. The mediums convicted of fraud were undoubtedly clever, since they succeeded in cheating even some intelligent people. Fraud being out of question in the case of Mr. Rishi, who is said to be working with a philanthropic motive only, it is needless to point out the conclusion.

Mr. Rishi himself alleges that spiritism is the essence of all religions, though unfortunately no religion is prepared to admit this, and quotes Sir A. Conan Doyle, who wrote to him that Spiritualism might well be a bond not only between the Hindus and Mahomedans, but also between Indians and Europeans. May I suggest that since Mr Gandhi is precisely seeking a rapprochement between Hindus and Mahomedans, as well as between Indians and Europeans, he might make use of Mr. Rishi. Not even Congressmen believe in the Charkha as a means of doing this, though some of them may pretend to believe in it, and it is just possible that spiritism may succeed where the Charkha has failed!

Mr. R. J. Gokhale (17 D. G. Colony, Poona 4) authorizes me to repeat here the offer of a prize of Rs. 500/- to Mr. Rishi or any body else if he succeeds in getting from spirits any information which is demonstrably unknown to his medium. I know that he will not accept the challenge, as mediums have never accepted a similar challenge given by an American magazine with the even more tempting offer of $ 10,000. They take an air of superiority and pretend that it cannot be done for money. It seems, however, from previous correspondence published in the papers that Mr. Rishi is not at all indifferent to 'filthy lucre' in material cash gained by means of his spiritual and ethereal entities, since he actually makes a charge for obtaining information from spirits. One correspondent quotes the instance of Sir Oliver Lodge not accepting the challenge. Professional mediums are in a different category from Sir Oliver Lodge, who is not known to have made money through mediums. Mr. Rishi does, and if he does not accept the challenge, it can only be because he is sure that he will not succeed. Even if he had the slightest doubt about it, he would take the chance, since he is not being asked to pay an indemnity if he fails. Mr. Gokhale is willing to accept a Committee of Professors of Philosophy from Bombay colleges to judge the performances. Our readers need not delude themselves into thinking, however, that they are going to see some fun, because Mr. Rishi will never accept any reasonable test. People say that discretion is the better part of valour, and so do we believe.

A HISTORY OF

FREETHOUGHT

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

by

J. M. ROBERTSON

COMPLETE IN

Two Volumes. Over 300 pages in each. Illustrated.

Rs. 5/- postage extra.

Write:—**Secretary, R. A. I.**

Rationalism and War.

By Maestro

RECENTLY, much has been written endeavouring to explain the real causes of war. This has tempted me to write this short article portraying my views on this irrational stumbling block of civilisation.

It is my opinion that progress and a stable social order can only be obtained by circulating the *truth* about the controlling factors of our lives. Today we do not know a shadow of this truth; what we know is told to us by politicians, the press and the clergy, who distort facts to conserve their domination in power and finance.

One may only arrive at a glimpse of this truth after a rational and scientific study. When this is realised, evidence should be collected and subjected to intense analysis, viewing the subject from as many angles as possible. Before any conclusion at all may be justified, great care should be taken that the mind of the student is not governed by emotion and a tendency to follow the paths of existing trends of thought, due to present methods of upbringing and teaching, but to follow a completely neutral path based upon reason and intellect.

Unfortunately this is an extremely difficult task. A man may start to study a question with a completely open mind, but as soon as he begins to be convinced by a line of argument put forward, representing one side of the controversy, his mind at once welcomes further points substantiating the original impression, and abhors with a feeling of disappointment any other arguments which tend to disprove the initial conviction.

It is largely due to this psychological fact that man holds dogmatic beliefs. Once he is convinced, he thinks only along certain fixed lines, rarely studying these beliefs by reading all their aspects, and subjecting them to the greatest of man's powers—his ability to reason.

All through life we are *told* to believe certain things, in the home, at school and through the medium of the press and the church. How often are the facts laid before us, and our ability to reason relied on to find a conclusion?

Under existing conditions, it is easily seen that right or wrong does not enter the question; we are to follow becauae we are told and as to the reasons which brought about this decisions, if we are foolish enough to inquire, it is generally not in the interests of society or the nation to reveal them. Or perhaps we should not doubt; we should believe and be loyal, as *it is so.*

It is evident that as long as nations continue in this way, so that we, the people, are mere tools in the hands of the financiers and politicians who sacrifice our lives that the honour of the nation is upheld, or to put it another way, that they should make vast sums of money and remain in power, then man is doomed.

Clearly this method of Government is quite wrong, and as long as nations remain armed gangs, each day telling its subjects that their nationality should be their greatest pride, and that the government is justified in going to war to honour a pact, which is probably made for advantageous trade reasons, then chaos is inevitable and progress impossible.

How can peace be expected under such conditions? Why should we kill each other just because we are members of a certain nation? Why cannot we be men and women primarily and the fact that we live in a certain area of the earth named....., a mere secondary consideration?.

As long as our lives are governed by this intense feeling of loyalty to a bit of ground we live on, as long as nations allow wealth to be monopolised by a few men and used as power to wreck our lives, then I can see no room for Progress.

Power is not conferred upon men for the sake of power, but to enable them to achieve ends which win happiness for each of us.

—H. J. LASKI.

The Cult of Asceticism and Renunciation

A SOCIAL DISEASE

By M. N. Roy

(By Courtesy of "Independent India")

THE national Renaissance of any people has for one of its conditions a critical view not only of the given epoch, but of its entire history. For the present is but a product of the past. A thorough change of the conditions of any given period requires, first of all, the discovery of the causes of those conditions which are usually rooted even in the remotest past of its history. An unbroken casual chain connects historical events which superficially might appear not only disconnected but positively chaotic. The present conditions of India, for example, are considered to be the result of foreign rule. To stop there is to tell only half the truth. What was the cause of the foreign conquest? That could not be an historical phenomenon without cause. The cause of that event must be sought in the past history of the Indian people. Some social disease must have enervated it so as to become an easy prey of foreign invaders. In short, only a critical examination of the past enables a people to discover the root cause of its present conditions, and the change of these latter depends upon the eradication of the former.

So long as a people seeks the consolation for its present misery in the real or imaginary glory of the past, the doors of future remain closed before it. Glorification of the past is a prominent characteristic of Indian Nationalism. Critical study of our own history is foreign to its ideology. Drunk with the cheap satisfaction that Indian culture, being "spiritual", is superior to that of other people, we do not think that there is anything for us to learn from history of foreign countries. Otherwise, it would be evident, that "the special features" of Indian culture also marked the history of other peoples. In the critical history of other peoples we might find a picture of our own past and be impelled to discover in our own history similar causes that produced analogous phenomena in other countries. It is generally believed that renunciation of the world in quest of a spiritual life is the badge of superiority of Indian culture. When the same practice is found to have been rampant also in other countries, India must give up her claim to distinction at least on that score. The favourite theory of our past thus shaken, there must begin a critical study of history as a necessary condition for the conquest of the future.

"The (early Christian) ascetics were inspired by the savage enthusiasm which represents man as a criminal and God as a tyrant....." (Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire). The ascetic Christians as distinguished from the "vulgar" renounced all the pleasures of life and duties of society. They lived on coarse and scanty food, begged or voluntarily offered. Their food excluded meat and drink excluded wine. They practised celibacy. No marriage was allowed. Body and mind were mortified by all sorts of cruel devices. Natural inclinations of body as well as of mind (love, affection, cheerfulness, rest, recreation, etc.) were condemned as vices. Monasticism was rampant. Thousands and thousands of "ascetics fled from a profane and degenerate world to perpetual solitude or religious society. They resigned the use or the property of their temporal possessions.....They soon acquired the respect of the world which they despised, and the loudest applause was bestowed on their divine philosophy which suppressed, without the aid of science or reason, the laborious virtues of the Grecian schools." (Ibid.)

A critical historian would have the courage to depict a similar picture of the ancient and mediaeval India. Not only is that not done, but similar practices are still extolled as highly commendable with sublime indifference to science and reason.

Not only did Christianity preach asceticism and renunciation of the world as virtues. Previously, the Pythagoreans had practised silence and submission as the gates of wisdom. With the Stoics also the contempt of fortune, pain and death was the badge of a philosopher; and the Cynics had demonstrated their disdain for

the amenities of life and the established customs of society.

As the Pro-Consul of the Asiatic provinces of the Roman Republic, the philosophic Pliny was amused and astonishdd to find (in the early years of the Christian era) "solitary people who subsisted without money, who propagated without women (that is, whose number increased by the influx of new proselytes, and who derived from the disgust of mankind a perpetual supply of voluntary associates." ("Natural History")

Asceticism had been practised by the Jewish Prophets during many hundred years before the rise of Chreistianity. John the Baptist was the last of a long succession of Prophets who shunned the world and thundered anathema against its vices, allurements, futility and transitoriness. The rise of Christianity was immediately preceded by the appearance of a numerous Jewish sect (the Essenians) who adopted the creed of asceticism. Then there were the Gnostics, and the mystic votaries of Alexandrian Neo-Platonism. All were so many symptoms of a social crisis which appeared to be insurmountable. Christian monasticism was the acute state of that social disease. The Christian monks only went further than their pagan ancestors. "The votaries of divine philosophy aspired to imitate a purer and more perfect model. They trod in the footsteps of the prophets who had retired to the deserts; and they resorted to the devout and contemplative life which had been instituted by the Essenians in Palestine and Egypt." (Gibbon, Ibid.)

The beginning of Christian monasticism can be traced to Egypt aptly characterised by Gibbon as "the fruitful parent of superstition." An illiterate youth named Anthony was the pinoeer of the cult. He gave up his patrimony, deserted his family and retired to the desert where he devoted himself to a life of meditation and prayer accompanied by self-mortification with fanatical rigour. The destitute Egyptian peasant soon became famous as the torch-bearer of divine light. His example was followed by thousands. In the beginning, the Christian Church looked askance at the monastic movement. But the genius of Athanasius—the redoubtable father of Catholic orthodoxy—had the courage to face the fact. Anthony became a Saint, and the powerful Bishop understood that the Church must reconcile herself with, and patronise, a movement which was striking its roots deep into the spiritual imagination of the destitute masses. Later-on, under the protection and patronage of the powerful Catholic Church, monasteries stood out as flourishing islands in the desolate sea of the social ruin that followed the fall of the Roman Empire. Religious discipline, superstition of holy severity, was the impetus to the voluntary labour of the monks which replaced the distrupted old means of production, namely, slavery.

The prolific colonies of monks multiplied in the deserts of Lybia, on the rocks of the Thebias, and in the cities throughout the valley of the Nile. The mountains and deserts in the very neighbourhood of the Egyptian capital were crowded with monks. No less than fifty monasteries were established by Anthony and his disciples. The ruins of those monuments of monasticism are still present for the observation of curious travellers. The monastic order of Anthony was composed of isolated individuals given to a life of penance, prayer and meditation in the solitude of the desert and mountains.

Pachonius established "organised communities" of recluses. "Brothers" thus living together were subjected to a severe and rigid system of the rules of conduct. Thus rose the monasteries which played such an important economic role to rescue society from the ruins of the Roman Empire. The first monastery of the Pachonian Order, founded on a small desolate island in the Nile, was peopled by fourteen hundred brethren. In quick succession the holy abbot established nine such communities for men and one also for women. Very soon the number embraced no less than fifty thousand members, pledged to strict celibacy, rigorous asceticism, severe mortification of body and mind, and complete indifference to the enjoyments of worldly life. That numerous order of devout fanatics was held together by "the Angelic rules of discipline" framed by the founders.

The populace and once prosperous cities of the lower Nile were often crowded with thousands of males and females belonging to the monastic profession. Since the temples could not accommodate the credulous crowd of devotees, public edifices and even the city walls were used as pulpits and places of worship. According to the historian Rufinus, once upon a time half the entire population of Egypt had taken to the holy life of asceticism either as recluses in the solitude, or under the "Angelic discipline" of monasticism. Gibbon writes that in those days "in Egypt it was less difficult to find a God than a man."

The knowledge and the practice of the holy life of asceticism were introduced into Rome

(*Continued on page* 82)

REASON

(ESTD. 1931)
The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road,
Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris)
Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 2/- & Foreign 3s. 6d. or $1.00 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

S. W. Willats (N. Q. Australia). Many thanks for interesting letter and cuttings. Our Ed. has written to you personally. We do not think *Plagues, Priests, and Parasites* is available now. Shall let you know if it is. Black edging to obituary notices is put only to draw immediate attention. Rs. 5 lakhs is about £500,000 (Australian). The pamphlet has been posted to you. We reciprocate your good wishes.

A. F. (Bombay). We are afraid you will have to keep guessing the identity of "Ali Akbar". Many share your desire that he (!) should contribute oftener. Thanks for good wishes.

We would like to know of persons willing to speak *for* Religion in debates to be held at the Indian Institute of Sociology Hall under the auspices of the R. A. I.

Notes & News.

TWO more nations, Denmark and Norway, have succumbed under the heel of the aggressor. And for all practical purposes we may also include a third, Sweden. That second most Christian gentleman, the Duce, we mean, is only waiting to be convinced that war is more profitable than blackmail and a benevolent neutrality. This war has been called a "war of surprises" but we do not think it should hold any surprise for anyone who has understood the nature of Fascism. No nation that adopts it can ever live in peace with another that does not. It is a danger to all civilization and progress, because it denies individual liberty and freedom of thought and expression which are the conditions of progress. It recognises no law and no morality and will stop at nothing to gain its ends. Within a decade it has reduced one of the most progressive nations to a state of barbarism. And yet we have people who are willing to stretch a hand of friendship to those very persons who were instrumental in bringing about this state of human degradation. It was rather late in the day that it was found that "Hitler's word could not be trusted" and we hope they are not still waiting to be convinced of the same thing about Mussolini. And yet the Allies do not seem to be taking it in earnest. It only remains for Italy to join Germany which seems very probable for the war to become a world conflagration. Meanwhile the "blackout" of our liberties continues and a muzzled press groans its contradictory "news".

x x x

FROM the New York *Truth Seeker* we learn of an interesting case which was tried before the New York Municipal Court on the 15th and 16th of February last. For years a certain Fundamentalist evangelists had received nation-wide publicity by offering a reward of $1,000 to anyone showing a single scientific error in the Bible. Mr. William Floyd of New York, editor of *Arbitrator*, accepted the challange and submitted a list of fifty-one scientific errors. Failing to receive the offered reward he filed a suit to collect it, against the Rev. Harry Rimmer and the Central Baptist Church.

x x x

NOW here was a fine opportunity to vindicate God's word as in complete harmony with modern science. But did they? My foot! The thousand bucks—we mean dollars—did not go with it, so they backed out through a technicality—that the plaintiff had not shown that the advertisement had been authorised by the defendants.

x x x

A correspondent to *The New Idea*, a Weekly Paper published at Melbourne, writes:

> Recently a sister died. Ever since the announcement appeared in the daily newspapers, the family has been continually pestered by letter, telephone and personal calls from the following people: A monumental sculptor who produced several designs for tombstones, and in spite of refusals would not leave the house until he was practically thrown out by the menfolk; a memorial card manufacturer; an agent who, for a consideration, was prepared to undertake the administration of the deceased's estate; a jobbing gardner seeking commission to tend the grave and keep it in order; a photographic firm offering to do enlargements. In addition a spiritualist was willing to try to get in touch with the departed and a herbalist to conduct health tests of the remaining members."

My word! The passing of a "Crosstian" does cause a boom in business, and we are assured on good authority that it causes a boom in the world beyond also! The reception of the person concerned, the grandeur of which depending on the number of masses the person has paid for, attendence at Church etc., etc. "Oh Death! Where is thy sting?"

x x x

THE effrontery of these Bible hawkers knows no bounds. They now claim that in Germany the Bible is selling as well if not better than *Mein Kampf*. We shall soon be informed that people are to be found everywhere there with a Bible in hand intensely interested in the antics of Jacob and Essau and the promises of Jehovah.

x x x

WE notice that the efforts of the "Holy Father" and his confrere the Archbishop of Canterbury to boost their wares in this sore time of ours is slackening a little. People seem chary to try again the remedies of these spiritual physicians.

x x x

A retired railway official of Dholpur yearned for fatherhood. Being denied that boon he resorted to the *Sadhus*. One of these very numerous species after being duly feted and feasted decamped with Rs. 70,000 of the host's fortune.

x x x

THE list of books of the Library of the Indian Institute of Sociology is now available and may be had from the Institute for 2as. only (postage extra). We may remind readers that the Library, which contains excellent books, is free to members of the R. A. I. who may issue books after keeping a deposit of Rs. 5/-.

———

We gratefully acknowledge the following:— Dr. R. K. Javeri, Calcutta, Rs. 5/-; A. F. Nakhoda, Singapore, Rs 10/-; Joseph I Samson, Rs. 5/-; Dr. R. P. Paranjpye Rs. 6/4; P. N. Sinha, Patna, Rs. 5/-; Dr. Paul Burton, Nilgiris, Rs. 2/-; R. M. Tulsiani, Pad-Idam (Sind), Rs. 2/-.

—ABRAHAM SOLOMON

———

An authority born of consent is always definitely superior to an authority born of coercion.

—H. J. LASKI.

THE CULT OF ASCETICISM AND RENUNCIATION

(*Continued from page* 80)

by Athanasius. The disciples of Anthony founded a settlement in the "capital of the world." Gibbon writes: "The strange and savage appearance of these Egyptians excited, at first, horror and contempt, and, at length, applause and jealous imitation. The Senators, and more specially the matrons, transformed their places and villas into religious houses." The apparent homage to the new institution of piety and devotion was rather an interest for a novelty which amused the jaded life of idleness and luxury, than a sign of spiritual fervour. Fear also played its role to enshrine the new superstition in the place of the old pagan prejudice. Encouragement to the holy institution was expected to be recompensated in after-life. Having had drunk of the worldly to the bitter dregs, the degenerate Roman aristocracy liked the sensation of the novel practice which would guarantee them a more splendorous life in the Kingdom of Heaven. The sensuousness of paganism had been under Christian censure. The institution of vestal virgins dedicated to the gods was narrow because the number of the holy objects of sanctiousness was limited. The progeny of Numa had established a monopoly of the privilege. The new institution, indeed, flourished under the frowning sign of asceticism, but did not place any limit upon the number of the consecrated virgins. These holy sisters could not always refuse their graces, not, of course, from themselves, but as the merited gift of God, to the devout Senators who had made such magnificent sacrifice to promote and patronise the angelic institution of monasticism. Portly matrons tasted a novel ecstasy by playing devout Magdalenas to the limitations of the Saviour who came to bless them in the tempting persons of sturdy peasant youths from Egypt or Syria. Some fair science of the degenerate aristocracy sought the morbid pleasure of mortifying their flesh, having been sorely disappointed by the limitedness of earthly enjoyment. Since there was nothing more to taste of life, they sacrificed but little. In such a state, an illusion is worth immensely more than the enervating feeling of over-satiation. Then, should the mortified flesh perchance be refractory and prove too restless for spiritual calm, there were holy brothers at hand to soothe the distressed with a mystical love which would drown the devil of lure in a surging sea of blissful ecstasy.

While the followers of the Egyptian Anthony and Pachonius were conquering pagan Rome, the Syrian desert was populated by the disciples of Hilarion. The Syrian youth passed twelve years of penance, prayer and ascetic life before he became the founder of numerous monasteries in his native land as well as in Palestine. In his travels, the holy man was accompanied by two to three thousand of his most ardent and devoted disciples. Later on, Simeon outshined his predecessor. At the tender age of thirteen, the shepherd youth renounced the world. His ascetic practices are reported to have defied the heat of thirty summers and the cold of as many winters at the top of a column of stone sixty feet high. In addition to the rigour of climate, the holy man, of course, resisted the mighty supernatural forces of evil which came to distract him from the celestial path. He never descended from his lofty position, but went to heaven straight with the glorious crown of voluntary martyrdom. The world that had once marvelled at the sublime speculation of a Plato and was enlightened by the scientific learning of an Aristole, groveled at the feet of an illiterate fanatic.

The name and fame of Basil are immortal in monastic history. Educated in the schools of Athens, he gave up the Archbishopric of Cæsaria and retired into the mountainous fastness of Asia Minor. Later on he founded a chain of monasteries along the coast of the Black Sea.

Nor was monasticism confined to the Eastern Provinces of the tottering Roman Empire. In the fourth century of the Christian era, the enthusiasm to renounce the world, and practise asceticism, were rampant in Gaul as well as in the distant island of Britain. Saint Martin of Tours was a soldier who became a Bishop, and was cannonised for his life of divine purity. Ecclesiastical historians of his time, particularly his biographers, maintain that the desert of the East did not produce any champion of virtue, renunciation and devotion, greater than that Gaelic Saint. It is reported that two thousand devoted disciples followed the Master to the grave.

More than two thousand devoted ascetics inhabited the famous monastery of Banchor in Flintshire. The monastic movement reached even the obscure corner of Ireland, and the holy home of Saint Colomba was built in a small island of the Hebrides. In the fifth century of the Christian era, monks and nuns scattered over the ruins of the Roman Empire —from Britain to Ethiopia and Spain to the confines of Persia—were counted in millions.

These voluntary exiles from social life were impelled by the dark and inexplicable forces of superstition. The rapid disintegration of antique society based upon slave labour, and the measure (unbearable taxation etc.) adopted to arrest the decline of the Roman Empire, had made worldly life utterly devoid of any hope for the masses. Every deluded soul was persuaded that on entering the monastic life, he or she travelled the road to eternal happiness. When the worldly life offers absolutely nothing but degenerating poverty, endless misery and a depressing perspective of still deeper degradation, the hope and promise of a mysterious life of eternal happiness can easily become the motive for the renunciation of the sinking ship, and for incredible acts of penance, asceticism and devotion to merit the tempting goal.

It is a natural impulse to run away from a house, however dear it might have been once, when it cracks and crumbles into a dreary desolation defying all efforts to repair. The natural instinct of self-preservation acquires the aura of pious heroism and admirable selflessness only because it is followed with greater enthusiasm, quickened by the alluring vision of a promised land flowing with milk and honey. Simple prudence assumes the complexion of admirable piety. Despair appears in the dazzling garb of devotion. Natural selfishness undergoes a miraculous metamorphosis, and haughtily misappropriates the doubtful glory of the religious fervour of renunciation. Still, to desert a sinking ship with the forlorn hope of reaching the safety of a welcome shore, can hardly be distinguished as an act of exceptional bravery, even though it implies the risk of drifting in dark and unknown waters.

(To be continued.)

Every Progressive Indian must read

THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM

BY

Dr. R. P. PARANJPYE, M.A., D.SC.

Price One Rupee. Post Free.

TO MEMBERS OF THE R. A. I.

Annas 8 only.

TODDLE AND TWADDLE

(Submitted to the World Congress of Faiths—Continuation Movement—at the Sorbome, Paris 1939)

By M. V. V. K. Rangachari, Cocanada, India.

IT is egg-dance even to-day, after *Homo Sapiens* discovered the feet. Man gained little stability since Colombus rounded the seas. If he could direct the egg to stand, his cunning proved the need for a larger number of the points of contact than one. The two feet have been tried with symbolic reverence for ages. The lower limbs epitomise submission and surrender. They remind us of the supreme need of the hour, humility, that disarming angel in whose sight aggression, the petty ego-demon vanishes. It pays probably hereafter, as it certainly paid before, for humanity to keep before it constantly the impress of the means of locomotion.

We can no more afford to crawl on the entire fore-body. That meant greater exertion even larger dependence on the ground than its ruggedness warranted. Vipers whose vantage is their venom, have yet this shortcoming, that they cannot lose touch with even an inch of the rocky soil on which their belly glides. The pedestrian risk is less, for every step he places on the earth, in that two at least are traversed in the air. Withal, the continuity of contact is not broken as in the winged flight. Our feet depend, even when they do not descend, on the earth.

Worship, then, the feet, the holy feet, not merely of the divinities, incarnate or discarnate, but even the bony frames, bundles of nerves and of flesh, nay even the clay-footed fetishes that ever helped our kind to stand on our legs. Our saints and saviours could never have walked the earth without them. We, the common Mr. Mrs. or Misscan do much less. It is part of the daily worship of the Sri Vaishnav to revert to the feet of his Guru (preceptor) and his God. We pay homage to the impression made in sandal or on silk, and in true devotion we would wash the feet of an enlightened guest. And as each has got to repeat the process in his own turn, the chances of priestly arrogance are minimised in Prapatti (surrender.) Hark, the Naman (caste-mark) calla. It is the perpetual reminder of movement, of gentle march, of soft progress, of continuous human achievement, how different from the unstable egg, reptilian stomach-motion, the leaping frog, or the swooping vulture!

Yet there is a dialectical implication in this ancient, if not primitive faith reverencing feet. After life descended from its arborial Habitat, feet have been constantly the dual number (*Nitya dvi vachana*). Mankind cut beastly quadrupedian logic in two halves. And in the search for the reconciliation of the pairs of opposites, for resolving vital conflicts, or synthesizing discordant antitheses, what comes in more handy, more deft or appropriate than the potent limbs attached to, yet at a respectable distance from, the not-always-congenial soil of life-and-death revolutions? In the strange admixture of joy and pain, the two feet help the balance to retain. These are indeed tender structures on which humanity is still toddling. Nor may we overlook the feet for that they have not carried us beyond our strifes, passions, attachments and wars. Much as they keep us in bondage, linked to the surface of life, we are yet a long way from perfecting within ourselves a saner or safer means of transport into the real depths of creation or the sublime flights of stratospherical ascent. Submarines swim under water, flying ships negotiate the skies. But do they add power to the engine of life? Rather are not they enfeebling it every time they roar death *en masse*? The negative genius for speed heads for the breakdown. Even its stupendous prospect recalls humility, the need for reversing the engines, the teturn to the feet, tender like the lotus. After all humanity's exercises and talent, the feet are tender, even touchy and sore. No wonder astute scriptural saws bring in the lotus delicacy when referring to these (Pada Padma) They require more delicate handling than bombs, machine-guns or poisons-gas may ever be capable of.

These too resolve our difficulties and differences, powder and shot, mines and torpedoes, shells and aerial-bombers. They awaken and develop a community-loyalty with millions joining together. They even promote the spirit of fellowship among the victims who are not merely walking on this base earth, but throng in progressive hordes in another. Those who keep faith in the bullet, them the spirit of world-dominion possesses. Their arms resolve opposition into dust. Death is for them the

resurrection and the way. An entire horizon filled with the shadow of the dogging 'Ego' (aham, I) leaves no room for light or reflection. Will ever the human feet scorch their shape tattooed on the shoulder-hide of unmindful arrogance ?

Promote fellowship through religion! It is not certainly the religion that till recently peopled another world with torture and burning sulphur. We have perfected the hell-craft already here in this life. If faith in old-time assertion is held out as the price for entrance, the consolations of the spirit avail little for Orthodox Ethiopia or Confucian China. We may hug any formula nearest our heart, but it will soon turn out a barrier between our own and other perhaps kindlier ones. In this regard, ideal beliefs like Atman, Karma, re-incarnation, and release (Moksha) are as disruptive as the Totems and Taboos, fetishes shaped in wood and clay of the primitive context. These are framed-up, rest-houses for the wander-weary mind of man. As it is impossible that one thought alone could dominate or occupy even a single individual for any length of his experience, these formulae abound even as there are mental activities, or as there are their frustrations. We cannot do away with distinct individual experiences, nor weave them into universal patterns That would offend against the diversity confronting life at every turn. Not by abstracting away from pluralistic real experiences may unity be attained. We may Instal idols more or less refined, formulate symbologies more or less general, but the method of religion apart from metaphysical egg-dancing will have to cut across its surface somehow, somewhere. Or religion may conceal the egg altogether in the folds of its cloak. Many are such folds of ignorance covering failure. Our faiths have ceased to be in living touch with our social needs. They do not bear intimately on our progress. Our creeds do not resolve the issues of relentless depression, embarrassing over-population, obselete social relationships and lying conventions that have far out-lived a fading background. Cloaked under all folds, inside the shell, there is one life-principle, the basic franchise, the right of being HUMAN. All else is surplusage, wasteful, even injurious.

India anticipated though-activity on the line. Its dialectical Sarira Mimamsa pursued the rational trends without fear or favour. It was sage Vyasa (Badaryana) who held that worship with the help of symbols did not emancipate. (Brahma Sutras, IV, III, 15) because, a symbol, even if it be merely verbal, as a word or sound-syllable, preponderates in such meditation. Therefrom arise differences. (Viseshancha darsayati, ibid. IV iii, 16.) The undifferentiated universality is left behind. The babel of tongues and the medley of faiths have created more breaches in life than they have helped to close. Indian spirituality thus exercised its talent more in the direction of ratiocinating Metaphysics (Vedanta) than on Theological Dogma that broke into denominationalism in Christendom. The composers of the Upanishads were "perfect free-thinkers, recognising no external authority and appealing only to the introspection and understanding of their readers" (Pandit Sitanath Tatwabhushan).

Even while they profess to support Theism, they are rapidly on the wing, riding on the eagle (Garuda) of Pantheism. That it was never Atheism, none of the genuine seers ever denied. To them it made no difference. They could live together, think together, feel together, God or no-God, Sat or Asat, One or Many. They knew fully that thoughts and feelings, impulses and activities are founded on life and its nourishment. Beyond that they could never have forsaken any man or country on mere ideological discrimination. Not until the seed of humanity is planted firmly, not until the soil that receives it is irrigated with care, not until then is safety ensured. Our group-loyalties will, otherwise, tend to acquire restrictive significance, even as the creeds fomented antagonisms in religious history. With experience as guide, it falls on our shoulders to refuse to countenance qualitative preferences or dogmatic allegiences. The point of contact for humanity is man, and to help to strengthen his foothold on this planet is the highest ideal of the Fellowship. We do not pretend to be freed from the pairs of opposites through the intervention of a miracle. Our pleasures and pains have simply to be borne. Our virtue is rooted in life as our vices are our special concern. Those who pretend to shirk human responsibility or shove it on extra-mundane influence are either deceived or deceptive. It does not strenthen the bond of unity to be quarrelling about abstractions, their content or connotation. They are not the pet animals tethered to the pegs of belief, nor tearing hounds violating the homes of unbelievers. Our faith is in the human feet, however feeble, and in the human good-sense howsoever distracted.

Here, in this part of the world, those faltering steps of Gandhi and his cautious good-

(Continued on page 87)

Unveiling "The Isis Unveiled."

(Are the Miracles Mentioned by Madame Blavatsky True ?)

By R. J. GOKHALE

MADME Blavatsky is regarded as a great authority on occult matters by Theosophists, and one would like to know whether the following accounts of miraculous phenomena in *Isis Unveiled* are trustworthy. If they are not, will any of her followers explain what amount of reliance is to be placed on a work disfigured by so many false statements. Many of Madame Blavatsky's authorities are also regarded as untrustworthy by scientists, *e.g.*, Reichenbach, Jaccoliot etc. Regarding Reichenbach, the article on Psychical Research in the Encyclopedia Britanica says: "The existence of Reichenbach's rays was fairly well disproved."

(Page 668, Vol. XVIII).

1. Indian Conjurors' power to create a mango tree.

"We have witnessed the same experiment (growing a mango tree from the mango stone) in India and Tibet. Until the experiment was ended we never once removed our eyes from the pot."

—Page 142, Vol. I.

2. Wonderful Fish.

Curious instance of the attraction between all bodies of the planatry system and energy things organic as well as inorganic :—At (In ?) Siam there are two species of fishes called *Palout* and *Pla-cade*. Once salted and placed uncut (whole) in the pot, they are found to exactly follow the flux and reflux of the sea, growing higher and lower in the pot as the sea ebbs or flows.

—Page 210.

3. Tigers licking Monk's feet.

"Tigers lick the feet of the sleeping Talapoin (Siamese monks)."

—Page 214.

4. Perpetual Lamp.

".....A burning lamp which had continued so for 1500 years by means of a most pure liquor contained in two bottles, one of gold and the other of silver."

"We have seen a lamp so prepared and we are told that since it was first lighted on May 2 1871, it has not gone out."

—Pages 227-9.

One of such (perpetual) lamps is mentioned by the Rev. S. Mateer of the London Mission. In the temple of Trivendrum there is a deep well inside the temple into which immense dishes are thrown year by year, and in another place, in a hollow covered by a stone, a great golden lamp which was lit over 120 years ago, still continues burning.

—Page 225.

5. Effect of maternal impressions on the foetus.

"We have but to recall the very familiar phenomenon of.....birth marks, where effects are produced by the involuntary agency of the maternal imagination under a state of excitement."

—Page 384.

6. Subtle Body ('Linga Sharir') of plants.

"Ashes of burnt plants contained in vials, when heated, exhibited again their various forms....."A small cloud rose took a defined form and presented to the eye the flower or plant the ashes consisted of."

—Page 476.

Andrew Grosse produced *acari* in the following manner.

"Black flint burned to redness."

A Mr. weeks ago produced the acari in ferrocyanide of potassium.

—Page 465.

7. Miracles performed by means of the Yogic power 'Dharani.'

"Sanang Setzen" says Colonel Yule, "enumerates a variety of the wonderful acts which could be performed through *the Dharani*. Such were sticking a peg into solid rock, restoring the dead to life, turning a dead body into gold, penetrating everywhere as air does, flying, catching wild beasts with the hand, reading thoughts, making water flow backwards, eating tiles, sitting in the air with legs doubled under, etc."

—Page 471.

8. Walking in the air.

"He (the priest of Siam) mounts fifty feet in the air with taper in hand and flies from idol to idol, lighting up the matches, self-supported and stepping as confidently as though he were upon solid ground. This, persons have seen and testify to."

—Page 495.

"The officers of the Russian squadron..... relate the fact that besides many other marvels, they saw jugglers walk in mid air from tree top to tree top without the slightest support."

—Page 495.

9. Miraculous Oil.

"An oil having several most extraordinary virtues is extracted from it (Asbestos). When rubbed into the body.....the person so rubbed may boldly step into the hottest fire; unless suffocated, he will remain uninjured. Another property of the oil is that when combined with another substance that we are not at liberty to name and left stagnant under the rays of the moon on certain nights indicated by native astrologer, it will breed strange creatures."

—Pages 504-5.

10. Talking Idols.

"Speaking of Kashmir, Marco Polo observes that they make their idols to speak.

To this day the greatest magician mystics of these regions may be found in Kashmere."

—Page 505.

11. Talking Baby Buddhah (in Tibet).

"There was a *baby* in arms (reincarnated Buddah) *standing erect and firm as a man*..... The miraculous creature repeated sentence by sentence "I am Buddah etc."

—Page 602, Vol. II.

12. Miracles about Todas. †

"No body ever saw the funeral of a Toda. Nor are they taken sick with cholera."

"Though the country around swarms with tigers and other wild beasts, neither tiger, serpents, nor any other animals was even known to touch either a Toda or one of their cattle, though they never use a stick."

—Page 614, Vol. II.

Note:—This article was rejected by the theosophist monthly the *Aryan Path*. —Asstt. Ed.

†Todas—People of a wild tribe inhabiting parts of the Nilgiri Hills in the Madras Presidency.

TODDLE AND TWADDLE

(*Continued from page* 85)

sense witness the seed sprouting anew. The soil where Kapila tilled, where Budha watered, and where Asoka farmed may not prove barren. Our religion reacted in many ways in succeeding history but the central theme of allegiance to the two feet (Charana dvandva) is seldom lost sight of. This foot-loyalty (Dvayanusandhana) is proof against the fallacy of mistaken identity. There are scriptures proclaiming unity and those that emphasize difference (Bheda srutis and abheda srutis). India knows these dialectical exercises pertaining to evolution and her symbology referring to Brahman-Atman (God-soul) interrelation is founded on experience. Right and left is implicit in feet; antithesis is inevitable. One-footed is either deformed or lame. The way of achieving unity is not by rooting out diversity.

"I do not bow to the two feet that I might be helped to resolve antithesis of conflicting impulses and emotions and unhelpful environment." That is a hard reality for which the only solution is to face with courage and endurance. "Nor to avoid the horrors of hell however painful". The phantasy of after-life inflicted untold suffering on the human mind even while the agony of life here had been plentiful. "Nor even do I desire to enjoy the celestial fragrance of paradise", a reward in expectancy for ritualist sacrificers. Let me have the good sense to rely on the two feet, *per se*, irrespective of reward or punishment, or even the hope of being disentangledf rom the cyclic recurrences of conflicting complementaries.

"Naham vande tava charanayordvandvam
advandvahetoh
Kumbhipakam gurumapi Harernarakam
napanetum
Ramyarama mridutanulata nandane napi-
rantum
Bhave bhave yabhavane bhavayeyam
bhavantam" (Mukundamala, 4)

Gandhi is India's faith. He is for truth and non-violence (Ahimsa). His old feet falter, and his spent breath is whisper scarcely audible. Many times he confessed defeat, retraced his steps, contradicted his own logic. But withal, in some peculiar sense, we have not a bolder pair of limbs nor powerful voice than Gandhi's for considerable time. He leads. We have faith in his two feet, weak as is his frame. We confide in his teaching which can scarcely be connected into a system. To toddle and to twaddle that is the highest humanity ever did or even could.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donations in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000/-.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer.

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

* If you recognise Human Equality,

* If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,

* If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrasy.

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office-Bearers:

President:—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.
Vice-Presidents:—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. and Mr. R. B. Lotewalla, *Hony. Treasurer:*—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee:*—Mr. J. M. Cooper, Dr. S. B. Gadgil, Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. A. Husein, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. S. B. Rath. *Jt. Hony Secretaries:*—Mr. Milton David, Mr. Abraham Solomon.

For further particulars please write to:—

The Secretaries,

Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,
BOMBAY 2.

Printed by B. M. Shet at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay 1. Edited and Published by R. D. Karve, M.A., for the Rationalist Association of India at 13, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.

REASON

JUNE & JULY 194
Vol. VIII No. 6 &
PRICE 4 ANNAS.



THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Objects of the Rationalist Association of India.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

NATIONAL PLANNING
By R. D. KARVE.

THE CULT OF ASCETICISM
By M. N. ROY.

IN DEFENCE OF SPIRITISM
By H. S. MUKERJEE.

THE BERTRAND RUSSELL CASE

THE RIGHTS OF MAN
By H. G. WELLS.

EMILE ZOLA CENTENARY
By ERNEST THURTLE, M. P.

NOTES & NEWS ETC.

Editor :
R. D. KARVE, M. A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).

STANDARD WORKS BY FAMOUS FREETHINKERS

Thinkers' Library

Education: Intellectual, Moral and Physical by Herbert Spencer. A great book on a great subject.

A Short History of the World by H. G. Wells. In the pages of this book we review the pageant of earth, of life, of primitive man, and of civilisation, as seen by one of the most vivid writers of our day.

Anthropology (in 2 Vols) by Sir E. B. Tylor. This is the scientific "Book of Genesis." Vol. 1 describes the life of early Man and how he learned to talk and write. Vol. 2 deals with the arts of life and pleasure, and the growth of Knowledge and Religion.(Illustrated).

The Evolution of the Idea of God by Grant Allen. Twenty years were occupied in preparing and ten years in writing this standard work on the history of the God-idea—which is the history of religion itself.

The Churches and Modern Thought by Vivian Phelips. A frank, fearless, and fascinating study of the question "Is Christianity True?"

The Martyrdom of Man by Winwood Reade. Acclaimed as a classic of the nineteenth century, unequalled in artistry of language and lucidity of style.

The Evidence for the Supernatural by Dr. Ivor, LL. Tuckett. Surveys the answer of Science to the question "Is Spiritualism True?" Is the Supernatural credible?"

The Existence of God by Joseph McCabe. A scholarly and searching examination into the origin, history, and present position of the belief in God with a reply to Sir J. Jeans, Sir A. Eddington, and other apologists.

Psychology for Every Man (and Woman) by A. E. Mander. Gives a clear and concise introduction to the study of human character.

Letters on Reasoning by J. M. Robertson. A scholarly exposition on rational thinking.

Clearer Thinking; (Logic for Every Man) by A. E. Mander. A valuable and practical guide to clear and logical thinking.

Man and His Universe by J. Langdon-Davies. An excellent survey of Man's progress from a primitive outlook on life to a modern scientific one and the causes that contributed to it.

First Principles by Herbert Spencer (Rs. 2/-) A clear and orderly synthesis of knowledge.

The Rights of Man by Thomas Paine. A treatise in defence of those principles of freedom for which the author so valiantly fought and suffered.

The Universe of Science by Prof. H. Levy An excellent book on the Philosophy of Science.

Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings by Henry Maudsley, M. D Reveals the psychological processes by which man arrived at beliefs commonly attributed to mystical sources.

Price Re. 1/- each, post free.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

New Members Joining
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA
will get free:

THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM
By Dr. R. P. Paranjpye

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER
A series of talks between
Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, AND FOUR PASTORS
AND
"REASON"
for one year

*

WRITE TO:
The Jt. Hon. Secretaries:
The Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Every Student of Hindu Law should read.
THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY
PRIZE ESSAY
ON
"WHY THE PRESENT
HINDU LAW
OF
SURVIVORSHIP
APPLICABLE TO
JOINT FAMILY PROPERTY
SHOULD BE ABOLISHED".

By:
K. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR,
B.A. (HONS.) LL.B.,

PRICE As. 4. POSTAGE EXTRA.
CAN BE HAD FROM:—
THE HINDUSTAN BOOK DEPOT.
21, Dalal Street, Fort, BOMBAY.

IT is not truth that makes man great,
but man that makes truth great.

—CONFUCIUS.

REASON

Vol. VIII | JUNE & JULY 1940 | No. 6 & 7

National Planning

By R. D. KARVE

IT was a pleasant surprise to see that one of the National Planning Committees has had the sense to recommend the spread of knowledge of modern birth-control methods as a means of keeping population within bounds so as to make it possible ultimately to provide adequate sustenance to every individual in the country. The benefit from the individual point of view, arising from a limited family, need not be pointed out, and it is this individual point of view which affects people's behaviour much more than any considerations of nation-building. I believe this result is due mainly to the efforts of Prof. Radhakamal Mukerjee, who is a staunch advocate of birth-control. Some humour is provided by the riders attached to this principal recommendation. One of these says, for instance, that stress must be laid on self-control as a means of birth-control. Experts all the world over are agreed that these are idle words, but considering that these Committees are appointed by the Congress which is dominated by Gandhi, who is an obstinate advocate of self-control, though everybody except himself knows that it has been a failure in his own case, it is not surprising that such a clause is introduced as a sop to the Dictator. The wonder rather is that artificial means of birth-control are recommended at all, as these are severely condemned by the great man.

I look back with some pride to 1921, when I began birth-control propaganda here, the first, I believe, to do so at least in this part of India, in the same year in which Dr. Marie Stopes started her first clinic in England. Of course I did not stop at propaganda, but also gave practical advice. Readers can imagine how difficult it must have been to make any headway at a time when that pillar of conservatism, the *Times of India*, refused to accept even paid advertisements of my small pamphlet on the subject, entitled "Morality and Birth-Control" now out of print. Other papers more or less followed the lead given by that paper, though some did accept advertisements. It was not until Dr. Hutton, in the last census report, emphasized the necessity of birth-control and pointed out its special need for India, that the *Times of India* began at least to open its correspondence columns to discussions on the subject. Of course, its well-known absence of impartiality was visible even there, though it made a show of allowing both sides to be represented. No letter from me, for instance, had ever any chance of appearing. When Mrs. Sanger and Mrs. How-Martyn paid a visit to Bombay some years back, a good deal of nonsense was appearing in the correspondence columns of the *Times of India* over the signature "Social Reformer," and Mrs. How-Martyn asked me why I did not reply to it. I told her that the *Times of India* would never print anything written by me, but one Dr. Patel, who was present at the time, undertook to get a reply published if I wrote one. I agreed, wrote a reply immediately and sent it to Dr. Patel. He suggested a few minor alterations, which I accepted, and the letter was sent to the *Times of India* with both our signatures appended. The letter did appear, but in a mutilated form, with neither his signature nor mine, but some fancy name such as "social reorganizer" substituted in their place. I was rather glad that my signature did not appear, because in

its mutilated form, it did not make any sense and I should have been sorry to be considered the author of such nonsense.

Obviously we have travelled a long way since then, when we find a Congress-appointed Committee recommending birth-control propaganda, even if a few silly remarks are thrown in to please the orthodox. Pandit Jawaharlal, who is at the head of this National Planning business, seems to take pleasure in subordinating his intelligence to his loyalty to Mr. Gandhi, and the results are bound to be somewhat confused.

Another objectionable rider, which can compete in silliness with the one about self-control, says that polygamy should be discouraged, with a view to check the growth of population. One wonders whether any of the learned members of the Committee have ever given a thought to this subject, beyond remembering that Gandhiji is opposed to polygamy and that bills for suppressing it were encouraged by the Congress Ministries. I have not the personnel of the Committee before me and it is quite possible that they were not all competent, but were kicked into competency by nomination on the Committee. But at least Prof. Radhakamal Mukerjee was there and he ought not to have allowed such a gross and palpable error to creep in.

The desirablity or otherwise of polygamy can of course be considered on its merits and I am not at all prepared to say that it should be utterly condemned. It has not at all been proved that monogamy makes people, even women, happier. Women merely want to stop polygamy because they have not the corresponding privilege of having more than one husband. The sensible way of claiming equal rights would be to claim that right, instead of which they want to curtail the rights of men. That is, however, not the point at issue here. What the Committee implies by its recommendation is that polygamy encourages the growth of population. Now this implication is utter nonsense, at least in this country. It would make sense in Europe if polygamy was allowed there, because in Europe women are more numerous than men, so that monogamy forces some women to remain unmarried, and hence childless, since unmarried women are not supposed to have children. In India, however, that is not the case. Women are not more numerous than men, but rather less, and besides that, most Hindu widows do not marry again though they are allowed to do so by law now. This reduces the number of women still further. The result of polygamy in India, therefore, is that more men have to remain unmarried than would otherwise be the case.

But how does this affect the population? All women can marry if they want to, whether monogamy is enforced or not, because the number of men is greater. The only question to be considered, therefore, is whether a woman becomes more fertile when she shares a husband with other women than when she has a husband to herself. The answer is perfectly obvious. Sharing a husband may not reduce her chances of pregnancy, because one man can impregnate a practically unlimited number of women if he is at all capable of it, but it will certainly not increase her chances. One may go further and say that under monogamy, a defective man will keep only one woman from having children, while under polygamy, such a man will prevent all his wives from having children. It may perhaps be argued that such a man will not marry at all, but it is well-known that such men often do marry, for prestige if not for pleasure. So, in a country like India, where women are not more numerous than men, if polygamy affects the population at all, it will be in the direction of decrease rather than increase.

I am suprised that this did not strike anybody. This is probably the result of taking ideas from European authors and applying them to Indian conditions without analysing them.

However, it is a great thing to have the principle of birth-control by modern methods admitted. Once this is done, attention can be concentrated on devising suitable means. The means which are recommended as most suitable by experts all over the world are unfortunately rather expensive for the very poor people who need birth-control most. India is one of the poorest countries in the world, but even if cheaper means are not found a great deal can be done by persuading sensible people to turn all their charity into this sensible channel, which is next in importance to food. A great deal of charity in India is wasted in feeding the idle poor and religious mendicants who sometimes call themselves Sadhus and Fakirs and suck the life-blood of the people. A great deal of money is wasted in building temples which also occupy a lot of space which may be more profitably used. Most religious charity is undertaken with the object of securing a comfortabl place in Heaven, and such charity is very of

(*Continued on page* 102.)

The Cult of Asceticism and Renunciation

A Social Disease

By M. N. ROY

(*Continued from page* 83.)

UNDER the hopeles conditions of social dissolution, the Christian doctrine of the end of the world was received with frightful credulity. Who would not run away from a world doomed to an early destruction? And since it was encouraged by the temptation of getting a place in the Kingdom of Heaven, the fearful flight naturally became as it were a stampede of a hungry mob towards an inexhaustible store of food. Similarly, when the Hindu persuades himself that the world is but a hallucination, he easily and often cheerfully foregoes its enjoyments, which are placed beyond his reach by the inequities of a religious society. The preconceived notion about the surety of the eternal bliss of a spiritual existence induces the imaginary renunciation of what is not possessed and will never be possessed. It is so very much like the disappointed fox who consoled himself with the deception that grapes were sour.

Even such impious and temporal considerations as vanity and worldly power played their part in the spread of monasticism. "It was naturally supposed that the pious and humble monks, who had renounced the world to accomplish the work of their salvation, were the best qualified for the spiritual government of the Christians. The reluctant hermit was torn from his cell, and seated, amidst acclamations of the people, on the Episcopal Throne; the monasteries of Egypt, of Gaul and of the East, supplied a regular succession of Saints and Bishops and ambition soon discovered the secret road which led to the possession of wealth and honour.....The popular monks insinuated themselves into noble and opulent homes; and the specious acts of flattery and seduction were employed to secure those proselytes who might bestow wealth or dignity on the monastic professions .....The credulous maid was betrayed by vanity to violate the laws of nature; and the matron aspired to imaginary perfection by renouncing the virtues of domestic life."(Gibbon).

A critical study of the monastic and akin institutions in India would reveal not a very different picture. Describing the religious Convention of Kanauj, convened by king Harshabardhan (in the first half of the seventh century) and presided over by the famous Chinese monk Huen Tsang, Havell writes: "These great church dignitaries from monasteries like that of Nalanda were mounted on elephants; others were carried in palanquins; they were attended by a numerous suit." ("Aryan Rule of India") The Convention over, for twenty days treasures were distributed to the delegates, over ten thousand of whom received hundred pieces of gold each in addition to rich garments, jewels and perfumes. In the period of Buddhist ascendency, the Sanghas enjoyed great political power as well as vast material riches. Subsequently, the wealth of the Hindu Maths and Temples became fabulous. The monastic orders and priestly hierarchy, while preaching the virtue of renunciation, lived a life of opulence and comfort. Imaginary, often fradulent, spiritual elevation brought material splendour and temporal power to those who might have remained in obscure poverty, had they not resorted to the pretension, imagination and fraud of a holy life. Renunciation guaranteed the practitioner of the comfortable cult, the means of material subsistence as well as honour, prestige and power. Even to-day, the Sadhu enjoys a privileged position in Hindu society. So much so that, while the producing masses are economically bankrupt, the society supports no less than five million religious vagabonds and parasites.

In India, monasticism became rampant during the Buddhist period and continued flourishing after the triumph of Hindu reaction. It was in the latter period that the numerous orders of Sadhus and Sanyasis came into existence.

The Buddhist monk Upagupta was accompanied by eighteen thousand followers when

he met his royal disciple Asoka. To celebrate the establishment of Buddhism, Asoka distributed eleven lakh pieces of gold coins to the assembled mendicants. The number of religious beggars attending king Harsha's charitable feasts at Prayag, about a thousand years later, was still larger. A very substantial percentage of the adult population must have swelled the monastic order during those thousand years. It is recorded, that the best part of the manhood of the kingdom of Magadha entered the monastic life. Buddhist monasticism was analogous to its Christian prototype. Both represented despair caused by the collapse of the old social order, and a vain effort to solve the problems of life by running away from it.

In the world of early Christianity as well as in India, monasteries were filled mostly by the destitute who gained much more in the new life of renunciation than they had actually sacrificed. It has been ascertained by critical historians that the great majority of the inmates of the Christian monasteries were pauperised peasants, runaway slaves and destitute artisans. For those unfortunate victims of a social catastrophe, the new life was a welcome escape from hopeless poverty, unbearable extortions and endless hardships. They left a perilous life of dishonour and contempt for a safe and laudable profession. The destitute and downtrodden scum of the earth became the chosen elite whose entrance into the glorious Kingdom of Heaven was assured. The austerities of monastic life were a very inconsiderable price to be paid for the invaluable reward. The physical hardships and privations of the holy profession were easily borne by the brothers and sisters accustomed to manual labour. They were borne cheerfully, since those enlisted in the service of God were guaranteed the indispensable necessities of life, which had not been always and easily available to them before. The ecclesiastical historian Tilemont writes that in Egypt, for example, "a monk lived more comfortably than a shephred." No wonder that destitute shepherds enthusiastically embraced monastic life, which transformed them into proud and privileged leaders of the swarms of devout bipeds, instead of the scarce and costly sheep they no longer possessed to tend.

For more than two hundred years, all the inmates of the Buddhist monasteries were also recruited from the poor oppressed classes. Havell writes: "For over two centuries, the Buddhist Sanghas were not influential enough to win many powerful patrons among the Aryan aristocracy, either Brahman or Kshatriya. It became the State religion only after it had outgrown its original revolutionary fervour. Then the doors of the opulent monasteries were closed to the down-trodden. It was ordained by the temporal lords that the Sanghas should not be used as a means of escaping secular obligations or evading the laws of the State. No one could enter them to avoid payment of debts; criminals under punishment, deserters from royal services and slaves were also excluded." Evidently, until then the Sanghas had offered a hospitable refuge to those unfortunate social outcasts.

The social background of the Christian cult of monasticism has been depicted by Gibbon as follows: "The subjects of Rome, whose persons and fortunes were made responsible for unequal and exorbitant tributes, retired from the oppression of the imperial government; and pusillanimous youths preferred the penance of a monastic, to the dangers of a military life. The affrighted provincials of every rank, who fled before the barbarians, found shelter and subsistence (in monasteries); whole legions were buried in these religious sanctuaries; and the same cause which relieved the distress of individuals impaired the strength of the empire."

Exactly similar causes were in operation also in India. As an admirer of the spiritual essence of Indo-Aryan culture, Havell can be trusted to make a proper appreciation of monasticism. Nevertheless, he writes: "Monastic life was held in so high esteem and offered so many attractions to the Kshatriya youths, that the fighting strength of Aryawarta was becoming dangerously weakened, and the resources of the State needed for national defence were absorbed by the thousands of monasteries filled with the wearers of the yellow robe." Again, "The conquest of Sindh by the Arabs was made easy by the fact that thousands of the male population had adopted the yellow robe for the sake of the easy life of the monastery.....The monastic system continued to absorb a large proportion of the flower of Indian manhood even after the development of Brahman philosophy".

Monasticism had become such a serious social menace that, after the death of Asoka, the Maurya rulers tried to check its ruinous progress by imposing heavy penalties upon those who left their families without provision. But the flood tide of social dissolution could not be resisted. It swept away the splendid empire of the Mauryas.

All the persecutions and repressions of the Hindu kings proved impotent to stem the tide of Buddhist Nihilism. Pushyamitra, who overthrew the Buddhist Maurya dynasty and assumed the leadership of Brahmanical reaction, deprived the monastic order of all power in the State, acquired since the time of Asoka. Monasteries were forcibly dissolved, and monks persecuted everywhere. Yet, monasticism could not be stamped out. It kept on flourishing in the face of persecution.

The sagacity of the Indian Constantine, Asoka, sought, and to some extent succeeded, to harness the ideology of social dissolution for the defence and even consolidation of the decayed social order, by pandering demonstratively to the vanity of monaticism. Under the royal patronage of Asoka and his successors, Buddhism stopped short of running its cataclysmic course of Nihilism; and that very deviation from its basic principle ultimately caused the downfall of Buddhism and contributed to the re-establishment of Brahman orthodoxy. In order to be victorious, Christianity also capitulated to the obstinate forces of pagan superstition; but the hybrid religion of the Catholic Church retained the original name of Christianity. In the case of Buddhism, the capitulation was complete. Even the name had to go in return for a place conceded to its founder in the list of the legendary Avatars of Hinduism. The superstitious practices of Hinduism corrupted and caused the downfall of Buddhism. But the vanquished was avenged by the fact that its most characteristic feature—monasticism—passed on to the triumphant religion. The hero of the conquering host, Shankaracharya himself, was the founder of the most powerful and abiding monastic order.

Critical investigation will bring into light the fact that behind the apparent prosperity of the Buddhist era, there operated similar social forces as promoted the abnormal phenomenon of monasticism in the period of decay and decline of the Roman Empire. Meanwhile, recorded history as well as social science warrant the assertion that the great majority of the Buddhist monks, and later on Hindu Sadhus and Sanyasis, must have been recruited from the masses of peasants and artisans rendered destitute and desperate by the decay of the roots of the established economic system, the resulting decline of industry and trade, pauperisation of the masses, increasing burden of taxation and various other forms of extortions and political oppression. Before the establishment of Buddhism as the State religion, propagandists of the new faith—Bhikkhus—travelled from village to village, preaching to the poor, destitute and the outcasts. Old records show that the majority of the monks and nuns were recruited from the villages, that is, from the economically ruined and socially oppressed masses.

Uncritical historians, particularly those with nationalist predilections, confound the greatness with the happiness of a nation. The greatness of a nation in the past is erroneously measured by the magnificence of the royal court and the opulence of the ruling aristocracy. It is conveniently overlooked who payed for that greatness and splendour, and what was the condition of the multitude who tilled and toiled so that the rulers could put on the flattering garb of greatness, magnificence, and renown. Invariably, the life of the multitude was devoted not voluntarily but under duress, to producing the material that went into the making of that glamorous garb of equivocal greatness.

In the early and mediæval ages, the productivity of labour was necessarily much lower than at present. Consequently, exceptional grandeur of royal cities, imposing magnificence of courts, flaunting extravagance of the nobility, vain stateliness of public and private architecture and the wasteful richness of temples and mausoleums, were not possible unless national income was very disproportionately distributed. As a matter of fact, those very monuments of national greatness testify to the endless oppression and grinding poverty of the masses. They represented a futile effort to conceal the decay of the established social order and the consequent destitution and degradation of the people. Historical research has revealed the fact that the external splendour of the Roman Empire reached the apex just when the barbarous system of slavery was eating into the very foundations of the imperial structure. That was the era of Augustus and Constantine. Later on, Justinian satisfisd his vanity for eclipsing the magnificence of his wasteful predecessors just when the economic fabrics of the empire were in ruins, and widespread bankruptcy and destitution of the toiling masses were feeding the superstition of monasticism.

For the construction of the Great Wall of China, more than twenty-five per cent of the entire social labour was withdrawn from productive activities. The result inevitably was a disastrous famine which reduced the population

(Continued on page 108)

IN DEFENCE OF SPIRITISM

By H. S. MUKERJEE

MY attention has been drawn to the article written by Mr. R. D. Karve and published in the issue of your journal for May 1940 under the caption "The Spiritist Humbug Again—A Challenge to Mr. V. D. Rishi," in which an attack has been made in general on Spiritualism, and in particular on Mr. Rishi who is the greatest exponent of modern Spiritualism in India now-a-days.

Dealing with the second point first, I propose to make a few remarks which may remove the misconceptions about Mr. Rishi's career and his work. He was an officer of the Judicial Service in the Indore State when he lost his first wife, Subhadrabai, in 1919, and began to take interest in spiritualism. He studied the subject deeply, got into touch with prominent spiritualists in England, and developed some mediumistic power himself in the shape of automatic writing. He married again and had the good fortune to find that his second wife—the present Mrs. Rishi—was also Psychic, and was able to develop her mediumistic power considerably. His studies and experiments in this subject took up so much of his time that he could no longer do full justice to his official duties. He applied for leave which was refused and then severed his connection with the State. Since then he has wholly devoted himself to the task of spreading the knowledge of the subject in India in his capacity as organiser of the Indian Spiritualist Society, and of relieving the sufferings of bereaved persons who joined the Society, by putting them in touch with the near and dear ones they have lost.

Mr. and Mrs. Rishi have visited Europe many times as representatives of Indian Spiritualists in the International Congress of Spiritualists which used to be held every three years. We do not know what actually happened in one of these trips to Europe, as alleged in the article. Suffice it to say that their Seances are *not* spectacular and fit for public demonstration like platform Clairvoyance, Direct voice phenomena, Materialisation, etc. These seances are generally held privately by themselves, or with one sitter at a time.

The success of a Seance can never be guaranteed, but, generally speaking, it may be said that if the sitter is earnest and is genuinely anxious to get into touch with those he has loved and lost, he is able to do so with the help of Mr. and Mrs. Rishi. Mr. Rishi has the power of inducing automatism in the sitter by simply touching his wrist. Mrs. Rishi is an Ouija Board writer of considerable power. It is not claimed that they have such high psychic powers as are found in the best mediums available in Europe or in America. But certainly they are the best now available in this country.

The messages that come through about the conditions of life in the other world are non-evidential. To study the subject scientifically special attention should be given to the evidential messages which can be verified, and by which the identity of the spirit which purports to communicate may be established. Such messages may be grouped as under:—(1) Physical description, (2) Characteristic behaviour, (3) Special or unique experiences, (4) Names, addresses, etc. (5) References to relatives and friends, (6) Response to questions etc. Such messages come in plenty through Mrs. Rishi's Ouija Board Indicator, and the contents of these messages are such as cannot possibly be known to her normally. No fees are charged for joining these Seances, but only those who are members of the Indian Spiritualist Society, and pay the annual subscription, are entitled to do so. It may be mentioned in passing that no spirit can be invoked against his will. The manifestation occurs through the agency of a sufficiently developed medium, if the bond of affection between the sitter and the alleged spirit is strong, or the latter wants to communicate for a special purpose. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Rishi is a clairvoyant and they are, therefore, not in a position to satisfy Mr. Karve's test of reading a particular page of a book in his pocket. But in psychic literature, there are records of many authentic cases in which powerful mediums have been able to read sealed letters and do even more wonderful feats. If Mr. Karve feels sufficiently interested in the subject, he may read Dr. Geley's "Clairvoyance and Materialisation."

As regards polyglot mediumship by which messages may be given in a foreign language not known to the medium, Mr. Rishi's power is not sufficiently developed, but it cannot be said that it is quite non-existent. We have

sometimes got messages through her in Bengali which she does not know. Instances are on record, in which messages have been delivered in other such languages also. But they do not come so fluently or satisfactorily as in English which she knows and which does not contain mixed letters like the Indian Vernacular languages. This is not to be wondered at, for if the spirit theory be true, the extraneous entities must make use not only of the physical organism but also the mental contents of the mediums. The more powerful and developed the medium is, the hand or voice may be better controlled for communicating messages in foreign tongues.

I now turn to Mr. Karve's attack on Spiritualism in general. He has quoted from the writings of Henri Poincare to show that the latter was apparently of opinion that levitations and movements of objects at a distance were nothing but fraud, and referred to Eusapia Palladino as quite fraudulent. The opinion of a Scientist on those matters, however eminent he may be, is of no value unless he cares to study critically the evidence about the genuineness of psychic phenomena recorded in the voluminous literature on the subject, or has made personal investigations which are possible only in collaboration with powerful genuine mediums. It is remarkable that those who have done so have been convinced of the reality of supernormal phenomena, however sceptical or agnostic their attitude might have been in the beginning. Sir William Crookes, Sir William Barret, Alfred Russell Wallace, Professor Richet, Dr. Crawford, Dr. Geley, Sir Oliver Lodge and a host of others may be cited as instances. There is a considerable volume of literature about Eusapia's mediumship which I cannot possibly deal with in this article. I would refer only to one book, viz. "Eusapia Palladino and her phenomena" by Dr. Hereward Carrington, which may, I think, be profitably studied by Mr. Karve. It will convince him that she was capable of producing genuine physical phenomena of the most wonderful kind, when her mediumship was at its best. As regards Levitations and Telekinesis, there are many records of authentic phenomena of this description in Psychic Literature. I would only content myself by quoting a few cases from the writings of Mr. Harry Price for whom Mr. Karve has apparently a high regard as a Psychical Researcher—

(1) "Rudi Schneider—A scientific examination of his mediumship" by Harry Price —In this interesting book Mr. Price narrates the results of his numerous experiments about the physical mediumship of Rudi Schneider in his own National Laboratory of Psychic Research when all sorts of scientific devices were used to guard against fraud.

(2) "Stella C—An account of some original Experiments in Psychical Research" by Harry Price. This book also contains some wonderful records of Telekinesis, Levitations, etc., performed by the medium under test conditions.

(3) "Leaves from a Psychist's case book" by Harry Price. (i) Chap, VI—"Lt. Irwin tells how the R 101 crashed"—In this chap. Mr. Price testifies to the genuineness of the messages received through the famous medium Mrs. Eileen Garrett, which were subsequently verified to be correct.

(ii) Chap. VIII "The swinging pendulums of Copenhagen"—In this chapter Mr. Price describes his experiments with Frau Anna Rasmussan of Copenhagen who had the wonderful power of moving pendulums in a glass case supernormally.

(iii) Chap. XIII—"The plotergeist girl" Here Mr. Price describes the wonderful exploits of Eleanor Lugun in Telekinesis, and producing scratches and stigmata on different parts of her body—all supernormally.

A perusal of the above books and the essays will convince the most hardened materialist about genuineness of Supernormal phenomena. Indeed, by the most careful and painstaking researches in psychic phenomena conducted on strictly scientific lines, Mr. Price has established the genuineness of such phenomena. It is true he does not yet accept the Spirit Theory. But his latest researches show that he is gradually veering round to it, as this is the only theory which can explain all the facts more or less satisfactorily.

As regards spirit-photography, Mr. Price has detected many frauds, and holds rather an extreme view that there is no genuine spirit-photograph in existence. This is a difficult and technical subject over which there is much controversy. I would invite attention to the pamphlet with the title "The Vindication of William Hope, or the Exposers Exposed" by the Rev. Charles L. Tweedale which will give the other side of the picture.

Finally, it is regrettable that in ridiculing the spiritualistic creed about the existence of God, etc., Mr. Karve has not scrupled "to rush where angels fear to tread." He has glibly talked about consciousness, volition, etc., i.e., all mental attributes being the function of the brain. We thought that this crass materialism of the 19th century had been exploded long ago. There is hardly space in a magazine article to discuss this deep and difficult subject. It may just be mentioned that the mental phenomena have absolutely nothing in common with the physical organism, so that it cannot be imagined how the former can possibly be a function of the latter. I would refer to Dr. James Ward's "Naturalism and Agnosticism," Dr. McDougal's "Body and Mind", and other standard philosophical works which adequately deal with this subject. Even the foremost physicists of the present day, e.g, Sir James Jeans and Sir Arther Eddington are veering round to the Idealistic Theory that the ultimate basis of the Universe is probably spiritual rather than material. This is also the doctrine of the Upanishads.

INDIAN PICTURES.

BY ASTRON.

IT is encouraging to notice the vast improvement in our Indian pictures. Apart from the improvement in technique, I mean the happy absence of that melancholy fatalism which pervaded almost all the screen stories a couple of years ago; a last-moment intervention by the supernatural, changing the would-be tragic end into a happy one. The stories now-a-days are more natural and true to life and a somewhat brave and rational outlook is apparent.

* * *

A case in point is an almost similar situation which occurs in two pictures at present being screened in Bombay, *Ardhangi* (Better-Half) and *Laxmi*. In both cases the husband of the heroine is fascinated by the "other woman" and the problem is to win him back. In *Ardhangi* the traditional *Satya-Narayan's Pooja* does the trick while in *Laxmi* there is no such humbug.

* * *

What surprises us most is the fact that the story in *Ardhangi* is written by the well-known dramatist and playright Principal P. K. Atre, who, we know, is a confirmed Atheist and cannot be expected to believe in such things. Principal Atre is supposed to be one of the best poets and playwrights in the Maharashtra and he has never made any ado about his Atheism. I am, therefore, all the more surprised and cannot understand this unnecessary stooping to ignorant superstition.

* * *

Another fine picture is *Kangan* which is an attempt at social emancipation in another direction, the breaking of social barriers between rich and poor. The story is beautiful in its simplicity and very well directed. Rationalists, knowing *Hindi*, seeking relaxation and entertainment so necessary in these anxious times, should make it a point to see both the pictures *Laxmi* and *Kangan*.

* * *

The other day I happened to interview the Director-Producer of a well-known Film Company in Bombay. Let me hasten to explain that I do not intend taking up the screen as a career nor do I belong to that very amiable tribe who keep accurate statistics of the number of letters received by their favourite "stars".

On being asked what were the considerations taken into account for selecting new stars he replied that apart from technical considerations—there was the film test, of course,—what was taken into account was whether the person concerned was educated, whether he was cultured, whether he was progressive. This is heartening indeed. If these considertions count with all our Indian producers, the future of the Indian screen is bright indeed.

* * *

The screen is one of the finest mediums for the enlightenment of the people. It is direct, effective and reaches a very large number of men and women in all walks of life. Coupled with the spread of education the Indian screen can help to mould a brave and rational outlook on life among the people of Modern India.

"**'Strange Cargo,'** a movie film starring Clark Gable and Joan Crawford, has been barred from further showings in Providence, R. I., following a protest by the Catholic Legion of Decency. The Legionaires reported: 'This picture, in which religion is the prominent issue, presents a naturalistic concept of religion contrary to the teachings of Christ, an irreverent use of Scripture and lustful implications in dialogue and situation."

—The *Truth Seeker*, New York. U. S. A.

It is better that mankind should become atheist by following *Reason* than blindly believe in two hundred millions of Gods on the *authority* of anybody.

—*Swami Vivekananda.*

ANOTHER CHAMPION OF SPIRITISM

Rejoinder By Prof. R. D. KARVE

WE print elsewhere in this issue an article fron one Mr. Mukerjee in defence of Mr. V. D. Rishi and spiritism in general. We are not personally acquainted with details of Mr. Rishi's life and have to depend on hearsay for these, and however honest Mr. Rishi may be assumed to be, this does not affect the question of spiritism in general. It is hardly worth while to discuss Mr. Rishi, but we can vouch for the incident to which we referred as having happened on one of his trips to Europe. Mr. Mukerjee 'alleges' (to use his own language) that Mr. Rishi devotes himself "to the task of spreading the knowledge of the subject in India." It would therefore seem natural for him not to discourage people who showed any curiosity about it and wished to be present at a seance. Perhaps it was because the steamer was outside India that he deliberately failed to satisfy such curiosity, his object being to spread the knowledge *in India*! Mr. Mukerjee says that the Seances are not spectacular, and that they are held by Mr. and Mrs. Rishi alone or with one sitter at a time. This is in direct contradiction of what we have heard about his seances in Poona, which were certainly not confined to 'one other person'. We have no reason to believe that our informants are dishonest, any more than Mr. Mukerjee. Mr. Mukerjee's statement can only be reconciled with our information by supposing that Mr. Mukerjee has not witnessed any seances where more persons were present, which we are quite willing to believe, but which does not disprove our contention.

Mr. Mukerjee makes use of all the usual loopholes in defence of Mr. Rishi: that Mr. and Mrs. Rishi's powers are limited, so that they may not be able to stand any tests that we may set them, that spirits do not always turn up when invited, that the manifestations occur only *if the bond of affection between the sitter and the "alleged" spirit is strong*, or the latter wants to communicate for a special purpose, and so on. The italics as well as the inverted commas are ours, but why on earth does Mr. Mukerjee used the word "alleged" before "spirit"? Perhaps this contains another excuse, that sometimes the wrong spirit turns up instead of the one invited! The words in italics are important. What sitter would like to have his affection for a deceased relative to be doubted? He would admit anything rather than that, and this naturally leads to a successful seance!

Mr. Mukerjee admits that the revelations about conditions in the other world are non-evidential, so that anything can be "alleged" about these conditions. But we expect these allegations to be at least such as to be consistent with common sense and logic. When Mr. or Mrs. Rishi pretend to give us information about courses of study followed in schools in the other world, and that a boy who dies after his third standard examination here is promoted to the fourth in the other world, we are entitled to ask what text-books they use, and where these comes from, since text-books are not known to die, so that their ghosts could be used in the other world! Also as I have asked before, what time do they use in these schools? What time does the sun set in the other world? Or perhaps these questions are rather easy, since Mr. Rishi alleges as a fundamental truth established long ago that the other world is an exact counterpart of this world. It follows that in the other-world-India, they follow Indian Standard Time, having been imposed by the other-world-British Government, and so on! Still I do not find any answer to the difficulty about text books. Does it happen by any chance that as soon as a text-book is published in this world, its exact counterpart is published in the other world? But in that case the exact counterparts of the editors and publishers, as well as the printing presses must exist in the other world. Spirits of living people must therefore already exist in the other world. How otherwise could it be an exact counterpart? How anybody who is not insane can believe such nonsense passes my comprehension. This is much more silly than any religious beliefs, which are silly enough in all conscience.

It seems Mrs. Rishi finds communications easier in English than even her own language, because English "does not contain mixed letters like the Indian vernaculars." I do not quite see what Mr. Mukerjee means by "mixed letters". Perhaps he means conjunct consonants, which the spirits apparently find it difficult to form!

In reply to my quotation of Henri Poincare,

Mr. Mukerjee says that the opinion of even an eminent scientist is of no value unless he has studied the subject. Mr. Mukerjee's idea of studying spiritism is to begin by believing in it or to begin to believe it after study. If a scientist remains a sceptic after study, he has not studied it properly. He quotes all the usual names again: Sir Oliver Lodge, Crookes, Wallace, and even Jeans and Eddington. We have dealt sufficiently with them already. He also quotes books by Harry Price, because I quoted him against spiritism. He does not seem to have seen the point of my relying on Harry Price for quotations. I quoted him because, as a President of the Psychical Research Society, nobody can accuse him of being an opponent, and his opinion about these phenomena, and about the scientists alleged to believe in spiritism is particularly valuable. If he mentions Sir Oliver Lodge and Wallace as being particularly gullible, Mr. Mukerjee can hardly be heard against him. It is no use quoting from his books in support of spiritism, because he naturally has some kind of belief in these phenomena, or else he would not have been elected President. But Mr.Mukerjee admits that "it is true he does not yet accept the Spirit Theory", though he fondly hopes that he is veering round to it. Mr. Mukerjee says that Mr. Price has established the genuineness of spiritist phenomena. It is true that Mr. Price says so on the ground that he has himself invented scientific instruments, which he considers infallible, in order to detect any deceit. But he aiso admits that mediums have been clever enough in the past to deceive in spite of attempts made by other people to detect deceit. We are quite justified in douting whether after all some medium will not be clever enough to deceive in spite of the precautions of Mr. Price. And since Mr. Price himself yet doubts the Spirit Theory, there is no sense in quoting him in support. Mr. Mukerjee gives a long list of books and says that their perusal "will convince the most hardened materialist about the genuineness of supernormal phenomena". We doubt it. When Mr. Price opines against spirit-photography and declares it a fraud, Mr. Mukerjee quotes others who do not think it a fraud. This can always be done, and we think it a waste of time to read the opinions of people who are victims of their will to believe without any appeal to reason.

Finally, Mr. Mukerjee alleges that I have rushed "where angels fear to tread". Angels are creatures of the imagination just as much as God, so naturally they do not tread anywhere except in the imaginations of believers. But I may remind Mr. Mukerjee that I am by no means the first and only atheist in the world, and that there have been and are many eminent thinkers who hold the same opinions as I do on that point. I could easily give a long list of books which may do Mr. Mukerjee good to read, but I do not venture to think that they are at all likely to convince him, since he is determined to believe in God and Spirits and what not on the most flimsy evidence imaginable. The 'verifiable information' supplied by mediums amounts to nothing more than what is supplied by plenty of astrologers who infest the footpaths of Bombay: obtained by the same means and very often wrong. Times out of number mediums have been caught cheating and it must take a very strong will to believe that they are not cheating when they are not caught.

By the way, Mr. Mukerjee contradicts himself when he says that seances are confined to one sitter, and at the same time informs us that no fees are charged for being present at sittings, but that every member of the Indian Spiritualist Society has a right to be present if he has paid his annual subscription. What is this annual subscription if not a fee paid to Mr. Rishi? What is done with these subscriptions? Is any account published? Does this money pay for Mr. Rishi's trips to Europe and tours in India? Mr. Rishi does charge fees to some people. In return for these, he is said to relieve suffering and give people messages from the dead which console them. It may perhaps be argued very plausibly that since people feel relieved by these messages, even if they are based on nothing, he is doing some good and giving a return for money. But this will not establish the truth of spiritism. However there is no reason for Mr. Rishi to worry about this, since his clients are hardly in a condition to demand logical proof. It is only people like us who will ask for it and the best way for him and his admirers would be to refrain from putting forward ridiculous arguments in support of absurd statements about the other world and similar products of disordered imaginations.

Mr. Mukerjee shows crass ignorance of elementary physiology. He says "mental phenomena have absolutely nothing in common with the physical organism, so that it cannot be imagined how the former can possibly be a function of the latter." Not only is the mind a function of the brain, but different functions of the mind are absolutely dependent on differ-

(*Continued on page* 106.)

THE RIGHTS OF MAN

"DECLARATION OF RIGHTS"

By H. G. WELLS.

The events which have occurred in Europe during the past few years and those that are happening at present have shaken the faith of the staunchest believers in the inevitability of human progress. The following Declaration of Rights for which Mr. H. G. Wells is mainly responsible having first formulated it in his recent book *The New World Order*, has been issued in the present form with the collaboration of eminent thinkers in the West. It has been published in that excellent series of sixpenny publications the Penguin Books, along with the criticisms and controversy regarding the various clauses and information as to how it started. We think this is a document of very great importance which is enhanced due to the times in which we are living, and we think we are fully justified in reproducing this Declaration which appears on pages 77-84 of the book entitled *The Rights of Man or What Are We Fighting For*, with due acknowledgments to the publishers.—A. S., *Asst. Ed.*

"WITHIN the space of little more than hundred years, there has been a complete revolution in the material conditions of human life. Invention and discovery have so changed the pace and nature of communications round and about the earth that now the distances that formerly kept the states and nations of mankind apart have been practically abolished, and at the same time there has been so gigantic an increment of mechanical power that men's ability either to co-operate with or to injure and oppress one another, and to exploit, consume, develop or waste the bounty of nature, has been exaggerated beyond all comparison with former times. This process of change has mounted to a crescendo in the past third of a century and is now approaching a climax.

"It becomes imperative to adjust man's life and institutions to these increasingly dangerous conditions. He is being forced, almost in spite of himself, to collectivise what was once a patchwork of separate sovereign states and at the same time to rescue his economic life from devastation by the immensely enhanced growth of profit-seeking businesses and finance. He is doing this clumsily and blindly and with a great sacrifice of happiness and well-being. Governments become either openly collectivist under stress of necessity, or they become the instruments of monopolising financial and business organisations; their power and aggressions increase, they concentrate controls, they subordinate the functions or religious organisations, education and the press to their domination; the direction of scientific and literary work and a multitude of social activities never conceded hitherto to the state, fall into their hands; they are not organised for such purposes; abuses and tyrannies increase, and liberty, and particularly liberty of thought and speech, decays. Throughout the whole world we see variations of this same subordination of the individual to the organisation of power. Phase by phase their ill-adapted governments are becoming uncontrolled absolutisms; they are killing that free play of the individual mind which is the preservative of human efficiency and happiness. The populations under their sway, after a phase of servile discipline, are plainly doomed to relapse into disorder and violence. Everywhere war and monstrous economic exploitation break out so that those very same increments of power and opportunity which have brought mankind within sight of an age of limitless plenty, seem likely to be lost again, it may be lost for ever, in an ultimate social collapse.

"It has been the practice of what are called the democratic or Parliamentary countries, to meet every enhancement and concentration of power in the past, by a definite and vigorous reassertion of the individual rights of man. Never before has our occasion to revive that precedent been so urgent as it is now. We of these countries recognise the inevitability of world reconstruction and world collectivism, but after our tradition we couple with that recognition, a Declaration of Rights, so that the mighty changes in progress today shall produce not an attempted reconstruction in the dark, a revolution of disaster, but reconstruction in the full light of day, a continuing and progressive revolution. To that expedient of a Declaration of Rights, the outcome of long ages of balance between government and freedom, we return therefore, but this time upon a world scale, and we declare:

"(1) That every man is joint heir to all the resources, powers, inventions and possibilities

accumulated by our forerunners, and entitled without distinction of race, colour or professed belief of opinions, to the nourishment, covering, medical care and attentions needed to realise his full possibilities of physical and mental development and to keep him in a state of health from his birth to death.

"(2) That he is entitled to sufficient education to make him a useful and interested citizen, and further that special education should be so made available as to give him equality of opportunity for the development of his distinctive gifts in the service of mankind, that he should have easy access to information upon all matters of common knowledge throughout his life and enjoy the utmost freedom of discussion, association and worship.

"(3) That he may engage freely in any lawful occupation, earning such pay as the need for his work and the increment it makes to the common welfare may justify. That he is entitled to paid employment and to a free choice whenever there is any variety of employment open to him. He may suggest employment for himself and have his claim publicly considered, accepted or dismissed.

"(4) That he shall have the right to buy or sell without any discriminatory restrictions anything which may be lawfully bought or sold, in such quantities and with such reservations as are compatible with the common welfare.

"(5) That he and his personal property lawfully acquired are entitled to police and legal protection from private violence, deprivation, compulsion and intimidation.

"(6) That he may move freely about the world at his own expense. That his private house or apartment or reasonably limited garden enclosure is his castle, which may be entered only with his consent, but that he shall have the right to come and go over any kind of country, moorland, mountain, farm, great garden or what not, or upon the seas, lakes and rivers of the world, where his presence will not be destructive of some special use, dangerous to himself nor seriously inconvenient to his fellow-citizens.

"(7) That a man unless he is declared by a competent authority to be a danger to himself and to others through mental abnormality, a declaration which must be annually confirmed, shall not be imprisoned for a longer period than six days without being charged with a definite offence against the law, nor for more than three months without a public trial. At the end of the latter period, if he has not been tried and sentenced by due process of law, he shall be released. Nor shall he be conscripted for military or any other service to which he has a conscientious objection.

"(8) That although a man is subject to the free criticism of his fellows, he shall have adequate protection from any lying or misrepresentation that may distress or injure him. All administrative registration and record about a man shall be open to his personal and private inspection. There shall be no secret dossiers in any administrative department. All dossiers shall be accessible to the man concerned and subject to verification and correction at his challenge. A dossier is merely a memorandum; it cannot be used as evidence without proper confirmation in open court.

"(9) That no man shall be subjected to any sort of mutilation or sterilisation except with his own deliberate consent, freely given, nor to bodily assault, except in restraint of his own violence, nor to torture, beating or any other bodily punishment; he shall not be subjected to imprisonment with such an excess of silence, noise, light or darkness as to cause mental suffering, or to imprisonment in infected, verminous or otherwise insanitary quarters or be put into the company of verminous or infectious people. He shall not be forcibly fed nor prevented from starving himself if he so desire. He shall not be forced to take drugs nor shall they be administered to him without his knowledge and consent. That the extreme punishments to which he may be subjected are rigorous imprisonment for a term of not longer than fifteen years or death.

"(10) That the provisions and principles embodied in this Declaration shall be more fully defined in a code of fundamental human rights which shall be made easily accessible to everyone. This Declaration shall not be qualified nor departed from upon any pretext whatever. It incorporates all previous Declarations of Human Right. Henceforth for a new era it is the fundamental law for mankind throughout the whole world.

"No treaty and no law affecting these primary rights shall be binding upon any man or province or administrative division of the community, that has not been made openly, by and with the active or tacit acquiescence of every adult citizen concerned either given by a direct majority vote of the community affected or through the majority vote of his publicly elected representatives. In matters of collec-

tive behaviour it is by the majority decision men must abide. No administration, under a pretext of urgency, convenience or the like, shall be entrusted with powers to create or further define offences or set up by-laws, which will in any way infringe the rights and liberties here asserted. All legislation must be public and definite. No secret treaties shall be binding on individuals, organisations or communities. No orders in council or the like, which extend the application of a law, shall be enforceable. There is no source of law but the whole people, and since life flows on constantly to new citizens, no generation of the people can in whole or in part surrender or delegate the legislative power inherent in mankind."

A Charge of Obscenity Against Our Editor.

The following is the statement submitted by our Editor Prof. R. D. Karve in reply to the charge of obscenity in respect of an advertisement of the book *Kama-Kala* (Art of Love) which appeared in the September 1938 issue of his monthly *Marathi* journal *Samaja-Swasthya* which is in its 12th year of publication. He was charged on April 8, 1939. The case has been going on ever since until he was acquitted on June 24, 1940.—A. S., Asstt. Ed.

1. I submit that I have not broken the obscenity law in any way. No definition of obscenity is given in the law, the so-called definitions given in the commentaries being merely interpretations given by individual judges. There is nothing in the wording of the advertisement in question that can possibly be called obscene by any sensible person. The first witness, Mr. Jahagirdar, was obliged to admit that in his opinion the advertisement would not be obscene if the words "Aprakritika Sambhoga" were omitted from it. Even the expression "Aprakritika Sambhoga", meaning unnatural intercourse, cannot in itself be considered obscene, and there is nothing in the context to make it so. In fact this expression is bound to occur in any comprehensive book on sex. No writer on sex can possibly recommend unnatural intercourse, and if it is mentioned in any book, it can only be for the purpose of condemning it. Is it obscene to condemn it?

What else is there in the advertisement that can be called obscene? It says that the book is fit to be read and seen only in solitude. Does this make it obscene? A bath is taken in solitude, is it, therefore, obscene to mention a bath? Pictures are mentioned, but they are merely "attractive pictures", not pictures of coitus, which are usually considered obscene. Poses of sexual intercourse are mentioned, but mere descriptions of these, without pictures, are found in many standard works, which are not declared obscene on that account.

2. It can be easily seen, therefore, that this prosecution is not what it appears to be on the surface. I can easily prove that it is not an honest prosecution due to the fact that Mr. Jahagirdar thought a particular advertisement obscene. Mr. Jahagirdar is in the habit of seeing much worse advertisements than the one objected to and passing them by. I have two of them here as samples. They have been appearing continuously in respectable papers like the "Dnyana-Prakasha", which is the organ of the Servants of India Society, and the "Loka-Shakti", which belongs to a well-known Congress leader. Both these refer to the same book, which is announced to contain "wonderful coloured pictures of 84 positions of coitus, and other things which it would not be decent to mention." The size of these advertisements makes it impossible that they have been passed by through oversight, and they have been appearing for long periods. I can only surmise that I have been prosecuted not because the advertisement published by me is thought to be obscene by Mr. Jahagirdar or some other person behind the scenes, but because this person or Mr. Jahagirdar was impelled by some ulterior motive and found that they could not get at me in any other way except by the obscenity law, which is sufficiently vague to allow such absurd and frivolous complaints. I shall explain why anybody should have such ulterior motives against me. As a social reformer, I have been writing rather strongly against certain orthodox customs, as also against certain items of Congress policy. People are offended by these writings and find these underhand methods of revenge. Of the other papers mentioned, one belongs to the Congress, and the other is known never to write strongly against anything at all. This is why they are allowed to publish with impunity advertisements announcing pictures considered obscene by the law, while I am prosecuted for an advertisement which does not announce such pictures.

3. As regards the interpretation of the section, a very important principle has been laid down by the Bombay High Court for that purpose in the case against Vishnu Krishna Puranik, 1912, (15 Bom. L. R. 307). The learned judges say in their judgment that "the important point to look at is rather the form of expression than the actual meaning, for the same meaning may be obscenely expressed by one form of language, and yet by the use of

145319

another form of language, may be couched in expressions free from reproach." Now if we apply this test to the advertisement in question, it is perfectly clear that it cannot be considered obscene. The language used is perfectly decent, so decent in fact as to be unintelligible in places. The word "Aprakritika" which has been objected to is, as is admitted by Mr. Jahagirdar, hardly capable of being understood by the ordinary reader. In fact that word has probably never before been used in Marathi and only occurs here because the writer of the advertisement is not well acquainted with Marathi. The rest of it is equally unobjectionable. I fail to see, therefore, how this advertisement or any portion of it can be called obscene.

4. Lastly, the section is so vague and consequently the decisions of magistrates so unpredictable, that the only way in which we ordinary mortals can judge these things is to see what other respectable people are doing, and when I see advertisements such as I have shown appearing in respectable papers like the Loka-*Shakti* and the *Dnyana-Prakasha*, how can I think that a much more innocent advertisement will be considered obscene in my journal? I claim, therefore, that I am entirely innocent of the charge levelled against me.

A Lecture on Atheism.

PROF. N. S. Phadke of the Rajaram College, Kolhapur, delivered a lecture on "The Atheistic Attitude" in the Spring Lecture Series in Poona on Saturday, the 25th of May, with our Editor in the chair. The lecture was very well attended, with people sitting even on the compound walls, as the lectures are held in an open compound with loud-speakers. The lecturer spoke from the utilitarian point of view, pointing out that when one believes in an all-powerful God without whose consent nothing can happen in the world, one naturally feels powerless to do anything useful for oneself or for society, while if one is an atheist, one is much more self-reliant and can do useful work without fear of being hampered by the fear of any mysterious power having arranged all future events beforehand and thus frustrating all efforts to the contrary. He concluded by recommending the atheistic attitude as being much more useful and stimulating than theism.

The president, in summing up, pointed out that it was not enough to prove that atheism was more useful than theism, as a useful theory is not necessarily a true theory, and a person who adopted atheism for its uses may be troubled by doubts as to its veracity. He gave some reasons why scientists in general tended to atheism, for instance, because they never found the hand of God anywhere in the course of their experiments, and if an experiment went wrong, a scientist would never imagine that it was due to interference by God. He would assume that he had made some mistake in conducting the experiment, or that some as yet undiscovered natural law was at work which prevented the expected result. This assumption always proved to be correct and often led to the discovery of new laws without ever having recourse to God. Strictly speaking, since the non-existence of God could not be proved logically, it was open to people to assume the existence of a God who never interfered with anything and whose existence was therefore not inferable from anything, if such a God gave them any satisfaction. This God would be even more powerless than a constitutional monarch, because the latter is at least seen and heard at some public functions. But in the case of such a God, as he has no power to interfere with anything, it is no use praising him or praying to him or building temples for him or anything of that kind. It would be only a theoretical existence without any practical value. If this gave mental satisfaction to anybody, he was welcome to it. We atheists perfer something more solid.

NATIONAL PLANNING

(Continued from page 92)

indiscriminately given. The religious idea of charity is to give to anybody anything that he asks for. In this respect, Karna is the ideal of the Mahabharata. He never refused anything to anyone and this ultimately brought ruin, because Indra came in the guise of a Brahmin and asked for the armour and earrings which were permanently attached to his body and which made him immortal. He gave them away immediately and this led to his death. This was certainly a silly ideal and most religious charity is moulded on that pattern. It is time now to take a more sensible view and confine charity to really useful purposes and to deserving people.

The most helpful way, both from the individual and the national point of view, is to provide modern means of birth-control to people who need them and cannot afford them. India is poor, no doubt, but a good deal can be done if a large proportion of charity money is devoted to this purpose.

REASON

(ESTD. 1931)

The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road
Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris)

Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed ann do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 2/- & Foreign 3s. 6d. or. $1.00 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Notes & News.

By ABRAHAM SOLOMON

WE regret we have been compelled to make this a combined issue of *Reason*. It was due to unexpected difficulties and also other matters which required urgent attention. They have been due to the present political and international situation which has given rise to new difficulties and hampered our activities. We have been compelled to postpone many activities which we intended to have and have been unable to publish extra rationalist literature in addition to *Reason* due to the increased cost of paper etc. However, all these, and many other, difficulties will have to be, and will be, met.

* * *

AT the moment we are unable to make any definite announcements regarding extra activities apart from the publication of "Reason", but at the end of the monsoon we intend to increase our activities. A series of lectures by well-known freethinkers is being arranged and will be announced in due time in *'Reason'* as well as in the local papers. We shall be in a position to announce much more in the next issue of *Reason*.

* * *

AMONG the lectures we intend to arrange are the following:—

"Astronomy and the Idea of God"
"Biological Concept of Life"
"Evolution of Morality"
"Medicine and Supernaturalism"
"Heredity and Disease"
"Propaganda"
"Science and Human Happiness"

and many others. Among the speakers will be Dr. A. S. Erulkar, Prof. R. D. Karve, Dr. G. Coelho, Prof. D. D. Karve of Poona and others.

* * *

IN the meanwhile we apologize to our members and readers for the inconvenience caused. "Many a time and oft" in the past have they borne with us patiently and it is to their loyal support and conviction of the righteonsness of our cause, their love for intellectual freedom and social justice, that the R. A. I. owes its existence.

* * *

AT a time like this when, in the words of Mr. Chapman Cohen, the whole world seems "to be overtaken by an epidemic of insanity" there is just one hope. The hope that men and women in all parts of the world who have a sane and rational philosophy of life, will organise themselves with greater energy and incessantly work to bring some semblance of sanity to war-torn mankind. That this second "nightmare of human history", as the late Dr. Har Dayal called the last war, will bring to the minds of a vast number of thinking men and women, with tremendous force, the futility, falsity and harmfulness of crude religious beliefs, the religious mode of thought, and the belief in the existence of a supernatural benevolent Providence.

* * *

THE words of that great thinker of our time, Bertrand Russell, will aptly describe the thoughts of a large number of thinking men and women:

> If indeed the world in which we live has been produced in accordance with a plan, we shall have to reckon Nero a saint in comparison with the author of that plan. Fortunately, however, the evidence of Divine Purpose is non-existent; so at

least one must infer from the fact that no evidence is adduced by those who believe in it. We are, therefore, spared the necessity for that attitude of impotent hatred which every brave and humane man would otherwise be called upon to adopt towards the Almighty Tyrant.

* * *

FASCISM, that ideology which personifies all the reactionary and retrogressive forces, sits triumphant in the very lands which were the source of inspiration to all liberty-loving peoples of this world. Beautiful France, the land of Voltaire and Zola, those immortal fighters for human justice; the land of "liberty, fraternity and equality;" France which in the minds of many stood for much that is progressive and beautiful in our not too perfect civilization, has succumbed to the onward march of brute force and organised treachery.

* * *

It is now admitted on all hands that France has fallen not due to lack of bravery on the part of the French fighting forces but to "fifth column activity", activities about which eminent thinkers and observers in every country have warned their respective governments. But the governments concerned evidently did not have any "official information" of the same. Fascism is an international organisation and has spread its tentacles in every country disturbing their internal peace and democracy. During the brief period of ten years the losses of the Freethought movement all over the world have been great. With the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, the triumph of bigotry in Spain, the rape of Holland and Belgium and the fall of France; the Freethonght movement has suffered greatly indeed. We cannot afford to sit complacent and wait. We must gird up our loins and prepare to meet this menace. Though somewhat far from the playground of death and destruction we seem to hear the echo of the booming bombers pouring death and ruin upon countless million lives. We feel this world shudder in the grips of a much boosted civilization run mad, and the future rising before us like a huge question mark—Whither Homo Sapiens?

* * *

IS this war to lead to a "victory of the exhausted over the dead"? Or will there be a "peace" with a Nazified Europe and the present conflict continue underground as in 1918-1939? Will the nations of the world continue to be deaf to the pleadings and warnings of their greatest intellects? How long is this nightmare to continue? These and many other questions come to our mind demanding an answer.

MANY are the lessons we here in India can learn from events of the past few years in Europe. India must awake and cease her petty squabbles and religious strife and unite and prepare to throw her weight in the cause of peace, freedom and cultural progress.

* * *

IT is reported that the cotton brokers of Karachi—a noisy tribe—have a strong belief that prayer has a steadying influence on the market. The market had shown "a steep downward tendency." Forthwith the brokers decided to close the market for three days and started a non-stop reading of the *Holy Granth* in the Cotton Ring in the new Exchange. But we must remember that the Congress Session at Ramgarh started with a mass prayer to the Rain God, so that the rains which had seriously interfered with the preparations might stop. And also that the British Parliament begins at every sitting by requesting God to endow its members with more wisdom than they possess.

* * *

WE are indebted to the *Literary Guide* of London for the following:—

Here is an extract from a recent Parliamentary report:—

Dr. Little asked the Prime Minister to approach the leaders of Churches to fix a day of prayer beseeching God "to bring the war to a speedy end by the overthrow of the enemy and promote such a spirit of brotherhood and goodwill among the nations of the earth that they will seek war no more."

Mr. Chamberlain said that consideration would be given to the suggestion at the appropriate time. "I do not think that time has yet arrived," he added.

Mr. Thurtle: Will the Prime Minister ascertain from the heads of the fighting Services their views as to the efficacy of the proposed action? (Laughter).

* * *

DR. V. R. Khanolkar, the well-known pathologist, who is a life member of the R. A. I. and was its Secretary in 1935, has left for America for Cancer Research and on his return will take up charge of the Research Department of the Tata Cancer Institute in Bombay.

NOTICE.

The next issue of *Reason* will be sent by V.P.P. to those who have not yet sent in their subscriptions.

D. R. D. WADIA,
Hon. Treasurer, R. A. I.

The Bertrand Russell Case

(Reproduced from "The Rationalist," Melbourne.)

BERTRAND Russell (Earl Russell) is one of the most famous of living Englishmen. He is noted as a philosopher and as a mathematician. With Whitehead he wrote "Principia Mathematica," a book which founded a new branch of mathematics. He has written many works on sociological problems and has been hailed by the former Dean of St. Paul's, Sir W. R. Inge, as one of the keenest intellects of our day.

He has been also admired for his great moral courage. This has been severely tested on a number of occasions. The most recent of these occasions has caused a great fluttering in the academic dove-cotes of the U. S. A.

Recently the Board of Higher Education of the City of New York appointed Russell Professor of Philosophy and Mathematics at City College, N. Y. He was to lecture in mathematics and logic and the appointment was to become effective in February 1941.

The appointment was barely noticed in the public press until the New York Sun ran an editorial criticising the appointment and quoting passages from his writings on religion and morals.

This stirred Bishop William T. Manning (Episcopal), who may well be termed an Archbishop of Reaction, and he launched an attack, denouncing Russell as the enemy of religion and morality.

The fight was on. Forces were rallied to attack the appointment. Organizations on this side included the Knights of Columbus, the Columbiettea (female Knights), the Lutheran Society, the American Legion, American National Committee for Religious Recovery, American Youth League, Mothers' Societies, Daughters' Leagues, and the Greater New York Federation of Churches.

Such is the manifestation of religious bigotry and intolerance in this 20th century.

Russell was not left to face the ravening pack alone.

Among the famous men who urged the Board not to yield to clerical pressure were the following: Albert Einstein, Prof. John Dewey (world-famous philosopher), Prof. Morris Cohen (philosopher), W. A. Neilson (formerly professor of English at Harvard University, now President of Smith College), R. M. Hutchins (President of the University of Chicago), Prof. J. W. Angell (economist of Columbia University), Prof. Raymond Pearl (biologist), Prof. Chas. A. Beard (historian) and Prof. A. N. Whitehead (philosopher).

Organisations also rallied to defend academic freedom from the attacks of clerical obscurantists. These included the American Philosophical Association (200 professors), the American Civil Liberties Union, American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom, Committee for Cultural Freedom, and the Woman's City Club.

Newspapers entered the fray.

The editorial policy of the Evening Post favoured retaining Russell. The Sun issued editorial after editorial opposing him.

At a special meeting of the Board of Higher Education the appointment was confirmed by a vote of 11 to 7. Russell had won the first round.

He was given little breathing space.

Immediately Mrs. Jean Kay, of Brooklyn, through her attorney, former Magistrate Joseph Goldstein, filed a suit bringing the action of the Board before the Court for review and annulment.

The case came before Justice McGeehan (name of ill-omen).

It was alleged that the appointment was illegal and an abuse of the powers of the Board on three grounds.

1. Russell was not a citizen nor had he declared his intention to become a citizen.

2. The appointment did not comply with an article of the Constitution of the State of New York with reference to appointments in civil service on the basis of merit and fitness.

3. The appointment was against public policy because of the teachings of Bertrand Russell and his immoral character.

Without traversing the legal arguments in connection with each of these contentions we may state that the petitioner succeeded. The Court (Justice McGeehan) held that the appointment was an insult to the people of the City of New York, that the acts of the Board of Higher Education of New York City in appointing Dr. Russell to the Department of Philosophy of the City College of the City of New York to be paid by public funds was, in effect, establishing a chair of indecency and, in doing so, it had acted arbitrarily, capriciously, and in direct violation of the public health, safety and morals of the people. The appoint-

ment was revoked and Russell was dicharged from his position.

It is too soon to say whether this is a heavy body blow or the knock-out. We are informed by a New York correspondent that there may be an apneal against Justice McGeehan's decision.

It seems that there has been a great outcry over this judgment as it represents a serious trend in American society at present. The forces of reaction are powerful and, in the modern world are playing on all sorts of emotional prejudices and narrow sectarian hatreds. Progressive thought faces a difficult period not only in America but here also. Red herrings are dragged across every trail. Misunderstandings and confusions, not all of which are innocent, prevail amongst the people.

This state of affairs will continue and cases such as this of Bertrand Russell will recur until the bigotries, intolerances, obscurantisms and shams of supernatural religion have been overthrown. Morality is not an absolute, handed down by divine fiat, but a matter of harmonious social relationships. It is this truth that rationalism has to teach contemporary society.

ANOTHER CHAMPION OF SPIRITISM

(*Continued from page* 98)

ent portions of the brain, as any competent medical man will be able to tell him. It is hardly worth while arguing with people who insist on being ignorant of the elementary facts known to science.

We have also received another letter from Bengal from one Mr. Jnanendranath Roy, but as it is full of abuse and dogmatic assertions rather than arguments, we shall not inflict it on our readers. We may mention, however, that our principal object was to take a rational view of the claims of so-called mediums, and that the name of Mr. Rishi was not even mentioned in our first article on the subject. It was only when Mr. Rishi's followers brought his name forward as an able exponent of spiritism that we were compelled to look into the matter. Otherwise Mr. Rishi and his doings do not interest us any more than those of any other so-called medium. Mr. Roy charges us with attacking and villifying Mr. Rishi personally. We have no personal grudge against Mr. Rishi and we have not referred to any personal matters connected with him except such as were relevant to the subject or were mentioned by his supporters. We have no interest in villifying anybody.

REVIEW.

Papists are Traitors by C. R. Boyd Freeman, Ripley Printing Society Ltd., Nothingham Road, Ripley, Derbys. 15pp. Price One Penny.

THIS little pamphlet is a powerful indictment of the Roman Catholic Church and the Vatican. The author shows that the Roman Catholic Church claims to be a sovereign state to which all other constitutions are subordinate, that the Pope is the lord of all kings and peoples and can depose rulers and dispose of their realms, can release their subjects from their oaths and from prisons and can use force and kill heretics in order to create discipline.

The author further shows that the Vatican does not stop at the theory but is in practice running a political conspiracy under the guise of religion in every country, the object of which is to break up the particular states and to replace them by ones which are subordinate to Romanism.

The author points out the pernicious influence the Papists exercise through the press which in England is coming more and more under the control of the Church, through the various orders which are secret military organisations masquerading as religious bodies and planning to undermine the secular constitutions, and through the vast mass of Catholic sheep which must follow their Machiavellian shepherds under pain of mortal sin and loss of other worldly happiness. In the opinion of the author, legally speaking Papists are traitors, and he demands that their theory as expounded in the canon law should be taken at its letter-value and particular exponents hauled up for treason. A trial would throw light in hidden quarters and completely expose the machinations of the Church. In the author's words "Light on their nefarious organisation would be as fatal to it as it is to other poisonous microbes of disease." For "The Romish Church *is* a disease." He declares that their seditious activities which are especially noticeable in Ireland and Canada (and he might have added, India) will ruin the British Empire if drastic action is not taken against the Papists.

The pamphlet will be of interest to readers in India as the Protestants not being very active here the menace comes mainly from the Catholic Church and anti-Catholic propaganda strives under heavy odds.

A MINORITY VIEW.

THAT all the gods are *dump*. That none of them ever spake unto men. That there has never been a communication to mankind other than men's own inventions, illusions and speculations. Invented messages to add authority to their own utterances. (Similar claims are made even to-day). That men have created thousands of divinities in their own image; enlarged shadows of themselves; and have endowed them with their own characteristics; swayed by like appetites and passions. Osiris, Isis, Horus, Brahma, Krishna, Siva, Ra, Thoth, Bel Hea, Mithras, Buddha, Pallas-Athene, Christus, Posseidon, Zeus, and 10,000 others. Jahveh is no exception. He was just the local, tribal, Liliputian deity of a semi-barbarous nomadic people. When man was young; a primitive; his world a province; his knowledge very circumscribed, even then it was entirely imaginary to believe that the Creator of even his Liliputian world held intercourse with him. To-day, with the marvellous knowledge which science has lately brought us of limitless numbers of worlds; of stupendous magnitudes; of enormous distances in time and space; this tiny globe a sand speck, this belief becomes preposterous and fatuous in the extreme. And the evidence. That these alleged divine communications added nothing to knowledge. That always they mirrored only the attainments and mental capacity of the hearer—indeed his predilections. Also his ignorances; his inspired errors; his limitations. That none of these divinities, or their confidantes, foresaw the wonderful achievements of science since made. That all were "flatearthers." They knew nothing but of their own generation. That the whole scheme is trumpery, dwarfish, childish, shot through with dreams and visions, with witchcraft and Munchausen tales. With its inhumane Valhalla of eternal torture for ephemeral conduct; repugnant alike to intelligence and to justice. A hell of which all decent men are ashamed and which is to-day almost wholly jettisoned. An unintelligent Paradise; monotonous beyond endurance: inane; obviously the conception of childhood where all will be singers; all musicians; all equal; all Communists for all eternity.

But its latitude and longitude is suppressed. What would such an institution here and now down your road, Mr. Commons, be labelled?

That it is contrary to experience that miracles should be true; but it is not contrary to experience that testimony should be false. That deities change from age to age; from country to country. Indeed, to the same individual the divinity of youth is not the god of maturity. That the purpose of 50,000,000,000 worlds is obviously not man. That nations, unaided by revelations, had, by self-reliance, reached a higher standard of culture and civilisation; such as the Egyptians, Sumeriens, Greeks, Romans and others.

That the religions of Greece for centuries B.C. taught the union of immortal deity and mortal woman. Taught the birth, death and resurrection of the man—God. Indeed, trinities, miracles, virgin births, resurrections, appear in several ancient myths. The Christ story is but a variant; unoriginal; unconfirmed; invented by Greek minds.

Christ left no statement; neither did Mary, or Joseph, or any of his brethren. Or any of the Apostles, or the Shepherds, or the Wise Men, or the resurrected dead. None from even one of the cured; none from even one witness. What remains? A few leaflets unsigned, undated; containing only "hearsay" statements, second-hand or twenty-second hand. No Law Court would entertain such. Why will men decline unsigned, undated cheques or deeds and accept unsigned, undated Gospels? Because the latter are non-essential.

That mentally we are "kiddies" just out of the cradle—uncivilized, unreasonable beings; hence poverty and war. That, unlike the humans, all the gods are *blind*: that none of them have ever yet seen human misery. And the evidence; that men are always and everywhere endeavouring to circumvent the evils of nature.

That, again, unlike the humans, all the divinities are *deaf*. We beseech in vain: the skies are leaden; unanswering; everywhere, always. The praying wheels of Tibet are as ineffective; as windy as our own appeals. Prayer is but a confession of weakness, a dethroning of self-reliance, making weak minds weaker. Our requests ascend to our—— ceilings.

That survival is a pathetic self-delusion, invented to blunt the sharp-sword of death.

That the evidence for cessation is overwhelming. That forty millions of people die annually and from this mighty multitude and down all the ages we get—silence unbroken. There is no evidence of survival that would survive the sievings of a Law Court.

That "spiritual" and "faith" are merely "hide outs". That demons, devils, divinities, spirits, angels, Valhallas, Paradises, Penitentiaries, have only an imaginary existence. That the future is a very safe warehouse for prophecies and promises.

That to-day a schoolboy knows infinitely more than all the divinities of antiquity—and their confidantes—all rolled into one. So much for their divinity. That there is no sin; these are offences against the community. That morals are solely a reflection of public opinion and like all else are evolved. That virtues will ultimately be all that is pleasing, beneficient to men; contrariwise vices will be all that is maleficient—no more. That this whole controversy could be tested validly; but it will be found that such will be studiously avoided like the Black Death. Why?

That self-reliance is the *sole* solvent in this very certain world. Self-reliance has given us printing, steam, astronomy, knowledge of this world and of the sublime universe. It has eliminated small-pox, has reduced illiteracy; T. B.; cancer. That if men had loved facts as they loved fancies; had worshipped knowledge as they worshipped "the Unknown," had not been sidetracked, preventible poverty, disease, injustices, ignorance, wars would long since have vanished from the earth. That men's thoughts and activities should be diverted from vague, indefinite abstractions, from unheeding divinities; from silent skies to the practical affairs of life, here and now, where *humanity* is being daily crucified, so that step by step all should be made as happy as is possible. Self-reliance is the *sole* solvent.

I. CHANGE.

Oakdale Road,
Streatham, S. W. 16.

THE CULT OF ASCETICISM AND RENUNCIATION

(*Continued from page* 95)

of the country by half. It was precisely in that period that Buddhist monasticism flourished in China, and the impatience for the bliss of Nirvana urged thousands of unhappy fanatics to the incredible practice of hurling themselves down from high mountains which, by virtue of those inhuman acts, acquired the reputation of possessing the superhuman power of miracle.

There is absolutely no reason to believe that the national grandeur of India from the time of Asóka to the reign of Harshabardhan and right up to the invasion of Mahmud of Ghazni was reared upon a different social basis. Had it been so, the same period of greatness would not find such a considerable part of the population abandoning the natural life of a social being to adopt the morbid monastic profession. Had the people also enjoyed worldly happiness when their rulers were basking in the sun of grandeur and glory, they would not rush madly after an illusion, leaving the reality behind. Havell writes: "Every great temple, which was built, meant the dedication of public and private funds for the maintenance of priests, temple servants, Brahman students and their gurus, Sadhus and Sanyasis. And it was the period from the seventh century to the time of Mahmud of Ghazni, which was the most prolific in religious building,—a time when Hindu monarchs vied with each other in the magnificence and number of their temples, when sacred hills were converted into cities of the gods, and when hundreds and thousands of skilled artisans were diverted from ordinary industrial pursuits to the pious labour of elaborating the embellishment of the temple service in stone, bronze, precious metal and costly fabrics." ('The Aryan Rule of India')

(To be concluded.)

Emile Zola Centenary.

By ERNEST THURTLE, M.P.

(Reproduced from "The Literary Guide")

THE centenary of the birth of Emile Zola has served to draw attention anew to the story of this famous Frenchman's epic battle for truth and justice. He was the second French man of letters to earn, by a magnificent exhibition of unselfish courage, a special place in the hearts of all people who hate injustice. Zola's fight in the Dreyfus case has, indeed, many points of similarity to the great battle Voltaire waged more than a hundred years earlier on behalf of the unfortunate Calas family, and in these sombre days to renew our acquaintance with it is to renew our faith in the heights to which humanity can rise in inspired moments.

Born at Aix in 1840, the son of a father partly Italian and partly Greek, and of a mother who was French, Zola as a youth and in early manhood endured great poverty and hardship. But he had the stuff of a great writer in him, and he rose superior to his sufferings and the economic handicaps which beset him. A patient and industrious observer, he had a remarkable gift for describing humanity as he saw it all around him, and so he became the author of a long series of novels dealing with various aspects of life in France at that time. Most of his works achieved at least a moderate success, but there were some which enjoyed enormous popularity and brought him wealth and great fame. The chief of these were *L'Assommoir*, a study of the life of a chronic drinker; *Nana*, the story of a girl of the streets; and *La Debacle*, a burning account of the tragedy of France in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1. Zola's literary output was vast, and only a man of extraordinary energy and tenacity could have produced it.

He may be said to have disciplined himself to the task of a writer. For over thirty years he imposed upon himself the duty of writing so many pages every morning. Indeed, he had a craftman's motto upon which he prided himself: *Nulla dies sine linea* ("No day without a line"). At the time he decided to become the champion of Dreyfus Zola was an established man of letters of international repute. His books sold in great numbers, for, though some people did not like his realism, the uncompromising way in which he held up the mirror to Nature and showed her her own image, and the vigour and freshness of his works, attracted an immense public. His literary skill was generally admitted, and before he became the centre of the fierce storm of passion aroused by the Dreyfus controversy he had reason to expect the coveted honour of a seat in the French Academy.

Captain Alfred Dreyfus was an officer of the French General staff who in 1895 was condemned on a charge of selling military information to the Germans, and was sentenced to confinement on the notorious Devil's Island. Dreyfus, who was a Jew, was in fact completely innocent of the crime for which he was convicted, the real culprit being another officer, one Major Esterhazy, and there is no doubt, in the light of the facts as they were ultimately disclosed, that anti-Semitism was the main factor in causing Dreyfus to be made the victim of another's crime.

The case caused a great stir in France, and there were features of it which gave rise to disquiet among thoughtful people. Zola had his misgivings and made it his business to examine all the available facts thoroughly. As a result he became convinced of the innocence of Dreyfus, and early in 1897, two years after the conviction, he decided upon the bold stroke of challenging the powerful ruling military clique of France on the issue. And so, in the newspaper of his friend Georges Clemenceau, the *Aurore*, he published his celebrated indictment "J'accuse." Every paragraph of this article, which occupied no less than eight columns of the newspaper, began with the words "I accuse". It was, in fact, a terrible denunciation of all those who had had a hand in hunting down the unfortunate victim of injustice. This was no hesitant and half-hearted attack. Leading politicians and the highest officers of the army alike came under the fierce lash of Zola's criticism, and were stung by its well-directed fury.

Zola's object in publishing this indictment was to force a prosecution for libel so that there might be a new judical inquiry into the whole affair. He was taking great risks in doing so, for he knew the power of the ruling political leaders and of the army chiefs to influence the course of justice; yet he felt that such publicity, whatever the risks to him involved in it, was the only hope of getting the wrong

righted. Events took the course which Zola expected. The publication of "J'accuse" threw France into a ferment, and the army authorities had to prosecute Zola to save their faces. At the trial a fresh flood of light was thrown on the case, but the army chiefs exerted their power to the full during the proceedings, and Zola was convicted of libelling various staff officers. He appealed against this conviction, and the proceedings were quashed. A new trial took place, however, and before the result of this was announced Zola, on the advice of counsel and friends, took refuge in England.

Happily, however, as he had declared in his famous statement "Truth was on the march." Changes had taken place at the French War Office, and new facts were brought to light regarding the Dreyfus case, with the significant result that one of the staff officers involved in the conspiracy against truth committed suicide, and Esterhazy, the real traitor, fled the country. This led to a revision of the trial, and on hearing of this Zola at once returned to France. Even this new trial did not result in the complete exoneration of Dreyfus—now, as a result of his four years on Devil's Island, a prematurely old man, with white hair, at the age of thirty-five. He was, however, given a free pardon, which he accepted with the reservation that he would continue his efforts to clear his name.

Zola, after his return from England, spent the remaining three years of his life in continuing his literary work. He died in 1902 as a result of being asphyxiated by fumes from a defective flue, so that he did not live to have the satisfaction of seeing the complete vindication of Dreyfus, which did not take place until 1906. But it must have been a comfort to him to know that, largely as a result of his courageous fight, the victim of injustice had at least been snatched from the tropical penal hell and restored once more to his family and friends.

If considerations of prudence had governed him, Zola would certainly not, in his days of established success and prosperity, have risked unpopularity and even hatred by taking up the cause of Dreyfus. But he who had been preaching justice and truth in his books all his life recognized that here was a duty to be done which he could not shirk, whatever consequence it might bring in its train. After his death France was a little slow in paying adequate tribute to this great son of hers. No doubt the fierce passions aroused by the Dreyfus controversy took some years to subside. However, in 1908, six years after his death, the body of Zola was conveyed to the Pantheon, France's last resting-place for her great citizens. On this occasion, in the presence of an assembly which included Captain (now major) Alfred Dreyfus, Anatole France delivered a passionate oration over the dead. Therein was this noble tribute: "There is no peace anywhere save in justice, no repose save in truth.....Envy him! He was a moment of the conscience of mankind."

WANTED

Old Copies of *REASON*

October 1931, November 1931

November 1932, & June 1933.

Write:

Secretary, **R. A. I.**

INDISPENSABLE TO ALL SERIOUS STUDENTS.

1 INDIAN FEUDAL STATES AND NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE... ... 0-4-0

2 PROBLEM OF AGRARIAN INDEBTEDNESS. 0-2-0

3 GANDHI'S TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE X-RAYED. 0-2-0

4 EXIT GOD ! 0-2-0

By A. R. DESAI.

Can be had from :

The Hindustan Newspapers Limited.

21, Dalal Street, Fort,

BOMBAY.

Three Fundamentals

(Submitted to the Fifth International Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths, Ceylon, 1940, by M. V. V. K. Rangachari, B.A., Cocanada.)

THERE is a unity pervading through the subjects set out for discussion at the International Congress of Faiths, and it is not unexpected. The headings run:

(i) peace and happiness through spiritual awakening,

(ii) Synthesis between science and religion,

(iii) approach to world-understanding through religion.

The emphasis is on spirituality, alias religion, based on faith, whatever in the world it may be. A devout body, even a world-embracing one, cannot get away from its obligation to extra-terrestrial considerations for resolving the difficulties in life. But there is the danger of the suggestion being carried into an after-life, whose contour, there is no way of mapping. Peace and happiness pertain to this earth, whether of the individual or in relation to the society of which he is a part. The spiritual awakening also refers to the bodily existence, since nobody is sure of the awakening beyond the final sleep.

Secondly, when we oppose science and religion, we generally indicate the divergence between knowledge and blind-feeling, between intellectual apprehension, and intuitive belief, or in usual terms of reason and faith. It is supposed to involve an unmanageable antithesis. Hence the need for synthesis. But, I am sure, most of the prescriptions at synthesising are deft manœuvres of doing away with one or other of the incongruous factors in the name of an apparent unity, rather than honest attempts to square the circle without violating its definitive shape. I have a suspicion that the propounders of the first theme may not be keen on confining it to the social or collective aspect. The bliss (Ananda) of peace (Shanti) tends to be psychological, and the ideal of the atuned mind enjoying oneness with the Infinite is the snare of the Asiatic. It is an ecstatic somnolence towards which devotion gravitates, unmindful of the hard realities besetting life.

But when we proceed to the question of world-understanding, all anti-social tendencies will have been discarded. The salvation is no longer of the particular, but of the more general kind. It cannot be confined to the classes, but should be extended to the masses. The priviliges cannot be many, but the few should be shared by all, or as large a proportion of the community as may possibly be.

Thus the common question of which the three subjects noted above may be seen as mere aspects resolves itself into this: what is the real basis for social happiness or well-being conceived as consciously-promoted peace or understanding among all the peoples of the world, where not only human instincts, but even the higher reasoning faculties find full scope for expression? It is a tall order to propose to answer such a complex question. But since it is of vital importance to mankind, each one of us cannot evade the responsibility of striving to find his or her own solution. The problem of social evolution was never simple, and perhaps never more complicated than at the present time. Man's part in shaping his own destiny is very insistent to-day, since social forces clashing furiously with one another threaten to engulf and swallow up what all humanity could so far have achieved. Can we, as conscious humans, men and women of diverse creeds, cultures, habits and temperaments, evolve some thing like a plan capable of common application in furtherance of the safety and continuance of the race, even at these perilous times, and under the very stormy conditions. The Fellowship posed this momentous question, and with history as our guide, we are bound to face it. We rely on history, because, we stand to profit by experience. But this history is far different from the unscientific jumble of dogma and prejudice that often flows in its name. Even as evolution turned up variations of structure and

differentiation of function, social history underwent many changes in class-formation and vocational bias. Acquired capacities tend to stick, thus facilitating further development in the line. In this the vital functions of food and breathing play the dominant role. What we eat determines how we behave; how the food is produced, in what social relationships, in what pattern of economic fabric, determines the further course of collective life. Just as the individual intellect is affected by assimilating norcotic substances, social independence is affected by the property-relations under which the divisions comprising the community derive their sustenance. The healthy food builds the sound body, and it is no less true that a diseased economic order like slavery cannot produce a contented race. Along with food the regulation of breath (Pranayama) help to keep the organism pure, and a like co-ordination of the economic lungs, the balancing of supply and demand serves to maintain the social Yoga (equilibrium). Some ancient seer (Matsendra) said that if you take care of the breath, the mind will take care of itself. As the Gita also says (VI, 17) "happiness is for him who minds what he eats, how he amuses or engages himself, when he sleeps or awakes."

Is this merely an individual concern? Those days of bright isolation when sages counted on their salvation (Mukti) are past. Life is to-day more inextricably mixed up than ever before to admit of such separatist emancipation. Spiritual awakening, if it should count for anything now, is not mere personal reaction to hostile environment, beginning with detachment (vairagya) flowing from some frustration. Whatever the claims of sublimated emotionalism, claims to perfected feeling. as when Sadhus and Saints experience the immediate presence of the object of their adoration, if society were to canalise ideal energies to general use, some guarantee beyond subjective testimony will have to be furnished in favour of their material validity. Meanwhile, the average man, not far removed from any other form of biological development, remains content with the normal functioning of the vital processes, if duly ministered to, and revolting when all or any of these are sought to be interfered with.

It may be boldness to assert, but yet it remains true, that just as our bodies are the fruit of chemical change, food, air, everything covered, so our thoughts, feelings, wills and sentiments represent the ferment that is constantly going on inside that magic-box, the brain. To produce the model-brain and on its basis turn out millions of similarly equipped cases has been the endeavour of our prophets, sages, reformers and sociologists in all times. Bread and wine in the Eucharistic Church, not to probe deeper into wild history (cf. J. G. Fraser in the Golden Bough) when gods and tribal heroes were eaten, and dedicated food (Prasad) in the oriental temples, rest on the prime factor of alimentary satisfaction. In endeavouring to evolve a formula, it is worthwhile to begin with food (and drink) which has to be ensured for the entire army of humans, men, women, children and the aged. Places designed for spiritual awakening, would be overlooking a serious factor affecting peace and happiness in its absence. Just think what a well-balanced food-budget can do for the world to-day, after two-thousand years of civilisation and material advance. Plentiful production, yet millions starving in hunger and poverty, rare types of food-material explored, yet countless palates unable to taste a dog's meal in the day! Every one knows that wars are traceable to economic forces, and wealth is food-generating, yet our rich endowments in Church, Mosque or Temple stand aloof, as if the safety of man is not their concern, as if gods need not feed men all the time when they fattened on them. Man hoards in order to spend in lean seasons, and it is the duty of the divines to repay a fraction of what through ages had been a one-way bargain, in the interests of general well-being. A system of community-feeding faintly suggested in the past, still obtaining in some Vishnu temples in South India, and Jaggernaut (Puri) may with advantage be extended on yet higher scale, and in various institutions. Relieved from bread-finding care, the masses can engage themselves in creative occupations. Social energies thus released can be employed in fighting disease, improving the habitat, and in augmenting the productive capacity of the community. Where greed and competition do not stand between food and man, the larger problem of social happiness would, in a large measure, stand liquidated.

Closely following upon economics, is the question of sex. Psychologists affirm that in a majority of instances, perverted urges in the line lead to abnormal mental conditions and illusions. Those sublimations, the transvaluation of values are merely the sex-impulse translated, into rugged inhibitory channels.

Perhaps this is true in all cases where historical evidence is forthcoming. Even myths and legends derive from the social complexes prevalent at the time they were woven. Where the normal relation between the sexes is interfered with, that balance between virility and gentleness, ferocity and motherliness, strength and love is disturbed, which is so very essential to the smooth functioning of society. Particularly is it true in our time, when the woman is not so much as heard of amid the battle cries of Europe. What has happened to them, to the mothers, sisters and wives of the belligerents, and what is happening to them further? Amidst the hooting of cars, in the noise of sirens, and the blaze of cannon and bombs, is there a shriek, a cry, not to mention the song of music, that is heard, indicating that presence, the soft touch that should in any event heal humanity's sores. No, I do not believe that humanity has placed any confidence in its women. I do not believe that woman ruled man at the critical time of his life. He refuses to be ruled by her at all material periods. This talk of woman's franchise, equality between sexes, the woman being the ruler of the household, the mistress of his career, is all faked. It is the veneer of merely peacetime vanity. Even when the woman fought on the battlefield, she fought man's battles, none for her sake. She is made to fight them, just as she is made to cook for him, to clean for him, to drudge for him in ever so many ways, as slave to the master, seldom otherwise. Man is the worst tyrant, lording it over so many ways, as slave to the master, seldom otherwise. Man is the tyrant, lording it over the entire animal world, including his own womenfolks. He stifles her voice, and loses the music of life. Never takes her into confidence in major undertakings and is hopelessly involved. Put for a short while, the key of your arsenals in her hand; she will burn away without compunction all your preparations so calculatingly gathered. Exceptions there might be, but in the generality of cases, it is the woman that can more easily get over the social and other barriers than ever man could or did. Those who have fought and dared it all, have lost all touch of the feminine in them, though it is inevitable that someday they have themselves been benefitted by it. A disharmonised sex-subject remains an abnormal monstrosity, and as one shrewd observer put it: "the secret of really great personalities is that they combine the characteristics of both sexes." The two parts are complimentary, symbolised by Ardha Narisvera (Siva, half-man, half-woman). Buddhistic philosophy speaks of the Father of the Universe, and the Mother of the three worlds, the Buddha showing infinite knowledge and power coupled with infinite love. The Mahayana deities have their Saktis. Yet to-day, man dares to do without the woman. In the triumphal tour of Sankaracharya, he was confronted with this problem. The episode of Mandana Misra's wife discussing sex is highly significant. The great Acharya had to implement his vision before the lady could be defeated. Whatever the merit in a few instances, the monastic order has this disadvantage as any attempt to curb natural biological instincts will lead to serious disturbances in the social order. The normal forces of sexual interaction should be preserved.

Given the necessaries of life, spiritual awakening consists in the harmonisation of the self with the not-self. In nature, this process of harmonisation is perpetually at work; in maternal affections, in mating, in the herd-instinct, even animals and birds are feebly sensing that vision beyond the body which in human parenthood, love, and social relationships man gains in better altruistic expression. When we speak of complimentaries, like the sexes, we have already trodden the ground of antithesis in a way. The opposition between the self and every other thing in the world (which we may abbreviate by 'not-self') is fundamental. Progress consists in the gradual assimilation by the self of increasingly greater proportions of the not-self. This proceess of assimilation, whether biological, psychological, or sociological, is indicated by synthesis. I am the thesis. Everything beside me is antithesis. When I take into myself any portion of the not-self, there is resulting synthesis. When the brute devours its prey, it may look odd, but there is biological synthesis. When I enter into the spirit of a poem or picture, I am one with it, a process of psychological synthesis. When a great world-teacher could establish concord and harmony among the peoples on earth, it would be social synthesis. The approach from the self to the not-self is wrought in countless ways, thus resulting in varied relationships, some painful, some pleasurable, leading to endless social complexities. How we live depends upon how we react to the not-self. We love it at times, hate it sometime, are drawn to it closer at some point, repelled at others. It is all a question of the self and the not-self, and the relationship between the two, of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis.

When the Hindu sages remind us of the pairs of opposites, good-evil, virtue-vice, pleasure-pain &c (dvandvas) and caution to get over them, they merely emphasise the need for systhesis. the one road to life-abundant. To be elated with pride is as injurious as being run down with worry through pain. Equipoise (Yoga) is synthetic, integrating, while disturbance from whatever cause is antithetical, and destructive. To surmount all bafflement is to baffle the not-self. even assimilate its richest splendour, and liquidate its baser elements. Verily this synthesis can go on in endless progression until one is identified with the universe surrounding him or her. Not mere intellectual comprehension alone will do it. This identification is much deeper, and goes on all sides much further beyond verbal interpretation. Language expresses only the fringe of conscions experience in thought-feeling-will aspects. Oneness (Adwaita-siddhi) is not reducible in terms of this triple division, even as At-onement is the echo of Christ's saying: I and my Father are One. That is the end, when all is peace and happiness, when spiritual awakening has carried the self furthest beyond the self, assimilated most of the not-self, liquidated antithesis, merged every opposing element in itself, and carried the synthetic process to the furthest limits humanly possible.

For the individual who has fully synthesised, peace and happiness retain no distinctive import. To such a one who has risen above the dualities, neither the absence of peace, nor positive misery fall to be recognised at all. Spiritual awakening, as an individualist process is thus of no consequence. If I want peace and happiness for myself, and if my spiritual awakening consisted in defying all troubles and braving every misery, as if they were never existing, I may stultify my very existence, retiring behing the stone-wall. But in a very intimate sense, the trouble to peace and happiness is social. Few of our undertakings and failures are independent of society. Our personal peace and happiness impinges mostly upon the community as a whole. Hence we find our wisest men and women insisting that so long as there remained one individual yet to be redeemed, the redemption of entire humanity should be deemed to have been held up. That is a social awakening leading to world-peace and world-happiness, not the peace and happiness of an immaterial "I", however high its pretensions,

(To be Concluded.)

Now Available

LIST OF BOOKS

OF THE

R. L. TRUST LIBRARY

COMPLETE AND UP-TO-DATE

You can have it only for As. 2

(POSTAGE EXTRA)

Write to—

SECRETARY:

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY

21, Dalal Street, Fort,

BOMBAY 1,

or

R. L. TRUST BLDG.,

Near Opera House,

BOMBAY 4.

The Indian Institute of Sociology

ONE must put everything that he comes across on the anvil of Rationalism. Our country to-day is in the grip of ignorance, superstition and mysticism. We are yet in the throes of mediaeval civilisation; and hence our march to progress is hindered. Our future depends upon that obstacle being removed. The philosophical revolution must precede the political revolution. Hence the urgent necessity of the intellectual training of workers in all spheres of life. We will succeed in being in the forefront amongst the forces that are marching ahead only if we train ourselves to understand and to make others understand the complexities in the political, social, and economic spheres of thought. Such training should not be haphazard. Incomplete knowledge is more harmful to the cause than complete ignorance. Incomplete knowledge coupled with the prejudices definitely result in the wrong approach of line. Thereby, instead of marching forward, we drift back. Hence the necessity of rational thinking.

The Indian Institute of Sociology exists for that single purpose. We must have that rational approach, and to develop that way of approach one must do certain things. One has to read choicest books on different subjects. The tendency to read books outside the School or College curriculum is definitely increasing. Thanks to the modern ideas of education, the teachers egg the students to read other books on the subjects. But this tendency must be directed to a proper channel. Now-a-days those who want to gather knowledge on a particular subject read any number of books that they could lay their hands on. But because they are not properly instructed as to which books should be read first and which afterwards, they are unable to grasp the subject thoroughly. Being devoid of the backing of conviction, we find dogmatists to the core, and people with prejudices. There must be a systematic reading, and the Indian Institute of Sociology possesses a library containing books from which a systematic reading can be done. The R. L. Trust Library is the only library of its kind in this country. There are more than 2,500 books in the Library on different subjects, like History, Economics, Politics, Sociology, Eugenics, Law, Fiction, Psychology, Ethics, Biography, etc. The books for reference are uptodate. Every month new books are being added to the Library. Periodicals of different types is a special feature. One can study at leisure the subject at his heart, because it is open to the members throughout the twenty-four hours. It is situated in Ranchhod Bhuvan, Near Opera House Terminus, at a central place in Girgaum, Bombay.

If one only confines himself to reading, he is sure to get confused. By reading alone, he forms certain prejudices. He gets a particular vision to look at the things around him. Reading must be supplemented by discussion. Through those discussions, many a doubt are removed; prejudices disappear; and convictions take the place of prejudices. Through discussions, one gets knowledge and imparts knowledge to others. If we come in contact with people proficient in different subjects we do enrich our store of knowledge. Knowledge is such a thing that never diminishes by imparting to others; on the other hand, it is definitely increased.

To understand the making and growth of our Society is the prime concern of those who wish to work to change the Society: and for that one must have the full and complete knowledge of the different aspects of our Society. Deep, conclusive and systematic reading of books, discussions on those subjects and correct information about the current topics is the basis on which alone one can take stand courageously and face the present situation to find a way out.

With the above objects The Indian Institute of Sociology is working. Its objects are, to promote the sociological interest of the Indian people, to gather and disseminate all sorts of sociological imformation, to facilitate the study of sociology, to focus the views of experts on such questions, to form and maintain a Library etc.

Great personalities like late Dr. Sir Bhalchandra Krishna, Kt., J. B. Petit, Shankerlal Banker, Principal T. A. Kulkarni of H. P. T. College, Nasik, late Mr. Osman Sobhani, Baban Goghalay, Prin. J. R. Gharpure, of the Law College, Poona, N. M. Joshi, late Dr. V. N. Bhajekar, Mr. D. G. Padhye, late Mr. P. G. Kanekar and Mr. C. S. Deole of the Social

Service League, were among the founder members of this Institute. The preliminary meeting to start the above Institute was held twenty-five years back on Saturday, the 27th November 1915, in the Servants of India Society's Hall, Bombay. In that meeting it was resolved that "with a view to aiding the industrial development of the country and the scientific study of economics, an Economic Bureau, for faciliting the study of Indian Economics, collection of facts and figures relating to different industries of the country, and the dissemination of correct economic ideas, be and is hereby established."

In the meeting held on the 11th February 1916 it was decided that the name of the Society be "Economic Society". The meeting of the General Body of the Economic Society, held on the 27th January 1933, decided to make a further change in the name; and since that day the Society is known as "The Indian Institute of Sociology."

Many luminaries in public like the late Sir Vitthaldas Thakersey, late Sir N. G. Chandavarkar, late Mr. G. K. Deodhar of the Servants of India Society, late Mr. Vitthalbhai Patel, Thakkar Bappa, Sir Chunilal Mehta, Hon. Mr. M. R. Jaykar, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Shet Govindlal Shivlal, Dr. Jivraj Mehta, Prof. P. A. Wadia, Prof. V. G. Kale, Prof. Tannan and others have at one time or the other actively worked for the Institute.

The Institute with such backing is working in furtherance of its aims. The cause deserves to be supported. Therefore this appeal. Professors, students and social workers should extend their hearty cooperation in furthering the objects of the Institute by becoming members and by giving the benefit of their study and experience to the public through lectures, debates, and discussions.

—RAMESH NADKARNI.

A New Pamphlet

EXIT GOD!

BY

AKSHAYAKUMAR R. DESAI

32 PAGES

Price 2 As. Postage ½ Anna.

Books at Reduced Rates—

SPECIAL CONCESSION

TO THE MEMBERS OF

Indian Institute of Sociology

AND

Rationalist Association of India

Available Books

	Rs.a.p.
Mahatma Gandhi As I Know Him Part I	1–8–0
Do. do. Part II	1–8–0
Futility of Khaddar ...	0–6–0
Swarajya or Surrender ...	1–0–0
Humanity Gain from Unbelief	1–0–0
Monopoly	0–4–0
Principles of Socialism ...	0–4–0
Rights of Labour ...	0–6–0
Religion of Capital ...	0–6–0
Women of Future ...	0–4–6
Logic of Socialism ...	0–6–0
How India is Governed ...	1–0–0

All these books at half the price!

Write to:

THE MANAGER,

HINDUSTAN BOOK DEPOT.

21, Dalal Street, Fort,

BOMBAY.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donation in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000/-.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer,
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

* If you recognise Human Equality,

* If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,

* If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy,

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office-Bearers:

President:—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D. *Vice-Presidents:*—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. and Mr. R. B. Lotewalla. *Hony. Treasurer:*—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee:*—Mr. J. M. Cooper, Dr. S. B. Gadgil, B.A., L.M.S., F.R.C.S. (Eng.) D. Ph. (Lon.) Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. A. Husein, Mr. J. N. Patuck. *Jt. Hony. Secretaries:*—Mr. S. B. Rath, Mr. Abraham Solomon.

For further particulars please write to:—

The Secretaries,
Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,
BOMBAY 2.

IF YOU WANT

To read choicest books,
To discuss modern problems,
To get correct information about current topics,
To have contact with intellectuals, and
To understand the making and growth of our Society—

Then You Must Remain in Touch with

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY.

OBJECTS.

To promote the Sociological interest of the Indian people, to gather and disseminate all sorts of sociological information, to facilitate the study of sociology, to focus the views of experts on such questions, to form and maintain a Library, etc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Donors Rs. 500/- or more. Life Members Rs. 100/- or more. Ordinary Members Rs. 3/- per year payable half-yearly. R. L. T. Library Deposit Rs. 5/-.

All members have the free use of the Library which contains a good collection of books on Economics, and also the Library of the R. L. Trust Hostel which also contains an excellent collection of latest books on all branches of sociology, namely, Economics, Ethics, Eugenics, Psychology, Philosophy, Politics, History, Biography and Fiction on current social problems.

Members are also entitled to publications of the Institute at such concessions as may be determined by the Managing Committee from time to time, as also one Magazine can be supplied at the cost of the Institute and any other Magazine for which concessions could be secured by the Institute for its members by any special agreement with its Publishers.

Rules, Regulations, Entrance Form can be had from:—

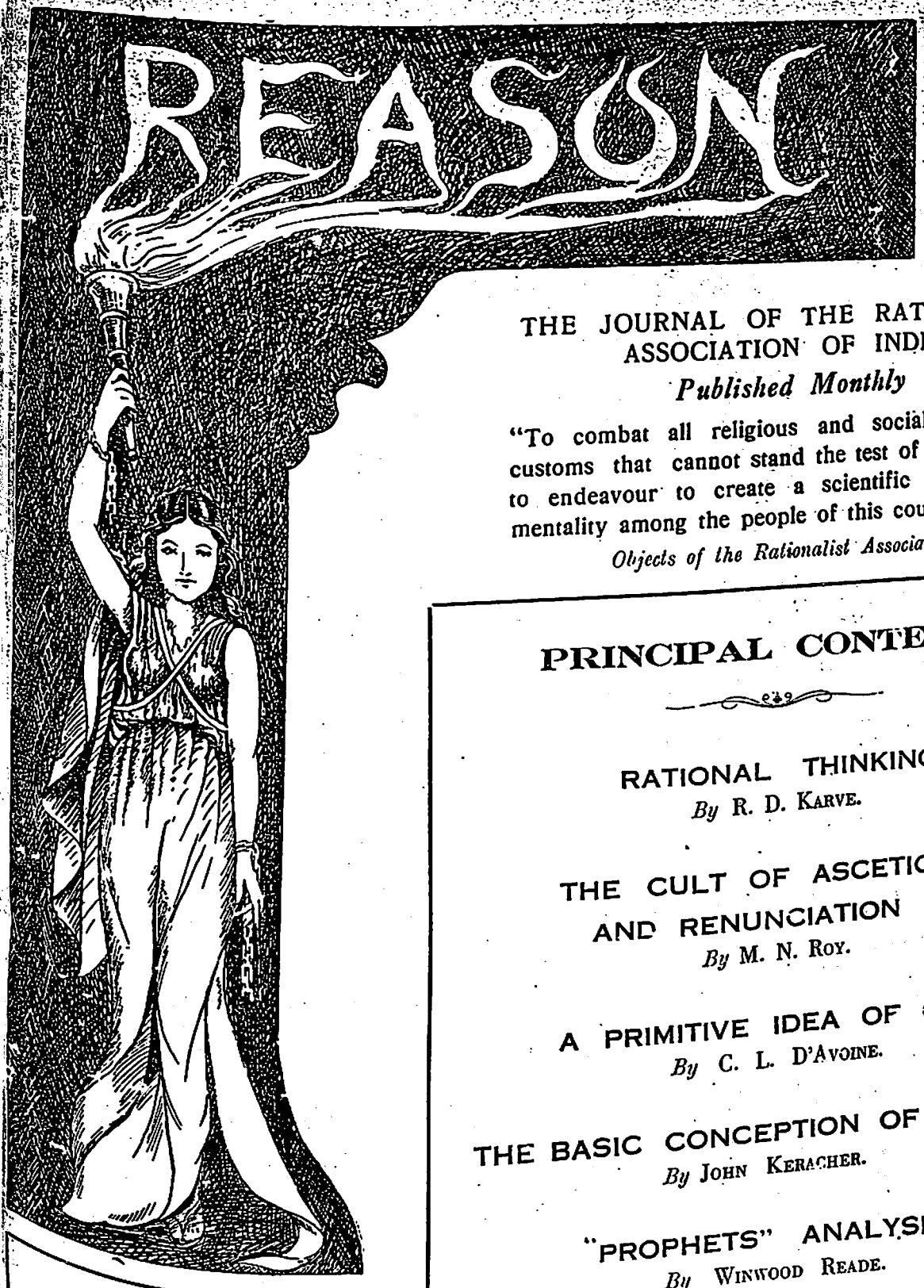
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY,

R. L. TRUST, 'RANCHHOD BHUVAN,'
Near Opera House, Tram Terminus,
BOMBAY 4.

15th January 1940.

G. S. POHEKAR. R. D. NADKARNI.
Hon. Secretaries:

Printed by B. M. Shet at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay 1. Edited and Published by R. D. Karve, M.A., for the Rationalist Association of India at 13, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.



AUGUST 1940.

Vol. VIII No. 8.

PRICE 4 ANNAS.

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Objects of the Rationalist Association of India.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

RATIONAL THINKING
By R. D. KARVE.

THE CULT OF ASCETICISM AND RENUNCIATION
By M. N. ROY.

A PRIMITIVE IDEA OF GOD
By C. L. D'AVOINE.

THE BASIC CONCEPTION OF HISTORY
By JOHN KERACHER.

"PROPHETS" ANALYSED
By WINWOOD READE.

REVIEWS, NOTES, NEWS, ETC.

Editor :
R. D. KARVE, M. A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).

STANDARD WORKS BY FAMOUS FREETHINKERS

Thinkers' Library

Education: Intellectual, Moral and Physical by Herbert Spencer. A great book on a great subject.

A Short History of the World by H. G. Wells. In the pages of this book we review the pageant of earth, of life, of primitive man, and of civilisation, as seen by one of the most vivid writers of our day.

Anthropology (in 2 Vols) by Sir E. B. Tylor. This is the scientific "Book of Genesis." Vol. 1 describes the life of early Man and how he learned to talk and write. Vol. 2 deals with the arts of life and pleasure, and the growth of Knowledge and Religion.(Illustrated).

The Evolution of the Idea of God by Grant Allen. Twenty years were occupied in preparing and ten years in writing this standard work on the history of the God-idea—which is the history of religion itself.

The Churches and Modern Thought by Vivian Phelips. A frank, fearless, and fascinating study of the question "Is Christianity True?"

The Martyrdom of Man by Winwood Reade. Acclaimed as a classic of the nineteenth century, unequalled in artistry of language and lucidity of style.

The Evidence for the Supernatural by Dr. Ivor, LL. Tuckett. Surveys the answer of Science to the question "Is Spiritualism True?" Is the Supernatural Credible?"

The Existence of God by Joseph McCabe. A scholarly and searching examination into the origin, history, and present position of the belief in God with a reply to Sir J. Jeans, Sir A. Eddington, and other apologists.

Psychology for Every Man (and Woman) by A. E. Mander. Gives a clear and concise introduction to the study of human character.

Letters on Reasoning by J. M. Robertson. A scholarly exposition on rational thinking.

Clearer Thinking; (Logic for Every Man) by A. E. Mander. A valuable and practical guide to clear and logical thinking.

Man and His Universe by J. Langdon-Davies. An excellent survey of Man's progress from a primitive outlook on life to a modern scientific one and the causes that contributed to it.

First Principles by Herbert Spencer (Rs. 2/-) A clear and orderly synthesis of knowledge.

The Rights of Man by Thomas Paine. A treatise in defence of those principles of freedom for which the author so valiantly fought and suffered.

The Universe of Science by Prof. H. Levy. An excellent book on the Philosophy of Science.

Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings by Henry Maudsley, M. D. Reveals the psychological processes by which man arrived at beliefs commonly attributed to mystical sources.

Price Re. 1/- each, post free.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

New Members Joining
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA
will get free:

THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM
By Dr. R. P. Paranjpye

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER
A series of talks between
Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, AND FOUR PASTORS
AND
"REASON"
for one year

*

WRITE TO:
The Jt. Hon. Secretaries:
The Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Every Student of Hindu Law should read.
THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY
PRIZE ESSAY
ON
"WHY THE PRESENT
HINDU LAW
OF
SURVIVORSHIP
APPLICABLE TO
JOINT FAMILY PROPERTY
SHOULD BE ABOLISHED".

BY:
K. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR,
B.A. (HONS.) LL.B.,

PRICE AS. 4. POSTAGE EXTRA.

CAN BE HAD FROM:—
THE HINDUSTAN BOOK DEPOT.
21, Dalal Street, Fort, BOMBAY.

It is better that mankind should become atheist by following *Reason* than blindly believe in two hundred millions of Gods on the *authority* of anybody.

—*Swami Vivekananda.*

REASON

Vol. VIII | AUGUST 1940 | No. 8

Rational Thinking

By R. D. KARVE

IT is surprising to see how few people are capable of rational thought. To some, however, it seems to come naturally, without the slightest effort, and these few are not necessarily trained in logic, and sometimes they have not even any education to speak of. After all logic is based on accepted rules of rational thinking, as grammar is based on accepted rules of language. That is why one sometimes finds absolutely uneducated people who are very quick to see a fault in argument and will stop you at once if you make an illogical remark. One of our foremost Marathi novelists, Mr. Varerkar, in a serial story he is writing at present, has made a village blacksmith an atheist. Unobservant readers are surprised and ask him, "How can an uneducated villager be an atheist?" His reply is that he has seen some.

I was once discussing religion in general at dinner with my French hostess with whom I was staying as a boarder in Paris. Of course, the lady would not be persuaded, but the maid-of-all-work, who was serving, remarked, "I quite agree with you, Monsieur". (People in England would be shocked at such an interruption, but not in France). She was just a village girl recently come to Paris to seek a job, and could just read and write, primary education being compulsory in France. Still she was apparently an atheist, just as much as I was.

All this was suggested to me by a so-called educational film I saw the other day at the Metro. The film was intended to show the importance of study and to impress on the minds of young people that play is not everything and that it is important to give some time to study. To my mind, the film did not attain any success in carrying out this intention. It represented a boy eager to play football and about to go for a game with some friends. At this moment his father comes in and wants to have a talk with the boy in private. So he asks his friends to go on and promises to join them in a few minutes. The father tells him that play would not help him to pass his examinations, but the boy thinks that his prowess at football was sure to do the trick. So the father draws a picture of the future, which is shown on the screen. The boy is now at college and is the star of the team. After some amusing scenes, comes the day of the football match, but just as the team is about to take the field, a teacher comes in and tells this particular boy that he cannot be allowed to play because he is backward in his studies. The poor boy is naturally disappointed, flops down on a seat, and tries to caress a dog lying at his feet. But even the dog abandons him and goes away. After this picture, the father asks the boy, "You would not like this to happen to you, would you?" The boy vows that he would devote himself to study and wants to send his friends away, but the father is very sensible and tells him that he need not give up games provided he gave enough time to study. And all the boys shout in chorus that they will do their lessons henceforth.

Has this film taught the lesson it set out to? Does it not seem that the most important thing is after all to be included in the football team, even at the cost of a little time devoted to study, just enough not to be reported as backward? Apart from the fact that a boy would probably not be excluded anywhere

from a football team because of his studies, to my mind the film-producers have entirely bungled the whole thing. Nobody doubts that athletic games are very important from the point of view of mental and physical health. But there is no doubt that they are being given too much importance. Games must not be played to the point of exhaustion, which necessitates complete rest. The importance of study can certainly not be impressed in this way. Even the passing of examinations cannot be considered the most important thing in education. After all, a University degree or diploma may help people to get jobs and earn their living. This is certainly important, but are there not professional cricketers and boxers, who earn their living equally well or even better than many professors? Do they need any education apart from professional training? The world wants to be entertained and pays to see these professionals perform, but even if they earn huge incomes, what is their value to society? Can they be compared to scientists or philosophers? Instead of bringing out the importance of culture, of scientific knowledge and scientific thought, the film shown emphasizes the importance of games and shows study merely as an auxiliary to games. This is the result of irrational thought on the part of the film-producer, who was not able to grasp the logical conclusion that would follow from the film as shown. If educational films are to produce any effect, I mean any desirable effect, the production should be in the hands of intelligent people who are able to think rationally, which, as I said, is a natural gift and is not always acquired by education. I dare say the producer is an educated man as educated men go, but he is certainly not rational.

Of course, irrational argument does not always imply an incapacity to think rationally, being often the outcome of an unwillingness to think rationally. Congress Ministers, for instance, were fairly intelligent people and could probably think rationally if they wanted to. But their main purpose being to carry out the fads of their Dictator, they felt compelled to argue in support of their policy and give any arguments, rational or irrational, that they could think of at the time. Of course, it would have been more sensible to keep quiet, since they could always gain their object by voting for or against any given scheme. But no, they must give silly arguments against birth control, or in support of prohibition, and make themselves ridiculous. Now that the illegally imposed Prohibition has come to an end, Mr. Kher, the ex-minister, is reported to have said that all opposition to prohibition is engineered by vested interests. Of course, nobody expects truth from politicians, though Congress makes a boast of truth and non-violence, but Mr. Kher must be aware that this is a lie. The Rationalist Association of India held a special open meeting to protest against prohibition before it was introduced, and only a deliberate liar can say that we have any vested interests in the sale of liquor. For Mr. Gandhi, anything he does not approve of is immoral, consequently drink is immoral, and must be made impossible for everybody so far as possible. Nothing can be more immoral than trying to impose one's own ideas on other people by force. There is neither truth nor non-violence in such an imposition.

Mr. Chapman Cohen, in his "Almost an Autobiography," gives an excellent example of the irrationalism of religious people. He refers to Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity", in which the author traces Atheism to the desire to lead a life of "pleasure" without having to pay the price in a future life. I think believers might credit even atheists with sense enough to know that their non-belief in a future life would certainly not abolish a future life if there was a future life. If a man had the slightest doubt about the existence of a future life, he would not dare to be an atheist. He would rather err on the safer side and behave as if there was a future life, considering the supposed consequences of a mistake on the other side! It is only the person who is thoroughly convinced that there cannot be any such thing as a god or a future life who will dare to express his thoughts, even to himself. Now, is such a person likely to lead a life of "pleasure"? Obviously there is nothing wrong in pleasure as such, but Hooker obviously uses the word in the sense "dissipation", or excessive pleasure-seeking. An atheist, who does not believe in a God who will pardon you if you say you repent at the last moment after leading a life of dissipation, but who is obliged to believe in the laws of Nature, which are inexorable, is much less likely to risk his health that way, his health being to him one of the most important things in the world. There are any number of religious stories showing how the worst criminals who have inflicted untold misery on their fellow-citizens have been pardoned and admitted to Heaven, simply because they said they repented at the end on their death-bed, which repentance was probably due to their fear of Hell and its tortures. This

(*Continued on page 122*)

The Cult of Asceticism and Renunciation

A Social Disease

By M. N. Roy

(*Concluded from page* 91.)

ASCETICISM is a perverse ideal—of a morbid mentality. Individual suicide is generally considered to be a reprehensible act. Throughout history, there has been difference of opinion regarding the morality and legality of the act of individual self-destruction. With all the arguments for and against suicide, it is an incontestable psychological deduction that suicide is committed as a rule in a state of temporary insanity. The virtue of asceticism represents an epidemic of this mental malady. It implies the spread of suicidal mania on a large scale. In other words, the holy man is an assassin. One may be granted the freedom to destroy his tormented self, and his morbid action may be excused as a token of individual insanity. But the cult of asceticism, if practised widely, becomes an instrument of homicidal mania. Insanity becomes a crime. Individually, the ascetic is to be pitied for his or her depraved insanity; the cult, however, is a veritable crime against humanity. The only saving grace is not the silly notion about its spiritualising power, but that it is a social disease as all crimes are. When a particular social system is caught in such a severe crisis as overwhelms the multitude with utter despair, suicidal mania finds a fertile field. Insanity becomes epidemic. The world is full of incurable sorrows and sufferings; the only way out is to run away from the world, and seek consolation in the dream of a better existence transcending that of the senses. Parenthood stands in the way of this only escape. Even in the chaos of social decomposition, spiritual egoism cannot always get better of the biological laws expressing themselves as love and affection. Therefore, to secure spiritual uplift, man must sink below the level of animal; must destroy his upsprings even before they are born. He must not only make a monstrosity of himself by the futile effort to violate all the laws of nature; he must destroy the posterity, thereby committing gross violence against mother nature herself.

Multiplication is the law of nature. The social value of asceticism, when it first appeared as a wide-spread cult, was somewhat analogous to that of the modern *proletarian* movement of birth-control. Conscientious people are reluctant to breed progeny when they are not in the position to perform their parental duties. But the restraint thus applied to propagation is an obligatory temporary measure. There will be no need for it as soon as the social conditions are changed. It does not represent a stupid condemnation of life itself. Besides, the modern movement of birth-control does not propose stifling of the sexual instinct; therefore, the temporary restraint of propagation does not make mental monstrosities out of the living generation. But rationalism was unknown to the multitude caught in the crisis of the antique social order. The scope and practice of asceticism could not be circumscribed by the consciousness of its social value. It was not associated with a conscious revolutionary struggle for overthrowing the decayed social system, which so hopelessly clouded the perspective of life, with a purpose of building up a new society. It reflected the despair of the victims of the crisis. It was an integral part of the ideology of social dissolution.

Not to plunge other souls in the ocean of worldly sorrows, is a motive nobler than spiritual egoism. Nevertheless, it also amounts to the same thing—a reprehensible attempt to destroy the human race. Had religion any place for logic, loyalty or true idealism, then the religious man should revolt against this sinful cult which recommends the destruction of the noblest creation of God. The teaching of religion is that God created man after his own image. When religion becomes a crime against God himself, there must be something radically wrong with it.

The ascetic is a defeatist. His defeatism is the product of the depressing hopeless social conditions that surround him. As soon as those conditions change, the disease growing out of them necessarily abates and gradually

disappears. That was the case with the European society, which succeeded in the struggle to come out of the chaos resulting from the decomposition of the antique society. The virus of Christian monasticism was a passing phenomenon. Monasteries outgrew their original negative features; gradually, they came to play a positive social role as productive units which constituted the corner-stone of a new social order. In India, the social crisis became a chronic disease, the ugly symptoms of which perpetuated themselves, as so many specific features of a special type of culture. Raising defeatism on the proud pedestal of imaginary and often fraudulent spirituality, Indian society abjured the path of struggle. It stagnated into a fossilised existence, the "conservative genius" of which choked the internal forces of disruption and progress, but could not resist violent impacts from outside. The Hindu ideal of Brahmacharya is a hideous heritage of a tragic past.

It was not an easy task to preserve the holy appearance of an abnormal institution embracing an ever increasing multitude of social derelicts, actuated by motives far from being genuinely spiritual. It was, however, accomplished through the destruction of the freedom of mind by fomenting the virtue of credulity and encouraging the merit of submission. The mind of a superstitious crowd, steeped in ignorance and trembling with fear, submitted to the most absurd and atrocious habits, the fanatical practice of which would be rewarded surely with salvation and possibly even with worldly fame, power and prestige. Austerities, that have been claimed as the special merit of the holy men of India, were carried to incredible extent by Christain monks. Pleasure and guilt were synonymous terms in the monastic vocabulary of India as well as of any other country inflicted by the disease. Everywhere impure desires of the flesh were mortified by the rigour of fast and abstemiousness. The Church Fathers were enthusiastically eloquent about the spiritual effect of fasting and abstinence. The inmates of Eastern monasteries—disciples of Anthony and Pachonius—lived on the pittance of twelve ounces of dry bread a day, and had to perform hard labour to keep their minds away from evil thoughts. Nights were devoted to prayer, penance and meditation. Meat-eating was strictly forbidden, and water was the only beverage compatible with the spiritual life of a man. The early Christain ideal of evangelical poverty was the last word of the doctrine of renunciation. On entering the holy life, the monk abjured all earthly possessions, even the cloak on his back was not to be called his own. The holy man lived on alms or the product of manual labour performed in the service of God.

Such a comfortless and barren life was naturally tormented by evil spirits, which are nothing but the vision of vainly suppressed desires, and haunted by hallucinations. The life of every Christian Saint is a tale of heroic struggle against the temptations of Satan, and of miraculous victories over those forces of evil. Since every prisoner of monasticism was either a miniature or an incipient saint, he also must experience the struggles and triumphs of the thorny road to holiness. How familiar are we in India with the tales of such spiritual exploits! Here as well as in many other countries, these tales were so hungrily devoured by the credulous multitude, because the hopeless conditions of their miserable life could be possibly changed only by a miracle. Recording some of those legends about the Christian Saints, and exposing their spurious origin, Gibbon writes: "These extravagant tales, which display the fiction, without genius of poetry, have seriously affected the reason, the faith, and the morals of the Christians. Their credulity debased and violated the faculties of the mind; they corrupted the evidence of history and superstition, gradually extinguished the hostile light of philosophy and science. Every mode of religious worship which had been practised by the Saints, every mysterious doctrine which they had believed, was fortified by the sanction of divine revelation, and all the manly virtues were oppressed by the servile and pusilianimous reign of the monks."

One composing a critical history of ancient India could use this admirable passage verbatim for summarising our spiritual heritage, which has been such a stout bulwark of reaction for centuries, and has contributed so much to our present unenviable plight. The European nations recovered from the virulent plague germinated in the putrid carcass of the once magnificent Roman Empire, as soon as the advance of knowledge raised the depressing gloom hanging upon life. The happy dawn of knowledge was caused by the rise of forces building a new social order. Only the faith in the endless possibilities of worldly life can persuade man to abandon the vain chase after the will-o'-the-wisp of an imaginary sublimer existence which disregards all the reality. This wild race after a chimera ceases only

(Continued on page 108)

A PRIMITIVE IDEA OF GOD

By C. L. D'AVOINE.

IN times of grave international crisis such as war, the clergy get the best opportunity to assert their importance and justify their usefulness as the agents of God on earth.

No doubt at other times they are not silent or unobtrusive, but it is particularly during the time of great danger and anxiety, that they usually come out to show the great influence they have with heaven and to teach people what to do to win divine favour.

In this respect the clergy of the Church of England of late have been particularly conspicuous and active. We have, so far, not heard much about the Pope of Rome simply because circumstances have prevented him from making his usual display of piety and exhortation. As a matter of fact, he must be feeling rather disconcerted that Hitler, who is described as the avowed enemy of Christianity, especially of Catholicism, should be marching so triumphantly against people who are out to defend "Christian civilization" and democracy. What must be very galling to His Holiness is the fact that Mussolini, who belongs to the most Catholic country in the world, is the ally of such an iconoclast as Hitler and neither of them has done anything to prevent Russia, the most atheistic country in the world, from overpowering the smaller states in Central Europe, thus endangering Christianity more and more. If Franco, the pet child of the Pope, whom he described as the Champion of Catholicism, should join hands with Hitler and Mussolini, then indeed the cup of bitterness for His Holiness will be full to the brim.

The Archbishop of Conterbury, however, does not appear to suffer from such misgivings. Soon after the Munich conference, when it was announced that Mr. N. Chamberlain had succeeded in making truce with Hitler and thus averted a world war, the worthy Archbishop lost no time in persuading the people of England that they must fall on their knees and pour their hearts in thankfulness to God for the great work Mr. Chamberlain had done. Thus it was that towards the fall of last year, Royalty accompanied by the nobles of the land and other pious folk assembled in Westminster Abbey, where the aged Archbishop in resplendent sacerdotal vestment, surrounded by other dignified prelates equally gloriously attired, offered a solemn thanksgiving service to God. On that occasion, it was reported, Mrs. Chamberlain was particularly noticeable in the assembly, seated at the side of her distinguished husband, and both appeared visibly affected by the solemnity of the occasion.

In spite of this, War did after all happen. One can understand the bitter disappointment of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who must have felt that he had been rather too impulsive in offering the nation's thanks to a Being who appears so enigmatic in the clouds. Anyhow, whether it was the belief that God was on the side of the Allies or not, France and England for six solid months took things easy and appeared to have thought that when the hour strikes it would be the easiest thing for them to march into Germany and crush Hitler and his Nazism for ever. On the way, the British soldiers were going to hang their dirty clothes on the Siegfried Line if that line had not already been blown to pieces by the Allies' artillery.

Early in Spring, things took a dramatic turn for the worse for the Allies. It was soon realized that both England and France had completely underrated the power of Germany and that Hitler's threat to crush all opposition was no vain boast. It was then only that it must have dawned on some people in England that God helps those who help themselves and that usually He is on the side of the biggest battalions. The old Archbishop, however, still continued to believe in the magic of prayer and, with the permission of the King, he ordered general prayers for the victory of our arms in all the Churches of the Empire. This was duly done on the 26th of May last and again quite recently, when it was announced that France had collapsed completely and henceforth the chance of defeating Hitler rests on Britain alone. Solemn prayers were said in all the Churches and some people like Mr. Shaw Desmond actually suggested that every body should pray exactly at 9 A. M. every day so that the volume of prayers ascending into heaven must ultimately impress the Almighty and induce Him to grant what He appeared so reluctant to give! This volume of prayers to wake up the Almighty reminds one of the fearful

noise of drums, bells, cymbals and shouting that people in other countries make to attract the attention of their Gods!

Whatever progress mankind has achieved in the intellectual field, it is clear that the idea of God of most people has not changed since primitive times. This idea, indeed, is as crude and childish as it was in those remote days. According to these people, a man-like God, omnipotent, wise and good, exists somewhere above and it is He who guides and controls the world. It is He who allows anything to take place and can prevent anything He likes.

If such fearful things happen in the world like Hitler and his hosts marching triumphantly and crushing everything before them and killing the innocent, there must be grave reason, they say, why God allows this. His agents declare that God permits the forces of evil to triumph at least for sometime, because in his goodness and wisdom He wants people to be punished for the neglect of Him and His Churches. After the expiation and atonement, He will set things right and the world will enjoy peace again. Such is the belief of people who think that prayers soften such a God who cannot be satisfied for the sins of the world until millions of innocent people, helpless women, children and the aged, have been mercilessly butchered and the countries destroyed!

It is rather depressing to think that most people who live in countries which claim to be in the forefront of civilization have such an idea of their God. They firmly believe that he allows such evil that good may come out of it. People who do not believe such things are really to be congratulated that their minds have been enlightened and emancipated from such repulsive ideas of the deity.

A lucid exposition of the Philosophy of Freethought by one of the greatest Freethinkers of our day.

FOUR LECTURES ON FREETHOUGHT AND LIFE

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

PRICE 12 AS. POSTAGE 1 ANNA.

RATIONAL THINKING

(*Continued from page* 118)

repentance does no good to anybody. It is merely a religious trick. An atheist has no such pardon to expect. He may not be necessarily a moral man, since human actions depend more often on the impulse of the moment than on reasoning, but he knows that he has to take the consequences of his actions in this world and that there is no other. The chances, therefore, are that he will try to behave himself in this world.

And it is not always by fear of consequences that a man is prevented from being and doing evil. No doubt men are selfish and have to be to a certain extent. But there is also such a thing as a social instinct, and innate desire to be useful to other people, which is even found sometimes in the greatest villains, who may have their own ideas of being useful. And religious people have committed the greatest atrocities in the name of religion. The fear of God does not therefore necessarily lead to social or moral conduct unless one has an innate inclination to be social or moral. Even Voltaire made the mistake of supposing that the fear of God is necessary to maintain order in society, but we need not repeat that mistake. History has shown the consequences of religion and they can hardly be considered desirable.

ON SOCRATES.

"Through dexterity and skill in Dialectic, by persistent oral cross-questioning....., he (Socrates) excited and enforced two things, — (a) men's inveterate ignorance, or conceit of knowledge that they did not possess; and (b) the true way of one's attaining knowledge, namely, by becoming explicitly conscious of one's ignorance.....He made it his business to subject prevailing notions, generally accepted opinions,..... in all departments of human interest, to a strict criticism and review. It was not enough to him that they should rest upon "use and wont" or *long-established custom: they must stand the test of reason, or else be rejected.* This meant, of course, a revolt *against tradition* and against *the lazy servile acceptance of truth on mere authority.* In which attitude, there was unquestionably something un-settling, even although his ultimate object was, like that of Descartes, later on, through doubt and searching to attain certainty—to establish both truth and morality on a sure foundation (see Diogenes Laertius, I. v. 7;), and, on the face of it, there seemed to be the same dangerous tendency that characterized the scepticism of the Sophists..... Nor is it matter for surprise that he should ultimately have been condemned to death on the charges of atheism and impiety and corrupting the youth. Well might elderly people, thus shaken rudely out of their lethargy, look askance at a teacher who habituated his hearers, especially young men, to demand a reason for every proffered truth and every cherished conviction. Free thinking like this was certainly disconcerting.

Dr. W. L. DAVIDSON.

The Basic Conceptions of History

By JOHN KERACHER.

AS soon as man became conscious of his existence, as soon as he was able to reason, he was bound to ask himself the questions: "From whence did I come?" and "Whither do I go?" It was very natural that he should wonder how he came to be here on earth and what would become of him after death. He saw his fellow men fall asleep, never to awaken. He saw others killed, life extinguished. It was his efforts to solve these problems that caused primitive man to create beliefs in life after death and in the power of super-human beings.

When we look back over the experiences of the race, the history of mankind, we find that man has formed three different ways of explaining his activities. In other words, there have been but three conceptions of history, three basic explanations by man of his doings on this planet. It is true that more than three names have been given to these conceptions of history, but they will all fall within the following: First, in order of time, is the Theological Conception of History; second, is the Idealist Conception of History, and, third, is the Materialist Conception of History.

The Theological Conception

The Theologial Conception of History is founded upon the belief that back of the universe there is some supreme being or beings either good or bad, and that all the doings of mankind are but the working out of the will of these supernatural beings. History, therefore, is but a record of the unfolding divine scheme of things.

This conception of history held the field for many ages. Today it is almost abandoned. The theologians themselves will no longer defend it, as it puts them in an absurd position. If it is true that man is simply carrying out the divine will, that his actions are part of a divine plan; if he is pre-ordained to do certain things and cannot do otherwise, then he is not directly responsible for his actions. Murder, rape, theft and other crimes, are not his work. He is but the humble agent carrying out the divine will. Benjamin Franklin in his autobiography expresses this concept as follows: "And now I speak of thanking God, I desire with all humility to acknowledge that I attribute the mentioned happiness of my past life to his divine providence, which led me to the means I used and gave the success. My belief of this induces me to *hope*, though I must not *presume*, that the same goodness will still be exercised toward me in continuing that happiness or enabling me to bear a fatal reverse, which I may experience as others have done; the complexion of my future fortune being known to him only in whose power it is to bless us, even in our afflictions."

Robert Burns expresses the same belief in prayer:

Thou Great Being! what thou art surpasses me to know,
Yet sure I am, that known to Thee are all Thy works below,
But if I must afflicted be to suit some wise design,
Then man my soul with firm resolves to bear and not repine!

Burns and Franklin lived during the same period, the period of bourgeois revolutions. For those times, they were advanced thinkers, yet unable to break away from the theologial conception of the universe and its divine rulership.

According to the Theological Conception of History, it would logically follow that if I were to kill someone I would not be to blame. I could not help doing it since a greater power than I had decreed that I must. On the other hand, if I were to save the life of another, at the risk of my own, I would be unworthy of any praise, since I could not avoid doing it. How often do we hear people say in such cases, "It was God's will." If this conception of history is defended, then it means that man is not directly responsible for his actions. The "good" or "evil" which he does are not his own doings. He is but a humble instrument carrying out the will of superior powers. To punish him here, or in "the hereafter," for what he could not avoid doing, is an indefensible position.

The Idealist Conception of History

This conception of history, which is advanced to-day by official society, is based upon the

theory of free-will. According to this conception, man is a free agent. He has the power to make a choice in relation to his actions, the power to choose between "good and evil". God may help him, or the devil may tempt him, but he alone must make the final choice. This free will, this power to choose between "good and evil," is necessary to the making of a "sinner." If man has no power to choose he cannot be a "sinner." The saving of souls would come to an end. Today the church defends the free-will theory. But what is the will? It is the mind in which ideas are formulated. The Idealist Conception of History is based upon human idea.

From the standpoint of the defenders of this conception, the idea is all-important. Good people are those with good thoughts. Bad people are the result of bad thoughts, "wicked" ideas. The ideas, good or bad, come first and the actions follow therefrom. Clever people are the outcome of clever ideas. Stupid people are the result of their own stupid ideas. Advanced nations are based upon advanced ideas, and backward nations upon backward ideas. People who are up-to-date are so because of their progressive ideas and out-of-date people are the result of old-fashioned ideas. This is the essence of the Idealist Conception of History.

If we follow up this conception of history and apply it to society in general we find that great nations are the result of certain nations having great men, who in turn are the result of their great ideas. History, viewed from this standpoint, simply means that great men have been the makers of history. This is sometimes called "The Great Man Theory of History." Of course it falls within the idealist conception. The whole conception rests upon the notion that the idea comes first and that action follows from the idea.

To a certain extent this conception is correct. It cannot be denied that ideas precede action. For instance, we cannot have a house until we have the idea of one. We can speculate upon how a house will look before it is started. An architect can draw a plan, he can picture a house in advance. He can show you what it will look like after it is built. Before we can have a table someone must first think of one, not only the first table which was made but also every individual table that is produced. The idea of a table may have originally arisen from food being placed on a flat stone while eating.

Applying this conception to all things, we are bound to admit that the idea comes before the produced object. If we view history from this standpoint we are forced to conclude that its unfolding is the unfolding of human ideas. There is nothing wrong with this conception as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough, for we are faced with an important question: "If all of our achievements are the result of ideas, if history is the outcome of the human idea, then, WHERE DOES THE IDEA ITSELF COME FROM?"

The Materialist Conception of History

The answer which we give to this question is, that ALL OF THE IDEAS OF MAN HAVE SPRUNG FROM THE MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH HE HAS LIVED AND MOVED. This is the substance of the Materialist Conception of History.

In a primitive society, where man is in contact with few things and uses but few tools or weapons, his ideas are primitive, and very limited. In a highly complex society, where man is in contact with countless things, a complex environment, his ideas are complex, many-sided, and extensive.

Man's material surroundings determine not only the extent of his ideas but also their general character. The first law of life is "self-preservation." Man must eat and protect himself from the elements. The growth of his ideas follow, in the main, the development of the means of securing a living. The first question that man asks, the one which is still the foremost question with the majority, is not in relation to how we came to be here or what will become of us when we die, but "When do we eat?" That is an eternal question. Idealists may repudiate such a "sordid view" but we can rely upon them to be on time at the dinner table.

A few years ago a psychological experiment was tried at a great prison. It was decided to hang one of the prisoners who had been sentenced to die, in the court yard where all the prisoners could see the hanging. As the rope was placed around the neck of the condemned man and the hangman was ready to spring the trap, the hundreds of prisoners looking from their cells were silent. The psychologists were keenly observing the effects of the scene when the silence was broken by a lusty-voiced prisoner demanding to know:

"When do we eat?" followed by a clamour for breakfast.

The highway over which man has travelled, down through the ages, has been an economic one. Morality, ethics, religion, politics, war, the arts, all that man has achieved, everything which he has today, rests upon an economic foundation. Just try to get away from this and see how far you can travel. When Napoleon said "Armies travel upon their stomachs," he only told a part of the truth. Soldiers are not the only ones who have to eat. The truth is that all society travels upon its stomach. This is a very simple fact but many people lose sight of it.

The present social arrangement is quite complex, the social superstructure almost hides the economic foundation upon which it rests. Many people are so secure that they quite overlook the fact that they eat and wear clothes, and that these things have to be produced by labor. But there are millions of others who never get a chance to forget it. The economic problem is right on their doorstep. Next to this main factor, the economic, come other material factors, such as climate, topography and other natural features of man's environment. If the community is an agricultural region, or an industrial city, it has its corresponding effect upon the ideas of the populace. All of the ideas of man, religious, moral, political, etc., are but the reflex of the economic and material enviroment. The brain acts much like a mirror. It reflects all that shines into it from the outside. The five senses convey to the brain sense perceptions, "food for thought." The brain "digests" these sense perceptions into ideas. If the ideas become more or less fixed we call them opinions. The brain can not reflect that which is not. It can only reflect real things.

When a child is born its mind is like a clean page upon which nothing yet is written. I do not contend that its mind is a blank, but that it is incapable of thinking. At this stage it is governed by instinct alone. It responds to hunger or pain. The awakening of its mind follows the awakening of the senses. The five senses, seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and touching, must first function before there can be anything resembling thought in the mind of a child.

All the lies and humbug, all the superstition and fear, that a child may acquire as it grows up, are the result of its environment. They are the "gifts," very often, of fond but foolish parents. An average child, one that is not sub-normal, will become really intelligent if it is brought into contact with intelligent people. But the same child in contact with stupid people may grow up with its mind full of nonsense, in fear and trembling of imaginary beings. Many years of a child's life may be spent in terror of the invisible things which it is taught to believe exist around it. This is nearly always the case when the child is unfortunate enough to have stupid parents, or is born and raised in a backward neighborhood where other children and adults are superstitious.

The five senses are like little railroads that carry sense perceptions to the brain. Many people have strange notions about the functioning of the brain. They surround the mind with much mystery, yet the brain is just a natural organ of the body like any other part. The function of the hand, for instance, is grasping, writing, and so forth. The function of the legs is walking, running, jumping, and so forth. The function of the stomach is the digesting of food. The function of the brain is thinking. But there can be no thought without sense perceptions.

If no food is conveyed to the stomach there can be no digestion. If no sense perceptions are conveyed to your brain there will be no thinking. The five senses convey the "food for thought." The mind is simply a functioning of the brain, just as digestion is a functioning of the stomach. The mind is inseparable from the brain, just as digestion is inseparable from the stomach. That functioning of the mind which we call memory is simply a storing away of sense perceptions. Innumerable images, or thought-pictures, are stored away, as it were, to be used when needed and sometimes when they are not needed or even desired. The process might be likened to the storing away of countless words on phonograph records to be reproduced when wanted. Phonograph records are silent until connected with the machinery that reproduces the words through the speaker (the horn). Your memory is silent until connected with the mental machinery, which you have the power to set in motion and give expression to your stored-up sense perceptions, through speech, or in writing, etc.

There is no thought-picture in the brain but what its counterpart exists somewhere

without. In other words, all thoughts, no matter how complex or mysterious they seem to be, can be traced to their origin. Thought can not spring from anything but material. It can not spring from nothing. Even an imaginary thing, Santa Claus, for instance, has its material source in the body of a kindly looking old man with a long beard. Or as Josef Dietzgen points out in relation to the belief in angels, the thought is but the combination of the body of a young woman with the wings of bird. Both are material, the wings and the woman.

A good story is told of one of the great medieval painters who had painted a beautiful angel on a church wall. One of the priests of the church laughed and pointed at the picture with the remark: "Who ever saw an angel with sandals on?" The artist promptly met the question with the retort: "Who ever saw an angel without?"

If you have the nightmare and you dream of pink elephants with green wings, or other such monstrosities, no matter how fantastic, you can trace all these composite thought-pictures to material sources. In fact, it is impossible to think of anything that does not have a material source. There never was a thought in the mind of any man but that its origin could be traced back to nature itself. You can not think about nothing. Just try it and see how far you will get.

There are still some people who believe that thought is inherent, that when we are born our minds are already a storehouse of knowledge. Such a notion is sheer nonsense. The doctrine of innate ideas is now completely discredited. Other people, while not believing that knowledge is inherent, cudgel their brains in search of what is not there. They think that if they close themselves in a room that they can draw knowledge from the "depths of their minds," somewhat like drawing up water from the depths of a well.

What is not put into the mind can not be brought out. If we wish to have knowledge on a certain subject we must go to the material sources and observe through our senses, or we must go to books or other mediums to acquire knowledge that others have gathered through the use of their senses.

—*From* **How the Gods Were Made.**

Now Available

LIST OF BOOKS

OF THE

R. L. TRUST LIBRARY

COMPLETE AND UP-TO-DATE

You can have it only for As. 2

(POSTAGE EXTRA)

Write to—

SECRETARY:

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY

21, Dalal Street, Fort,

BOMBAY 1,

or

R. L. TRUST BLDG.,

Near Opera House,

BOMBAY 4.

"Prophets" Analysed

(*A Study in Psychology of Prophets.*)

By WINWOOD READE.

ALL persons of imaginative minds know what it is to be startled by a thought; they know how ideas flash into the mind, as if from without; and what physical excitement they can at times produce. They also know what it is to be possessed by a presentiment, a deep, overpowering conviction of things to come. They know how often such presentiments are true; and also how often they are false.

The prophet or seer is a man of strong imaginative powers, which have not been calmed by education. The ideas which occur to his mind often present themselves to his eyes and ears in corresponding sights and sounds. As one in a dream he hears voices and sees forms; his whole mien is that of a man who is possessed; his face sometimes becomes transfigured, and appears to glow with light; but usually the symptoms are a more painful kind, such as foaming of the mouth, writhing of the limbs, and a bubbling ebullition of the voice. He is sometimes seized by these violent ideas against his will. But he can, to a certain extent, produce them by long fasting and by long prayer; or, in other words, by the continued concentration of the mind upon a single point; by music, dancing, and fumigations. The disease is contagious, as is shown by the anecdote of Saul among the prophets; and similar scenes have been frequently witnessed by travellers in the East.

Prophets have existed in all countries and at all times; but the gift becomes rare in the same proportion as people learn to read and write. Second sight in the Highlands disappeared before the school; and so it has been in other lands. Prophets were numerous in ancient Greece. In the Homeric period they opposed the royal power, and constituted another authority by the grace of God. Herodotus alludes to men who went about prophesying in hexameters. Thucydides says that, while the Peloponnesians were ravaging the lands of Athens, there were prophets within the city uttering all kinds of oracles, some for going out and some for remaining in. It was a prophet who obtained the passing of that law under which Socrates was afterwards condemned to death. In Greece, in Egypt, and in Israel the priests adopted and localised the prophetic power. The oracles of Ammon, Delphi, and Shiloh bore the same relation to individual prophets as an Established Church to itinerant preachers. Syria was especially fertile in prophets. Marius kept a Syrian prophetess named Martha, who attended him in all his campaigns. It matters nothing what the Syrian religion might be; the same phenomenon again and again recurs. Balaam was a prophet before Israel was established. Then came the prophets of the Jews; and they again have been succeeded by the Christian cave saint and the Moslem dervish, whom the Arabs have always regarded with equal veneration. But it was among the Jews, from the time of Samuel to the captivity, that prophets or dervishes were most abundant. They were then as plentiful as politicians: and politicians in fact they were, and prophesied against each other. Some would be for peace, and some would be for war: some were partisans of Egypt, others were partisans of Babylon. The prophetic ideas differ in no respect from those of ordinary men, except in the sublime or ridiculous effect which they produce on the prophetic mind and body. Sometimes the predictions of the Jewish prophets were fulfilled; and sometimes they were not. To use the Greek phrase, their oracles were often of base metal; and in such a case the unfortunate dervish was jeered at as a false prophet, and would in his turn reproach the Lord for having made him a fool before men.

The Jewish prophet was an extraordinary being. He was something more and something less than a man. He spoke like an angel; he acted like a beast. As soon as he received his mission, he ceased to wash. He often retired to the mountains, where he might be seen skipping from rock to rock like a goat; or he wondered in the desert with a leather girdle round his loins, eating roots and wild honey; sometimes browsing on grass and flowers. He always adapted his actions to the idea which he desired to convey. He not only taught in parables, but performed them. For instance, Isaiah walked naked through the streets to show that the Lord would strip Jerusalem, and make her bare. Ezekiel cut off his hair and beard and weighed it in the scales: a third part he burnt with fire; a third part he strewed about with a knife; and a third part he scattered to the wind. This was also intended to illustrate the calamities which would befall the Jews. Moreover, he wore a rotten girdle

as a sign that their city would decay, and buttered his bread in a manner we would rather not describe, as a sign that they would eat defiled bread among the Gentiles. Jeremiah wore a wooden yoke as a sign that they should be taken into captivity. As a sign that the Jews were guilty of wantonness in worshipping idols, Hosea cohabited three years with a woman of the town; and as a sign that they committed adultery in turning from the Lord their God, he went and lived with another man's wife.

Such is the ludicrous side of Jewish prophecy; yet it has also its serious and noble side. The prophets were always the tribunes of the people; the protectors of the poor. As the tyrant revelled in his palace on the taxes extorted from industrious peasants, a strange figure would descend from the mountains, and, stalking to the throne, would stretch forth a lean and swarthy arm, and denounce him in the name of Jehovah, and bid him repent, or the Lord's wrath should fall upon him, and dogs should drink his blood. In the first period of the Jewish life, the prophets exercised these functions of censor and of tribune, and preached loyalty to the god who had brought them up out of Egypt with a strong hand. They were also intensely fanatical, and published Jehovah's wrath not only against the king who was guilty of idolatry and vice, but also against the king who took a census, or imported horses, or made treaties of friendship with his neighbours. In the second period the prophets declared the unity of God, and exposed the folly of idol-worship. They did even more than this. They opposed the Ceremonial Law, and preached the religion of the heart. They declared that God did not care for their Sabbaths and their festivals, and their new moons, and their prayers, and church services, and ablutions, and their sacrifices of meat and oil, and of incense from Arabia, and of the sweet cane from a far country. "Cease to do evil," said they; "learn to do well; relieve the oppressed; judge the fatherless; plead for the widow." It is certain that the doctrines of the great prophets were heretical. Jeremiah flatly declared that, in the day that God brought them from the land of Egypt, he did not command them concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices: and this statement would be of historical value, if prophets always spoke the truth.

They were bitter adversaries of the kings and priests, and the consolers of the oppressed. "The Lord hath appointed me," says one whose oracles have been edited with those of Isaiah, but whose period was later, and whose true name is not known, "the Lord hath appointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to give unto them that mourn beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for lamentation, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

The aristocracy who lived by the altar did not receive these attacks in a spirit of submission. There was a law ascribed to Moses, like all the other Jewish laws, but undoubtedly enacted by the priest party under the kings, that false prophets should be put to death; and though it was dangerous to touch prophets on account of the people, who were always on their side, they were frequently subjected to persecution. Urijah fled from King Jehoiakim to Egypt; armed men were sent after him; he was arrested, brought back and killed. Zachariah was stoned to death in the courts of the Temple. Jeremiah was formally tried, and was acquitted; but he had a narrow escape: he was led, as he remarked, like a sheep to the slaughter. At another time he was imprisoned; at another time he was let down by ropes into a dry well; and there is a tradition that he was stoned to death by the Jews in Egypt after all. The nominal Isaiah chants the requiem of such a martyr in a poem of exquisite beauty and grandeur. The prophet is described as one of hideous appearance, so that people hid their faces from him: "*his visage was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.*" The people rejected his mission and refused to acknowledge him as a prophet. "*He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.*" He was arraigned on a charge of false prophecy: he made no defence, and he was put to death. "*He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from the prison to the judgment; he was cut off from the land of the living.*" It was believed by the Jews that the death of such a man was accepted by God as a human sacrifice, an atonement for the sins of the people, just as the priest in the olden time heaped the sins of the people on the scape-goat, and sent him out into the wilderness. "*He bare the sins of many and made intercession for the transgressors. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and hath carried our sorrows. His soul was made an offering for sin. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, and with his stripes we are healed.*

REASON

(Estd. 1931)

The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road
Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris)

Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

R. A. I. Membership Rs. 5/- Foreign 8s. annually.

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 2/- & Foreign 3s. 6d. or. $1.00 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

To Correspondents.

V. Subrahmanya Iyer (Mysore). Thanks for quotation. We do not think you are right when you say "there is certainly no fear of any rationalist being put to death in these days". Murder for the glory of God is rare only due to lack of opportunity. The excuse that one "should not label oneself as belonging to any particular body or as holding any particular doctrine or belief," is a familiar one and is generally put forward by those who lack intellectual courage. It is also due to the common mistake of thinking that Rationalism is a creed. It is not. It is a mental attitude, a way of thinking. The briefest definition of Rationalism is right thinking. The necessity of an organised body of rationalists is evident to all those who are aware of the activities of religious vested interests and their systematic exploitation of ignorant superstition. It is only due to the incessant and courageous work of little known and ordinary men and women that well-known writers are able to a certain extent now-a-days to express heretical views without much fear. Rationalism does not merely imply "doing good to others by making them realize the importance of Reason" but much more than that. Many believers have also done a lot of good to others with equal sincerity. We reciprocate your good wishes.

S. W. Willatts (Australia). Thanks for letter and 6d. The delay of mails is certainly very annoying. Another copy of the pamphlet is being posted. Dr. D'Avoine has been rather busy of late and also unwell, but hopes to contribute oftener to *Reason*. We have no copies left of the issue in which a report of Dr. D'Avoine's trial appeared. We hope to publish it in pamphlet form but at a later date. Thanks for good wishes.

Notes & News.

IT is indeed encouraging to note that our efforts for the spread of Rationalism in this country are being appreciated in many parts of the world. Reviewing the progress of the R. A. I. for the last ten years, the *Literary Guide* (of June 1940) writes: "It says much for the way in which the comparatively small group of Rationalists in India have worked that such progress has been made both financially and numerically, in a period which has been marked almost throughout the world by an increase in irrationality and obscurantism."

x x x

THE July issue of *The Rationalist* of Melbourne also has reproduced parts of the speeches delivered by Dr. R. P. Paranjpye and Dr. A. S. Erulkar at the Tenth Annual General Meeting of the R. A. I.

x x x

THE series of broadcast talks entitled "Four Pastors and an Unbeliever" have also been widely noticed particularly as the B. B. C. in England does not allow any talks of a heritical nature in spite of the many letters written to it.

x x x

IN this connection we may mention that many of our members have also written letters to the B. B. C. protesting against the overdose of religion and requesting for talks on rationalistic subjects.

x x v

WE hope that the R. A. I. will receive the same appreciation from intelligent and progressive-minded people in this country, as it has received from eminent rationalists in other parts of the world.

x x x

ON May 26, 1940, there was a mass attack on heaven—a day of National Prayer in England imploring God to help the Allies. Events that followed within a few days were not very encouraging, in fact they were such as to make Mr. Churchill sum them up as a "colossal military disaster." Immediately there were suggestions for a day of thanksgiving to God for "His wonderful answer to our prayers."

There was a man (?) who being ill-treated by his neighbour went to the strong man of the village and requested for help but on receiving a kick in the pants instead, turned round and thanked him for not having kicked him harder

HOT in the footsteps of his English Christian brethren Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has made an appeal for ten days' prayers to God to be held at Benares. We wonder which of the thirty-three millions of gods he means. Unless there is a specific clarification on this point we see danger ahead. For example, if goddess Kali or some other gods or goddesses of uncomfortable tendencies take it into their heads that the prayers are meant for them, woe be to Homo sapiens.

x x x

By the way we wonder why Malaviyaji has so far not thought of prayer as a method of gaining India's independence. If India's four hundred millions start praying all at once and refuse to do anything else until their object is gained we see no chance for any of the thirty-three millions of gods or any others for that matter, living, dying or dead, to escape. But if Malaviyaji is asked which god he means we are sure it will be something existing somewhere beyond nowhere or all the moral, ethical or æsthetical qualities with capital letters.

x x x

THE Questions and Answers Magazine *The American Freeman* edited by E. Haldeman Julius is an excellent and very interesting monthly journal and gives valuable information on many subjects. The subscription is only $1.25 per year and may be sent to the editor at 229E, Forest Avenue, Girard, Kansas, U. S. A. The following is from the same paper.

"The proportion of criminals among Roman Catholics was one in 40; of the Church of England, one in 72, of Dissenters and Jews, one in 666: of Freethinkers and Infidels one criminal in 20,000."

—ENGLISH CRIMINAL PARLIAMENTARY REPORT.

x x x

FUNDAMENTALIST Christian Captain A. H. M. Ramsay, Conservative M. P. who is also President of the Right Book Club attempted to prevent, by legislation, the entry of delegates and visitors into England for the World Freethought Congress in September 1938. He has recently been put under preventive arrest in England.

ABRAHAM SOLOMON.

x x x

WE gratefully acknowledge the following:—

J. R. Labelle Rs. 5/–; Mrs. P. J. Branden Brady Rs. 5/–; J. J. Miranda Rs. 5/– Dr. H. P. Moolgaokar Rs. 5/–; Mr. F. Brower Rs. 5/–; Mr. D. S. Tanavde, Ahmedabad, Rs. 5/–; R. V. A. Rs. 5/–; Dr. O. R. Chetty (Madras) Rs. 2/–; Mr. A. N. Deshpande, Yeotmal, Rs. 2/–.

OBITUARY.

Dr. D. R. Chaubal.

We very much regret to announce the death of Dr. Chaubal, who joined our Association last year. He was building up a good practice. He was very popular and commanded a wide circle of friends. His smile and laughter were infectious, and his interests were beyond his profession; he was well-read and extremely interested in rationalism. He broke the barriers of caste and was engaged to be married to a young lady of a different caste. His premature death at such an early age is a great blow to his mother—he was the only child—and to his fiancee. To both of them we offer our heartfelt sympathies.

C.

Religious Instruction in Schools.

The Sind Education Advisory Board is reported to have appointed a sub-committee to recommend what kind of religious education may be given to children in the schools. If the Board has already decided to give religious education of some kind or other, we cannot congratulate it on its decision as we fear there will be, sooner or later, sharp differences of opinion on the nature of the instruction to be imported. In a country where religious differences are many and are often unconscionably exaggerated, it is best for a Government to confine themselves to secular education, leaving private or aided schools to provide religious education if they like. Sound moral instruction is much to be preferred from every point of view, at any rate in schools. If religious instruction is consistent with this, it is superfluous. If it is not, it is harmful.

—*Bombay Chronicle, Aug. 10, 1940.*

Progress of the Russell Case

THE decision of Justice McGeehan (Catholic) cancelling the appointment of Bertrand Russell as professor of philosophy at City College of New York has been carried to the Appellate Division by the Board of Higher Education, which, after a spirited session, voted 12 to 5, to hire private counsel to appeal the case. Opposing members of the board and Corporation Counsel Chanler contend that the board has not the legal power to appeal.

A suit filed early last month in a Los Angeles court by I. R. Wall, ex-Baptist minister, for an injunction to halt the payment of salary to Russell, now an instructor at the University

of California at Los Angeles, was promptly dismissed.

Joe Scott, the much publicized Los Angeles attorney and Catholic church leader, denounced Russell, closing with the statement, "I stand aghast at the decision of the New York Board of Education."

Counter-attacking his critics, the British philosopher declared that "all my proposals in regard to the relationship between men and women were intended to bolster the institution of marriage—not to abolish it."

"Freedom is essential to physical well-being, mental advancement and spiritual progress," he said. "Victorian virtue was not the apotheosis of goodness.

"The young woman of Victorian days did not have the opportunity for expression that her brother had. She was a slave. We have made improvements.

"However, there is much that the wisest man does not know. The 'last word' has not been spoken about anything, not even about morality."

In his classrooms, Dr. Russell said, he teaches philosophy—never his ideas on sex.

In the New York City Council a resolution offered by Councilman C. E. Keegan (Catholic), was adopted by a vote of 14 to 5, requesting Mayor La Guardia to reorganize the Board of Higher Education and appoint members who will serve the city "more creditably" than those who appointed Russell.

At the same session by a vote of 15 to 4 the Council asked the Board of Education to draw up rules for excusing pupils during school hours for religious instruction. Religious councilmen solemnly asserted that such action would reduce juvenile delinquency. They probably have not read Frank Swancara's articles on Religion and Crime in The Truth Seeker.

The best strategic thrust in this war of words was that of "An Anxious Father" who called attention to another alarming fact. The following pertinent paragraphs are from his letter in The Nation, April 27:

"At this moment the Board of Education is about to erect a new high school, which is to be one of the finest in the United States. This building, which is to be paid for with the taxpayers' money, is to be named in honor of a man who notoriously lived with women other than his wife, who had an illegitimate child by a woman whom he never subsequently married, who publicly acknowledged his illegitimate child, who wrote salaciously on matters of sex, and who entered into a marriage the legality of which was questioned at the time by the church and has always been in doubt because the prior death of the wife's former husband has not been established. This man wrote on the subject of sex in a manner which your magazine would not care to print. In almost any of his biographies can be found, for instance, a letter called 'Advice to a Young Man on the Choice of a Mistress' which deals lucidly and lewdly with sex.

"In matters of religion he was frequently in difficulties with the church. He described himself as a man who believed not in the forms of religion, but in the Golden Rule, and he was a defender and friend of Thomas Paine. This man's morals were as much out of tune with the church and mores of his times as are Bertrand Russell's today.

"True, Benjamin Franklin, like Bertrand Russell, was also a scientist, mathematician, philosopher, and writer. But almost any biography which my daughter might obtain of Benjamin Franklin would disclose to her his immoral sex life and views. Surely, if the employment of Bertrand Russell as a teacher of philosophy is not permitted because of his views on sex, then the Board of Education should not be permitted to build a monument, with the taxpayers' money, to such a man as Benjamin Franklin.

"It may be argued that the situation is different because Franklin is dead. But surely the good Bishop and the Judge would not countenance the city's naming a high school in honor of Bertrand Russell one hundred years from now or in any case, in honor of a man who would have been barred from teaching in that school during his life because of his immoral views and practices. True, Franklin himself will not come in contact with the children, but the story of his life, as told by Carl Van Doren, Bernard Fay, Phillips Russell, and others, is only too easily available. Will not our children naturally seek to learn more about the man in whose honor their school is named and thereby be inspired to read these biographies and his own writings? Is this not exposing them to influences as pernicious as those from which the more righteous elements in our community sought to protect our youth by barring Bertrand Russell? Judge McGeehan, in granting the petition of Mrs. Kay, recognized this, as there was no claim that her daughter would have personal contact with Bertrand Russell at the College of the City of New York, since that school is conducted exclusively for men."

Three Fundamentals

(Submitted to the Fifth International Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths, Ceylon, 1940,
by M. V. V. K. Rangachari, B.A., Cocanada.)

(Concluded from last issue.)

II. Science and Religion

WE began with the comprehensive question of social happiness and peace whereunder not merely the primary instincts, but even the higher reasoning faculty find full expression. This brings us to the problem of Science. In the earlier history of the race, religion was the primary social venture. It permeated life, through and through. It framed its own theories concerning the objective universe, and man's position in it. It satisfied the thirst for knowledge for a time. What could be considered to be the germs of investigation and enquiry are traceable in the roots of religious order which as time went on began to claim exclusive mastery. The masses were kept in ignorance, and all doubts were answered with episcopal rigour. The individual's right to know was soon converted into his or her obligation to believe in whatever the church condescended to give out. Penalties here and hereafter were imposed against non-conformity. Church-science was the only valid knowledge, all else became anathema.

We may well appreciate the scantiness of knowledge, for, long afterwards, in the varied departments of science we are confronted with problems which still defy explanation. But the initial mistake of the creeds, the world over had been, the claim to certainty, as if absolute truth is dancing before the human eye, only to be recognised as such by some expondent or seer whose physical concrete experience stood for unimpeachable evidence of its validity. With numerous claims so advanced at one or other of the periods in human history extending over widely differing fields of climate, occupation and habit of life, the reflective mind began to test their relative merits with objective detachment. The greater opportunities for travel and intercourse afforded in recent time gave an impetus to the comparative study. Much of what has passed for subjective certitude has been sifted, its variance from concrete experience exposed, and the limits of authority over intellectual freedom fully made out. We no longer allow any prophet to declare that the earth is flat, that it is the centre of the creation, that the sun moved around it, that its age is 6,000 years, that species were separately moulded or that the work occupied six days only. We examine all religious doctrines as critically as when we put any fact of nature under observation. If religion refuses to place any coinage out of her wealth to objective and current tests, we are not ready or willing to acknowledge its prestige. The inquiring mind of man has proceeded further than the rock-defended possessions of institutional religion. Galileo, and his telescope, and after him scores of devices for accurate and minute observation, experiment, classification, and theorising batter the stone-walls of obscurantism. Man braved the prison, survived the burning stake, endured the rack-torture, and the right to question the why and wherefore of life, independently of the creeds, remains.

Weak at the main entrance of objective verification, the creeds retire to the back-gate of personal satisfactions, of expected fulfilment of cherished longings, in lives to come, or in an immortal hereafter to follow the earthly existence. These individual convictions must remain dependent upon the state of development of particular beings. There may be some who reject science and its achievements altogether, resting their pathetic hope upon the invulnerability of the faith once delivered to our fathers. While others wear two pockets to keep them both in separate insulated compartments, so that what is learnt during the secular week may not mar the effect of Sabbath-day preaching. To them the world is made of two universes, physical and theological, the one not having to do with the other. Of course, that is one way to synthesise, adding the one to the other, arriving at the face value, two. It is one kind of synthesis, even the act of recognising the antithesis.

But as we began, religion was the former social venture of man. For a time it appeared to hold his entire field. Gradually, its vacated territory became occupied with another mode of social venture, viz., science. How has the change come about? What necessitated the change? The answer lies in the insufficiency of the creeds to satisfy man's social needs. In the ordering of mutual relations, among the flocks affiliated to distinct, and often widely conflicting cults, adjusting the relations between the sexes, as in marriage and divorce questions, in regulating the growth of populations by birth-control, and the application of other eugenic laws, in influencing the flow of economic advantages in saner channels than greed and cut-throat gangsterism permitted, otherwise in helping to build a safer, sounder, or juster social and economic structure on a broad world-wide basis, the creeds remain as mere confessions of failure, if nothing worse. Often they took sides with opposing forces, vested interests, and reactionary elements, to retain the hold permanently, to perpetuate ignorance, folly, and misery.

This identification with reaction drove institutional faith into the background. When it failed to answer human problems correctly, society came to neglect its dogma, and began to look down upon ritual as unmeaning show. With the passage of time, the dogma lost its significance, and the ritual grew in emptiness. The advance of science began on purpose to fill in the gaps left in modern society by these antidated modes of belief, and manners of conduct, the dogma and ritual of the bygone past. It is significant that the altar gave place to the marriage-register, contract displacing sacrament. The growth of physical, biological and psychological sciences has had at every turn its repercussions upon the social consciousness of humanity. No two words present a more complete picture of modern science than Evolution and Relativity, and no two individuals did greater service to the thinking world than Darwin and Einstein. Evolution established the factual reality of the material universe, as against the shadowy idea-world of platonic illusions. Life is a process of growth from comparatively simple beginnings into more complex variations; differences are in degree, not in kind. Even consciousness is the product of such variational biological functionings, not anything peculiarly vouchsafed by special grace upon our kind, abruptly. Life was not specially "breathed in" nor was the mind or "soul" peculiarly encased. Post-Darwinian evolution goes on checking and correcting an overstatement there or an understatement here, to accord with facts or instances since discovered, but the central theory retains its validity. The idea of creation out of nothing, as also the beginning of the universe are effectually given up. Universes outside our Galactic system, whirling nebulae millions of light-years away from us, stars, new-born, young, old-aged and dying; astronomy honours evolution as every other branch of science.

But it is no mechanical universe that we live in, in the Newtonian sense. There are no fixed absolutely valid laws governing the motions of bodies, big and small. Our formulations are relative to the subject of observation. Even light, which was believed to be immaterial hitherto, has weight; it bends by its own weight. Einstein, with his general and special theories of Relativity, and his demonstrations regarding the movement of the planet, Mercury, and the displacement of star-positions during solar-eclipses, has revolutionised the prevalent notions about scientific laws.

It is indeed a sad commentary on certain aspects of modern science, that instead of serving the purposes for which it has been brought into existence, its application has rendered wholesale annihilation of communities possible and easy. As a social venture, science began its career of service, and now the sceintfic machine is master in the field, mopping out humanity. Our tanks and bombers, field-artillery, and machine-guns, torpedoes, and sub-marines, mines, and destroyers, are these the incarnations of physical science? Our press and radio-programs, songs and march-orders, are these the model of sociological theory, "nerves" first, "nerves" next, "nerves" always, are these the fruits of psychological investigations, even the soothing unction to the troubled souls? If the way of the older creeds was blind, the lead given by certain aspects of the scientific movement seems to be pointing to chaos, into wilderness, even positively wide danger.

Synthesize science and religion! In a tragic sense, science seems to complate the ruin of mankind that religion began in the dark middle ages. That was when man was forgotten for the sake of gods and goddesses. Here now, man is again forgotten for the sake of the machine, and the state that machinery established and maintains. Religion was a social venture, no less than science. But both began as servants, and mounted to mastery. Faith ceased to be creative, when it assumed the role of the spiritual dictator. It snubbed and beat man

into submission to its error. Now, science wields the baton. Even intellect can be chained, and punished in the concentration camp. It is no longer the free intelligence of the inquiring mind. The human element has been removed, and only the monster-machine stands on its stay. Restore humanism, formulate the science of life, rather than that of death; you would be synthesizing religion and science in a positive real sense.

Our religions have lost the living touth with life. Few communities think of their priests except on formal occasions like celebrating birth, marriage or death. Even then, it is merely to display social conformity rather than through an innate urge to live up to the creed. Superstition dies hard, indeed; but in most cases the average man or woman scarcely gave thought to the validity of the faith from which the rites proceeded. With the day-to-day problems of society, the custodians of religion have the least concern. Life on earth can go on without their intervention. Only now and then when the gates from and to another world would seem to fling open, is the minister at all remembered. He is as ignorant about the thought-movement in his time as the moon. Analytical science has invaded his entire dominion. The world that really matters is no longer his. He is often the object of ridicule, if not positive insult, because he cannot stand analysis, and no body cares for the obsolete and crude notions that he carried in his head. Science, which is intellectual hunger, does not tolerate faith emanating from emotional surfeit. In a sense, each is an abstraction from the totality of concrete life. Like the touch and taste in the fruit, each represents one phase of life-experience. They both meet in life itself, as a whole. The religious mind hankers after mystic satisfactions, which the imagery produced by the complicated brain-structure cannot avoid; we can only seek to explain or unravel, how the imagery came into being. In this psycho-physical analysis, it is likely to miss the beauty and grace attending on faith, just as an analysis of the rose loses its colour and fragrance, and biological vivisection misses the vital process of life.

We may recognise religion and science as distinct departments of human endeavour, examine their distinctive contributions to social advantage, even try to check their pernicious tendencies, but we should remember that life is bigger than either of these phases, of which they are both only partial expressions. We talk of cognition, feeling and conation as if they are different psychical processes. We forget that there is no thought but has its pain-pleasure index; no feeling without its impelling power; and no impulsion without a strain of consciousness in the background. All mental activity carries the three qualities, cognitive, aesthetic, and conative; only the emphasis varies according as we concentrate on thought, enjoyment or active conduct. In a similar sense, the scientist is also the prophet, and no prophet may justify his wisdom that does not accord with scientific experience. Whatever the status of blind devotion (Mudha Bhakti) in a forgotten world, in the enlightened faith of the world of to-morrow, the indications of scientific discovery cannot be ignored.

III. World-Understanding Through Religion

I am mindful of the religious bias in the entire theme of which world-understanding is the final and necessarily the most important objective of the Fellowship of Faiths. World-understanding, just now is in imminent progress. I am not cynical. Nor am I insensitive to the ruthless slaughter taking place in many fronts, east and west. Let me make my position clear. In the triple fundamentals of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, the index of power in the one determines the rest. The quantity of positive electricity released from the neutral body discharges in that very process an equal quantity of negative electricity, at the other end. When we know the strength of the antithesis, we are enabled to guess in a way correctly the forces on the other side that called it forth. Even while wars are spreading world-wide, we may note the huge under-currents moving for world-peace. The retort may follow, what avail the subterranean artesian currents, when the city is ablaze? But the answer is easy. There is no historic connection between the city-fire and the underground stream. Neither is the thesis to which the other stands related as antithesis. But while talking peace, we cannot get away from the phantom of war. The one proceeds from the other and *vice-versa*. I assert that whatever may happen, we are close upon a new order of social organisation. I further venture to suggest that such new order cannot fall too short of being world-wide. I give as the reason and the backing of my argument, the very extensive turmoil, and the intense struggle the earth is to-day witnessing.

Yes, to-day, man is understanding brother man by the pistol and the sword, just as the

brute enters on the prey. But the synthesis of the brute is instinctive, unconscious, while humanity cannot get over reflection, imagination, even if it would. We may mistake evil for good, but the power to recognise is there. Discrimination is our asset, whatever the extent of our failure. From the first entry into the world, the human baby seems to be seeking to discriminate, to gain greater control over its limbs, and through them the surroundings in which it is placed. Has it an idea of itself, its hands, and feet? Its limbs would in the beginning appear to be apart, things, which along with the rest of the world should be brought under its dominance. The line between self and not-self is ill-drawn, to the wisest sage equally with the new-born child. To understand the world, the self has got to be understood. This self, not-self relation, baffles philosophers whose many systems witness varying explanations liable to diverse errors and over-or-understatements. The self is called the subject, and the not-self the object, and the antithesis between them is the subject-object conundrum.

When I see a picture, there is the impression of an object on the retina of the eye, which stimulates chemical activity along the sensory nerve-fibre, ending in some changes in the disposition of the particles in a portion of the brain-surface, called cerebral cortex. That is the physical side which somehow gets translated into the mental impression of the picture. As an embodied being, I discriminate between the external object, viz., the picture, and my own impression of it, which is subjective. But when I recollect the image of the picture in my mind, the object is no longer external, i.e., outside myself, any more than the optical nerve or the brain is outside my being. Similarly, organic sensations, like feeling of fulness in the belly, are objective in the sense of their being capable of being observed by the subject, viz., the observing self, though they arise within the body of the observer, and constitute part of the mental structure of that very self at the time. Indeed, the self can observe itself, placing itself in the position of the object under the microscope, as it were. We often profess to analyse our thought-processes, scan our feelings, and put our impulses to the test. In all these mental acts, it is hard to determine where the subject ends and the object begins. The frontiers of subject-object territory are not defined and the one trespasses upon the other as the latter recedes. What is not the self is relative to what assumes the role of the self.

The shifting sands of relativity affect the notion of the self "ego" in the psychological field. Understanding, if it is a conscious mental process, cannot penetrate into the mystery of what in essence constitutes the self. In fact, there is no warrant for presuming that an absolute "I" resides anywhere about the organism that bears the character of the first person. We, however, readily accuse others who are "ego-centred". The human mind that can penetrate into the doings of the far-off nebula, which traverses millions of light-years in a moment of mental flash, which assimilates the secrets of the genes, hormones, and chromosomes, in their biological detail, who can bind it in chains to say thus far is the self, and all else beyond pertains to the antithesis, viz., the not-self?

The dialectical movement of mental expansion is no less true of the community than of the individual. For, what any single member has achieved may as well be obtained by all. Not only that, what is possible of attainment by any one in the species, remains an attribute liable to universal application. We have only to bring on the conditions favourable to the expansion of the possessions of the one or the few, to enable the many, or even all, to partake of the beneficence. Religion, if it should become universalised, should therefore not only help one to understand the self rightly, and in so doing clear the relation with the not-self, but at the same time, it should divest itself of those unessentials which prevent its synthesis or assimilation in all fields of experience.

Shorn of all verbiage, the central fact of human experience is man. Around him centre all interests, affecting truth, beauty and goodness. No truth is valid to us unless it is humanly true. Beauty is judged in the human eye. Our goodness refers to human well-being. When we recognise the religious ideal as being humanly related in this sense, we begin to cast off all allegiances to an absolute unconditioned quality-less objective. Here we are, frail humans, seeking light to enable us to walk hand-in-hand just a few steps further than where brutes tore with teeth and claws. The jungle is scarcely cleared, and the light of dawn scarcely ascended. A few generations back, man had peopled his darkness with monsters and icy indifferent abstractions who pawned and played with life, as they pleased. In all their games, their dress, however gorgeous and splendid, betrayed the deft human fingers that worked behind its manipulation.

The comparative study of religions revealed the mainspring of religious endeavour throughout the centuries, and in all portions of the globe. It was mostly fear of the unknown, though slightly tempered with the love of the known. For, to love the unknown is a psychological fallacy. We only pretend to love after having translated what is believed to be unknowable in terms of the known, e.g., father, mother, king, etc. Discrimination cautions that there are limits to such dangerous symbology. It evokes differences, assists fraud, and aids exploitation. Above all, it fails to resolve the problem of evil, for which express purpose all phases of faith coin their own peculiar formulae. And the problem of evil is co-extensive with the problem of life.

Science confesses to its limitations when it gives up all pretensions to absoluteness and finality. Its conclusions are tentative, relative to present experience; liable to modification as it varies. In a changing world there is scarcely any room for absolutes, the certitudes of faith of any brand. Only faith in our capacity for mutual understanding may carry humanity on the road to progress. Whether that faith is justified or not, experience should testify. In spite of cataclysms, sent by nature or wrought by the human hand itself, the race as a whole has outlived danger and extinction. Having appeared late on the scene of stratified rock, we are assured of a long, perhaps useful, career. Even our weapons should teach us how to live in peace and safety. In science is imbedded not merely the physical cunning to master the universe around, but is even involved the entire art of living well. It implies not only the analytical faculty to destroy and investigate, but also the corresponding power to rebuild, refashion, and improve our lot. With man as centre, his betterment in the widest circumference, we draw the circle of Humanism as the one valid world-religion, and as this circle is drawn on the broad basis of human experience, otherwise disciplined into science, the approach to world-understanding through religion is by the high-road of Scientific Humanism.

An old foundation is worthy of all respect, but it must not take from us the right to build afresh whatever we will.

—*Goethe.*

THE CULT OF ASCETICISM AND RENUNCIATION

(Continued from page 120)

when man regains faith in himself, and by the strength of advancing knowledge throws off the influence of credulity, prejudice and superstition.

The supine complacence and idle pride regarding the sublimity of our spiritual heritage should no longer lull the critical faculty of the progressive Indian. Legendary glorification of a past sickness should not curb the striving for a fuller life—of health and real happiness. But, for the purpose deceptive bubbles must be burst, legends deprived of the fraudulent garb of history, and credulity confronted with criticism. Unless we know how to read correctly the history of our past, we shall never be able to survive our present degradation and conquer a future of real greatness.

Every Student of History must read

HOW INDIA IS GOVERNED ?

By S. K. Shah.

Giving a layman's guide giving a bird's-eye-view of the New Constitution in one volume epitomised from Prof. K. T. Shah's two volumes "Provincial Autonomy" and "Federal Structure."

PRICE Re. 1.

Can be had from

The Hindustan Book Depot,
21. Dalal Street, Fort,
BOMBAY.

REVIEWS.

Veshya—Vyavasaya (Prostitution), by R. D. Karve, The Right Agency, 13 New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4. Pp. 166, Rs. 2/-.

THIS book on Prostitution is written in excellent Marathi. Its treatment is bold and rational as was only to be expected from the author. He is an authority on matters relating to sex and is renowned for his super-advanced views on sex morality, the expression of which has always called for singular courage, which he possesses in abundance.

He sets off by giving a historical survey of prostitution extending over many centuries in countries all over the world. He then examines its existing state in various countries and goes on to prove how impossible it is to eradicate this age-old profession. Having arrived at this conclusion, he discusses the pros and cons of state control. The fact that individuals practising this profession help to spread venereal diseases at a very rapid rate is the one reason which urgently calls for government control. It is in the interest of public health (1) to enforce frequent and compulsory medical examination of all those directly engaged in the profession, (2) to oblige the contaminated individuals to undergo medical treatment, and (3) to prevent them from practising the profession until they are certified cured. The author cites many examples of countries where such regulations are in force and others where they are not. Although the state of public health is naturally much more satisfactory in the former, he rightly maintains that it would be much more so if prostitutes found suffering from disease were treated as patients and not as convicts, as then they would willingly undergo medical examination and treatment and not try to escape it as they often do at present. So far so good. The author, however, goes to the length of considering this profession as no worse than that of a lawyer's, doctor's, or nurse's. He argues that if a prostitute lends the use of her body for the sake of money, a lawyer lends not only his brains, but at times even his conscience for the same purpose. If it is the unemotional contact that be considered so unholy, then he argues that a doctor or a nurse has to undergo many an ordeal of handling the most revolting of human creatures (p. 154). Now what I ask the author is that even supposing that a lawyer does have to prove that black is white, how often does he have to prove it as compared with a prostitute? In the second case, a doctor's or a nurse's transaction is unemotional on both sides, which is not the case with a prostitute and her client, and hence the two cannot be compared. The author occasionally makes a reference to high and low class prostitutes (p. 18 and 38). How does he differentiate between the two? I take it that he means those who deal with a limited, chosen and cultured clientele as compared to those who accept any Tom, Dick or Harry? Now the author considers the wife who allows her unloved husband to share her bed as no better than a prostitute (p. 153). Granting that she be labelled as such, will she not belong to the highest grade of her profession according to the above classification? Moreover, the author admits that this is a profession where women can make money with the least effort and he also tells us that women who usually take to it are unintelligent and unemotional. Can he then wonder or complain if prostitution be regarded as a profession of the lower grade? He also informs us that in some countries women of good society temporarily take to this profession when in want of money and leave it as soon as they have made enough. Will he tell us why they then leave it? I grant that a prostitute fulfils a most urgent need of society, but she no more does it for the good of society than Britain rules India for the good of India. Both have entirely selfish motives. We all know that it is her presence that makes it possible for respectable women to move in security. Similarly, we know that it is the drains that help a town to be clean and healthy. Does it therefore raise the gutter to the level of a garden or a park? I am willing to demand that society treat the prostitute as a human being, but when people go into ecstasies over the decency of the profession, I feel like asking them if they would like their sister or daughter to be a prostitute rather than a lawyer, doctor or nurse?

Talking of different methods of protecting the public against venereal diseases, the author tells us that in Scandinavian countries there is no restriction on prostitutes, but it is the doctors who are compelled to inform the Public Health Dept. of persons suffering from such diseases who subsequently are made to undergo medical treatment (p. 125). The author disposes of this method as impracticable, trying to illustrate it by citing the example of France, where there are 4,000,000 of such people.

What earthly use would it be to compel only prostitutes to undergo medical examination and treatment if four millions of diseased people are to be let loose on society? Moreover, the author is a strong advocate of the doctrine of free love. I have no fault to find with that doctrine, but my only query is that were it to be the order of the day, how does the author propose to tackle the problem of the spread of disease if he discards the Scandinavian method of control? To my mind it seems necessary to adopt a combination of the two methods, namely, the Scandinavian one and that of frequent and compulsory medical examination of brothels and individual prostitutes, as they are the rapid carriers of disease.

On page 111, the author vicariously condemns the League of Nations Report on White Slave Traffic, quoting the words of an agent of the said traffic who maintains that the writers of the report know nothing about the trade. The author, however, does not even mention the name of this "knowing" personage.

This book is tightly packed with valuable information and provides excellent food for thought. India is very backward in realising the importance of regulating this psofession and protecting the public from disease. Every Marathi-speaking man would get many times his money's worth if he goes in for this book,

SHAKUNTALA PARANJPYE.

Reason and Intuition, by V. Subrahmanya Iyer, B.A., Retired Registrar, Mysore University, reprinted from "Prabuddha Bharata", June 1940.

IN reply to Prof. P. S. Naidu, who tried to "pull down the foundations.....that support the bogey of the superiority of *Reason*.....so that the superstructure will *tumble* down to *dust* of its own accord", the author gives quotations from the writings of Swami Vivekananda and the Bhagavad Gita in support of the supremacy of reason and also quotes the Upanishads for the same purpose. The quotations are excellent for people who are inclined to believe any of the authorities quoted. These authorities have been so variously interpreted, however, especially the last two, that we prefer not to base our conclusions on them, nor indeed will any authority satisfy us in this matter. If we had not an inner conviction of the supremacy of reason, no authority in the world would be enough to convince us. This pamphlet will, however, be useful to those who have occasion to argue with the orthodox.

R. D. KARVE.

Almost An Autobiography, the Confessions of a Freethinker, by Chapman Cohen, issued for the Secular Society Ltd. by the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London E. C. 1. 268 pp. Price 6s.

THE name of the author is already familiar to our readers. He has worked for fifty years in the cause of Freethought, has been the President of the National Secular Society founded by Bradlaugh from 1915 till to-day, and the Editor of the *Freethinker* during the same period.

This book does not, like other biographies, enter into the small details of everyday life, but is rather the history of the author's mental development and work. Incidentally, he replies to all the arguments usually given by believers against the rationalistic point of view. In his lecturing and debating, he has even run the risk of physical assault and gives his experience that courage often reduces the risk. He does not believe in leaving people to enjoy their opinions, and thinks that "Freedom of expression should be not merely a legal right which a man may or may not exercise as he pleases, it should be regarded as a social act which no man may neglect without falling short in his duty as a citizen", which explains the aggressiveness of the Freethinker. As regards the censorship so often exercised in the case of books read by children, he enters an emphatic protest. "I had no one to tell me 'You must not read this', or 'You must not say that'. I was fortunate enough never to hear that in my home, and I had hardly heard it outside before I was old enough to recognize that it was very bad counsel. When I did meet it in actual life, I thought it the most unwarranted piece of impudence I had yet come across. It did not matter who said it, a teacher, a priest, or a Government. My opinion concerning this has grown stronger with the passing of the years."

The author had the advantage of being a "born freethinker", having had no religious training to get rid of, a very rare advantage indeed. This explains his remarks: "One of the earliest impressions I formed of a great many freethinkers with whom I came into contact was the degree to which they were still influenced by the religious outlook on life and its problems". And readers will be surprised to find that he cites the names of Charles Bradlaugh and G. W. Foote as instances in point and explains why. Readers will easily find eminent rationalists in this country who are not able to give up their religious prejudices except on certain points.

We heartily recommend the book as well worth reading and preserving. —R. D. KARVE.

LIFE OF LEONARD NELSON

LEONARD NELSON was born in Berlin on July 11th, 1882. The general course of his philosophical researches was decided while he was at school in Berlin, and at the Universities of Berlin, Heidelberg and Goettingen, where he studied mathematics and science. His place in the history of philosophy, he decided, was to be among the successors of the great founders of critical philosophy—Kant, Fries and Apelt. Nelson began where they left off. In particular he interested himself in the line of enquiry opened by Fries and since almost forgotten, developed it further and accepted it as the foundation of his own philophical system.

In 1909 Nelson became lecturer in philosophy at the University of Goettingen. It is significant of his attitude towards science as a whole that he joined the department of the philosophical faculty devoted to natural science. Till his death he remained a University lecturer, but he never was appointed to a professorial chair; even in the Weimar Republic the Universities remained strongholds of reaction.

During the early years of his career, Nelson made many enemies by his trenchant and fearless attacks upon the dogmatic and unfounded assumptions of many an accepted philosopher. But he also gathered around him a comparatively large circle of disciples and collaborators, and with these friends he tried to rekindle the traditions of the school of thought established by Fries. He founded the Fries Society, republished the works of Fries which had almost fallen into oblivion and issued a *New Series of Essays of the Fries School.*

Nelson's own contributions to the first two volumes of these *Essays* dealt almost exclusively with methodological questions relating to the sources of knowledge. *The Critical Method and the Relations between Psychology and Philosophy* was the title of an essay published in 1904. And in 1908 the second volume of the series concluded with a comprehensive article, entitled *Das sogenannte Erkenntnisproblem* ("The so-called problem of Knowledge")—analysing the various past attempts to solve the problems relating to the sources of knowledge, and suggesting possible solutions and possible errors they might involve.

In 1910 Nelson began to concentrate on ethical problems. His very first lectures foreshadowed almost exactly the line of thought which runs through his system of ethics as published much later. But many years' work was necessary to complete the work with the thoroughness that Nelson insisted upon. The most serious difficulty lay in the approach to the problem, the necessity of formulating the principles of ethics and of establishing their validity in accordance with the critical method—that is to say, with all dogmatic assumptions rigorously excluded.

Not until 1917, till the chaos and insecurity of the World War, was *The Critique of Practical Reason*, the first volume of Nelson's system of ethics, submitted to the public. At that time, preparations for the completion of the subsequent volumes dealing with the application of ethical principles to the spheres of education and politics were fairly well advanced. But Nelson's interest was no longer confined to philosophical research. Practical tasks which he considered more important were thrusting themselves into the foreground. He tried to re-establish contact, interrupted by the war, with the members of the Fries Society, and suggested that they should transform their philosophical society into an educational community dedicated to the realisation of the aims they had agreed upon. But his appeal did not evoke the response that Nelson had hoped for and, allowing the Fries Society to break up, he looked around for new helpers. He approached younger people who were more vigorous, more determined to shape for themselves their character and way of life. And increasingly he sought among the working class for contacts who had grown up under harder social conditions and were, therefore, keener "not only to interpret the world but to change it." With this circle of friends—organised at first in the International League of Youth—he began to work politically; and with their support the Militant Socialist International was founded in January 1926.

Even in these last years of his life, however, Nelson did not discontinue his scientific researches altogether. The third volume of his system of ethics, showing the application of ethical principles to politics, was published in 1924—before the volume on the science of education—because of the urgency of the political situation. But the work on education was so far advanced that it could be published by his collaborators soon after his death.

During the same period the Walkemuehle,

an international school, was founded. Nelson was not himself in charge of the work at this school, but he kept in close touch with it and gave it his support. This school was intended to achieve two aims. It was to apply the educational principles which follow from the philosophy of ethics and to serve as a field for experience of practical educational work. And secondly it was to be a training school for young men and women, developing their capibilities and character so as to make them more effective workers in the reconstruction of society in accordance with ethical demands. A "Philosophical-Political Academy" was founded at the same time to provide a systematic training for educators and politicians on the basis of the principles established by the critical philosophy.

While engaged upon all this work, Nelson became aware that the strength he could devote to it was limited. The insomnia from which he had suffered since youth had undermined his health. Nelson, knowing this, paid increasing attention to the education of his successors and to the strengthening of the organisation within which the work could best be carried on. He died on October 29th, 1927.

Any biographical study of Leonard Nelson is bound to emphasise that aspect of the man which more than any other enabled him to make the contribution which he did to history. Not only had he a striking capacity for pursuing his ideas right through to their practical conclusions, but he was possessed by a determination unfailingly to do so. Over and above his purely intellectual capacities, Nelson was distinguished by the fact that his theoretical ideas as they developed, led him to intervene with all the force of his great sincerity in the practical social problems of his time. It was true of him, as it was of Confucius, twenty-five centuries before him, that he would blush with shame when his words were finer than his deeds. It is more than probable that it was this very sensitive moral feeling that impelled him to preserve in his thinking that integrity which he demanded in all other spheres of activity. "Constancy, trustworthiness, rectitude, these are the true philosophy..." These words of Plato's might well have been spoken by Nelson.

Nelson's whole life developed in a strikingly consistent way. Brought up in a middle-class environment, he was conscious as a young man of the absence of any principle to guide him in the conduct of his life. In the realm of values as a whole he could find no orientation, no compass to direct him: the need for such a compass was forced upon him at school. The dogmatism which confronted him there and which he detested aroused in him a determination, which steadily grew in consciousness and strength, to shape his life in his own way. In this, however, he needed some standard which should make him independent, not only of the influence of stray impulsus aroused by changing circumstances, but also of the prejudices and dogmas that lead to rigidity in thought and conduct and rob one of both open-mindedness and understanding. In his search for such a standard Nelson declared war upon all dogmatism and authoritarianism—on that which hides behind the pretence of would-be enlightened scepticism, which confuses lack of prejudice with lack of principle, no less than on that which lays down principles and criteria which it refuses to expose to the light of critical examination. In this struggle of his against dogmatism of all kinds, he took Kant as his leader: "Anyone who has once known the taste of real critical thought, is revolted by dogmatic rubbish of any kind."

(To be Concluded.)

Books of interest to Rationalists

By M. N. ROY.

FROM SAVAGERY TO CIVILIZATION

*

HERESIES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

*

Price Rs. 1/8 each. Postage extra.

Available from:—

THE RENAISSANCE BOOK DEPOT

8, Round Building, Bombay 2.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donation in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000/-.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer,

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

* If you recognise Human Equality,

* If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,

* If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy,

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office-Bearers:

President:—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D. *Vice-Presidents:*—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. and Mr. R. B. Lotewalla. *Hony. Treasurer:*—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee:*—Mr. J. M. Cooper, Dr. S. B. Gadgil, B.A., L.M.S., F.R.C.S. (Eng.) D. Ph. (Lon.) Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. A. Husein, Mr. J. N. Patuck. *Jt. Hony. Secretaries:*—Mr. S. B. Rath, Mr. Abraham Solomon.

For further particulars please write to:—

The Secretaries,

Rationalist Association of India,

5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,

BOMBAY 2.

IF YOU WANT

To read choicest books,
To discuss modern problems,
To get correct information about current topics,
To have contact with intellectuals, and
To understand the making and growth of our Society—

Then You Must Remain in Touch with

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY.

OBJECTS.

To promote the Sociological interest of the Indian people, to gather and disseminate all sorts of sociological information, to facilitate the study of sociology, to focus the views of experts on such questions, to form and maintain a Library, etc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Donors Rs. 500/- or more. Life Members Rs. 100/- or more. Ordinary Members Rs. 3/- per year payable half-yearly. R. L. T. Library Deposit Rs. 5/-.

All members have the free use of the Library which contains a good collection of books on Economics, and also the Library of the R. L. Trust Hostel which also contains an excellent collection of latest books on all branches of sociology, namely, Economics, Ethics, Eugenics, Psychology, Philosophy, Politics, History, Biography and Fiction on current social problems.

Members are also entitled to publications of the Institute at such concessions as may be determined by the Managing Committee from time to time, as also one Magazine can be supplied at the cost of the Institute and any other Magazine for which concessions could be secured by the Institute for its members by any special agreement with its Publishers.

Rules, Regulations, Entrance Form can be had from:—

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY,

R. L. TRUST, 'RANCHHOD BHUVAN,'
Near Opera House, Tram Terminus,
BOMBAY 4.

15th January 1940.

G. S. POHEKAR. R. D. NADKARNI.
Hon. Secretaries:

Printed by B. M. Shet at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay 1. Edited and Published by R. D. Karve, M.A., for the Rationalist Association of India at 13, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.

REASON

SEPT. 1940.

Vol. VIII No. 9.

PRICE 4 ANNAS.



THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Objects of the Rationalist Association of India.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

THE USE OF PRAYER
By R. D. KARVE.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF FASCISM
By M. N. ROY.

THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY
By C. L. D'AVOINE.

BUT THE GODS ARE DUMB!!
By ALI AKBAR.

THE ONSLAUGHT OF UNREASON
By G. Y. CHITNIS.

NOTES, NEWS, ETC.

Editor :
R. D. KARVE, M. A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).

STANDARD WORKS BY FAMOUS FREETHINKERS

Thinkers' Library

Education: Intellectual, Moral and Physical by Herbert Spencer. A great book on a great subject.

A Short History of the World by H. G. Wells. In the pages of this book we review the pageant of earth, of life, of primitive man, and of civilisation, as seen by one of the most vivid writers of our day.

Anthropology (in 2 Vols) by Sir E. B. Tylor. This is the scientific "Book of Genesis." Vol. 1 describes the life of early Man and how he learned to talk and write. Vol. 2 deals with the arts of life and pleasure, and the growth of Knowledge and Religion (Illustrated).

The Evolution of the Idea of God by Grant Allen. Twenty years were occupied in preparing and ten years in writing this standard work on the history of the God-idea—which is the history of religion itself.

The Churches and Modern Thought by Vivian Phelips. A frank, fearless, and fascinating study of the question "Is Christianity True?"

The Martyrdom of Man by Winwood Reade. Acclaimed as a classic of the nineteenth century, unequalled in artistry of language and lucidity of style.

The Evidence for the Supernatural by Dr. Ivor, LL. Tuckett. Surveys the answer of Science to the question "Is Spiritualism True?" Is the Supernatural Credible?"

The Existence of God by Joseph McCabe. A scholarly and searching examination into the origin, history, and present position of the belief in God with a reply to Sir J. Jeans, Sir A. Eddington, and other apologists.

Psychology for Every Man (and Woman) by A. E. Mander. Gives a clear and concise introduction to the study of human character.

Letters on Reasoning by J. M. Robertson. A scholarly exposition on rational thinking.

Clearer Thinking; (Logic for Every Man) by A. E. Mander. A valuable and practical guide to clear and logical thinking.

Man and His Universe by J. Langdon-Davies. An excellent survey of Man's progress from a primitive outlook on life to a modern scientific one and the causes that contributed to it.

First Principles by Herbert Spencer (Rs. 2/-) A clear and orderly synthesis of knowledge.

The Rights of Man by Thomas Paine. A treatise in defence of those principles of freedom for which the author so valiantly fought and suffered.

The Universe of Science by Prof. H. Levy. An excellent book on the Philosophy of Science.

Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings by Henry Maudsley, M. D. Reveals the psychological processes by which man arrived at beliefs commonly attributed to mystical sources.

Price Re. 1/- each, post free.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

New Members Joining
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA
will get free:

THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM
By Dr. R. P. Paranjpye

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER
A series of talks between
Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, AND FOUR PASTORS
AND
"REASON"
for one year

*

WRITE TO:
The Jt. Hon. Secretaries:
The Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Every Student of Hindu Law should read.
THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY
PRIZE ESSAY
ON
"WHY THE PRESENT
HINDU LAW
OF
SURVIVORSHIP
APPLICABLE TO
JOINT FAMILY PROPERTY
SHOULD BE ABOLISHED".

BY:
K. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR,
B.A. (HONS.) LL.B.,

PRICE AS. 4. POSTAGE EXTRA.
CAN BE HAD FROM:—
THE HINDUSTAN BOOK DEPOT.
21, Dalal Street, Fort, BOMBAY.

AN APPEAL

5-12, Queen's Road,
Bombay, 1st September, 1940.

Dear Fellow-Rationalist,

You will have noticed that since January 1940, the Rationalist Association of India has been making additional efforts to widen its influence and increase its membership. You will also notice that since the last issue REASON contains an increased number of pages which will henceforth be twenty-four.

The Executive Committee of the R.A.I. has decided to make special efforts to increase the number of members before 31st December 1940. And if there is a sufficient increase it is intended to reduce the annual membership subscription from Rs. 5/- to Rs. 3/- from 1941, that is, members will receive literature to the full value of their subscription and more; the subscription to REASON alone being Rs. 3/-.

We request each member to help by getting at least THREE new members before the end of this year.

You no doubt realize that the success of the R.A.I. depends on the support it receives from its members.

We appeal to everyone who values intellectual liberty and rational freedom to strengthen the R. A. I. so that it may serve as a rallying point for the forces of freethought and cultural progress in this country.

C. L. D'AVOINE,
President,
Rationalist Association of India.

HELP TO INCREASE

THE FRIENDS

OF

FREETHOUGHT



Get new members for the R. A. I.

Truth for Authority—not Authority for Truth.

—*Lucrita Mott.*

REASON

Vol. VIII | SEPTEMBER 1940 | No. 9

THE USE OF PRAYER.

By R. D. KARVE.

I was surprised to find the following paragraph by "Critic" in the *New Statesman* and *Nation* (8th June 1940):

"To my surprise several people were upset because I quoted an example of Cockney humour last week about the surrender of Leopold following a day of national prayer. One correspondent retorts that I did not wait long enough; it was the miraculous deliverance of the B. E. F. that answered prayer. There is subject matter for a book here. In brief, my view is this. The world has lost something valuable by the decline in the habit of formal praying. For prayer may be a great psychological force. It is a deliberate act of consecration which sets the will and clarifies the imagination of those who pray. Therefore those who pray sincerely often have a personal power denied to those who do not. If prayers are answered that is because some of those who pray know better what they want and seek it more consistently and powerfully than those who allow their desires to be conflicting and desultory. But to suggest that there is a Providence which will save British soldiers from German guns because prayers are offered for them, and reject the equally sincere prayers for German soldiers, seems to me an unchristian conception."

The kind of apology that is here offered for the offence given by the humorous aspect of prayer seems to me entirely uncalled for, but is explained by the fact that the writer himself has a soft corner for prayer. He has sense enough to see that to speak of God as "Providence" when hundreds of people are being slaughtered every day without any consideration of their innocence or guilt is in itself utterly ridiculous. And still he would have people pray to a God who is so completely indifferent to the welfare of mankind. To explain this feat of mental jugglery, he launches into the benefits derived individually from prayer. If there is no Providence, however, prayer becomes an act of idiocy rather than an 'act of consecration.' And to say that those who pray have any greater personal power—I suppose he means will-power—is a futile pretence Only those who believe in a Providence that looks after them will be induced to pray, and a man who relies on a Providence cannot possibly have a greater will to exert himself than one who knows that there is no Providence and that he has to rely on his own efforts. It is precisely weak-kneed people who tend to pray, and it is to prevent such people from relying entirely on Providence that the saying "God helps those who help themselves" has come into existence. Napoleon gave his considered opinion that God is always on the side of the biggest battalions, meaning that God is nowhere in a war and that if you have not the necessary military strength, prayer will be of no avail. "Critic" pretends that "some of those who pray (not all!) know better what they want and seek it more consistently and powerfully than those who allow their desires to be conflicting and desultory." (Bracket mine). Here "those who allow their desires to be conflicting and desultory" are identified with those who do not pray, a trick that will not stand the test of logic. The writer seems to think that we can fix our desires where we like, or allow them to be conflicting and desultory if we please! If there are people in England who do not desire a victory for England, they will at any rate know that it is dangerous to let their desires be suspected and to prevent this, they will probably take part in any public prayers

that may be staged. Honest atheists will not pray, and is it possible to accuse all atheists of desultory and conflicting desires? Look at people like Bradlaugh and Chapman Cohen devoting their whole lives to freethought propaganda. Can this be done without strength of will? Of course, it is possible to find religious people who have equal strength of will, but it is obviously not the result of religion or prayer. Religion or want of it has nothing to do with will-power, and prayer will not give it if you do not possess it already.

Political leaders in India find religion a great asset. Mr. Gandhi has concocted an inseparable mixture of politics and religion and finds it easier to influence his followers by pretending that what he proclaims is not his own opinion, but comes from an "inner voice" directly prompted by God. Sensible people interpret his theory of "non-violence" as the only course open to Indians, who are not in a position to gain their independence by military strength, but he calls it a religious principle. People all over the world pretend to admire him for it, but are not prepared to adopt it for themselves. As a religious man, Gandhi is bound to believe in prayer, though his prayers for India have not produced any results.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, to whom the Benares Hindu University owes so much, is also a religious man and has called on his countrymen to spend ten days in prayer for the success of the British in the present war, for which he is himself staging a sacrifice during that period. What his sacrificial offering is to be, I do not know, but in ancient times, all kinds of animals including human beings were offered to gods to please them.

Prayers take very curious forms in India sometimes, especially among Hindus. The importance of agriculture being very great in India, and the rains very often capricious, prayers for rain are very frequent, and naturally if you wait long enough in the rainy season, they are always answered. When there is a prolonged drought and people are impatient for rain, it is not uncommon, when ordinary prayers have failed, for people to take an idol from its temple and immerse it in water and keep it there till rain falls, apparently on the assumption that the god will be suffocated and obliged to secure his release by producing rain and pleasing his worshippers. Of course, the worshippers explain to the god beforehand why he is being treated in this way, so that he should not be in any doubt about it. In the face of this, who will say that idol-worship is not an advantage? Can you treat an invisible god in that way? Of course idolatry is not confined to Hindus, and Catholic Churches contain images of Christ and Virgin Mary, and even if these are not called gods, Christ is one of the Trinity and therefore identified with God. And even an uneducated Hindu will be able to explain that the image in a temple is only a representation of God, put there to facilitate concentration. In fact, during the Ganapati festival, images of the god are brought into every religious household, consecrated for the time being, and after a period of one to ten days, the temporary godhood is taken away from the image and it is drowned in the sea or river or tank, whatever may be convenient for the locality.

To anybody who can reason a little, prayer would seem extremely presumptuous. Religious people believe in a God who not only rules the world, but who is supposed to regulate the smallest thing that happens, and without whose consent nothing can happen. What then is the meaning of prayer? It is a request to God to refrain from something that he thinks best, or to do something that he has not thought of, or which he has not so far thought fit to do. How can a human being presume to advise an omnipotent god as to what he should do or refrain from doing? If it is simply to let him know our desires that we are to pray, this implies an assumption that he is not omniscient as he is taken to be. Can an omniscient and omnipotent being be imagined to change his mind at the request of a few thousand or a few million human beings, the sum of whose knowledge will certainly not equal his? If it is in him to take pity on people because they are miserable, is it necessary to supplicate him to do so? What can be the level of intelligence of a man who thinks that prayer will have any effect on a god with the qualities he is assumed to have? Pandit Malaviya is a learned man, but apparently does not possess this much power of reasoning, or thinks it wrong to use such power if he has it. This refusal to apply reasoning to certain subjects really implies a lower level of intelligence, because an intelligent man cannot help applying his intelligence to any and every subject. It is not possible for him to mark off certain subjects as beyond the scope of reason. When leaders exhibit this kind of mentality, they are simply unfit to be leaders. It may be that they are merely cheating the masses in order to impress them, and in that case they are dishonest instead of unintelligent. Politics is said to be incompatible with honesty and this is their only excuse.

The Future of Christianity

By C. L. D'AVOINE

THE beginning of the 20th century saw a marked decadence of Christianity among all educated people due to the revolution in thought which some of the epoch-making discoveries in science, which took place during the last century, caused. The discoveries in geology and palæontology and especially the Darwinian theory of Evolution proved the Biblical theory of the creation of the world and the origin of man to be mythical, and as Christianity is founded on that theory, that religion suffered in consequence. The supporters of Christianity admitted this, for they contended that to accept the Darwinian theory of Evolution was most impious and insulting to God as it was a deliberate attempt to dethrone God and lower man into a beast.

Despite all the violent opposition of the Churches, Evolution was generally accepted and when this proved to be the case, some of the astute theologians changed front and pretended to see in Evolution a more marvellous evidence of the works of the Creator than the simple narrative of the Bible shows. They betook themselves to harmonizing and reconciling the findings of science with the Bible. The Bible, they say, did not pretend to teach science, but narrated the facts of creation in the language of Oriental imagery.

For all that, they contended, science did not contradict religion, on the contrary, they asserted that it supported religion more and more. Despite all this, Christianity had really received its death blow, and this was reflected in the attitude of the well-informed towards that religion at the beginning of the 20th century. Some of the better educated and more candid among the theologians actually went so far as to admit that the supernatural claims of Christianity were untenable but they contended that for all that, the discoveries of science did not and can never undermine the doctrinal teachings of Christianity and they thought they were justified in continuing to teach the old story as if nothing had happened to overthrow it.

However ingenious these explanations were, it was clear that the thoughtful could not be taken in by such special pleadings and Christianity was rapidly losing ground. Then came the Great War which began in 1914. It had the effect of absolutely putting a stop to education on the continent of Europe during the four years it lasted and long after peace was restored. The result was that a very large number of young people grew up with little or no education in such countries as France, Germany, Austria, Italy and Russia. Even in England education was seriously interfered with and it is no exaggeration to say that millions grew up in complete ignorance.

This sort of things was commented upon by a Belgian writer in a Belgian newspaper some eight years ago when he pointed out that such a large number of uneducated people all over Europe constituted a very great danger to the future. He gave the name of "Gogos" to these uneducated people and he said that such people would follow blindly any charlatan in politics or religion bold enough and clever enough to impress them. The course of events in Europe has completely proved the forebodings of that Belgian writer to be correct. People soon began to follow blindly political leaders and demagogues with the result that powerful dictatorships were established all over and in other parts political factions were the order of the day. Ultimately this has landed us in the present War which threatens to destroy our present civilization.

Be that as it may, it is, in my opinion, wrong to put all blame upon the last Great War. The uneducated masses in Europe were always a menace to the stability of peace and order. The truth is that the last Great War by dislocating and preventing education among the middle classes added a much larger number of people to the already large number of uneducated peasants who generally constitute the masses in Europe. Few realize the amount of ignorance that prevails among the masses all over Europe and for this the States are immediately responsible. The education of the people there is mostly in the hands of religious teachers who see to it that the people receive the education the teachers want. Men and women in rural districts in Europe receive no education except that imparted to them by priests and nuns which, is a very elementary affair. As we all know these people are trained to believe but to ask no questions, with the result that they remain all their life a credulous,

thoughtless and superstitious lot. Such people are liable to follow any leader that impresses them somewhat.

We may, therefore, truthfully say that today we are reaping the harvest of seeds that were sown centuries ago by the Churches which insist that the correct attitude of the people should be to believe but not to think. Is there any wonder that Hitler and Mussolini and other dictators found millions to follow them blindly and fanatically? The present disaster in Europe is undoubtedly the result of this. The soil was prepared long ago and for this we have to thank Christianity. Even in their methods the dictators themselves closely copy those of the Roman Catholic Church in the days of its glory. It was, then, obedience for the glory of the Church and today it is obedience for the glory of the State.

Serious thinkers are asking: What of the future? Christian teachers are urging people to save "Christian Civilization." Will Christianity be safe after the War? Certainly not among the thoughtful. Few will continue to believe a religion that has become utterly bankrupt after nineteen hundred years of existence. It is, however, possible that there may be a brief revival of religion. Such is always the case during and soon after great calamities. "With a certain type of uneducated character, a pestilence, a ruined harvest, a national disaster, even individual trouble," as the *Freethinker* of London reminds us, "reawakes the scarcely suppressed savage in man." Just at present the Churches are making much of the world calamity that has befallen us. They are calling people everywhere to prayer and they assure the trembling wretches that such a calamity terrify, that the war is the result of the neglect of God by the people. And yet we were told by these very same people that there was a great revival of religion after the last war.

For a time it is quite conceivable that people may respond to the exhortations of priests but it will not last long. I am not one of those, (Mr. H. G. Wells for instance) who believe that the very fate of Homo Sapiens is in danger owing to the present trouble.

Civilization will revive with greater glory after the war. Dictators do not live for ever and the doctrines they teach are not everlasting. It has been truly said that intellectual progress does not follow a straight line but its course is wavelike. We are undoubtedly in a trough at present, a deep one it is true, but humanity will recover and the experience gained will be to the good. It is impossible to imagine that all the discoveries of science will be lost and that superstition will again become supreme.

As regards Christianity, however much it may regain among the thoughtless and the uneducated, learned people are not going to forget that its cardinal dogma is founded on the belief that man was created about 7000 years ago, that he incurred a mortal sin by disobedience of the Creator and that Jesus Christ came to atone and redeem him on account of that sin. If Science is true, this Christian belief must be wrong and anything that is untrue cannot last for ever. Like all the religions that have gone before it Christianity must ultimately find itself in the cemetery of the past unless humanity reverts to the primitive state again which is most unlikely.

Books of interest to Rationalists

By M. N. ROY.

FROM SAVAGERY TO CIVILIZATION

Price Rs. 1-8

*

HERESIES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Price Rs. 1-8

*

MATERIALISM

AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT

Price Rs. 2-8 (Cloth)

Postage Extra

*

Available from:—

THE RENAISSANCE BOOK DEPOT

8, Round Building, Bombay 2.

BUT THE GODS ARE DUMB!!

By ALI AKBAR.

WITH the completion of the Marine Lines Street, the "Oblong Mosque" is put on the map of Bombay. We had the Round Temple; now we have the Oblong Mosque; will we have a Triangular Church? I have been making a tour of Bombay considering this possibility. Not being a Christian, may be I have missed a lot. However, there can be no rivalry now between the Hindu God and the Muslim God. Our City Fathers, their devotees, have been impartial. But will such impartiality satisfy the gods? The gods are jealous. Does not the Lord God of Israel say "Thou shalt have no other god but Me"? Being jealous they cannot brook equality. We should not be surprised if one day we come across special "agents" of these gods working to establish their superiority. Then we shall have the spiritual counterpart of the political Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League. We will have a divine version of the slogan 'If you are a Muslim join the League' and its Hindu counterpart. We may even hear of the Pakistan scheme! It will be a curious sight—migration of temples and mosques. Mosques from Koliwada, Dadar, and Mandwi congregating at Imamwada, Mahomedali Road and Chota Kabristan, while the temples will be all moved to Mumbadevi and C. P. Tank. The New Hindu Colony at Dadar is rather godless and can easily harbour a few evacuee temples. And then perhaps we might even see the stately march of the Fire Temples from Khetwadi and Thakurdwar to Dadar and Colaba, for you cannot ignore the special claims of the minorities.

Only the Christian gods do not resist a transfer. Indeed, it is surprising how accommodating they are. Their followers do not object to churches being demolished so long as they are allowed to re-build them elsewhere. Some years ago there was a church at what is now a track of the G. I. P. Railway line. We do not have an island church there round which the train has to negotiate. The church was taken down and erected in another place. All went off quietly. The civic needs were met and the Christians worship in peace in their new church.

One cannot but be struck with this difference in the attitude between the Muslims, Hindus and Christians. From what we see in Bombay it seems the gods of the former two do not like any transfers. They must be worshipped in the same place. Do we not remember the Hindu-Muslim riot over the Byculla Temple? That temple had to be rebuilt in the same place; the same pujarini could not worship the same god in any other place. Do we not see the faithful Muslim praying on the road and blocking the traffic because the mosque which was once right inside now rides astride the foot-path since the road has been widened? The old dilapidated mosque cannot be shifted. Do we not hear the twanging bells and the growling drum from a dingy old temple in the midst of a modern residential locality? Yes, we do see and hear all this because the gods have a high sense of local loyalty. They will never be unfaithful to their salt, be *nimak haram* and desert the locality in which they have established themselves and built up a clientele. The strange part of it is that even though all their devotees have migrated to another place they remain rooted to their land of origin. That is why we still see the tottering apology for a temple dangerously perched on the top of a needle point on the Worli Hill. We see it still there even when the buffaloes have migrated to Kurla and Andheri. It is for this very reason why there is an annual trek of Bombay residents to the various villages in Goa to offer the annual coconut to the village deity. One of the attributes of a divine being is ubiquity. But these deities seem to have lost all sense of locomotion. In fact they seem to have developed a characteristic of certain species of animals.

There is another aspect to this location of houses of worship. Going round Bombay and the suburbs one sees very often a temple, a mosque and a church so close together. At Byculla, Dadar, Dongri, Bhuleshwar, we have good examples of this. Recently the Worli gods have a new neighbour. I think a Buddhist temple is going to be erected. The erect needle —the phallic symbol—was erected long ago. With the houses of worship in such close proximity the people have worshipped in their respective houses and seldom has there been any trouble. Some who are apologetic for their religious life say that god is one and people worship different phases of him. If that be so, why should there be so much rivalry between

(*Continued on page* 164)

The Philosophy of Fascism

By M. N. ROY

[*A chapter from the book "Fascism, Its Philosophy, Professions and Practice," written in 1935, and published in 1938*]

FASCISM is a comparatively new socio-political phenomenon. It first appeared in Italy in 1919. Since then, it has spread in all the countries of Europe, having triumphed completely in several of them. Its sudden appearance and spectacular progress naturally made it the outstanding topic of the day. Brutalities committed by it shocked the entire progressive and freedom-loving world. Much has been written either for or against it. Though not wanting apologists and panegyrists, Fascism, however, has been condemned as a politically retrograde and socially reactionary movement. It has been characterised as the violent effort to bolster up decayed capitalism. Its growth has been traced to the conditions of chaos created by the ruinous consequences of the great war. Plausible explanations have been offered for its success in Germany.

But with all that, enquiry into this monstrosity of our time has not yet been sufficiently penetrating. Historically, it is not a post-war growth. Such a sweeping socio-political movement cannot happen all of a sudden. The Fascist ideology is the logical consequence of the development of philosophical thought taking place over a sufficiently long period of history. If Fascism is a socio-political reaction, its ideological foundation must have been laid by a philosophical reaction. It has been said that Fascism has no philosophy. That is an erroneous idea which prevents proper understanding of the phenomenon. Fascism has a definite philosophy which grew over a long period precedent to its appearance as a socio-political phenomenon, in opposition to the modern scientific philosophy which provided the ideology to the revolutionary social and political movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The philosophy of Fascism is the logical outcome of post-Hegelian idealism of the pseudo-scientific schools of ultra-modern positivism, new realism and empiricism, which, while pretending to reject idealism, sought to re-establish a new sort of metaphysical mysticism. Those schools of camouflaged or dishonest idealism reached their climax in pragmatism and Neo-Hegelianism. The former co-ordinate the "carnal stomach philosophy of vulgar materialism" with "religious experiences," while the latter distorts the revolutionary weapon of Hegelian dialectics to serve the purpose of militant reaction.

Violating all the temporal standards of morality, justice and freedom, Fascism claims divine sanctions. The official philosopher of Italian Fascism, Giovanni Gentile, was the first to advance that claim. He writes: "Human being is naturally religious. To think means to contemplate God. The more one thinks, the more one feels oneself in the presence of God. As against man, God is everything, man is nothing." ("Fascism and Culture"). In order to justify political reaction and social barbarism, the philosopher of Fascism turns his back upon one of the fundamental principles of modern European culture, namely, humanism.

Man had to free himself from divine tutelage before he could take up the struggle for temporal freedom. In order to deprive him of the hard-earned political freedom and civil liberties, it is necessary to defraud him of the spiritual liberation inherited from the days of the Renaissance. The super-religious self-effacement of man, preached by the philosophy of Fascism, is the expression of vulgar materialism which rises in revolt against the revolutionary doctrines of philosophical materialism. The mortal man, possessing the Fascist faith vicariously drowns himself in the all-embracing being of the divinity, only to resurrect as an instrument of the Almighty, his will and action free from all the laws of this world. In order that acts of barbarism and violence could be justified, as committed in pursuance of a divine purpose pervading the Universe, the process of thinking, which engineers such acts, is hypocritically visualised as the "contemplation of God." These acts are divinely inspired. God takes decayed and distressed capitalism under his protection, and each fanatical defender of this worn out system of vulgar materialism becomes an inspired, divine instrument. Through this sly stratagem of self-effacement,

he retains to himself unbounded freedom of will which is denied to others. The Fascist is the Superman.

The super-religious doctrine of self-abnegation, however, does not prevent the eclectic philosopher of Fascism from discovering "the endless and immortal essence of man. For the historically impossible task of preserving a worn out social system, the potentiality of man engaged in the sacred mission must be "endless, unconditional and free." Gentile does not find it difficult to give "philosophical" explanation of this crass contradiction between his doctrine of self-abnegation and the cult of almightiness of the Fascist. He is a Neo-Hegelian, and knows how to pervert dialectics to suit his purpose. Pragmatism, the "spiritualist" philosophy of expediency, also comes to his help. Having taught that "thought is contemplation of God", he performs what he presumably believes to be a brilliant feat of dialectic skill.

"God and thought (respectively) represent the two opposite poles of life; both necessary and both essential, yet opposed to and contradicting each other." Again, God and man are declared to be a "flexible unity, in the eternal movement of self-realisation a living and therefore restless unity, always dissatisfied with itself." A caricature of Hegelian dialectics, this neo-scholasticism is remarkably similar to Hindu mysticism. What is mysticism, after all but mental confusion which takes refuge in obscurantism to reject experimentally demonstrated scientific truths and rationally established philosophical concepts? Fascist philosophy, as expounded by Gentile, is a classical specimen of mysticism.

Thought is contemplation of God, yet its relation to its object is that of opposition, of contradiction! How the passive state of contemplation can be identified with the active function of opposition, the object being the same, is beyond the grasp of rational mind. But spiritualist conceptions are beyond the radius of reason. Then, to identify thought with contemplation is an epistemological innovation. By thinking about a thing, we acquire knowledge about it. Contemplation does not lead to any such result. It means, dwelling upon what is already known. If one starts with religious presuppositions, he can contemplate the attributes ascribed to God. But his very presuppositions place the object of contemplation beyond the reach of the mental activity called thought. So, it is either a pure confusion of thought to identify thought with contemplation, or it is a purposeful distortion of the basic principle of epistemology.

However much confused and obscurantist this mysticism philosophically may be, its practical deductions are very clear. They are purely materialistic in the most vulgar sense. Drawing inspiration from the Hegelian theory of State, Gentile discovers metaphysical sanctions for the Fascist dictatorship. "The Fascist State embraces and includes all spiritual values including religion. The State, which tolerates any other sovereign power, commits suicide. Whatever is spiritual, is free, but within the great limits of the powers of the State, which itself is spiritual." The practice of Fascism, shows for what vulgar materialistic purposes the divinely derived power of the spiritualist Fascist dictatorship is wielded.

The bourgeoisie, defending their waning power with the bloody instrument of Fascist dictatorship, advances the claim to inherit the "divine right of Kings." The kings may be kings of the past, but as long as the prerogative of divine sanction remains reserved to the State, conceived abstractly according to the metaphysical Hegelian doctrine, it can be claimed logically, if not legitimately, by the class which controls the State. The mediæval dictum "the King can do no wrong"—is stretched by the philosophers of Fascism to the new dictum—"the State can do no wrong."

Incidentally, it may be mentioned that the roots of the philosophy of Fascism can be traced in the "divine philosophy of the Gita," according to which all powers (bibhutis) on earth are the powers of God. Thus, philosophically, Fascism is not a new phenomenon; nor is it correct to say that Fascism has no philosophy. Fascist philosophy is the logical outcome of the spiritualist view of life. The logical connection between the doctrine preached in the Gita and the Fascist Neo-Hegelian conception of the State, is easily perceived. As a matter of fact, the philosophy of Fascist dictatorship results directly from the modern schools of mysticism and spiritualism which represent reaction against the scientific view of life. Its Indian ancestry can be traced through Schopenhauer, whose disciple Nietzsche was the father of the philosophy of Fascism.

Let us make a little closer acquaintance of this monstrous manifestation of spiritualist extravagance. "The Fascist movement is actuated by a deep spiritual motive. The doctrine of Fascism is its action. It is not a closed system of ideology. It is a new form of thought, a new method of living. The charac-

teristic of Fascism is its religious sentiments." (Gentile) The motive of Fascism has been clearly manifested by its action which, according to its philosopher, summarises its doctrine.

The Fascist movement unites the disillusioned petit-bourgeois masses in a fanatical army, demagogically led in the paradoxical crusade for galvanising the chains of their own slavery. The Fascist movement suppresses with violence the revolt of the slaves of capitalism, and to perform that inglorious role, it is patronised by the reactionary bourgeoisie which helps it to assume dictatorial powers. The "deep-rooted spiritual motive of Fascism" is evidenced by countless acts of violence, committed over a number of years, all for the sacred cause of saving capitalism which is vulgar materialism in practice. How are such actions compatible with the "deep-rooted spiritual motive"?

The philosopher of Fascism gives the answer: Fascism has no principle. It is not encumbered with a logical system of ideology. Spiritualism knows no reason; logic has no place in it. The spiritualist character of Fascism finds expression in its arbitrariness. Expedience—of capitalist domination—is the only law for this mad manifestation of spiritualism. It does not want to encumber itself with the ballast of really philosophical theories and rational principles. It wishes to keep its hands free to wield any weapon in its bloody crusade against forces making for the liberation of society from the vulgar materialism of the capitalist civilisation. The doctrine of an inscrutable divine will, of religious experience, of spiritual motive, of religious sentiments, comes very handy for justifying the unbounded arbitrariness of temporal power, as simply doing the bidding of a supernatural purpose which knows no law—for which man-made laws have no validity.

Yet, according to Gentile, Fascism is the avowed enemy of "every form and system of abstract, rationalist, irreligious thought, even of unnatural liberalism and substantially materialistic freemasonry." Here we find spiritualism standing out naked in its true significance. Fascism is religious; therefore, it declares rationalism to be a danger and liberalism unnatural. It is against philosophical materialism, because that is the antithesis of the practice of vulgar materialism. It is a defender of religion, because faith places premium on ignorance which makes the masses easy of exploitation.

Books at Reduced Rates—

SPECIAL CONCESSION

TO THE MEMBERS OF

Indian Institute of Sociology

AND

Rationalist Association of India

Available Books

Mahatma Gandhi As I Know Him Part I		1–8–0
Do. do. Part II		1–8–0
Futility of Khaddar	...	0–6–0
Swarajya or Surrender	...	1–0–0
Humanity Gain from Unbelief		1–0–0
Monopoly	... ...	0–4–0
Principles of Socialism	...	0–4–0
Rights of Labour	...	0–6–0
Religion of Capital	...	0–6–0
Women of Future	...	0–4–6
Logic of Socialism	...	0–6–0
How India is Governed	...	1–0–0

All these books at half the price!

Write to:

THE MANAGER,

HINDUSTAN BOOK DEPOT,

21, Dalal Street, Fort,

BOMBAY.

SOME IDEALS OF FASCISM

(By Courtesy of "Independent India")

ON "WHITE MAN'S BURDEN"

"Colonies were acquired by the right of might, Europe needs raw materials and colonies, and with a heroic conception of life, the white race is destined to rule. But if ruling nations gave away to pacifist ideas, allowing colonies to govern themselves, these would merely say: We do not need Europe any longer."

—Hitler—at a Conference of University students at Munich, January 26, 1936.

"Imperialism is the eternal and immutable law of life. Italy has no future in the West and in the North. Her future lies in the East and the South—in Asia and Africa. The vast resources of Asia must be valorised, and Africa must be brought within the orbit of civilisation."

—Mussolini—in 1919.

x x x

ON WAR

"Three cheers for war! May I be permitted to raise this cry. Three cheers for Italy's war, noble and beautiful above all! Three cheers also for war in general!" *—Mussolini.*

"Fascism issued from the war, and in war it must find its outlet. Our country cannot advance except through a great war."

—Mario Carli—a Fascist journalist.

"We must try to make the world understand why Germany on January 30, 1933, struck out the word pacific from its vocabulary."

—Von Papen—as Vice Chancellor of Hitler's first Government.

"Pacifism is cowardice on principle—not a theory of life, but a defect in character."

—Roehm.

"War is the most simple affirmation of life. Suppress war and it would be like trying to suppress the processes of nature."

—Goebbels.

x x x

ON LAW AND JUSTICE

"Effiminacy must disappear from our administration of justice. The idea of retribution must again be put in the foreground."

—Bavarian Minister of Justice.

"The only effective punishment is to make offenders dread prison life."

—Prussian Minister of Justice.

"The humanity nonsense of the so-called scientific penology must be repudiated. It is to be continuously brought to the attention of the prisoner that he has to atone for his wickedness against the legal order of the State by the loss of his freedom. This is to be brought home so vividly by the nature of the infliction of the punishment, that he will feel an inhibition against any attempt to commit new crimes."

—Decree on Prison Reform issued by Goering.

x x x

ON CONSCIENCE AND DUTY

"If conscience conflicts with the will of the nation, conscience must acknowledge itself to be wrong. The will of the nation is expressed through the leader. Warlikeness, brutality and ruthlessness are Teutonic virtues which must replace the false Christian virtues of meekness, brotherly love and peace."

—Dr. Joachim Hosenfelder Bishop of Brandenburg, Leader of the German Christian Movement.

x x x x

ON SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IDEALS

"The new political ideal realised by Fascism is that in which the only duty of the leader of the State is leadership, and the only duty of the rest of the nation is obedience."

"Hitler is the restorer of authority from above, and discipline from below." *—Goering.*

"Society must be divided into the elite and the masses; the former is characterised by resourcefulness, shrewdness and intelligence, the latter by loyalty, patriotism, conservatism, morals and religious sentiments."

—Wilfredo Pareto—ideologist of Fascism.

x x x

ON WOMEN AND FAMILY

"The woman's place is in the home; her duty, the recreation of the tired warrior."

—Goering.

"The woman's task is to be beautiful and to bring children into the world." *Goebbels.*

"There is no higher or finer privilege for a woman than that of sending her children to war." *—From the declaration of the Women's Order of the Red Swastika.*

"An important reduction in the scientific education given to women will shortly commence. In order to strengthen their services to the family—services for the honour of the German people and for the honour of God who wished the German people and created them."

—*Press Service of the Nazi Party 1934.*

"The husband is the head of the family. It is obligatory for the wife to follow him. Children, whatever their age, must honour and respect parents. They are subject to paternal rule. Such rule is exercised through the father. The children cannot abandon home without the explicit permission of the ruling parent.

—*Regulations printed on the marriage certificate issued by the Fascist State of Italy.*

x x x

ON SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

"Vaccination is a shameful blot on the escutcheon of German science. The tracing of almost all diseases to bacteria is a serious scientific error. Many chemical products are fiendish devices perfected by Marxist scientists and marketed by Jewish industrialists seeking to weaken the blonde race."

—"*National Health*" (*Official Organ*) *1934.*

"We will entrust the job of keeping the German people physically fit not to so-called modern specialists, but to the old-fashioned family doctor. Let young medical students take him for their model. The grand old general physician is what I have in my mind. Let us turn from chemical compounds and nostrums to the herbs which nature has abundantly provided."

—*Dr. W. Klein—Medical Counsellor, at the opening of the Academy for Advanced Medical Study.*

"The task of the University is not to teach objective sciences but the militant, the warlike, the heroic.

—*E. Krieck, "Education in the Third Reich."*

ON CULTURE

"When I hear the word culture, I draw my pistol."

—*Goebbels.*

"Goethe was internationally minded, and therefore, a stranger to his people.

—*Esser—Minister of Bavaria.*

We know of no world except in relation to mankind; and we wish for no Art that does not bear the mark of the relation.

—*Goethe.*

Correspondence.

The Pope and War

Cannanore,
Aug. 28, 1940.

The Editor *Reason*,

Dear Sir,

From experience it is known you do not like suggestions from me; but I am "trying again."

In the most interesting number of *Reason* for the month I find only one reference to the silence of the Pope. Perhaps you do not know how much interest is caused in the "Christian" world by this individual..... the world which is "fighting for Christian Civilization."

Before Italy entered the war the Pope was full of denunciations of the war and how it was being carried out; he spoke as the representative of Christ (Son of God) on Earth. Many thought he really believed he *was* that representative. Since Mussolini came in (we cannot say "Italy") the Pope has kept his mouth shut and even took orders from Mussolini on the conduct of his paper!

Why? If he believed himself to be what Catholics do, he would defy any "earthly" ban.

Could you not write up that matter and show Catholics how mistaken they have been, and how the Pope himself does not really believe what the Church teaches?

On other matter: You might have called attention to *The Martyrdom of Man* when you published the extract entitled "Prophets Analysed." It is such a good book for Rationalists.

With best wishes.

O. B. R. DICKEY.

Our agreement or disagreement does not depend on the person who makes the suggestions but on the value of the suggestions themselves. We agree with what our esteemed correspondent, who is a very keen and active rationalist, has to say regarding the Pope, and an article on the subject will appear in the next issue of *Reason*. We regret reference to Winwood Reade's excellent book *Martyrdom of Man* was omitted through oversight.

—*A. S., Asstt. Ed.*

Dancing.

For grace, poise, and correct technique visit the Silvester School of Dancing. Moderate fees. Concession to members of the R.A.I. Opp. Broadway Cinema, Dadar, Bombay.

—*Advt.*

REASON

(Estd. 1931)
The Journal of the Rationalist
Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road
Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris)

Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

R. A. I. Membership Rs. 5/- Foreign 8s. annually.

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 3/- & Foreign 4s. 6d. or. $1.25 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

NOTICE

Members of the R. A. I. and their friends will meet at the Indian Institute of Sociology on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. Time 7 p.m. Notice will also appear in local papers on the respective days.

Lectures

September 12, 7 p. m.—

"WHAT IS RATIONALISM"

—*Prof. R. D. Karve.*

Followed by a Discussion.

September 26, 7 p. m.—

"ORIGIN OF RELIGION"

—*Abraham Solomon.*

Followed by a Discussion.

Notes & News.

MEMBERS of the R. A. I. will note from the foregoing notice that as promised the R. A. I. has started its other activities. The Indian Institute of Sociology, where members will meet twice a month as announced, must become a centre of intellectual and social contact among freethinkers in Bombay.

x x x

THE lectures, discussions and debates which will be arranged there will be a fine opportunity for friends to introduce new members. Rationalist literature will be available for sale at these meetings and the excellent library at the Institute, which is free for members of the R. A. I., should make rationalists in Bombay attend these meetings regularly and take active part in making them a great success.

x x x

WE hope there will be a response to the appeal by our President, which appears on the first page of this issue. It should not be difficult for members to enrol three new members within the next four months, now that our Association is increasing its activities. There are more rationalists in India than many realize and a little effort on the part of our friends will surely increase the membership of the R. A. I. a great deal.

x x x

A few young and enthusiastic members of the R. A. I. are making it a point to pay informal visits to some of our elder members with a view to get their suggestions and ideas regarding the activities of the Association and other matters connected with Rationalism. The result has been very encouraging.

We hope our other elder members will extend their cooperation. This will also help to develop the social side of Rationalism and help to fight the greatest enemy of all progressive movements—apathy.

x x x

THE Bombay Station of the All India Radio has arranged a series of talks on the Sources of the Rights of Man. Dr. R. P. Paranjpye is one of the speakers. He will speak on "Democratic Law" on the 17th of this month.

—ABRAHAM SOLOMON.

If man had given to the service of man all that he has given to the gods in the last hundred thousand years, where should we be to-day? —JOSEPH MCCABE.

"An important reduction in the scientific education given to women will shortly commence. In order to strengthen their services to the family—services for the honour of the German people and for the honour of God who wished the German people and created them."

—*Press Service of the Nazi Party 1934.*

"The husband is the head of the family. It is obligatory for the wife to follow him. Children, whatever their age, must honour and respect parents. They are subject to paternal rule. Such rule is exercised through the father. The children cannot abandon homc without the explicit permission of the ruling parent.

—*Regulations printed on the marriage certificate issued by the Fascist State of Italy.*

x x x

ON SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

"Vaccination is a shameful blot on the escutcheon of German science. The tracing of almost all diseases to bacteria is a serious scientific error. Many chemical products are fiendish devices perfected by Marxist scientists and marketed by Jewish industrialists seeking to weaken the blonde race."

—"*National Health*" (*Official Organ*) *1934.*

"We will entrust the job of keeping the German people physically fit not to so-called modern specialists, but to the old-fashioned family doctor. Let young medical students take him for their model. The grand old general physician is what I have in my mind. Let us turn from chemical compounds and nostrums to the herbs which nature has abundantly provided."

—*Dr. W. Klein—Medical Counsellor, at the opening of the Academy for Advanced Medical Study.*

"The task of the University is not to teach objective sciences but the militant, the warlike, the heroic.

—*E. Krieck, "Education in the Third Reich."*

ON CULTURE

"When I hear the word culture, I draw my pistol."

—*Goebbels.*

"Goethe was internationally minded, and therefore, a stranger to his people.

—*Esser—Minister of Bavaria.*

We know of no world except in relation to mankind; and we wish for no Art that does not bear the mark of the relation.

—*Goethe.*

Correspondence.

The Pope and War

Cannanore,
Aug. 28, 1940.

The Editor *Reason*,

Dear Sir,

From experience it is known you do not like suggestions from me; but I am "trying again."

In the most interesting number of *Reason* for the month I find only one reference to the silence of the Pope. Perhaps you do not know how much interest is caused in the "Christian" world by this individual..... the world which is "fighting for Christian Civilization."

Before Italy entered the war the Pope was full of denunciations of the war and how it was being carried out; he spoke as the representative of Christ (Son of God) on Earth. Many thought he really believed he *was* that representative. Since Mussolini came in (we cannot say "Italy") the Pope has kept his mouth shut and even took orders from Mussolini on the conduct of his paper!

Why? If he believed himself to be what Catholics do, he would defy any "earthly" ban.

Could you not write up that matter and show Catholics how mistaken they have been, and how the Pope himself does not really believe what the Church teaches?

On other matter: You might have called attention to *The Martyrdom of Man* when you published the extract entitled "Prophets Analysed." It is such a good book for Rationalists.

With best wishes.

O. B. R. DICKEY.

Our agreement or disagreement does not depend on the person who makes the suggestions but on the value of the suggestions themselves. We agree with what our esteemed correspondent, who is a very keen and active rationalist, has to say regarding the Pope, and an article on the subject will appear in the next issue of *Reason*. We regret reference to Winwood Reade's excellent book *Martyrdom of Man* was omitted through oversight.

—*A. S., Asstt. Ed.*

Dancing.

For grace, poise, and correct technique visit the Silvester School of Dancing. Moderate fees. Concession to members of the R.A.I. Opp. Broadway Cinema, Dadar, Bombay.

—*Advt.*

REASON

(Estd. 1931)
The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road
Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris)

Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

R. A. I. Membership Rs. 5/- Foreign 8s. annually.

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 3/- & Foreign 4s. 6d. or. $1.25 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

NOTICE

Members of the R. A. I. and their friends will meet at the Indian Institute of Sociology on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. Time 7 p.m. Notice will also appear in local papers on the respective days.

Lectures

September 12, 7 p. m.—

"WHAT IS RATIONALISM"

—*Prof. R. D. Karve.*

Followed by a Discussion.

September 26, 7 p. m.—

"ORIGIN OF RELIGION"

—*Abraham Solomon.*

Followed by a Discussion.

Notes & News.

MEMBERS of the R. A. I. will note from the foregoing notice that as promised the R. A. I. has started its other activities. The Indian Institute of Sociology, where members will meet twice a month as announced, must become a centre of intellectual and social contact among freethinkers in Bombay.

x x x

THE lectures, discussions and debates which will be arranged there will be a fine opportunity for friends to introduce new members. Rationalist literature will be available for sale at these meetings and the excellent library at the Institute, which is free for members of the R. A. I., should make rationalists in Bombay attend these meetings regularly and take active part in making them a great success.

x x x

WE hope there will be a response to the appeal by our President, which appears on the first page of this issue. It should not be difficult for members to enrol three new members within the next four months, now that our Association is increasing its activities. There are more rationalists in India than many realize and a little effort on the part of our friends will surely increase the membership of the R. A. I. a great deal.

x x x

A few young and enthusiastic members of the R. A. I. are making it a point to pay informal visits to some of our elder members with a view to get their suggestions and ideas regarding the activities of the Association and other matters connected with Rationalism. The result has been very encouraging.

We hope our other elder members will extend their cooperation. This will also help to develop the social side of Rationalism and help to fight the greatest enemy of all progressive movements—apathy.

x x x

THE Bombay Station of the All India Radio has arranged a series of talks on the Sources of the Rights of Man. Dr. R. P. Paranjpye is one of the speakers. He will speak on "Democratic Law" on the 17th of this month.

—ABRAHAM SOLOMON.

If man had given to the service of man all that he has given to the gods in the last hundred thousand years, where should we be to-day?

—JOSEPH MCCABE.

Book Review.

THE WORLD AS I SEE IT

By ABRAHAM SOLOMON.

The World as I See It, by Albert Einstein, translated by Allan Harris. Thinker's Library No. 79, Watts & Co., London. Pp. 112. 1s. 3d.

ALBFRT Einstein, a name which immediately rouses in the minds of ordinary men and women the vision of a man lost in a maze of mathematical formulæ and submerged in a science laboratory, probing into the mechanism of our mysterious universe; whose theories one dare not try to understand and yet is compelled to accept. This book which is issued in the excellent *Thinker's Library* series contains addresses, letters and occasional writings on a large variety of subjects, and serves to "reveal to the general reader the human side of one of the dominating figures of our day." It reveals Einstein as a man intensely and personally interested in the happiness of mankind. In the introduction we are told, "Himself familiar from early years with the handicap of poverty and with some of the worst forms of man's inhumanity to man, he has never spared himself in defence of the weak and the oppressed." In 1933 he made his famous declaration: "As long as I have any choice, I will stay only in a country where political liberty, toleration, and equality of all citizens before the law are the rule."

He is a thoroughgoing rationalist and recently became the honorary associate of the Rationalist Press Association of London. He writes: "I cannot conceive of a God who rewards and punishes his creatures, or has a will of the type of which we are conscious in ourselves. An individual who should survive his physical death is also beyond my comprehension, nor do I wish it otherwise; such notions are for the fears or absurd egoism of feeble souls."

Describing the various kinds of religious beliefs, those based on fear, social and moral religions, he says: "Common to all these types is the anthropomorphic character of their conception of God. Only individuals of exceptional endowment and exceptionally high-minded communities, as a general rule, get in any real sense beyond this level. But there is a third state of religious experience which belongs to all of them, even though it is rarely found in a pure form, and which I will call cosmic religious feeling. It is very difficult to explain this feeling to any one who is entirely without it, especially as there is no anthropomorphic conception of God corresponding to it."

He further says: "The man who is thoroughly convinced of the universal operation of the law of causation cannot for a moment entertain the idea of a being who interferes in the course of events—that is, if he takes the hypothesis of causality really seriously. He has no use for the religion of fear and equally little for social or moral religion. A God who rewards and punishes is inconceivable to him for the simple reason that a man's actions are determined by necessity, external and internal, so that in God's eyes he cannot be responsible, any more than an inanimate object is responsible, for the motions it goes through. Hence science has been charged with undermining morality, but the charge is unjust. A man's ethical behaviour should be based on sympathy, education, and social ties; no religious basis is necessary. Man would indeed be in a poor way if he had to be restrained by fear and punishment and hope of reward after death."

Writing on Society and Personality he says: "A man's value to the community depends on how far his feelings, thoughts and actions are directed toward promoting the good of his fellows." And further, "Without creative, independently thinking and judging personalities the upward development of society is as unthinkable as the development of the individual personality without the nourishing soil of the community."

The book is divided into four parts. After reading the first three parts rationalists will be a little surprised at some of the views expressed in the fourth part which deals with the Jews. Particularly the following: While urging that the constructive work in Palestine should be "carried out in such a manner as to serve the interests of the Arab population also," he says: "We shall thereby be following not merely the dictates of Providence but also our traditions, which alone gives the Jewish community meaning and stability." (Page 96). Now what does Prof. Einstein mean by "Providence?"

The ruthless persecution of the Jews rouses the sympathy of everyone who has any feelings

(*Continued on page* 156.)

A Dialogue Between an Atheist and a Missionary

BY ANIL

The following dialogue is reported *verbatim* as it took place between an atheist and a missionary belonging to the Church of England; the writer was sitting in a small cafe on the Lamington Road when two gentlemen arrived and one of them ordered soda for himself and tea for the other gentleman, and they started talking. I have not omitted a single word of what I overheard or added anything of my own.

1st gentleman—Well, sir, we meet after a very long time.

2nd gentleman—It seems an age since we met last time.

1st—What are you doing now? You are no longer connected with that institution? (here he mentioned one institution but I omit the name for obvious reasons).

2nd—No. I have severed my connection with it; it is an old story now. I am at present trying my hand at journalism.

1st—Another question if you don't mind, of course.

2nd—Not at all. Go ahead.

1st—What about your wife? I hear that you are not now living together.

2nd—No; we are divorced. It is nearly three years now.

1st—Very sad, very sad indeed; such a beautiful family life you had. Why did you do it? Was there a quarrel?

2nd—No; mere difference of opinion; you see when a husband and wife live together for nearly seven years and as you say very happily, sometimes either one or both of them need a change of partners. Personally, I think there should be a law that no marriage should last longer than five years and that period is too long.

1st—What are you talking? Your ideas are simply monstrous. If I did not make it a fixed point not to mind anything that you say, I would have to run away from you. Marriage after all is a sacrament and you want to turn it into a contract.

2nd—Well, question for question. Is your married life happy?

1st—You see I don't mind telling you everything frankly, because you are an old friend; but you see we are now marrried for nearly fifteen years.

2nd—That is no answer to my question; tell me, are you happy with your wife?

1st—Well, to tell you the truth, I am not happy; but it is all the fault of my wife.

2nd (smiling)—If I were to ask your wife, she will say that it was all your fault.

1st (forcibly)—She does say that; no need to ask her. You see she has become old now; she has been too carefully brought up by our missionary women and she thinks that sex intercourse is very sinful; she does not come near me at all, nor does she allow me to touch her; what can I do? And at times I do want her so badly; I feel sometimes that my whole body is burning. But she does not understand; she is too carefully brought up by our missionary friends to have any womanhood left in her and I keep on burning.

2nd—Well, your St. Paul has said that it is better to marry than to burn.

1st—But that is precisely why I married and now look at the result.

2nd—What St. Paul really means is that it is better that you should have intercourse with a woman than that you should burn. St. Paul does not necessarily mean marriage.

1st—Do you really think so? I shall have to think about it. That reminds me. You see many of our catechists carry contraceptives in their pockets; and they are all married, with a number of children. What do you think they are doing with those things?

2nd—How do I know? You had better ask them.

1st—You see, originally I came of a Brahmin family and my domestic life was very strict and rigid; when I began to grow up I was frightened by the idea of nightly emissions and my uncle told me that it was a terrible sin. I was myself thinking in the same way and I suffered such terrible tortures because of this sinfulness. I tried various means to stop it; but afterwards I read Havelock Ellis and other writers on sex and I found that it was quite natural. From thenceforward I began to feel the need of imparting sex education to our children. You know now there are many among the Christian missionaries who are quite in favour of this education for the children.

2nd—Well. You people seem to be making tremendous progress; if you go on at this rate I have not the least doubt that you will soon put an end to Christianity. Of course, what you are preaching is not Christianity at all; it is pure and simple Churchianity; and this Churchianity arose simply because you exploited the teaching of Jesus for securing your livelihood.

1st—You seem to be an admirer of Jesus.

2nd—I am an admirer of all great men and I think that Jesus according to the conditions of his time was a great man.

1st—But Jesus believed in God and you are an atheist. Or have you turned theist again?

2nd—No. I am an atheist; but you see I have an idea at the back of my mind that Jesus himself did not believe in God.

1st—Holy Moses! What are you talking?

2nd—I am talking sense. Have you read Dr. Wainger's philosophy of *As If*?

1st—No and I hope I never shall read anything you read.

2nd—It does not matter. You know Dr. Wainger has put forward a most interesting theory about the belief of Jesus in the existence of God. He says that when Jesus asked us to believe in God as our father and behave like his children what he really meant was that we should behave in such a manner *As If* God is our father and *As If* all men are our brothers. I go a little further than this learned doctor and suggest that Jesus himself was behaving in such a manner *As If* God existed. It does not mean that God has real existence.

1st (annoyed)– If I stop talking to you any further I shall have no convicition left and then good-bye to my livelihood. As for you, you are past all hope of salvation. (He rises and flounces out of the hotel; the other gentlemen looks at him and laughs.)

Every Progressive Indian must read
THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM
BY
Dr. R. P. PARANJPYE, M.A., D.SC.
Price One Rupee. Post Free.
TO MEMBERS OF THE R. A. I.
Annas 8 only.

THE WORLD AS I SEE IT

(Continued from page 154)

at all and it is no surprise that Prof. Einstein feels strongly about it. It is clear that Prof. Einstein is more interested in the free social and cultural development of the Jews and not in a Jewish Nation as a separate state. He says: "The object which the leaders of Zionism have in view is not a political but a social and cultural one."

Whether the development of Palestine will solve the so-called "Jewish Problem" is a controversial question. That it has given succour to many a victim of Anti-Semitism and kindled the hearts of that unfortunate people with hope, no one will deny.

On being accused of nationalism because of his strong sympathy with Zionism, Prof. Einstein writes: "In any case it is a nationalism whose aim is not power but dignity and health. If we did not have to live among intolerant, narrow-minded and violent people, I should be the first to throw over all nationalism in favour of universal humanity."

These are only a few of the many interesting and important subjects Prof. Albert Einstein discusses in a simple and frank manner in this little book.

INDISPENSABLE TO ALL SERIOUS STUDENTS.

1 INDIAN FEUDAL STATES AND NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE... ... 0-4-0

2 PROBLEM OF AGRARIAN INDEBTEDNESS. 0-2-0

3 GANDHI'S TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE X-RAYED. 0-2-0

4 EXIT GOD! 0-2-0

By A. R. DESAI.

Can be had from:
The Hindustan Newspapers Limited.
21, Dalal Street, Fort,
BOMBAY.

Where Leaders Meet

By **M. V. V. K. Rangachari**

WHEN Rev. J. F. Butler spoke of faith in a non-humanistic system of religion as the saving mark of the world, he had in mind the Christian Church and the definite attitude of assurance that it stood for. Its superhuman loyalties stand against Humanism which could not survive this war. "The West had been experimenting with Humanism and the result was the present carnage and misery". (*The Hindu*, 5-8-1940). It is doubtful whether the humanistic experiment had been sufficiently tried in European history and whether the certainties of the Trinitarian Doctrine that held the field for two thousand years would emerge stronger through purification by fire. Whatever the merit in Mr. Butler's prophesy, the charge that the Philosophy of Humanism, placing man over everything else, was responsible for the present catastrophe has slender foundation. As in matters secular, so in matters pertaining to faith there is the danger "of a transition to acquiesce to authority", as Sir S. Varadachariar pointed out. Religious evolution, with its persecuting episodes too often bursting forth, justifies the warning that apart from emotional efficacy and hopefulness, religion should satisfy a third condition, viz., it should carry intellectual conviction Dogmas like vicarious punishment, atonement, immaculate conception, virgin birth, corporeal ascension, stand the chance of critical examination in an awakened age of scientific sense.

As for India's spiritual heritage, the West is in no need to benefit by it to-day. Even the simple, sensible formula of non-violence (Ahimsa) proffered by Gandhiji is unacceptable in the national, much less in international, relations. His appeals to every Briton and the Government are turned down. The basic spiritual truth in Indian Philosophy is Man. There is nothing more noble: *Na manushat shreshthataram hi kinchit*. Humanity is the meeting ground of all religion, philosophy, politics, science, and the art of life. It is not played out here, nor even played at all in Europe with a sufficient emphasis. There the mechanism rules, not an organic biological truth helpful for the preservation of life. There science analyses to the point of death. The system of synthetic Social Yoga is yet to come into its own. In that sense, perhaps of tolerance and assimilation, India has a message, even to the world outside.

But the conflicting paradox of *Karma*, the baffling problem of determinism in the face of an apparent sense of doership (free-willist agency) has impaired our capacity for initiative. In the race for life, which entails the acquisition of the necessaries, the *non-possumus* indifferent attitude meant a wrong. misplaced, emphasis. As Yoga, in individual or collective life implies the balancing of opposing tendencies, one cannot too often remind oneself that one ought to exert oneself to the utmost, yet stand detached from the result of the very exertion, as it flows in scientific determined sequence. The unity of fare provided for home and outside consumption may thus perhaps be attained. The fact however remains that India is deficient materially, from whatever cause. The West, amidst plenty, is unable to hold on; it is not unreasonable to think that the deficiency there pertains to another order.

In interpreting Sir S. Varadachari's theme, Dr. R. N. Sarma (*The Hindu*, 21-8-40) adverts to "a totally erroneous impression" which his observations are "calculated to create, about the contribution and value of Indian Philosopby to higher life." The Y. M. I. A. address was confined to the present, and the leadership of the day. The days of *Maitreyi* and *Nachiketas* nor even the later work of Sankaracharya did not fall to be considered on the occasion. While talking about leaders, Sir S. Varadachariar had surely none of these in mind. He may or may not have political leaders, or leaders of masses "shouting in and out of season 'Jai'" in his view. But leaders are those who actually lead, with or without shouts. Leaders of thought and action influence life greatly. The Theoreticians, Philosophers who estrange themselves from the mass-mind and remain safe in cloistered seclusion, they too may lead in some degree but more often they led no-where in the past and do not hold great promise in the world's future. Metaphysics abstracted away from the concrete realities of existence, and having no bearing upon the practicalities of life and society stands

(*Continued on page* 159.)

The Onslaught of Unreason

By G. Y. CHITNIS.

THE world today is in the grip of terrible reaction against reason. You can go to any part of the world and you will find that everywhere reason is at a discount. People are not today in a position to discuss anything from a rational point of view; take the recent conquests of Hitler; if some one were bold enough to tell him that all the territories he has acquired are more of a liability than an asset, he will fly into a terrible rage and immediately order the impudent speaker to be shot.

Since Hitler's accession to power, the entire German economy has been put on a war footing, with the result that the terrible war machine he has built eats away a very large part of the national revenue and to feed this monster, people have perforce to reduce their standard of living, increase their hours of work and devote the major part of their labour to production of the engines of destruction. But this is not all. The war effort must necessarily be accompanied by an appropriate education of the children and the youths so that they will be fit to become soldiers who know how to obey and cannot think for themselves; this training of the children and the youths may be good for manufacturing fighting robots but I have yet to learn that it has produced a good and intelligent citizen. Even the man in his domestic circle is not free; he, his wife and his children must behave always in such a manner that it will further the ambitions for world conquest of the Fuehrer. Nazism is not merely a political doctrine; it is a view of life like any other view of life; it has a philosophy of its own and its own church which is not identical with Christianity but directly opposed to it; this view of life every rationalist must reject as it entails a replacing of the reign of reason with the instinct of pugnacity, murder and slaughter; no system of political or social thought can be acceptable to a rationalist unless it gives him fullest liberty as a citizen to develop his own powers in any way he likes provided his freedom does not interfere with the freedom of other people.

In our country Gandhism also represents not merely a political doctrine but a view of life; although the Mahatma talks of truth and non-violence and leads people to believe that he is a born democrat, it is a fact that the very emphasis that he puts upon truth and non-violence places both democracy and freedom at a discount. To the mind of the Mahatma the truth is something which is absolute and can be grasped by some sort of intuitive process which is not available to persons who are spiritually less endowed. If this idea becomes prevalent in the mind of the people, it is possible that it will give rise to a sort of super-dictator who will seek to control our entire life.

From the point of view of a rationalist this is a very undesireable state of things. If rationalism originally sprang as a revolt against the Roman Catholic Church it was primarily because the Church as a whole stood for total negation of reason; nobody was allowed to think; not to speak of laymen, even the clergy were debarred from reading the Bible; the sole authority for interpreting the Bible vested in the Pope who could of course interpret the Bible according to the political and economic necessities of the Church. The discoveries of the great scientists and philosophers were ruthlessly suppressed simply because they threatened to undermine the very foundations of the Church; men like Galileo were made to deny what their scientific genius affirmed, for fear of the rack and the stake. Europe at that time was passing through the dark ages and if it were not for the light and the enlightenment that was brought into Europe by the Arabic philosophers and the scientists, Europe perhaps would never have emerged out of that darkness.

We are witnessing today in a more virulent form the resurgence of the same dark period in modern Europe. There is the same anxiety to deny the supremacy of reason in human life; the same desire to turn human beings into so many machines with strong muscles to do the work that is assigned to them but no brains to think for themselves; all the achievements of European renaissance seem to crumble into dust before the mighty and the powerful onslaught of unreason. Man seems to be moving in a circle; if at one time he seems to progress towards freedom and reason, at another moment he is willing to throw overboard not only his freedom but his powers of reasoning as well, in order that he may become a more efficient instrument for carrying out his dictator's wish. Plato has said that democracy is not neces-

sarily the final form of government because there is no such final form; democracy must sooner or later give rise to autocracy. And now we are having not the autocracy of a class but the dictatorship of one man exactly at a moment when the spirit of democracy seems to be in the ascendant.

Does it mean that reason is never to triumph at all in our life? Does it mean that we are always to be the slaves of our own passions and the slaves of somebody with a stronger will than our own? Does it mean that man has been endowed with this thinking faculty only to make a fool of himself? One philosopher has said that man is a thinking animal. I am sure he would not have made that remark if he had lived in our time and seen with his own eyes how countless numbers of people willingly give up the very idea of thinking things for themselves and leave it to somebody who of course uses this opportunity for his own pet schemes or ambitions. We have seen thousands of Germans blindly obeying the will of the Fuehrer and we have seen as many in our own country swallowing the stupidest doctrines and the most incredible fads that have ever been propagated. No, I do not suppose that looking to the comptele mess we have landed ourselves in, we can very well accept the definition of the philosopher. We shall have to invent some other definition which does not so glaringly contradict the facts about our life.

But somehow the dreams of our philosophers, our scientists and our men of genius must come true; we must bring back reason from the wilderness and enthrone it in the very centre of our life; it is possible that for the present when there is so much triumph of unreason we may not succeed on a very large scale. Even in that mental and intellectual prison, Germany, there are a few men and women who are somehow feeling that all is not well with the world; they see for themselves that when the light of reason is extinguished, freedom also disappears and along with the disappearance of freedom many valuable things are lost which can never be recovered except by a supreme renewed effort. Similarly, there are men and women all over the world who are silently working for a rational ordering of things, who are hoping that someday, somehow, the supremacy of reason will be recognised in the affairs of men and people will have a brighter, freer and more joyous existence.

Let all the rationalists in India work in the same faith and press forward to the mark of their high calling.

WHERE LEADERS MEET

(*Continued from page* 157)

little chance of gaining leadership of the modern world.

Neither professors nor modern authors "who have written books in English on Indian Philosophy based on misleading translations of the original Sanskrit treatises" could have claimed attention at all, for Dr. Sarma to raise the thought and lay it aside. What great ones practise, that others imitate; the standard set by them, by that people abide (Yadyadacharati sreshthas tattadevetaro janah, Sa yatpramanam kurute lokastadanuvartate, Gita, iii, 21).

The leaders are Sreshthah, (great men) who are great by performance, and practice (acharati). It is the example, not precept, that involves leadership. Their standard is human, and yet is higher than the average man (pramanam). If the masses follow them and shout 'Jai' they are not disturbed. Nor do those who cavil affect their course. The point in Sir Varadachariar's address was the variance from spiritual truth as laid down in theory and the corresponding degree of its practical application in modern Indian life. That is hardly any complaint against classical philosophy. Apart from supervening factors like foreign conquests, even if our hoary past led, by itself, to its logical sequence in the famished present, it would do no good to any one to blame the past. When the formula to "eradicate the desire for enjoyment of material prosperity" is overworked, it dawns too late even "the truism that in the race of life material progress must count". Any Yogic-programme that runs counter to truth and claiming to be protected by Spiritual Warrant will remain an unrealised mystery despite all "philosophical evaluation and metaphysical adjudication." True, in any context of life, there is always the hangover of the past? We may never successfully break away from it. It would be a futile unhistoric effort. Dialectically, nature holds her sway (Prakritih niyokshyati, Gita, xviii, 59) But nature too impels movement. It marches onward.

The mystery is progressively unravelled. Social philosophy is a process, and not a state. Our theorists stand out alone while the procession makes headway. None may complain that the planetary system revolves.

Life of Leonard Nelson

(*Concluded from page* 140.)

His interest in a rational critique therefore led him to took for a teacher amongst Kant's successors. The importance of Kant's philosophical system does not lie in the philosophical results he reached, but in his *critical method* which makes possible the attainment of philosophical results, which are certain because they are scientific and free from arbitrary dogma. But which of Kant's successors has accepted this legacy? Nelson could find only one, Jacob Friedrich Fries. He came upon him almost by chance. Fries had been dead for fifty years: his work and his writings had fallen almost into oblivion. The Kantian system is not entirely free from gaps and contradictions and can, therefore, be used in support of certain doctrines or against them. During the early nineteenth century the dispute that had centred round the content of the system had thrust into the background the further development of the critical method, from which alone a sound scientific solution of these disputed questions could be anticipated. Fries and Fries alone attempted a scientific development of Kant's teaching. But his efforts remained unknown outside a small circle of pupils, and even this group disintegrated shortly after his death as a result of political conflicts. It was necessary to go back to Fries and to take up again the task of developing and applying the critical method at the place where Fries had laid it down.

All this was clear to Nelson even before he went to the University. This it was which determined the nature of his studies and of his own scientific work. Does this definite choice of a school of philosophic thought, giving him at the outset a point of view from which to determine his attitude in the midst of the prevailing chaos of philosophical system and tendencies, convict him of the charge of prejudice? On the contrary, it was precisely because of his intention of attacking the foundations of dogmatism in philosophy that the development of the critical method in philosophic thought was needed. This intention of his found expression in the fact that before Nelson devoted himself to his own philosophic studies, he schooled himself in the sciene of mathematics in order to develop the strict logic and intellectual honesty necessary for a scientific philosophy. And it is also to be seen in the fact that for years his own work in philosophy was concentrated upon the question of the philosophic method. In those years he made the critical method the object of his investigations and defended it against attack. He criticised and amended the work of his predecessors, an example to the world of the fact that true respect for great men should not lead to dogmatic blind acceptance of their views, but to a desire to perfect their work. By applying the critical method to the fundamental questions of the exact sciences he was able to test its validity in relation to the facts of these sciences and their practical value. And only when he was completely convinced of the efficiency of this instrument, the critical method, that he had inherited from Kant and Fries, did he begin to apply it in the field in which it was his heart's desire to work, the field of ethics, of the standards according to which men should shape their lives. Difficult as the problems were, he succeeded in establishing the sound ethical principles upon which a complete system of scientific ethics could be built up.

Nelson was realistic enough to see that the "spirit of the age" had no place for a real and genuine system of ethics. The ruling powers had no intention of permitting any such restriction of their arbitrary will; while those over whom they exercised their power were equally free from any urge to accept a system of ethics that would impose its stern demands on each and every one of them. Nelson knew very well, as we can see from a letter which he wrote in 1915, that it is far easier to find some deep philosophical truth than it is to face up to its practical consequences." But he was also well aware that because he held the views that underlay all his thinking, he must set out to find people prepared to act on their convictions, to educate them and to provide them with the possibility of active work in public life. And because he saw this conclusion he applied it.

Nelson endeavoured at first to win supporters for the realisation of his ideas among the circles nearest to him: he took his ideas to the lecture rooms of the University and into the movements which were grouped around it. In doing so he was influenced by the fact that it is from the ranks of the students that the State officials, who are in key positions in public life, were constantly being recruited. What more obvious course than to try gradually to raise the intellectual level of those responsible for the

education of the people and the conduct of the State?

But after a short time Nelson was compelled to abandon this attempt. The War proved that, before the education of the masses of the people could be attempted, it was first necessary to find a means of protecting the results of laborious and painful effort from destruction in such events as war.

It was evident that until at least the lives of those on whom the whole future of the work depended were secure, the political struggle must come before purely educational activities.

In this connection it must be remembered that Norman Angell had published his disturbing book, *The Great Illusion*, in the years immediately before the war. The book demonstrated with great thoroughness and with the eloquence of conviction, that war no longer "pays," that it is barren of advantages to winner and loser alike. If that was so, however, then one of the chief reasons for modern war had disappeared. The fact that the very difficult Moroccan question was finally settled peacefully served to strengthen this belief. How strongly the book influenced the thought of that period was revealed, for example, by the speech of Jean Jaures in the French Chamber on January 13th, 1911. He said:

"This book states the truth. But what is it that the book states, gentlemen? That to-day, when economic life is becoming more and more internationalised, the interests of nations are so inextricably interwoven, that the collapse of one would inevitably mean the collapse of all.... In this way their network of common interests will force nations to spare one another and to avoid the great catastrophe of war."

These words were greeted by cries of "True, very true," from many socialists, reformist and revolutionary alike.

The discovery that this new security was itself an illusion, that the nations were prepared to risk general collapse rather than renounce aggression, was reason enough for Nelson to adopt a radical change in his methods. This decision was confirmed by his growing realisation that the German bourgeoisie was quite incapable of the task of regenerating public life. More and more did he come to see in the organisations built up by the workers in their struggle for freedom the centre of gravity round which a real revolution of social life would have to turn.

Even before this time the mass organisations of the workers were not, of course, unknown to him. If he was unable to associate himself more closely than he did with the Social Democratic movement, then the only mass movement of the Left in Germany, this was for a reason of fundamental importance.

The so-called scientific principle underlying this movement, particularly in so far as its *aims* were concerned, was recognised by Nelson for what it is: a "scientifically untenable popular philosophy quite incapable of good results." Historical materialism propounds the existence of a law, inherent in economic facts, which with the inevitability of the laws of nature must lead to socialism. Its personal application consists of the assertion that so-called material interests determine the conduct of men and that for the struggle for socialism this is by no means a disadvantage, for if everyone understood what his material interests were and pursued them consistently, then socialism would in the long run be inevitable. These theories are as dangerous as they are unsound.

We certainly do not require great experience to see that in many cases we satisfy no material interest of our own by our solidarity with the victims of class society. On the contrary, if we want to save our lives and money, we would often do far better not to place ourselves on the side of the oppressed but curry favour with the oppressors, or at least to avoid opposing them in any way.

Nelson was convinced that a great movement built up on such false principles must end either in opportunism or in dogmatic revolutionary phrase-mongering. He saw that if there were no serious attempts to select men who defend the oppressed for reasons other than material, the movement must become the prey of unscrupulous hypocrites. For these reasons Nelson decided at first to waste none of his energy on it. Considerations of practical politics forced him to hold back and the events of recent years have been his justification.

While the experience of the war and the failure of bourgeois attempts at reform logically brought him closer to the working-class organisations, this did not blind him to their faults. His organisational work in this new sphere naturally involved associating himself with the militant socialist movement, but his efforts were directed from the very beginning towards the gradual correction of its fallacious doctrines with their dire consequences.

The Russian revolution and the personality of Lenin, his fine character and natural simplicity, awoke in Nelson a justified hope of

attaining his goal. He saw that the theoretical doctrine of historical materialism had fundamentally left Lenin's convictions unscathed, that here was a practical idealist of the first water, and one who was a clear-sighted politician into the bargain.

He therefore conceived it as his aim to reform socialist theory in the light of such correct practice, and to prevent the practice of the socialist movement from corresponding to the theory of historical materialism.

From then on, this was the guiding principle of Nelson's political activity. In 1917 the International League of Youth was founded, with the object of uniting, regardless of national frontiers, all constructive progressive forces. Its appeal was especially to youth, to youth not so much in the sense of those young in years, but of those still able and willing to adapt themselves in view of the lessons of experience. The International League of Youth was common ground for people of all the parties on the Left who approved of the aim of the League: the systematic training of comrades to take over responsible work in the movement. Up to 1922 members of the League were still working in all parties of the Left. In that year, however, the Independent Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Party of Germany combined, and the League decided to ask all its members in Germany to join the United Socialist Party.

Although this step was logical and even obvious, it was not easy to take. At the time the war record of the Social Democratic Party under Noske and Ebert was fresher in people's memory than it is to-day. But even at that time Fascism was already standing threateningly at the door, and a united working class alone could effectively counter it, and then only by dint of skill and determination. For Nelson and his comrades it was obvious that they had to support this step towards unity.

But the same consistency between theory and practice, which took the International League of Youth into the United Social Democratic Party, ultimately led to a complete break with that party of the masses.

The policy of building up a progressive State, together with—and indeed in the closest co-operation with—the Catholic Party, had led the Social Democratic Party of Germany to make more and more concessions to the totalitarian Catholic claims. It gave way on all issues that mattered to the Catholics. Church-dominated school legislation, millions in subsidies to the Churches, Concordat with Rome—these few items are enough to indicate the victorious advance of the Church under the coalition government of Socialists and Catholics. Socialism *cannot* preserve harmony with organised Catholicism and at the same time achieve anything in the direction of human progress! The International League of Youth opposed this unhealthy and unnatural union, whose bastard offspring testified clearly enough against it—to all but those who would not hear. The leading Social Democratic circles resented this criticism bitterly, though, of course, such propaganda was not a violation of party rules. The conviction was rapidly spreading within the rank and file of the Social Democratic Party that the aims of socialism were irreconcilable with those of the Catholic Party—a party which was not only a supporter of clerical aspirations but at the same time a reactionary capitalist party of the bourgeoisie. It was for this reason—though, of course, others were officially given—that Nelson and the other members of the International League of Youth were expelled from the Social Democratic Party.

The impossibility of reforming one of the existing parties having thus been demonstrated, the members of the League under Nelson's guidance founded the Militant Socialist International. In this organisation were incorporated the full political and educational principles which should be applied in a socialist party. The scientific character of socialism being recognised in this party, decisions about the correctness of a certain line of action, about the truth or error of a belief, were not left to the chance of a majority vote, but were arrived at by weighing up the reasons for and against.

As for the selection and education of the party membership, Nelson's application of the principles deduced from his ethical philosophy, was one of the most important contributions he made to the movement. That those who call themselves socialists should live as socialists may sound a matter of course. And from the point of view of moral obligation it is indeed a matter of course. Yet we know how often it is not done. Indeed, this rule is widely regarded among socialists as an absurdity, as evidence of sectarianism, as a Utopian idea. And yet, to require this personal consistency of its members is the only way to safeguard the party against penetration by arm-chair intellectuals and careerists. Admittedly it also excludes many well-intentioned people who think they can appease their social consciences by paying a few pence towards a Left orga-

nisation and by reading a socialist paper; but sympathisers of this kind can lend their support without a membership card.

What then are the demands which the application of this principle imposes? Even before the Militant Socialist International was founded, Nelson had put some of them to his closer co-workers; they were in the first place demands of mere practical efficiency in everyday life. Nelson insisted, for instance, that people who were introducing themselves to others, should pronounce their names audibly; he insisted that the purpose of language is not to conceal but to express thought. In discussions he asked everyone to speak so distinctly that everyone else could understand what was said. To these demands—which as you know are rarely fulfilled by every member of any group—was added another: that members should keep to arrangements agreed upon and keep to them exactly.

Of course, as the work developed, the demands on the members gradually became more exacting. A socialist claiming to work for the liberation of mankind from wage slavery, should join the organisations of primary importance in this struggle, the Trade Unions. He should show his readiness to fight those organisations, the Churches of to-day, dedicated to the spiritual suppression of mankind, at least to the extent of expressly terminating his membership. Since people who drink alcoholic beverages easily become too talkative or even if they do not lose control of themselves, may by their example induce weaker comrades to do so, and since moreover distillers and brewers are among the meanest exploiters in modern capitalism—a socialist should be a total abstainer. Since a socialist demands as a matter of justice that all interests should be fairly considered in society, he himself must take into account not only interests of his human neighbours but also those of animals. Finally, a socialist must shape his life in such a way as to prove that he is willing if necessary to renounce certain class privileges which may exist even within the movement. He can prove this, for instance, by submitting to a system of taxation which in the interest of the party funds reduces the differences of income amongst the members, which are often quite considerable.

But socialism demands even more from those who devote their lives to it. It is well known, though not usually admitted, that personal relationships often considerably jeopardise the struggle for socialism, or at least present an obstacle to the active participation of a comrade. Family ties are a continual matter of complaint and often mentioned in explanation of the temporary or permanent abandonment of the work by a comrade. A profession that you are very fond of, or an environment which you have come to like, may be other obstacles which cause difficulties. Every day you may observe examples of this kind in the movement if you keep your eyes open. Unhappy marriages, registered or unregistered, worries about children, wanted or unwanted, jealousy—these are a few of the many factors which may rob a good comrade of his mental balance and cost a tremendous amount of wasted time and energy. This is an almost entirely undeveloped field for socialist education.

Certainly there is not and cannot be a recipe which will enable us in future to prohibit such things as marriages, jealousy and worries about children among socialist fighters. But we can and should insist—and Nelson and his co-workers have done so—that socialist fighters should be conscious of their special responsibilities when entering into personal relations and should not consider this whole sphere—as they often do—as something apart from the political struggle.

Are we not justified in expecting a socialist, fighting as he is for high ideals, to free himself from ties, existing only through mere tradition and social prejudice, in which perhaps he has become entangled through no fault of his own? He should indeed remember that it is, of course, for the purpose of liberating reserves of time and energy for the cause of socialism that he is freeing himself from unnecessary responsibilities. We neither expect nor desire our comrades to reject all personal obligations. We do not aim at irresponsibility but a deliberate moulding of our lives according to the socialist ideal.

All these demands, it should be realised, are nothing but the logical consequences of socialist convictions seriously accepted; nevertheless they annoy and repel many people. This is, however, not so unforunate as it appears at first sight, for this may be a way of making them realise that these conditions of socialist efficiency have not been worked out without serious reflection. And if they watch political life with an attentive and unprejudiced eye, they will agree that the cause of socialism requires deeds as well as words, and that the demands we expect them to fulfil are no more than justified.

We all know that in no mass movement existing to-day is so serious a conception of the socialist aim generally accepted. But we know also—or at least we should know—that conditions within the socialist movement are anything but satisfactory. Is it not long overdue for us to ask ourselves how we can revive and rebuild the movement? That it is impossible to develop into a mass movement a party organised on the basis of socialist demands upon its members is an assertion which is unproved and unsupported by experience. Such an assertion sounds particularly strange coming from those who are otherwise always pandering to the masses with all the arts of flattery. To contend that the masses cannot possibly fulfil such demands is to suggest nothing less than that what is possible for individuals is not possible for the masses. But the masses consist of individuals, and we cannot believe that the number of individuals whom we can expect ultimately to take up active service for socialism is limited. Many people have prejudices and habits of mind which can only be removed by the slow development of new convictions; but we do share the fantastic and insulting egoism of those who believe that only a few selected people are capable of living as socialists.

Nelson and his pupils certainly had such a respect for the normal human being as to believe that the mass of the people are capable of understanding the value of a life of service to the socialist cause and can live accordingly. We are of the opinion that all who call themselves socialists can and should do so. And if only a fairly large number of active comrades —the leaders, of course, giving an example— made up their minds to live as consistent socialists, then—as Nelson and his circle experienced more than once—the masses will need no further encouragement. So long as so-called leaders, hiding behind the broad and patient backs of the masses, pretend to be unable to induce them to adopt decent principles of conduct, we can only believe that the true reason for the lack of earnestness and militancy in the socialist movement is the irresponsibility of the leaders, or, worse still, their *own* deep-rooted disinclination to devote their lives to the socialist aim. If that is so, they are only barriers to the progress of the movement they pretend to lead, barriers which must be removed without delay. For it is more important to-day than ever, in Lenin's words, "to understand that it is our task not to degrade revolutionaries into dilettantes, but to raise dilettantes to the status of revolutionaries." More than ever do we need men and women who, to quote Lenin again, are willing to appeal to the masses—to individuals in the mass—to "devote to the revolution not only their free evenings but their whole lives."

Nelson, the International League of Youth and the Militant Socialist International have followed this course. Nelson's death was a very great loss to the movement. But his work was so well founded that his death did not endanger its development. It has stood the test, not only from the point of view of correctness of policy, but also from the soundess of its logical and psychological foundation.

—*From Life of Leonard Nelson.*

BUT THE GODS ARE DUMB!!

(*Continued from page* 147)

the followers? Why does one sect decry the other? If this attitude is correct, the position seems to be like that of big manufacturing company that puts various kinds of cars on the road. Different agents sell these different models. They demonstrate how the chassis is differently built, the engine differently constructed and the body differently designed. Even when they have told you that, they will never tell you that if you buy another make you will go straight down Pedder Road into the sea. Unfortunately this is what the religious pastors want to impress upon us. Even though the rival gods be nestling shoulder to shoulder in their respective houses, and living as good neighbours loving one another with good business relations, their pastors zealously watch any sheep straying into the next field. When such an event happens, even though there may be commotion in the camp and wool may fly, the gods slumber on, nestled as close together as before. Could these gods be really jealous? would they mind where they are taken and by Whom they are worshipped? We human beings even kill one another to say "yes", but the Gods ARE DUMB!!

A New Pamphlet

EXIT GOD!

BY

AKSHAYAKUMAR R. DESAI

32 PAGES

Price 2 As. Postage ½ Anna.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donation in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000/-.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer,
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

❋ If you recognise Human Equality,

❋ If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,

❋ If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy,

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office-Bearers:

President:—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.

Vice-Presidents:—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. and Mr. R. B. Lotewalla. *Hony. Treasurer*:—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee*:—Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Dr. S. B. Gadgil, B.A., L.M.S., F.R.C.S. (Eng.) D. Ph. (Lon.), Mr. J. M. Cooper, F.R.G.S., Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. A. R. Desai, B.A., LL.B., Mr. A. Husein. *Jt. Hony. Secretaries*:—Mr. S. B. Rath, Mr. Abraham Solomon.

For further particulars please write to:—

The Secretaries,
Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,
BOMBAY-2.

IF YOU WANT

To read choicest books,
To discuss modern problems,
To get correct information about current topics,
To have contact with intellectuals, and
To understand the making and growth of our Society—

Then You Must Remain in Touch with

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY.

OBJECTS.

To promote the Sociological interest of the Indian people, to gather and disseminate all sorts of sociological information, to facilitate the study of sociology, to focus the views of experts on such questions, to form and maintain a Library, etc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Donors Rs. 500/- or more. Life Members Rs. 100/- or more. Ordinary Members Rs. 3/- per year payable half-yearly. R. L. T. Library Deposit Rs. 5/-.

All members have the free use of the Library which contains a good collection of books on Economics, and also the Library of the R. L. Trust Hostel which also contains an excellent collection of latest books on all branches of sociology, namely, Economics, Ethics, Eugenics, Psychology, Philosophy, Politics, History, Biography and Fiction on current social problems.

Members are also entitled to publications of the Institute at such concessions as may be determined by the Managing Committee from time to time, as also one Magazine can be supplied at the cost of the Institute and any other Magazine for which concessions could be secured by the Institute for its members by any special agreement with its Publishers.

Rules, Regulations, Entrance Form can be had from:—

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY,

R. L. TRUST, 'RANCHHOD BHUVAN,'
Near Opera House, Tram Terminus,
BOMBAY 4.

15th January 1940.

G. S. POHEKAR. R. D. NADKARNI.
Hon. Secretaries:

Printed by R. M. Shet at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21 Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay 1. Edited and Published by R. D. Karve, M.A., for the Rationalist Association of India at 3, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.



REASON

Oct. 1930

Vol. VIII No. 10

PRICE 4 ANNAS



THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Objects of the Rationalist Association of India.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

REASON AND SENTIMENT
By R. D. KARVE.

THE FATE OF HOMO SAPIENS
By H. G. WELLS.

STUDENTS AND LIFE
By P. H. GANDHI, B. COM.

MATERIALISM
By C. Y. CHITNIS.

CASTE SYSTEM IN INDIA
By AKSHAYAKUMAR R. DESAI.

CORRESPONDENCE, NOTES, NEWS, ETC.

Editor
R. D. KARVE, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donation in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000/-.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer,
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

❋ If you recognise Human Equality,

❋ If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,

❋ If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy,

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office–Bearers:

President:—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.
Vice-Presidents:—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. and Mr. R. B. Lotewalla. *Hony. Treasurer:*—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee:*—Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Dr. S. B. Gadgil, B.A., L.M.S., F.R.C.S. (Eng.) D. Ph. (Lon.), Mr. J. M. Cooper, F. R. G. S., Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. A. R. Desai, B.A., LL.B., Mr. A. Husein. *Jt. Hony. Secretaries:*—Mr. S. B. Rath, Mr. Abraham Solomon.

For further particulars please write to:—

The Secretaries,
Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,
BOMBAY 2.

Do not ask who said this or that, but mark what is spoken.

—*Landor.*

REASON

Vol. VIII | OCTOBER 1940 | No. 10

Reason and Sentiment

By R. D. KARVE

I have recently had occasion to speak on Rationalism to two or three different groups of people, and after one of these lectures, the president, after the usual compliment to me on an interesting speech, earnestly besought the audience to remember the importance of sentiment. Reason was all right so far as it could go, but sentiment was all-important and must not be neglected. It was difficult to understand what he meant and I wonder if the audience made any sense out of it. He did not explain what he exactly meant by sentiment, but was careful to leave it vague. He did not think it necessary to believe in a god or a soul, but asked them to cultivate sentiment. He could not explain it any better to me when we had a little talk after the lecture.

What did he exactly mean? What is sentiment and what is its value as compared to reason? It is hardly possible to accuse rationalists of forgetting the importance of sentiment. They know that the majority is guided by sentiment rather than reason. Nor are rationalists themselves devoid of sentiment, as their opponents try to make out in order to belittle them. But the rationalist would rather be guided by reason than by sentiment. Not that he always succeeds in this, and his conduct may seem unreasonable even to himself sometimes after the event, when it is too late to do anything about it. In spite of such failures, however, I believe the rationalist is right in seeking to be guided by reason so far as he can.

The general statement that sentiment is more valuable than reason seems to me perfectly absurd. In the first place, there is no such thing as "sentiment in general". There are several different varieties of sentiment and these may be good or bad or indifferent. Fear, anger, love, jealousy are all sentiments. Can anybody say with any justification that they are all good, or useful, or valuable? There is no sense in such a statement. Fear may be useful on certain occasions, as when a man runs away from a tiger, but can it be said to be always useful or good? Nobody has any respect for a coward, however well he may get on in the world. Can anybydy commend jealousy as such, though the law tolerates even murder where the cause is sudden provocation due to jealousy? It is hardly a sentiment to be cultivated.

Even sentiments which are universally applauded will hardly bear critical analysis. Consider for instance the universal feeling of abhorrence aroused by incest. What is at the bottom of this horror? If we consider that there is nothing unnatural about incest, that it exists among all other animals, the only reason we can find for this horror is simply the disapproval of civilized society. The point becomes clear if we consider different societies, and different ages. Sex relations between brother and sister are regarded as incest now, but marriages between brother and sister were common in ancient Egypt, which was not any the worse for it. If we consider the evolution of Hindu society from Vedic times to the present day, we find things which would be considered horrible at present. It was for instance considered absolutely necessary to have a son, as it is even now, to escape hell after death, and so, if a man had a daughter only, he had a right to have sex relations with that daughter, so that she might give him a son, before she could be married. Later on, this right was modified and the father was content to claim the first son that the daughter may produce after marriage. In fact, considering that man is descended from the apes, it is no wonder if the customs of apes are found in primitive society,

which means that the father had a right to sex relations with every female in the family group and this right was later modified in several ways. There is ample evidence of brother and sister marriages having been current. At present, among Hindus, marriage is allowed only between certain kinds of cousins, but not all, and so relations between cousins who cannot marry would be considered incestuous, as between brother and sister. Is there any reason behind this sentiment? It is difficult to find any except usage, but people always find reasons in support of any established custom. It is alleged for instance that marriages between near relatives are eugenically bad, which is not exact. Such marriages are not bad unless there are hereditary defects, which are likely to be multiplied. But good qualities are equally likely to be multiplied and there is no reason for condemning such marriages where the heredity is good. Race horses give excellent results from close in-breeding, but people are horrified if these results are applied to human beings.

The universal horror of incest is exploited in the story of the film "Bharosa", which is worth analysing from this point of view. A man going to Africa and expecting to return soon, is obliged to leave his wife with a close friend who is also married, but whose wife is later obliged to go to her father's to look after him in his illness. In the meanwhile, these two people left together falls in love with each other, or at least the man falls in love, and though he tries his best to resist temptation, he is obliged to stay with her one night when she is frightened by a tempest, and she is weak enough to yield. The result is a child, a girl, whom the absent father thinks his own. He joins them later on and expresses the idea that as his friend had a slightly older boy, a marriage between the two children could be arranged later on, which horrifies both his wife and his friend, who think of all possible means to prevent it. The wife even wants to get rid of her child, but is caught by the husband as she is going to lift the girl out of her cradle, and she dies of heart-failure. It is now the duty of the friend to prevent the marriage. He suggests a military career for his son in the hope that he may get killed, but when he comes home in a vacation, and the girl's father sees them in love, he wants to get the marriage over. The friend finds excuses: he does not want the girl to be forever in danger of becoming a widow, as death always threatens a military man; he pretends to believe an astrologer who has foretold the death of one if these two get married, but finding everything useless, orders his son to give up the girl and arranges another marriage for him. The son revolts, runs away with the girl with the consent of her father and gets married to her. When his father finds it out, he goes there with his friend, and as a last resort, locks himself inside a room with the married couple and tells them the whole history of his sin, and why he had tried to prevent their marriage. They are so impressed with the heinousness of the crime they have unwittingly committed, that they go away in a car by themselves, ostensibly on their honeymoon, but with the deliberate intention of commiting suicide by taking the car over a precipice.

Can this be justified from any reasonable or humanitarian point of view? To send the young couple deliberately to their death when they have committed no fault at all can certainly not be called reasonable. Apparently it satisfies the sentiment of the audience! A much more reasonable way would have been to say nothing about it, which might at the worst have made one person unhappy, instead of ending two young lives in this ruthless fashion. Even making allowances for the father's belief that sex relations between them would be sinful, he could have devised a scheme for separating them for ever, since he had been so very careful to tell them the truth before their honeymoon. They would have been unhappy for a time, but need not have died to atone for a sin they had not committed.

Seeing that sentiment often leads to such things, is it wise to preach the importance of sentiment at the cost of reason? Every one knows it is important, but the rationalist can only recommend that sentiment should be checked by reason whenever possible in order to check the extravagance of sentiment.

Faith is a sentiment which is very often recommended in place of reason. One of the audience at my lecture asked me whether Hitler's success was not due to the blind faith which Germans had in him. That is true, but what good is it going to do to Germany or to anybody else ultimately? A leader may sometimes be able to do really great things with the blind support of his followers, but is blind faith to be recommended on that account? Even people who cannot believe blindly can support a leader for the time being without even agreeing with him entirely, as many people are supporting Gandhi at present. Intelligent support is worth quite as much if not more than blind support. Blind support always implies ignorance and I shall certainly not advocate ignorance for the supposed advantages of blind faith.

The Fate of Homo Sapiens

By H. G. WELLS

An unemotional Statement of the Things that are happening to him now, and of the immediate Possibilities confronting him.

REVIEWED BY JUNIUS IN THE "RATIONALIST" OF AUSTRALIA.

A new book from the pen of H. G. Wells is always worthy of attention, and this, his latest work, is undeniably one of his greatest. It is a brilliant analysis of present-day events and trends, coupled with an urgent plea that the human species should take immediate steps to re-educate and re-adjust itself, otherwise disaster will swiftly overtake it. As he very aptly remarks:

> "It is becoming evident to everyone that the present state of affairs cannot continue. . . . . Adapt or perish, that is and always has been the implacable law of life for all its children. Either the human imagination and the human will to live, rises to the plain necessity of our case, and a renascent Homo Sapiens struggles on to a new, a harder and a happier world dominion, or he blunders down the slopes of failure through a series of unhappy phases . . . to his ultimate extinction. Either life is just beginning for him or it is drawing very rapidly to its close."

As one would naturally expect, the author does not indulge in platitudes. Many of his statements are not merely challenging, but definitely provocative. Few readers will accept all his ideas or endorse all his conclusions; but none can gainsay the force of his arguments and the passionate sincerity of his utterances. In fact, Wells definitely anticipates criticism: he claims that he has "written with the complete freedom of a biologically trained and controlled observer," as contrasted with others —politicians, statesmen, diplomatists—whose expressed views on current affairs must be modified by due regard to the conventions and to motives of expediency. It is not surprising, therefore, that Wells should come to the conclusion that every system, every party, after being weighed in the balance, is found wanting. "There is no creed, no way of living left in the world at all," he writes, "that really meets the needs of the time."

So it is scarcely likely that one will find this book very cheerful reading, but it is unquestionably a mental tonic and one which will make a strong appeal to all rationalists. It emphatically rejects the shallow optimism of those who believe that—

> "God's in His heaven
> All's right with the world."

The book should also hold a special interest for Australians, becanse it is substantially an expansion of the public lecture which its author delivered in the Sydney Town Hall early last year, under the title of "The Human Outlook." Its line of argument is the same, its conclusions are the same, although naturally much fuller, and its application to current events likewise much closer. It was written prior to the outbreak of war, but almost needless to say, Wells had anticipated a world-wide conflagration as practically inevitable.

Briefly, the book stresses and develops three main themes:—

(1) Invention and science have completely altered the environment of mankind. "We have passed," he says, "in a single life-time from a general neediness to a practicable plenty for all." The world could be organised to enable every individual living to day to enjoy abundant food, housing and leisure, but this ideal could not be attained without organised collective control. The only alternatives were "totalitarian collectivism," as exemplified in the dictator countries, or "a scientifically planned and directed socialism" which should be the ideal of a freedom-seeking community.

(2) "The disruptive driving force," he terms it, of an excess of frustrated and unemployed young men, who must find some outlet or means of relief, may shatter human life altogether under the new conditions. In primitive times, the surplus energy of the young male population found outlet in war; in more

recent times, emigration to new lands was available, but this outlet is now closed. Unfortunately it is the totalitarian and aggressive countries which are making the more exciting and attractive promises to these young men. "Official Great Britain," Wells remarks, "pays the dole and encourages no presumptuous hopes." Now that war is on, however, our author would probably qualify that statement.

(3) The existing mental organisation of the human species is totally inadequate to deal with the existing situation. The only possible solution, he considers, is along the line advocated in his earlier work, "World Brain"—that is, a kind of permanent "World Encyclopedia," a mighty super-university, holding together, utilising and dominating all the teaching and research organisations at present in existence. Wells himself, however, is far from optimistic that this is likely to materialise; hence the somewhat gloomy note on which the book ends—the final chapter being entitled "Decadent World."

Unfortunately, this outline can give no conception of the sweeping and masterly survey of the cross currents of the world of to-day, contained in an intensely interesting work of 330 pages, which deals with all countries and races, and all political, social, economic and religious systems and their leaders. In addition (and not the least interesting portion) is much autobiographical material, recounting the author's own experiences and development.

From the point of view of rationalists, one of the most important aspects is Wells's outspoken attack, not only against all established religious institutions, but upon all religious beliefs. Scores of passages could be cited, but two or three will suffice to explain the bitter hostility exhibited by the religious press to this most important and timely work.

Speaking of his early days, Wells says:

"I knew that there were also savages for whom Britain provided missionaries and machine guns."

Or again: "The religion put before me was queer, muddled stuff. . . .stuff that took refuge from any intelligent questions behind a screen of awe, mystery and menace. . . . . I had some bad times, fearing a God whom I felt but did not dare to think a spy, a bully, a tyrant and fundamentally insane, and it was only after terrific distresses that I achieved disbelief."

And later, in more serious strain, he tells us that "the man of the new world order, if ever it is to be attained, must learn to go right on without leaders, just as he must learn to go right on without God."

Whilst, however, the religious press, both in Australia and elsewhere has attacked or belittled this book, it is significant (although quite in accord with clerical tactics) that Christian leaders shirked the issue when Wells was here in person last year and invited them to reply. In referring to the address which he gave in Canberra before the Education Section of the Science Congress, entitled "A Provocative Paper on the Poison Called History," Wells mentions that he denounced the teaching of the "Judaeo-Christain mythology as historical fact in the most emphatic terms," Notwithstanding this, when the discussion ensued, "not a single Christain leader appeared to reply to that challenge. . . . . The avoidance of the central issue was complete. And it was quite deliberate." Obviously that was an occasion when silence was golden. And we can hardly blame the Christians present for failing to meet the challenge: yet that does not deter them from still teaching this mythology to the rising generation as if it were historical fact and from agitating for its inclusion in the curriculum of the State Schools.

It is not, however, for these statements alone that Mr. Wells has incurred the animosity of clerical reviewers. He has done something far more damaging, far more dangerous and therefore unpardonable. He has made a bold frontal attack, not only upon Christian dogmas but upon Christian institutions. If he had ignored the Christian Church, he might have been forgiven: if he had uttered one word in its favour, from any point of view whatever, he would have been quoted from a thousand pulpits. But to say that the Church is an anachronism, and a dangerous one at that, is not only the height of bad taste, it is almost seditious, particularly when we recall that the present war, in which our own country is engaged, is a war—according to Archbishop Head—between Christianity and paganism! Quite apart from patriotic motives: though, the chapter on "Christendom" is devastating enough to earn a permanent place for Mr. Wells in the "Index Expurgatorius."

The dogmas of the Roman Church are described as "the most extraordinary jumble of absurdities and incompatabilities that has ever existed and perplexed the human intelligence. . . . a strange heap of mental curruption . . . ."

In fact, when detailing the accumulation of doctrines by that Church, he admits that "it is difficult to tell these things without a touch of derision."

But Wells realises that however fantastic its dogmas, it is the political influence of the Roman Church which makes it a very real menace.

> "In all the democracies," he adds, "the Catholic vote obeys the tortuous wisdom of these scheming old anachronisms. Here tyrannies are blessed and here revolts are fomented. . . . .
>
> "Its friends are those who support and serve it; its enemies—and its enmity has the unrelenting quality of an instinct—are those who have thwarted, controlled and suppressed it. It is against Soviet Russia, against every Protestant system, against every country which insists upon secular education; it is on the side of every government, however corrupt and evil, which attends Mass and makes the sign of the cross."

And he goes on to point out that as the Roman Church lies in the closest entanglement with the intellectual life of the Western world and still holds many millions in its grip, it is "certainly the most formidable single antagonist in the way of human adjustment to the dangers and frustration that now close in upon us all."

An as if to add insult to injury, the author recommends the Catholic reader to make acquaintance with Mr. Joseph McCabe's recent masterpiece, "The History of the Popes." "It will," he states, "trouble his mind, but it will purge it. But if he asks his co-religionists questions about it, they will make him feel as if he were making rude noises."

In view of statements like these, which are fully substantiated, it is no wonder that such a popular and influential publication as the "Picture Post" (London) was recently threatened with boycott simply for publishing a summary of Mr. Wells's book.

As an illustration of what might be expected in a modern Roman Catholic Christian State, Wells refers us to Franco's Spain and to Eire. The former, he ironically remarks, "is still too busy cleaning up the Republican opposition by shootings, expulsions and prescriptions, to develop the Christian life in its complete harmony, but in Ireland, Catholicism has been in control for some years." There, as a result of the rigid censorship of books and publications, combined with the clerical control of education, there has been produced "a first crop of young men, as blankly ignorant of the modern world as though they had been born in the thirteenth century, mentally concentrated upon the idea of bringing the Protestant North under Catholic control in the sacred name of national unity."

But if the Protestant reader derives great satisfaction from the author's castigation of Catholicism, he will feel far from flattered when he turns to the following chapter, "What Is Protestantism?" If he is honest, he will be compelled to admit the force of Wells's statement that the Protestant Churches "play a diminishing role in the drama of human affairs," and that they are unable, as reading, writing and controversy spread, "to arrest the progressive release of the human intelligence." The spirit of enquiry which Protestantism permitted has to-day "reached its natural finality in complete, untroubled disbelief in superhuman authority. Protestantism, logically pursued, culminates in atheism without qualification." At the same time, Wells regretfully admits that the term "atheist" is still a term of opprobrium. As a consequence many atheists prevaricate; they cling to the word "God", whom they describe as the Absolute or some other meaningless term. Wells frankly has no time for such equivocation or self-deception. "God", he says, "who is not a personality is a contradiction in terms." With this statement, even his clerical critics should agree.

Christianity, of course, is not the only institution which suffers under the author's examination and criticism. The Fascist and the Nazi will relish his comments on Russia, Communism and Stalin; the Communist will endorse his attack on the Fascist dictatorships and his views on Hitler and Mussolini; even the members of our Commonwealth Government, which twelve months ago publicly rebuked Mr. Wells for describing the Fuehrer as a "certifiable lunatic," appear now to be in complete agreement with him on this point. But none of these is likely to welcome the author's final conclusion that "ALL the main religious, patriotic, moral and customary

(*Continued on page 170*)

A Diatribe on Rationalism

By PERICLES.

A FRIEND of mine has drawn my attention to a silly attack on Rationalism which appeared in the 'Sunday Standard' of the 8th September last, under the caption of "Facts and Fallacies" by Maximilian!

It would seem that a certain amount of space is reserved in the columns of that Sunday paper for Maximilian, who appears to be labouring under the impression that he has a brilliant pen, to record his "Facts and Fallacies" which he also calls "A Rambling Commentary on Men and Matters".

After reading his diatribe on Rationalism, I think that it would have been more appropriate for him to describe his writing in those columns as "My ravings on things I do not understand". Maximilian's serenity of mind seems to have been somewhat disturbed on receiving a letter from a correspondent who asserted that the Christian Churches have failed to do what they are here for and that it is high time the priests (whom he described as impostors) should be driven from the place which they occupy in the world. He invited Maximilian to join issue with a certain Rationalist leader here (whose name is not mentioned) in order to awaken the sluggish mind of the people to the danger of following such priests.

No doubt Maximilian's correspondent was not justified in making such a sweeping condemnation of priests in general but no one except an ignoramus, or one actuated by vested interest, would fail to recognize that the Christian Churches after 1900 years of existence have failed to do what they are here for. Ever since Christianity has been in existence we have had nothing but Wars, and what is actually happening in Europe ought to open the eyes of any sensible and sincere person to the fact that Christianity has miserably failed in its mission.

Maximilian, however, thinks otherwise. He is certain that the Churches have not failed because he happens to know some priests who have been very kind to him.

He sees in the suggestion of his correspondent to join a well-known Rationalist to denounce the Churches and their priests, a devilish attack on the Deity! He comically proclaims that he is no man for such a thing. One cannot help feeling here that Maximilian has an eye for business when he proclaims so openly his piety.

He is sure that Rationalism which seeks to drive God out of existence has miserably failed to do so. He claims to have read a number of Rationalist books and he is sure that Rationalism has not succeeded in instilling doubts about the existence of the Deity. He is convinced that Rationalists have deluded minds and that their futile attempts to eliminate God lands them "in a bleak, barren, despair-laden atmosphere in which the Future is nought else but an impenetrable cloud of Sable Uncertainty from which the Silver Lining of Hope, man's only sheet anchor in this world, is missing."

After the delivery of such a fatuous opinion one wonders whether Maximilian is really acquainted with Rationalists and their writings as he claims. As said above, Maximilian's declining to discuss the question of the existence of God, a question that was never proposed by his correspondent, reminds one of the antics of a clown. No; he does not appear to have the necessary qualifications for such a task—the best advice one can give him is: "Ne sutor supra crepidam". These things are certainly above the understanding of a poor scribbler like Maximilian.

THE FATE OF HOMO SAPIENS

(*Continued from page* 169)

systems in which human beings are sheltering to-day, appear to be in a state of jostling and mutually destructive movement, like the houses and other buildings of some vast, sprawling city overtaken by a landslide. To the very last moment, in spite of falling rafters and bulging walls, men and women cling to the houses in which they were born and to the ways to which they have grown accustomed....."

If we are honest with ourselves, we must all plead guilty in some degree to this charge. Even the convinced rationalist, who has been able to discard his religious superstitions, will still be found clinging to some others—political, economic, national or ethical. For that reason—if for that alone—"The Fate of Homo Sapiens" is well worth perusal. To repeat the words which Wells used in commending McCabe's work: "It will trouble his mind, but it will purge it."

STUDENTS AND LIFE

By P. H. Gandhi, B. Com.

(Summary of an Address delivered to Students in Dadar)

COLLEGE represents the best part of your youth. While youth with all its recklessness, joy and freedom is in full bloom you devote the major portion of your time to studying literature, science and art: most of you are free from financial anxieties because your parents or near relatives are there to pay your expenses. Their general expectation is that when you pass out of the College you will be fully equipped both morally and intellectually to take upon your shoulders the burden of life.

If this expectation is not fulfilled, sometimes it is the fault of the students themselves who have thoughtlessly wasted their time and the substance of their parents without acquiring adequate knowledge; but very often you will find, it is the fault of the system of education that has been imposed upon you.

The Western system of education which has been introduced in our country about 70 years back has no doubt brought us a number of blessings. It has created an intellectual awakening and made us aware of a number of social evils which have been hampering our progress towards freedom. In short, the Western system of education was the beginning of the intellectual rebirth of our nation.

It is true that when Lord Macaulay pleaded for starting Universities in India on the model of British Universities, what he had in view was that it would prepare a large number of natives to fill up junior positions in the administration and they would be cheaper than the trained Englishmen. If Macaulay's idea did not succeed in its entirety it is not the fault of the noble Lord who did his utmost to see that the intellectual element in the country was harnessed to the British Empire by bonds of service. The first two or three generations which came out of the Universities immedietely wanted high posts in the administration and even to-day you will find that the best students amongst you are cherishing a secret ambition to be members of the Indian Civil Service, Indian Educational and other Services. Failing these lucrative posts, they would at least strive to occupy positions in Provincial services. Others less fitted perhaps have an idea of entering the teaching profession, the legal profession or the medical profession. So most of you have their ambitions fairly well defined. The rest, after securing a degree, roam about in the streets in search of any employment they could get hold of.

But remember that the Universities which have produced higher and lower grades of clerks have also produced men like Dadabhai Navroji, Phirozshah Mehta, Gokhale, Tilak, Gandhi, C. R. Das, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subashchandra Bose and a host of brilliant men and women who have scorned to exploit their education for self-aggrandisement and dedicated their lives to the cause of their Motherland. These men like other students sat at the feet of William Shakespeare, Carlyle, Burke, Voltaire Rousseau, Kant, Hegel but never thought of utilising their studies for purposes of fulfilling their petty personal ambitions. Their studies in Western Literature, Science and Philosophy, led them to the great and grand idea of realising the freedom of this country. They looked upon this country as a single undivided nation. They rose above the petty considerations of caste, creed or colour and made Nationalism their only religion.

I am not suggesting that all of you should on that account take to politics. I am not, myself, a politician. I am a business man pure and simple but I find that whatever field of activity you are going to engage yourself in, it will yield fruitful results only when you have educated yourself properly and developed a practical realistic outlook on life.

The first thing that I want to draw your attention to is, that although you are studying in the Colleges and have considerably developed your powers of thinking, you will find that your individual, domestic and social life does not accord well with the type of education you are receiving. You have inherited a number of social traditions and customs which bind your home-life with a sort of steel ring and from which you cannot escape. Sometimes you express your revolt by taking to Western dress and cultivating all the habits that Western people cultivate, such as smoking, drinking, eating meat and even beef and so on; but this revolt is blind, and does not lead you anywhere. It merely estranges you from the affections of those who should be dear and near to you. Besides you merely develop a

consciousness of superiority without having done anything to deserve it.

You remember when you were young boys, you were in the habit of walking about with a stick in your hand and destroying the branches of the trees as you went along. As boys you were very destructive and perhaps it was quite natural to you at that age; but to-day this natural destructiveness must be turned into more fruitful channels. Instead of lopping off the branches of the trees, you should become iconoclasts and destroy idols and ideals which are out of place in a world of modern thought. You should learn to integrate your home life to your college life so that there would be perfect harmony between the two. As your college life is free and joyous, your home life should be free and joyous.

The one great advantage of the Western system of education is that it inculcates in you the spirit of inquiry and criticism. You cannot accept anything on trust or blind faith. When you are young you ask so many questions to your parents and the reply that you generally get is "Shut up." If your father asks you to do anything and you ask him why you should do it, he feels offended and thinks that you are questioning his authority. Then he begins to talk to you about discipline, obedience, humility and so on. But you are not satisfied. If you do a thing, you want to know why you do it. Of course, the spirit of questioning does not mean irreverence or disrespect to your elders but it certainly means that you refuse to entertain a single proposition unless it appeals to your own reason.

Our home life should be so organised that it will provide the fullest scope to the spirit of inquiry and criticism. All the religious and social traditions which have come down to us from the hoary past with a great halo of sacredness and infallibility must be subjected to the severest criticism and should be accepted only when they stand the test of reason and science. Our objects of worship and social veneration must all be put in the crucible of criticism and tested before they could be accepted as true and valid.

If your intellectual and social life is thus purified and made free it will be the beginning of a wider and more practical outlook on life. The power of idea is very great and you must see that the ideas that you adopt are both universally valid and rational.

It is all the more necessary for me to emphasise the necessity of ordering our lives in accordance with reason because in the world to-day you find that both reason and freedom are at a discount. Hitlerism in Germany and Gandhism in our own country, whatever the fundamental differences that separate them, are at least one in discounting both individual freedom and rational thinking. Hitler believes in violence and Gandhiji believes in non-violence and because of these separate beliefs their attitudes towards life are also basically different; but Hitler as well as Gandhiji believes in regimentation of life where no individual freedom, initiative and original thinking are allowed. The result of the Hitlerist regimentation is the disappearance of democracy and civic freedom from the face of Europe and the result of the Gandhian regimentation is the disappearance of democracy and individual freedom from the Congress. This tyranny of great leaders must be resisted at all costs. You may not become a great politician or a great writer or a great artist or a great man of business and yet I feel that each one of us, however insignificant he may be, has to contribute something towards the further progress of our nation towards freedom, peace and prosperity.

Each one of us must learn to think for himself. It does not matter if our ideas are wrong or insignificant or both. Our own ideas which we have thought by our own efforts are much better than the great ideas we have borrowed from others; we read, we listen to lectures, we go to public meetings not because we want to borrow ideas but because their ideas may stimulate our own powers of thinking. Our own intellectual contribution towards the development of society may be very small, very insignificant compared to the contribution of other great men but it must be our own individual contribution which bears upon itself the stamp of our own personality.

There is also another reason why I insist so much upon your thinking things out for yourselves. When you go out in the outer world from the sheltered life of your Alma Mater you will invariably find that there is a vast difference between your world of ideas and the world of realities, so much so that at the most critical period of your life you are generally overwhelmed by the crushing burden that the actual life ruthlessly throws upon your shoulders. You feel that the training you have so far received hardly prepares you for the struggles that be ahead of you.

The reason is simple. You inherit a certain conception of social life from the books you read and a certain type of romantist idealism from the films which do not tell you anything

about the life as it actually exists. The economic struggle, fear of unemployment, the constant difficulty about making both ends meet, lack of leisure, the indifference of others, all these things combined make you feel that you have learnt nothing from your Colleges and your Universities. That is why it is so absolutely necessary that the knowledge that you acquire in schools and colleges must be constantly tested in the light of your actual experiences.

In fact the knowledge you acquire must help you to interpret and understand those experiences correctly so that you may avoid the mistakes you have committed before. For that it is necessary to examine the primary basis of knowledge about the world, society and individuals.

First let us consider the question of the world. What do we know of the world we live in? The geography of it we know almost by heart. We know that it is divided into two Hemispheres and several Continents. We also know that it forms a part of a large planetary system which revolves round the Sun. We know that it is immeasurably smaller than many other planets and yet you find that mere geographical information about the world does not serve our purpose.

If we turn to Philosophy and Science, they give us so many conflicting views of the world that our mind becomes puzzled. In spite of all the philosophical speculations and scientific discoveries we do not know the whole truth about the world. The knowledge that at one time this earth was so extremely hot that it was impossible for any creature to live upon it, does not tell us really anything about it. When the earth began to cool it was possible for the plant, animal and human life to grow upon it. It only means that after several thousands of ages it will be so cold that again there will be no life upon it.

The truth of the matter is that these ideas do not help us at all to lead our life smoothly and comfortably. These speculations are entirely useless for the conduct of life. Our intelligence and our other mental powers are developed only with a view to subserve the ends of our life. Why then should we employ them on speculations which are fruitless? And if our intelligence has a purely practical value and no speculative value at all, it means that we are concerned with things as they are related to us and not as they are in themselves. In other words we cannot occupy ourselves with absolute truth or absolute good; because neither absolute truth or absolute goodness exist for us. We know nothing about them and those who glibly talk about them are liars, hypocrites and humbugs. We can primarily concern ourselves with what is relatively true and relatively good, but even before we concern ourselves with relative truth and relative good, we must see first what is useful to our own life.

The philosophers and the religious teachers may talk about dignity and holiness of life. We know that our life cannot subsist except on a purely material basis. We want sufficient food to eat, decent clothes to wear and a fairly healthy place to live in. So long as these necessaries are not acquired, our life can become neither dignified nor holy. If life is to be lived and lived abundantly, then the material side of your life must be attended to first. When these material needs are satisfied, then only we can talk of social progress and national emancipation. A man who neglects the material side of his life and under the intoxicating influence of a glamorous idea begins to think in terms of the social good, harms himself as well as society because no good can possibly come to a society which consists of half-starved, ill-clothed people who have no roof over their heads and who do not know where their next meal is coming from.

Therefore I say with all the sincerity and emphasis I can command, do not be misled by airy idealism and romanticist notions that ultimately lead into a ditch. First be practical and see for yourself that we have inherited from the past certain animal instincts which must be properly organised and fed but not destroyed and also remember that we are not Gods. Idealism may be the food of the Gods, but men require wheat bread, butter and also jam if they can get it. Let us live on the purely material plane and not go up high soaring in the heavens with our heads full of all romanticist cant and our feet dangling in the air. Our feet must be set firmly on the earth, and then after establishing our position firmly on the earth we could look above and see the shining helmets of the gods seated on the clouds.

This will clear our minds of social prejudices and irrational doctrines that our forefathers have put into them. We shall begin to breathe freely and see more clearly than before. If the aim of human existence is happiness, then no individual can ever be happy or prosperous or wise unless and until all his material needs are fully and completely satisfied. When the material aspect of our life is properly organised then each one of us will become a free and good citizen of a free and prosperous State.

CASTE SYSTEM IN INDIA

By Akshayakumar R. Desai

"IT may be doubted if the existence of caste is on the whole unfavourable to the permanence of our rule. It may even be considered favourable to it provided we act with providence and forbearance. *Its spirit is opposed to national union.*" (James Kerr).

This statement by a representative of the foreign Rulers in India clearly exposes the role of the caste system in India. It throws a powerful light on the nature of this most esteemed and unique organization by which Hindu life is governed.

The caste system of the Hindus is one of the most reactionary social institutions. Its whole basis is irrational, and its entire structure is undemocratic and hierarchic.

The caste system disintegrates the Hindu humanity into a conglomoration of variously graded superior, inferior and despised groups as castes. These castes are further sub-divided into a multitude of sub-castes.

Never in history was a living community so minutely dissected as the Hindus. Again the exclusive and separate existence of each sub-group of the Hindu community is ruthlessly and jealously guarded by a number of taboos preventing its members from entering into vital social exchanges with those belonging to other sub-groups, such as marriage, dining together etc.

The very foundations on which the caste system rests are undemocratic and anti-national. The inequality based on birth, gradations of professions and their inequality, and the restrictions on marriage outside one's sub-group, are the special and fundamental features which distinguish this highly-graded institution from all others. Caste system is not only based on inequality but is organized with a view to stabilize inequality.

Whatever may be the historical explanation and justification of the emergence and persistence of the caste system in the past, it no longer has any useful and historical reason to survive now.

The social division of the Hindus into castes may have originated from and corresponded with the functional divisions of the Hindu Society i.e. the members of each caste pursuing an identical vocation such as that of the priest, soldier, trader, artisan, labourer or slave, but it does not hold good to-day. The caste is no longer homogeneous to-day. It is no longer an organization of the individuals pursuing the same profession and, therefore, more or less on the same level of economic prosperity or adversity and with more or less the same outlooks. For instance, the Brahmin community is no longer a union of priests and teachers as it used to be in the past. To-day, it is a chaos of humans who follow a bewildering variety of social activities. A Brahmin may be a banker, a mill-owner, a mechanic, a professor, a mill hand, a clerk, a cook or a coolie. The diversity of occupations followed by members of the same caste results in wide disparity among them of wealth aad culture. As a result of this the homogeneous caste composed of individuals performing identical social functions and, therefore, more or less on the same plane of material conditions and culture, breaks down. Its social *raison d'etre* is lost because its economic foundation is destroyed. The process of its dissolution starts from this moment, though like every institution which has outlived its historical necessity, it projects most conservative and obstinate resistance to every progressive effort to hasten its destruction.

x x x

(2)

THE incidents of this caste system which is regulating the lives of hundreds of millions of Hindu humans are terrible. This system has become a veritable prison-house for these crores of individuals. It engenders the poison of narrow caste-consciousness which retards the growth of national consciousnes. It prevents a Hindu from not only feeling as an Indian, but even as a Hindu. It instigates him to feel as a Brahmin, a Bania of Vaishnavaite or Jain variety, or a patidar of a particular category.

A Hindu is socially chained on every side. The frontier of free social existence and movement is narrowed down to a locality and a small human group for him. His social exchange and intercourse is limited within the narrow confines of castemen. His whole outlook is circumscribed round caste. Caste becomes the gamut of his life activity. It engenders a false sense of values in his mind which completely stifles his thinking and makes him pursue false aims and thereby lead a futile life. The caste-patriotism which is instilled in the mind from birth does not allow the indivi-

dual to develop a genuine national and international outlook. It blinds him to the horrible and agonizing condition of the people as a whole—irrespective of caste and creed. It deadens his sensitiveness and thereby forbids him to feel and think about the broader, wider and vital problems of humanity as a whole and Indian humanity in particular.

A system in which millions of people are degraded into untouchables, whose shadow is even shunned under the special pleas of religion by higher castes, clearly stands self-condemned.

Caste system is a gigantic juggernaut which is streamlining the consciousness of millions of people to a low, narrow, reactionary, fossilized and unhealthy level.

It is a fossil deadweight which hangs heavily on the whole Hindu humanity destroying whatever is creative, life-giving, and progressive in it.

The caste, with its numerous irrational bans and taboos, is a veritable chain for a Hindu. It has its own technique of terror and persecution of its recalcitrant members. An eminent social reformer gives a very vivid picture of its technique of control over individuals.

"The greatest hindrance to all social Reforms is the caste. If I want to educate my girl, the caste would step in and would say I should not do it. If I wish to postpone my children's marriage till they are sufficiently grown up, the caste would raise its hand and forbid me. If a widow chooses to marry again and settle respectably in her home, the caste would threaten to ostracize her. If a young man wishes to go to Europe for bettering his own or the country's prospect, the caste would perhaps now-a-days give him a hearty send off, yet close its doors on him when he returns. If a respectable man of the so-called untouchable class is invited to the house, the caste would deliver its judgment against that householder and condemn him as unfit for any intercourse."

As a Hindu is from his birth shackled by this caste life, as his whole existence is dependent upon caste, caste holds a very powerful sway over him. It engenders terror in the mind of a Hindu.

A Hindu may exhibit audacity enough to rebel against the sections of the Indian Penal Code, but will recoil from fear from any attempt to openly infringe the caste code. The terror of State-prison and gallows is nothing in comparison to the terror he feels for the penalty of ostracizm from his caste. A Hindu Nationalist who declares war on powerfully armed British Imperialism, a Hindu Magistrate or a Judge who decides the fate of innumerable criminals, a Hiudu professor or a politician who propagates the theories or programmes of a new world order based on the elimination of all race, sex and other distinctions, scrupulously conforms to the caste code, marries within miserable limits prescribed by the caste though his heart may be focussed on a non-caste girl. The hero cringes and crawls on his belly before the caste.

x x x

(3)

BUT the old vigour of the caste system is slowly vanishing. It is being mellowed down and slowly eradicated by the operation of many objective and subjective forces. We shall see what are the forces which are undermining, though slowly, the iron-grip of this rigid caste-system.

The destruction of the self-sufficient village community and the resultant dislocation of the entire foundation of the stable economic life of the Indian people, has given a great blow to the foundation of the caste system. The very stable basis of caste is shaken. The growth of cities, the growth of industries, the interlinking of those self-sufficient and also self-excluded and isolated villages for economic and administrative needs of British Rulers have completely changed the character of the productive system of India and hence the relations of human beings dependent on this productive system. The very economic basis of the caste system is hit.

Further, with the British Rule in India, the legal and sociological background of caste has withered. Equality before Law has undermined this background.

Further, the establishment of the exclusive jurisdiction of the State in all civil and criminal matters by the British Government and depriving the caste-panchayats or Pundits of their power to inflict punishment for disobeying the customs of the community, has given a further blow to the caste system. The caste is deprived of its legal sanction.

The direct legislative enactments like the civil marriage act, the removal of caste-disabilities act, the widow re-marriage act, the women's right to property act etc. have also cut the wings of caste system.

But the activities of the Government are carried out not with a view to destroy this most iniquitous and oppressive institution, but with

a view to satisfy its own needs of efficient and smooth administration. In fact, this has been admitted by British statesmen. They recognize the anti-national and hence reactionary character of the caste system and so understand its utility for preventing the people of India from uniting on a national scale. Here is an acknowledgment in very frank words:—"India still needs the hierarchical leadership of caste. Those who wish for the abolition of caste forget that if successful it would be attended with the most disastrous consequences."

But the genuine and far-reaching blow to the caste system is being given by the movements of the people to combat the results of the disintegration of the Indian economic structure. The spread of European education among the middle-classes is engendering rationalist, liberal and progressive ideas among them. The growing menace of increasing unemployment among the educated classes make them critical of the entire structure of society, and its ideological justifications, stimulates them to think out the solution of this problem, and thereby attracts them to deeper studies of sociological importance.

Rationalism, liberalism, equalitarian humanism, socialism, communism etc. are rapidly attracting the best intellectuals of the Indian educated classes.

The growth of the All-India Student Organisation with a distinctly radical outlook is really one of the signs of how these ideas are permeating the educated strata, thereby hitting the basis of caste outlook on this front.

But there is another current among the people which is very imperceptible on the surface but which is undermining the whole edifice of the caste system from its bottom. It is still a very small current, but a sure one. It is the growth of a powerful mass movement embracing millions of workers and peasants for their economic grievances against the present system.

The organization of the working class on their class basis and not on their caste basis, the unity in action which they are building up in the process of their common struggle for their economic and other demands, and the resultant growth of class consciousness amongst them with its resultant realization of the common interest of all the toilers and exploited sections irrespective of their caste and creed, is objectively giving a powerful blow to the caste outlook.

The growth of the Kisan movement in India in which thousands of peasants—hungry, starving, illiterate, stifled by the religious, defeatist and pessimistic doctrines, which were deliberately perpetuated to keep them at the lowest levels of the hierarchical ladder of the caste system,—are uniting and standing up against the economic exploitation which they are subjected to, is surely breaking in action the foundations of caste system.

These movements of the illiterate people to fight the common economic grievances is a very great factor, which though, it is not very perceptible on the surface, is slowly but surely destroying those very foundations on which the whole castle of caste is resting.

Books of interest to Rationalists

By **M. N. ROY.**

FROM SAVAGERY TO CIVILIZATION

Price Rs. 1-8

*

HERESIES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Price Rs. 1-8

*

MATERIALISM

AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT

Price Rs. 2-8 (Cloth)

Postage Extra

*

Available from:—

THE RENAISSANCE BOOK DEPOT

8, Round Building, Bombay 2.

REASON

(Estd. 1931)

The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road
Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris)

Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

We invite contributions of not more than 1,500 words on topics of interest to rationalists. They should be type-written. If not published they will not be returned unless stamps are enclosed.

R. A. I. Membership Rs. 5/- Foreign 8s. annually.

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 3/- & Foreign 4s. 6d. or $1.25 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

NOTICE

Members of the R. A. I. and their friends will meet at the Indian Institute of Sociology on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Time 6-45 p.m. Notice will also appear in local papers on the respective days.

Lectures

October 9— Time 6-45 P.M.

Materialism in Ancient India.

Speaker: V. B. Karnik.

Followed by a discussion.

October 23— Time 6-45 P.M.

Caste System in India.

Speaker: A. R. Desai.

Followed by a discussion.

Notes & News.

By **Abraham Solomon.**

THE fortnightly lectures and discussions arranged by the R.A.I. at the Indian Institute of Sociology Hall are meant to be of an informal kind where the audience takes quite an active part in the discussion. At the first of these meetings on 12th Sept. last when Prof. R. D. Karve spoke on Rationalism there was a small but interested audience, Dr. C. L. D'Avoine and Mr. V. D. Satghare also taking part in the discussion which followed.

* * *

THERE is particularly among the younger people, a healthy spirit of inquiry about such subjects as the existence of God, the origin of Religion, Atheism, Agnosticism, etc., which is exploited by interested persons to give wrong information and an incorrect interpretation of facts. Rarely are these subjects treated in an unprejudiced manner. These discussions, therefore, should prove popular with those who earnestly wish to increase their knowledge and understanding through frank and fearless discussion. Our members should help by giving more publicity to these discussions among their friends.

* * *

ON the request of a few members the day of these meetings has been changed from Thursday to Wednesday. We hope this will not cause any inconvenience to other members.

* * *

IN addition to these informal discussions it is suggested that the R.A.I. should arrange public lectures by eminent speakers in a popular hall big enough to accommodate a large audience. Three members have already promised to contribute every month toward the expenses of these lectures. The expenses for each lecture will be approximately Rs. 15/-.

* * *

THESE public lectures will mean increased publicity for the R.A.I. which is very much needed and will help to increase its membership. If a few more members are willing to contribute to make up the necessary amount it is intended to arrange one public lecture every month. Donations to the Lecture Fund will be separately acknowledged in *Reason* and a statement of expenses will also be shown.

THE following books have been presented to the R.A.I. Library by Dr. C. L. D'Avoine.

Act of God by F. Tennyson Jesse.
Jocasta's Crime by Lord Raglan.

* * *

WHILE advocating a cause or belief few people realize the necessity of carefully considering arguments or evidence contrary to that particular belief. They even go so far as to make sweeping statements, which are glaringly contrary to observed facts, in support of their pet theories.

* * *

DURING the period when there was prohibition in Bombay the Prohibition Board appointed by the Bombay Presidency Congress Committee used to publish a monthly journal called the *Social Welfare*. It had since stopped publication but has recently been revived as a weekly paper "devoted to social and cultural reconstruction" under the joint editorship of Mr. K. M. Munshi, M.L.A. (Bombay) and Dr. Subbaroyan, M. L. A. (Madras).

* * *

DURING the course of an editorial in its first issue of the 19th Sept. Mr. K. M. Munshi writes: "I am convinced that a drinkless society can only be a civilized one." So apparently there has been no civilization in the world at all. But why! Even the gods are not civilized; they have their special nectar, a taste of which will make us immortal! The gods of India have their *soma* too!

* * *

THE weekly, however, shows a broader outlook than before and the first issue to hand contains a few good articles. Jawaharlal Nehru in an article entitled "The Content of Social Welfare" draws attention to the fact that few social workers go to the root of our social evils. They merely seek to tone down glaring injustices. He further writes:—

> Recently the Planning Committee considered the report of their sub-committee on Women's Role in Planned Economy. This sub-committee, more than any other, had to deal with social problems and it tackled them in all earnestness and with great ability. In doing so, it was all the time coming up against political conditions and *even more so* economic aspects and *religious injunctions or just prejudices with the force of custom.* (Italics ours).

And further:

> It is not easy to say which is more difficult to deal with—economic vested interests or religious vested interests. Both these series of vested interests want to maintain the *status quo* and are opponents of change. The path of the real reformer is thus a difficult one.

* * *

IN the same article he also stresses the need for extending the Civil Marriage Act. Recently a Women's Conference also passed a resolution to the effect that Registration of marriages should be made compulsory. This will also help to put a stop to child marriages, which are even now performed in spite of the Sarada Act.

* * *

ANOTHER good article is contributed by Mr. M. C. Chagla on "Hindu-Muslim Relations" in which he attempts to expose the culture myth. He writes:

> There is.....no separate or distinct Hindu and Muslim culture as such. The culture we have today is an Indian culture to which both Hindus and Muslims have liberally contributed. Take music, painting, or architecture—they all have testimony of both Hindu and Muslim influences. Our heritage is an Indian heritage and it is too late in the day to ask for a partition of what is in fact and substance an imparta-ble estate.
>
> Our natural and logical divisions are on provincial and linguistic lines. Bengal, Madras, Maharashtra, Gujerat, the Punjab, United Provinces—these territories do stand for different languages which enshrine a literature and mode of life and thought of its own. It is an indisputable fact there is more in common between a Hindu and a Muslim of the United Provinces than a Muslim of the United Provinces and a Muslim of Madras.

* * *

ON 8th September last there were prayers in all the Churches and Synagogues, Temples and Mosques, Mandirs and Agiaries all over India. The day was observed as a Day of National Prayer "in accordance with the desire expressed by His Majesty the King-Emperor and the appeal issued by the Viceroy." On the very day and on the days following there was severe bombing of London resulting in much destruction. Many Chuches were hit and the Royal chapel destroyed. God may not care for poor mortals sometimes but it is a pity he cannot protect his own houses! Or has the praying by different people to different gods caused a confusion in heaven? But the object of the prayers, we think, was perfectly clear. Perhaps the Archbishop of Canterbury has roused the ire of our thirty-three million gods by saying that we are fighting for Christian civilization!

* * *

THAT gallant Christian gentleman, General Franco, whom the Pope dubbed as the "Champion of Catholicism," is being

(*Continued on page* 185)

MATERIALISM

By Dr. G. Y. CHITNIS

NO one who has read Comrade Roy's recent book on materialism* can fail to be impressed by the vast and ripe scholarship as well as the very profound learning of this Indian revolutionary. Roy is an Indian who has developed European habits of thought. He lived in the West more than fifteen years and during that time acquired a thorough mastery of science and philosophy. When one reads his works on scientific and philosophical subjects one feels that it is a pity that this gifted man has got himself entangled in the maelstrom of politics; if he were able to devote his time and energy solely to the pursuit of knowledge perhaps he would render a most distinguished service to the cause of Indian freedom; but I suppose it is not possible for any one to-day to ignore the challenging call of Indian nationalism and every one who has ability and knowledge must leave the cosy shelter of a scholar's life and throw himself into the arena of active politics.

Irrational Gandhism

It is also a blessing in disguise that Roy is in active politics today; for a man of his discerning vision and philosophical insight cannot but deplore the present pitiable condition of Indian nationalist politics; there we see reason absolutely trampled underfoot and faith enthroned in all its pristine glory to stem the tide of progress and hamper the advance of knowledge. The Congress which can be considered the best political organisation in the country has abdicated rational politics in favour of faith, magic and mysticism; there the authority of one man is held supreme and it is maintained with such ferocious obduracy of blind faith that any one who has the courage to question that authority is branded as a traitor to his country. In such an atmosphere Roy's rationalism and clear ways of thinking have absolutely no place and except a few individuals here and there he is condemned by every nationalist not only as disloyal to the traditions of the Congress but what is worse, as an agent of British imperialism.

This political charlatanry and faith-mongering goes hand in hand with a very peculiarly unscientific and irrational conception of what is called Indian civilisation. The protagonists of this civilisation declare with a loud fanfare that it is essentially spiritual and as such has nothing in common with what we call Western civilisation; Roy has exploded this theory by showing that the claim that the special genius of Indian culture lies in its essential spirituality cannot be maintained in view of the fact that even the so-called materialist West has passed through the same spiritual stages of development through which we are passing; as a matter of fact our so-called spiritual civilisation is linked up with a semi-feudal economic and social system and with the break up of this system the spiritual civilisation also will vanish and India will set herself on the same path of moral and material development which is today the characteristic feature of western civilisation. Our Indian nationalists, therefore, do not realise that what they are hugging to their breats as a spiritual culture is not spiritual at all but is only an ideological remnant of a fast disappearing social and economic system; it is, therefore, necessary that renascent nationalism should base itself upon something more tangible and rational than this passing fantasy and this is precisely what Roy is trying to point out. But no prophet is honoured in his own country, especially when the field is full of false prophets who themselves being blind, are leading the blind into a blind alley of self-destruction; but I hope that in spite of the varied setbacks that Roy receives along with the consequent unpopularity and odium, he will not give up his present laudable object of rationalising Indian nationalism. The task is difficult; the difficulties are great and the prejudices die-hard and yet I feel that a time is fast coming when the bundle of irrationality which is called Gandhism will be wiped out from the field of Indian politics; Gandhism is a danger to Indian freedom but it also blocks the way to progressive thought and free action and therefore the sooner it disappears the better for the future of the country.

Coming back to Roy's book I find that it deals with the history of scientific thought in a succint but adequate manner. From the Greek philosophers right down to the present time he has shown how at each stage of political and economic development systems of thought have risen to give a sanction as it were to that development and he comes to the conclusion that at the time when a particular economic or political system arises, it gives

* Materialism by M. N. Roy, Indian Renaissance Publication. Price Rs. 2/8.

rise to speculations which are primarily practical and material in character; but when that system begins to stabilise itself and refuses to make room for another and more adequate system, then the speculations which defend the outworn system become primarily spiritual; this idea is not to be found in so many words in Roy's book but I think that the implication that I have drawn is there nevertheless. The spirituality of speculations is to be determined chiefly by their acceptance of ideas which cannot be proved through the ordinary channels of experiment and observation but are merely the objects of faith that is, credulity. The short history of the development of ideas that Roy has given will bear this out.

World Is a Reality

If we call that spiritual which cannot be proved by reason then I suppose one must discard the entire thesis of spirituality and accept a purely material basis for our speculations. That the world as it is given is a reality; that it is not an illusion, that it does not require a creator to account for its origin and growth, because if we assume the existence of the creator the various conceptions of God contradict each other hopelessly, because there is no solid foundation either in reason or in the material world by which we can test its validity; people who believe in God say that he is above reason and that he is primarily an object of faith. The very reasonable objection that we can take to this position is this that the very proposition, "God is above reason," cannot be made, because it shows that we know enough about God to write this proposition; and if God is only an object of faith, I do not see why we should have only one God; like the Hindus and other primitive tribes we can have a pantheon of gods; each Hindu has a god for himself; why not, if he is merely an object of faith? To rationalise the conception of many gods into one god and then deny the right of reason to know anything about god is merely to kick the ladder when we have ascended to the top of the roof. The result is that we cannot come down and remain on the roof; similarly, if we kick away reason after we have made use of it for rationalising the conception of god we also remain hanging in the air.

This again is not in Roy's book but these are the implications that we can draw from that book.

Religion and Science

The history of the progress of man is the history of the conflict between his religion and his science; philosophy has all along served the purpose of being the handmaid of religion; in this conflict science has always come out triumphant although religion which is regarded as the spiritual bulwark of man's life did not fail to adopt the most irreligious and unspiritual methods of torture and persecution to silence the voice of science and prevent it from proclaiming the truth to the world; in this conflict the protagonists of science have always shown themselves to be possessing all the spiritual graces that adorn human life and make it beautiful, good and truthful, whereas the advocates of religion have invariably shown themselves to be malicious, greedy, grasping and having all the seven deadly vices in them; but the light of reason could not be suborned to give a false shade and men of science were inspired with the noble ideal of freeing humanity from its spiritual bondage, compared to which the long prayers and meditations of the men of religion were proved to be a mere cloak for hiding the most sordid material interests. If the readers wish to read the details of this conflict they should read Roy's book in which he describes them in his own inimitable style.

What is Wrong?

If I have to find fault with Roy's book it is this that he started on his scientific enquiry with an unscientific notion; he is a dialectical materialist and as such very anxious to prove that dialectic materialism is the final philosophy of life. This I look upon as essentially an unscientific position. Dialectic materialism is no more the final philosophy of life than the Hegelian dialectic idealism although Hegel was under the impression that he had solved in a satisfactory manner all the philosophical problems for all times; Hegel's apple cart was upset by Feurbach, Marx and Engels; as an intelligent Marxian, Roy is bound to uphold dialectic materialism; but to look upon it as the final philosophy for all times is merely trying to introduce absolutism in our rational way of thinking by a back door; to do him justice it is true that Roy contends that change being the law of life, nothing is permanent; therefore, we may assume that his dialectic materialism also is subject to change; but I wish that he had made this point clear in the book which is otherwise so good that none should miss reading it.

Critical Scepticism

Those who have read about the recent researches in physical sciences cannot fail to perceive that our very conceptions are undergoing a rapid change; the conception of matter itself is changing so much that we can hardly know what is material and what is non-mate-

THIS IS

ADOLF HITLER

By ANIL.

THE racial doctrine of Hitler has no scientific foundation. Every well-known scientist agrees that there is no pure race on the face of the earth to-day. But of late Hitler and his acolytes have been so insistent upon the purity of the German race that their very insistence creates a doubt in the mind of every intelligent person; but we do not seek to go into the details of this unscientific racial theory. What we want to point out is that the Fuehrer himself, who hopes to become the world-conqueror cannot pretend to possess pure Aryan blood. His father was an illigitimate son of a servant girl, Maria Schicklgruber, who married one Gorz Hiedler when Hitler was five years old. Thus the man who talks volubly about the nordic race is not nordic at all and for anything we know may have Jewish blood in him. Apart from the question of his birth his hair is black whereas the nordic type depicted in the Nazi literature is blonde.

Hitler's ambition in life was to be a great artist; but after failing to pass the State examination when he travelled to Vienna at eighteen years of age and presented himself to the Academy School of Art, he was rejected on the ground that "his drawings proved unmistakably that he was not suited to be an artist." He decided, therefore, that as with Michael Angelo, it was architecture and not painting which was the true medium for his genius. At that moment his mother died. Adolf Hitler was left alone in the world with no education, no leaving certificate and only a portfolio of drawings which the Vienna School of Art had just pronounced to be bad. He drifted back to Vienna. For three years he lived in a men's hostel in Vienna—Brigittenanau, taking his meals at a soup kitchen and finding occasional employment as a street cleaner or as a house painter. There were moments when he was forced to beg from passers by. The hostel in which he lived housed the dregs of the Vienna population. It was in this drab and foul dormitory that Adolf Hitler first acquired that physical repulsion for Jews which thereafter became for him almost a pathological obsession. His hatred of Jews extended to social democrats and he was much influenced by the doctrines of Dr. Karl Lengen, the Mayor of Vienna and a violent anti-semite.

A court case in which he committed perjury hastened his decision to leave his native Austria. He went to Munich. As he had no occupation, the ground slipped more and more from under his feet. In 1914, he really had to choose between becoming a criminal and committing suicide. The Great War provided a third alternative.

Hitler's war record is another mystery. It is certain that he spent his time in relative safety at divisional headquarters. Nobody knows why he never rose to the rank of N. C. O. Very few of those who joined up in 1914-15 remained privates in 1918. He enlisted as a private in the 16th Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment known as the.....Regiment. In November 1914 this regiment was engaged in the Ypres sector and suffered very serious losses. Hitler was not in the front line. He acted as orderly to the regimental staff. For a time he served as a mess waiter and thereafter was employed as a despatch runner.

Adolf Hitler wears the Iron Cross 1st Class. His story is that he received it for having captured single-handed fourteen British soldiers. Siegmund Graff, then secretary to the ex-Servicemen's Organisation called "Stahlhelm" who is now a high official in the Ministry of propaganda, investigated the case in 1930. According to Graff's report, in August 1918, an English gas shell exploded near divisional headquarters where Hitler was hanging about, and he was found gassed and unconscious. The commanding officer wrongly assumed him to be dead, and, as an act of piety pinned the cross on his tunic. When Hitler came round the cross could not be taken away from him. The end of the war found him in hospital suffering from gas poisoning which had affected his eyes. Meanwhile a communist revolution had broken out in Bavaria and Munich was captured by the Soviet. On May 1st 1919 this communist government was suppressed with extreme brutality by Colonel Von Epp and his young assistant Ernst Rohem. It was at this moment that Hitler drifted back to Munich. He had no family, he had no friends. He applied to his former regiment for help.

The military authorities in Munich were much concerned at the time by the communist agitation which was being carried on under-

ground among discharged soldiers. They engaged Hitler as an *agent provocateur* and spy. His duty was to frequent the public houses in poor quarters of the city, to pose as a left wing agitator and to furnish regular reports to Captain Rohem.

After nearly a year the birth of Hitler's party occurred in the summer of 1919 in Munich, late at night in the wine Restaurant 'Brenessel.' It happened then that Captain Rohem and some other rowdies entered the place and ordered the orchestra to play patriotic tunes, and all those present to rise at their feet.

One middle-aged man, rather drunk, refused to obey.

"That is dull, that is all nonsense," he called. "You'd better make a party."

He was the unsuccessful journalist and playwright, Dietrich Eckart, may be the greatest political genius of the post-war period.

"What party?" came the challenging question from the intoxicated captain.

"A party.....any party. Just a party for the sake of having a party.....so that everybody can join it and suppose that they're fighting for his interests....." "Let us have a drink," said Rohem, and joined Eckart.

Conference followed this first meeting. A few weeks later a piece of news was reported from Munich to the effect that "Reichswehr officers and politicians negotiated to form a party which should be both social and national so that the workmen too could join it." This news was the announcement of the birth of the National Socialists Party.

Dietrich Eckart clearly visualised the party's future provided that it stuck to two essential points. It was to have no clear programme and an incompetent leader.

"The German *spiesser*," declared Eckart, "feels uncomfortable if any one attempts to sell him a clear idea. Besides there are parties with programmes, plenty of them. Our strength must be to have none. We must keep on promising that we can do everything better. The German *spiesser* does not want to be asked questions. Give them a leader to command and they will be glad to obey and let the other fellows think for them."

Later Eckart described the "Leader" he visualised: "A vain monkey he should be. Big-voiced and stupid. Some one who believes in the silliest nonsense he ever spouts. He must be a bachelor so that he can catch the women.....and a soldier.....not an officer..... a soldier....."

The same evening Private Adolf Hitler received orders to report to Eckart.

REVIEW.

Idiocy of Idealism. By Oscar Levy. (Hodge, 5/-)

BERNARD Shaw thinks that this book ought to be called the Neutral History of Dictators and Saviours. This "well-known and entirely tactless Nietzchean Jew," who edited the English translation of the works of his master demonstrates in this provocative essay the theory that the trouble with the world is not its departure from religion but its excess of religion. What is wrong is not too much materialism but too much idealism. This idealism, he thinks, comes straight out of the Bible. To Judaism and its principle of the Chosen People he traces the Nazis and their race myth. In Christianity with its blessing on the poor and lowly he discovers the source of Bolshevism. For Levy the real Christ is not "meek and mild" but a revolutionary demagogue, a would-be king. He traces this type of visionary throughout subsequent history in a straight line through Luther, Calvin, Cromwell Rousseau, Fichte, Hegel, Hitler and Stalin. Behind the long line of revolutionaries and reformers, first consciously religious and later secularised, he finds the idea of the Kingdom of Heaven. It created the Puritan revolution in England and in a different form the Revolution in France. Under the cloak of philosophic idealism it gave sanction to German nationalism till, as Mr. Levy thinks, it reached its acme in the present age of fanaticism and intolerance. The book is full of striking if unorthodox thoughts. "Not only one but many a Christian died on the cross, and the others sent their enemies there." The religious man in power has the advantage of "unloading his conscience on the dunghill of Providence."

Levy thinks that "the Gospel of St. Marx" is only a logical outcome of the extremism of the "Bolshevik of Bethlehem" and Lenin did not suspect that he himself was intoxicated by "the opium of the people." The conclusion is naturally that of Nietzche; the necessity to save one's soul by conquering "for the masters; dechristianized, denationalized, and devulgarized, the Kingdom of Earth."

It is all very clever but really rather distorted. Nietzche himself died mad and perhaps was the greatest idealist of them all. There may be more to be said for the revolutionaries and the prophets than the exponent of an aristocratic ethic cares to admit but there is a certain element of truth in this twisted thesis that the orthodox of all the Churches, secular as well as religious, might do well to consider.

—*The Sunday Statesman, 1-9-40.*

Because the Bible Tells Me So

By W. BALL

I must believe and must obey
What contradictory Scriptures say,
For if I don't I sure shall go
Into that awful hell below,
Where almost all of us will be
Tormented through eternity.
This is certain, this I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[1]

Therefore, lest I have to bear
Endless torture and despair,
God's commands I'll strive to keep,
Though they may cause my flesh to [creep,
So often does some holy verse
Charter murder, theft, and worse.
Such were God's commands I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[2]

Though God at times may seem to say,
In brief, low words, Thou shalt *not* slay,
More often far in piercing alt
He shrieks aloud, Thou *shalt*, thou *shalt*!
Slaughter—hell—these are his will:
So I will learn to hate and kill:
Else God will curse me. This I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[3]

If boys or girls should work or play
Upon God's holy Saturday,
We saints must stone them all to death;
For so God's glorious Bible saith.
Oh! what a treat 'twill be indeed,
To hear them shriek and see them bleed!
With holy joy the flints I'll throw,
Because the Bible tells me so.[4]

All witches must be surely killed,
That God's dear Word may be fulfilled:
Yet though to slay them God doth bid,
They don't exist and never did,
So teacher says at other times,
And calls such deeds most cruel crimes.
Still, witches must be killed, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[5]

God's blessed Scriptures, too, ordain
That all blasphemers shall be slain:
The congregation must arise
And stone each wretch uutil he dies;
And all who will not own God's sway—
That is, his priests, whom we must pay—
We swift must kill; we must, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[6]

Thus we must murder, day by day,
Proud heretics and all who pray
To images of wood or stone
Or any god save ours alone.
And if a town turn to such sin,
We must slay every soul therein,
And burn that town; we must, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[7]

I may, as pious fancy craves,
Go capture girls and men as slaves,
And sell or buy for lust or gain;
So God's most holy laws ordain,
The slave-girl I have "humbled," I
May drive forth with our child to die,
Or beat them lingeringly to death
Unpunished: so God's Bible saith.[8]

They are my money, God explains;
Hence he such "rights of men" ordains.
Slave-hunters and their lusts his care,
Of captured maids he took his share,
When men and matrons all were killed,
As in his wisdom he had willed;
He spared not even babes, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[9]

Divorce courts we no longer need,
The laws of priests now supersede.
A woman false (but no false man),
Must be found out by God's own plan;
His priest gives a doubted daughter
Dust from the floor mixed with water.
If false, her flesh shall rot away;
So God's unerring Scriptures say.[10]

If in distress or faith run wild,
I should devote my wife and child
To God as offerings I must keep
My sacred oath, and though I weep
Must sacrifice them to the Lord
By sacred fire, by holy sword.
This is Jehovah's will, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[11]

I may sell any girl of mine,
As bond-slave, or as concubine;
But if she ask me but to try
Some nobler faith, then she must die.

[1] Mark xvi. 16; ix. 43-48; Matt. xxv. 41-46. [2] Deut. xx. 14-17; Joshua x. 28-42; Num. xxxi. 17, 18; xxxiii. 55, 56; 1 Sam. xv. 2, 3; Ex. xi. 2; xii. 35, 36; iii. 2, 22. [3] Lev. xxvi. 7-39; vii. 25-27; Num. iii. 10, 38. [4] Ex. xxxi. 14, etc. [5] Ex. xxii. 18; Lev. xx. 27; [6] Lev. xxiv. 16; Num. xv. 30, 31; Deut. xvii. 12, 2-7. [7] Ex. xxii. 20; xxxii, 27; Deut. xiii. 1, 5, 12-16; xviii. 20; Lev. xvii. 8, 9, 4, 14. [8] Deut. xx. 10-15; xxi. 10-14; Gen. xxi. 14; Ex. xxi. 2, 6, 7, 20, 21; Lev. xxv. 44-46. [9] Num. xxxi. 17, 18, 28-47. [10] Num. v. 11, 31. [11] Lev. xxvii. 28, 29; Judges xi. 29-40; Gen xxii. 2, 15-18; 2 Sam. xxi. 1-6; 9, 14. [P.T.O.

Also [1 2 3 4 5 6] etc. See also [4 5 6],

Son, daughter, wife, or dearest friend,
Who asks me to strange gods to bend,
Must die by my own hand, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[12]

And all these deeds are good and right,
God's law alone gives perfect light
Unto our helpless, darken'd eyes,
Making the poor and simple wise;
And we must trust no other guide
But by this law alone abide.
God's law is perfect. This I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[13]

If men are ill and like to die
No skilful doctor must come nigh;
To call a good physician in
Would be a naughty wicked sin.
God's elders must anoint the man
With oil, and pray. This is God's plan—
I must rely on this, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[1]

'Tis guaranteed by Truth divine
That devils enter men and swine;
And you or I can cast them out
By fasting and by conquering doubt.
And those who say this is absurd,
Mock and despise God's Holy Word.
Devils can be expell'd, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[2]

I can, if faith be found in me,
Make mountains leap into the sea,
And wither trees, as Christ has said,
And walk the waves, and raise the dead;
And poison cannot injure me;
And at my touch disease will flee.
All this is certain; this I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[3]

If two of us, agreeing pray,
God will do whate'er we say.
Oh, if two Christians could agree,
What wonders then the world would see.
Oh, that one grain of faith were found,
That miracles might still abound.
As in dark times they did, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[4]

I hate all thrift, I take no oath;
The Bible hath forbidden both.
Poor-spirited, absurdly meek,
Peace now at any price I seek;
Inviting wrong continually
By bribing all who injure me;
For such are Christ's commands, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[5]

I must bless rogues who'd cut my throat,
Reward the thief who steals my coat,
Let all assailants go scot free,
Nay, help them in assaulting me:
And when they give my face a thwack,
Present unto their kicks my back:
And take alternate kick and blow
From every brutal-minded foe.[6]

Beneath the vilest tyrant's curse,
Though wife and child be slain or worse,
We must submit, and kiss the rod—
The powers that be are all of God.
Slaves, hug your chains, be curs sublime;
To fight for freedom would be crime;
Resist not evil; fight no foe;
Because the Bible tells you so.[7]

I may now lead a wicked life,
And beat my children and my wife,
And cheat my friends and rob the poor,
And make their lives hard to endure;
If I believe, God pardons all.
So ere I die I'll on Him call.
Then I shall go to heaven, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[8]

My life may be one round of sin;
A kindly act need ne'er creep in;
If I'm predestined to believe,
God's purpos'd grace I shall receive.
For heavenly thrones 'twill make me fit,
Whatever crimes I may commit.
'Tis faith that saves, not deeds, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[9]

Faith gives me wings; faith saves from hell;
If faith is in me all is well.
No matter what my sins below,
In heaven they are as driven snow.
Deeds of the deepest, darkest dye
Are innocence itself on high.
Faith so transforms our sins, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[10]

So I'll believe and I'll obey
What God's conflicting Scriptures say.
For sceptics wise in their own eyes
Will feed the worm that never dies,

(*Continued on page* 185)

[12] Ex. xxi. 7, Deut. xiii. 6-10. [13] Ps. xix. 7-13.

[1] James v. 14, 15. [2] Luke xiii. 26-36; Mark ix. 23-29. See also [3]. [3] Matt. xvii. 20; xxi. 21, 22; Mark xvi. 17, 18; xi. 23, 24; Luke xvii. 6; John xiv. 12-14. [4] Matt. xviii. 19. [5] Matt. vi. 19-34; v. 34, 3, 5, 39, 44 45. [6] Luke vi. 29, 30, 37; Matt. v. 39-48. [7] Rom. xiii. 1, 2; Matt. v. 39, 44, 45; 1 Peter ii. 13. [8] Rom. x. 9; Mark. xvi. 16; John v. 24; Luke xxiii. 40-43. [9] Rom. viii. 29, 30, 33; iv. 5; v. 1; ix. 16, 18. [10] Isaiah i. 18.

rial. Therefore, even in the sphere of scientific enquiry, it is better to develop some form of critical scepticism which does not rest content with the acceptance of any formal thesis as permanent and final. If I have taken my neck out of the noose of idealist philosophy I am not going to put it back in the noose of materialist philosophy simply because the materialist philosophy as it has developed especially in its dialectical aspects is hardly distinguishable from the idealist philosophy of Hegelian thinkers. If I am not wrong I can say without any fear of contradiction that dialectic materialism rendered great service to the cause of the Russian revolution; but since that revolution has taken on today certain reactionary forms and is seeking to stabilise itself with a rigid bureaucracy which does not reflect the progressive urge of the masses of Russia and is on the contrary interested in maintaining its own position, the materialist philosophy of Marx, I am afraid, will develop and is actually developing the same objectionable features that religion developed in its conflict with science. Today no free research is possible in Russia, no free education is possible, individual and civil liberties are curtailed and the entire economic and political power concentrated in the hands of one man who rules the vast Russian masses with a ruthlessness and ferocity which would have put to shame even Peter the Great. This political reaction is inevitably reflected in materialist philosophy also. Marx, Engels and even Lenin have become infallible; vast commentaries are written on their texts in the manner that Shanker and Ramanuja wrote in our country on Upanishads; but no one can question the validity of Marx's theses. Marx is occupying today the same position in Russia that Aristotle occupied in Europe in the Middle Ages; Stalin has become greater than any previous Popes of the Roman Catholic Church; the Greek Church is not now officially in existence in Russia but the Kremlin has taken the place of that Church today and Stalin combines in his own grasp both the temporal and spiritual power. What Roy fails to see is that simply because we call a philosophy materialist it does not necessarily become progressive on that account; even materialist philosophy can develop the same objectionable and irrational features when it has to defend a particular mode of political and economic thought. In short the dialectic materialism of Marx which is today defending the Stalinist bureaucracy cannot possibly be distinguished from the dialectic idealism of Hegel which was interested in defending the Prussian state.

Because the Bible Tells Me So

(Continued from page 184)

Burning and writhing, down in hell,
Where almost all mankind must dwell.
Since God saves very few, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[11]

God plunges them in quenchless flame,
Glory be to his holy name!
They shriek for ever in that fire;
Hallelujah! Strike the lyre!
Praise in the highest be to God;
For every Flame's a scourging rod!
And this will come to pass, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.[12]

[11] Matt. vii. 14; Rom. xiv. 23; Heb. xi. 6.
[12] Rev. xxi. 8; xix. 3; Luke xvi. 23 24.

[*Note.*—The above is issued as a leaflet by the Secular Society Ltd. 61, Farringdon St., London.—*Ed.*]

NOTES & NEWS.

(Continued from page 178)

gently reminded by the other two Christian gentlemen Hitler and Mussolini (they have not yet been excommunicated by the Pope) of the help they gave him in massacring helpless women and children in republican Spain.

* * *

We gratefully acknowledge the following:—

Mrs. M.F.M. Phelips, Cape Town, S. Africa, Rs. 5; D. S. Erulkar, England, Rs. 5; Joseph Erulkar, England, Rs. 5; Kishore Premchand, Rs. 5; M. V. Parab, Rs. 5; M. V. Mathew, Madras, Rs. 5; B. D. Solomon, Rs. 5; Dr. G. Coelho, Rs. 5; J. B. H. Wadia, Rs. 20; Dr. W. N. Welinker, Rs. 5; R.M. Rs. 5; T. H. Modi, Rs. 5; Akbar Frosh, Rs. 5; Mangaldas P. Pai, S. India, Rs. 5; Lt.-Col. S. S. Sokey, Rs. 5; Ramdas Khimji, Rs. 5; R. Hurry, Rs. 5; Rao Bahadur Prof. D. L. Sahasrabudhe, Poona, Rs. 5; Dr. H. Ghosh, Calcutta, Rs. 5; "Atal", Rs. 5; J. N. Patuck, Rs. 10; R. R. Shresta, Lucknow, Rs. 5; Krishen Dev, Lahore, Rs. 5; Major R. M. Lloyd-Still, Burma, Rs. 10; M. M. Patel, Rs. 5; Dr. Fredrick Vas, Karachi Rs. 5; S. Halder, Rs. 2; Dr. V. G. Gomes, Poona, Rs. 2; Chanan Singh, Nirobi, Rs. 2/5; Samson Moses, Rs. 2; S. D. Nadkarni, Karwar, Rs. 2.

Society to Promote Human Equality

OUR Society originated early in 1934 on the initiative of The Ethical Union, the original members of the Committee being R. Dimsdale Stocker, F. J. Gould and R. A. Price with A. W. S. Mitchell as Honorary Secretary, all being members of the Ethical Union and two, at least, members of the Rationalist Press Association.

R. Dimsdale Stocker and F. J. Gould have since died as has Har Dayal (who was also on the Committee.)

The original object of the Society was stated to be:—

"To insist on human equality as an ethical ideal—to advocate the greatest possible measure of economic equality between all human beings; and to support all practical proposals to that end."

Mr. Price, who has been appointed Chairman of the Committee, had long felt that the approach to economic equality could but be made through a monetary system which began by providing, out of our economic inheritance from the past, an income to every individual and community—small at first—but to become sufficient to provide at least the necessaries of life for all.

This view was adopted by the Committee and in 1937 the Society in General Meeting sanctioned a further official "Object" as follows:—

"On a basis of equality to provide every man, woman or child within the community with a basic income, payable out of the National resources, progressively increasing to assure at least the necessaries of life-food, clothing and shelter to every individual."

Mr. Price had published as long ago as 1920 a booklet advocating unearned minimum incomes for all. The Socieity having adopted the idea issued later in 1937 a 16-page fairly closely printed brochure demonstrating the benefits which would accrue to any Nation which adopted a Basic Income System.

Its effects upon Employment, Unemployment, Wages, Salaries and Profits, Family Life, Personal Industry, initiative, enterprise, physical and mental fitness, moral character and many other aspects of life are dealt with; and a graph showed the gross inequalities of income now existing and the equalizing effect of Basic Incomes.

A revised edition of the brochure has been printed this year and can be obtained from the Society's Secretary, A. W. S. Mitchell, address 10 Quernmore Road, London, N. 4. Price 3½d. post free.

Foolish criticism that Human Equality is impossible because men and women will always be different in height, weight and shape and also in mental powers and accomplishments led to the decision that it was desirable to formulate a definition of Human Equality. After consideration some words of the late F. J. Gould were adopted as follows:—

"Equality is a mode of society in which we wish to treat all men, women and children with a like respect and on the basis of that wish to provide all with the best material help towards universal health, efficiency and friendship."

When one thinks of the hundred millions in India and of their widely differing levels of capacity and character and of their varying systems, languages and religion, equality must indeed for that country seem a far-away dream—yet we believe that if a beginning could be made in the direction of economic equality through Basic Incomes, however small, a revolution would be begun, which in a time shorter than appears now to be possible would change the face of India and bring hope and life to the downtrodden millions.

We do not wish it to be inferred that we think the manifestation of money will bring prosperity. We know that production, distribution and exchange are vital factors and we think that the monetary system can be used to guide production, distribution and exchange so that the distribution will take place so far as possible according to the number of mouths to be filled.

The Society has a number of members in India and in other places overseas.

Its address is 4a, Inverness Place, Queensway, Bayswater, London, 2.

A. W. S. MITCHELL,
Hon. Sec.

A New Pamphlet

EXIT GOD!

BY

AKSHAYAKUMAR R. DESAI

32 PAGES

Price 2 As. Postage ½ Anna.

CORRESPONDENCE

Vani Vilas Mohalla,
Mysore, 31st August, 1940.

To

The Editor, 'Reason',

Dear Sir,

I am most grateful to you for the honour you have done me by noticing some of my writings on pages 129 and 138 of your journal for August 1940. Seeing that you respect 'Reason' most, I have ventured to state here what appears to me to be in perfect consonance with 'Reason' which is *my "inner conviction"* to which you specially appeal in your printed comments.

1. You say that you "prefer *not* to base your conclusions on them (authorities), nor, indeed will any authority satisfy us in this matter," and yet you quote on the opening page on the said issue, the words of Swami Vivekananda, as your motto!

(*a*) If my 'inner conviction' be that you are entirely in the wrong, what are we to do? (*b*) To whom else are we to appeal? Next, (*c*) if my 'inner conviction' agrees with what another man, e.g. Swami Vivekananda, says, should I not say so or quote him? (*d*) Why do *you* quote him if Rationalism or the Rationalist association holds that a man of 'Reason' should never agree with another? If this be not your *creed*, (*e*) Why do you object to my agreeing with Swami Vivekananda or the Gita or Goethe? (*f*) If you say that no two Rationalists should agree, then, why do *you quote* Socrates, the Rationalist *Princeps* on page 122 of the same issue? And what is meant by an '*Association*' of Rationalists?

2. On page 128, in criticising me you say "Rationalism does not merely imply 'doing good to others by making them realize the importance of 'Reason' *"but much more than that"*". Pray tell me what this "much more" is?

3. Your next reference is to my "lack of intellectual courage". Now, I have openly said in all my publications as well as in my letters on this subject, that my highest appeal is only to 'Reason'. I have made no secret of it in all my travels throughout India and in Europe. What more does 'intellectual courage' mean? It does not teach me *intolerance* of another's views or convictions or to separate myself from those that do not agree with me.

Yours sincerely,
V. SUBRAMANYA IYER.

Just a word of explanation before we answer Mr. Iyer. The review of Mr. Iyer's pamphlet *Reasan and Intuition* was written by our editor Prof. Karve, and bears his signature. All that appears on the middle page of *Reason* viz. To Correspondents, Notes and News etc. is written by our Asstt. Ed., Mr. Solomon, and likewise bears his signature.

However, had Mr. Iyer read carefully that to which he refers in his letter, this letter would never have been written. Please refer to the letter:

(1) We do not see any contradiction in this. Quoting anyone merely implies that we appreciate what is said or the way it is said. In this particular case we quote not *because* Swami Vivekananda has said it but because of the quotation itself. We would have quoted it even if good old Col. Blimp had said it. And by the way that is not our motto.

(*a*) Well, you are welcome to it.

(*b*) Appeal to facts and state reasons why you think we are wrong.

(*c*) By all means.

(*d*) We never said anything of the kind.

(*e*) We never objected to anybody agreeing with anybody.

(*f*) Same as (*d*)

2. "Rationalism may be defined as the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason *and aims at establishing a system of philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority.*" (Memorandum of the R. P.A., London). That surely implies much more than merely "doing good to others by making them realize the importance of Reason"?

3. Far be it from us to accuse Mr. Subrahmanya Iyer of "lack of intellectual courage". What we said was: "The excuse that 'one should not label oneself as belonging to any particular body or as holding any particular doctrine or belief' is *generally* put forward by those who lack intellectual courage. It is also due to the common mistake of thinking that Rationalism is a creed." Does this mean that we accuse Mr. Iyer of "lack of intellectual courage"? If it does, we were not aware of it.

It is indeed heartening to learn that Mr. Iyer has always openly said that his "highest appeal is only to 'Reason'"

We hope we have made ourselves clear enough to avoid any further misunderstanding.

—A. S., Asstt. Ed.

Dear Mr. Solomon,

Thank you for copies of "Reason," your letter, and specially the excellent booklet "Four Pastors and An Unbeliever," which I enjoyed very much. It was such a surprising pleasure to go through the latter that I have already passed it on to not less than four of my friends

here. I think, even without Dr. D'Avoine's splendid talks, some portions of the Pastors' speeches alone would have gone a long way in our favour! As it is, I have only praise and admiration for Dr. D'Avoine! Let's have more of 'em!

As regards new supporters and members, may I say that three or four friends are actually awaiting enrolment forms. Obviously, by the interest evinced by many members of this Hostel in the copies of REASON proudly displayed on my desk, it is a cinch that Rationalism will find many devotees from here. Will you kindly see that I get at least six enrolment forms soon?

I don't know if I can get as many as thirty members from here. But rest assured that there will be ample whole-hearted support from me and my friends for this cause so worthy of encouragement and so vitally necessary for India.

Yours,
M. V. MATHEW.

The Editor, "Reason."

Sir,

I have been glad to see that the R. A. I. is not content to gather recruits, but is equally concerned to foster unity and fellow-feeling among its members, so necessary for the Rationalist, who usually has to cut himself off from the vast Society of the Superstitious and would be left isolated were there no "brotherhood" to receive him.

The Rationalist, as one who has freed himself from the harmful beliefs and the obsessions of the Established Religions, is best equipped for making life for himself and for others a thing of beauty and a joy. It is, therefore, necessary that Rationalists should meet as often as possible and help to create a social atmosphere which will be as a beacon of life and hope to those who have privately shed the superstitions of their religions, but dare not run the risk of being isolated.

In this connection I was glad to note the popularity among our members of the fortnightly meetings at the Indian Institute of Sociology. The lively discussion that followed the first lecture (which attracted a good number of non-members too) showed the wide interest it had aroused among those present.

I think it is not sufficiently well-known that members of the R.A.I. are allowed the *free* use of the extensive library of the Indian Institute of Sociology on payment of the usual deposit of Rs. 5/-. Thus, there is now a triple attraction—the personal contact among members, the lectures and discussions, and the library and the study circles it is to germinate.

Dr. D'Avoine and yourself are usually present whenever informal meetings of members are arranged. There are a good many of our members who are younger and less busy than the two of you. Now that they may read about the new impulse in the Association, I think we may expect them at our future fortnightly meetings before their absence becomes conspicuous.

Yours, etc.,
R. A.

To The Editor "Reason"

Sir,

I have read the appeal by our President in the September issue of "Reason". I think it is a matter of congratulation for those who are at the helm of affairs that the R. A. I. should have continued to exist against such heavy odds.

I hope the R. A. I. grows from strength to strength and I hope to do my bit towards the same. Even if we are able to reduce the subscription from Rs. 5/- to Rs. 3/-, those of us who can afford must continue to subscribe more. It is to the courageous work of Rationalists in the past that we owe the fact that today we no longer waste money on the ministers of religious dope and we should not count it too much to divert an equivalent amount to help the enlightenment of others.

In a period marked by reactionary movements and widespread obscurantism the R.A.I. will be able to continue its noble task of upholding the banner of freethought in this country only if Rationalists bear in mind Paine's warning that "those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it" and do their best for the best of causes.

Yours, etc.,
J. J. M.

The Editor "Reason."-

Sir,

Just a few words to record my appreciation of the excellent work carried on by the R.A.I.

I have just succeeded in getting two of my friends to join the R.A.I. I hope to get more before this most Christian year is out.

May I suggest that those who are unable to get any new member should send a year's subscription for "Reason" for one or two friends whom they think likely to be interested.

With all good wishes.

R. M.

I disagree with every word of what you say, but I shall defend to the death your right to say it.

—*Voltaire—Candide, Chap. IV.*

STANDARD WORKS BY FAMOUS FREETHINKERS

Thinkers' Library

Education: Intellectual, Moral and Physical by Herbert Spencer. A great book on a great subject.

A Short History of the World by H. G. Wells. In the pages of this book we review the pageant of earth, of life, of primitive man, and of civilisation, as seen by one of the most vivid writers of our day.

Anthropology (in 2 Vols) by Sir E. B. Tylor. This is the scientific "Book of Genesis." Vol. 1 describes the life of early Man and how he learned to talk and write. Vol. 2 deals with the arts of life and pleasure, and the growth of Knowledge and Religion.(Illustrated).

The Evolution of the Idea of God by Grant Allen. Twenty years were occupied in preparing and ten years in writing this standard work on the history of the God-idea—which is the history of religion itself.

The Churches and Modern Thought by Vivian Phelips. A frank, fearless, and fascinating study of the question "Is Christianity True?"

The Martyrdom of Man by Winwood Reade. Acclaimed as a classic of the nineteenth century, unequalled in artistry of language and lucidity of style.

The Evidence for the Supernatural by Dr. Ivor, LL. Tuckett. Surveys the answer of Science to the question "Is Spiritualism True?" Is the Supernatural Credible?"

The Existence of God by Joseph McCabe. A scholarly and searching examination into the origin, history, and present position of the belief in God with a reply to Sir J. Jeans, Sir A. Eddington, and other apologists.

Psychology for Every Man (and Woman) by A. E. Mander. Gives a clear and concise introduction to the study of human character.

Letters on Reasoning by J. M. Robertson. A scholarly exposition on rational thinking.

Clearer Thinking; (Logic for Every Man) by A. E. Mander. A valuable and practical guide to clear and logical thinking.

Man and His Universe by J. Langdon-Davies. An excellent survey of Man's progress from a primitive outlook on life to a modern scientific one and the causes that contributed to it.

First Principles by Herbert Spencer (Rs. 2/-) A clear and orderly synthesis of knowledge.

The Rights of Man by Thomas Paine. A treatise in defence of those principles of freedom for which the author so valiantly fought and suffered.

The Universe of Science by Prof. H. Levy. An excellent book on the Philosophy of Science.

Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings by Henry Maudsley, M. D. Reveals the psychological processes by which man arrived at beliefs commonly attributed to mystical sources.

Price Re. 1/- each, post free.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

New Members Joining
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA
will get free:

THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM
By Dr. R. P. Paranjpye

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER
A series of talks between
Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, AND FOUR PASTORS
AND
"REASON"
for one year

*

WRITE TO:
The Jt. Hon. Secretaries:
The Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Every Student of Hindu Law should read.
THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY
PRIZE ESSAY
ON
"WHY THE PRESENT HINDU LAW OF SURVIVORSHIP APPLICABLE TO JOINT FAMILY PROPERTY SHOULD BE ABOLISHED".
BY:
K. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR,
B.A. (HONS.) LL.B.
PRICE AS. 4. POSTAGE EXTRA.
CAN BE HAD FROM:—
THE HINDUSTAN BOOK DEPOT,
21, Dalal Street, Fort, BOMBAY.

IF YOU WANT

To read choicest books,
To discuss modern problems,
To get correct information about current topics,
To have contact with intellectuals, and
To understand the making and growth of our Society—

Then You Must Remain in Touch with

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY.

OBJECTS.

To promote the Sociological interest of the Indian people, to gather and disseminate all sorts of sociological information, to facilitate the study of sociology, to focus the views of experts on such questions, to form and maintain a Library, etc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Donors Rs. 500/- or more. Life Members Rs. 100/- or more. Ordinary Members Rs. 3/- per year payable half-yearly. R. L. T. Library Deposit Rs. 5/-.

All members have the free use of the Library which contains a good collection of books on Economics, and also the Library of the R. L. Trust Hostel, which also contains an excellent collection of latest books on all branches of sociology, namely, Economics, Ethics, Eugenics, Psychology, Philosophy, Politics, History, Biography and Fiction on current social problems.

Members are also entitled to publications of the Institute at such concessions as may be determined by the Managing Committee from time to time, as also one Magazine can be supplied at the cost of the Institute and any other Magazine for which concessions could be secured by the Institute for its members by any special agreement with its Publishers.

Rules, Regulations, Entrance Form can be had from:—

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY,

R. L. TRUST, 'RANCHHOD BHUVAN,'
Near Opera House, Tram Terminus,
BOMBAY 4.

15th January 1940.

C. S. POHEKAR. R. D. NADKARNI.
Hon. Secretaries.

Printed by B. M. Shet at the 'Advocate of India' Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay 1, Edited and Published by R. D. Karve, M.A. for the Rationalist Association of India at 13 New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.

REASON

Nov. 1940.

Vol. VIII No. 11

PRICE 4 ANNAS.

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Objects of the Rationalist Association of India.



PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DASERA
By R. D. KARVE.

A CALL TO RATIONALISTS

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVOLUTION
By ANIL.

SAVING CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION
By C. L. D'AVOINE.

ROOT OF THE TROUBLE & ROOTING IT OUT
By V. S. MUDVEDKAR.

ITEMS OF INTEREST, ETC.

Editor:
R. D. KARVE, M.A.
Diplome d Etudes Superieures (Paris).

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD, BOMBAY.

PUBLIC LECTURE

AT

THE BLAVATSKY LODGE HALL, French Bridge, Chawpatty.

THE "SPIRITUAL GENIUS" OF INDIA

SPEAKER:

M. N. ROY

Saturday 14th December 1940. at 6 p. m.

RESERVED SEATS FOR MEMBERS OF THE R. A. I. AND THEIR FRIENDS ONLY.

Members should write to the Hon. Secretaries giving the number of seats required on or before 11th December 1940.

LECTURE FUND

The R. A. I. has decided to arrange one Public Lecture every month in addition to the fortnightly discussions arranged at the Indian Institute of Sociology. The expenses for each lecture will be approximately Rs. 15/- Donations to this fund will be used exclusively for this purpose.

The total amount required is Rs. 195/- for thirteen lectures up to December 1941.

DONATIONS RECEIVED

N. M. Bhethena	Rs.	15/-
D. R. D. Wadia	"	5/-
Dr. M. G. Pradhan	"	5/-
Nur Jehan Azad	"	2/-
Akbar Frosh	Re.	1/-
Total	Rs.	28/-

Hon. Treasurer.

Series of talks broadcast from the Bombay Station of the All India Radio on 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 30th & 31st Oct. 1939.

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER

Represented by

His Grace Dr. Roberts
Catholic Archbishop of Bombay

His Holiness Khalifa Bashiruddin Mahomed

Dastur Kaikushru Mahiar Kutar
Parsee High Priest

His Holiness Jagadguru Shri Shankaracharya Dr. Kurtkoti

AND

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.,
President, Rationalist Association of India.

PRICE 4 As. FOREIGN 6d.

Available from

The Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Restless, onward must thou strive,
Never halt or langour know.
—*Schiller.*

REASON

Vol. VIII NOVEMBER 1940 No. 11

The Significance of Dasara

By R. D. Karve

ON the 10th of October, which happened to coincide with the 10th of the lunar month Ashvin, Hindu India celebrated the anniversary of Rama's victory over Ravana. The former is supposed to be the 7th incarnation of Vishnu, one of the Hindu Trinity. In mythological times, the Hindu gods were always at war with the Rakshasas (demons) and the latter were very often victorious. Ravana had harassed the gods for a long time and held several of them prisoners and made them work as household servants. It was for the express purpose of getting rid of Ravana that Vishnu was born as a man, because Ravana had secured a boon by which he was invulnerable to anybody except human beings, whom he did not think sufficiently important to be included in that boon. This man was Rama, the eldest son of Dasharatha, the king of Ayodhya. Ravana was his rival for the hand of Sita, who had announced that she would marry the one who succeeded in bending the huge bow of Shankara (or Shiva, another of the Hindu Trinity) brought there for the purpose. Ravana, though a powerful man, could not even lift it and fell down under the weight. Rama succeeded easily and won the prize. This was his first contact with Ravana.

Later on, when his stepmother insisted on his being exiled to the forest for fourteen years in order to secure the succession for her own son, his wife and another brother insisted on accompanying him, and Ravana found the opportunity to abduct Sita and take her away to his kingdom Lanka (Ceylon). It took Rama a long time to find out what had become of her, and when he did find it out, it was not an easy task to invade Lanka which involved crossing the sea to Ceylon. He had however secured the help of a tribe of monkeys, one of whom, Hanuman, jumped over the sea and found out where Sita was kept by Ravana. As a mischievous prank, he also set fire to Lanka and came back to report. This co-operation of monkeys is explained by some people by supposing that they were not really monkeys, but a tribe of people who wore their loin-cloth in such a way as to leave a tail hanging behind.

There is an interesting story about the building of a bridge over the sea for the forces of Rama to cross over. One of his followers found out that if he wrote Rama's name on a stone, it would float on water, but when Rama tried to do the same trick himself (of course without writing his own name on it), the stone sank: a lesson in humility for Rama. He succeeded ultimately in killing Ravana, setting his brother on the vacant throne, and bringing back Sita, whom, however, he could not take back into his home, since she had stayed with Ravana for an year or so, and could not be assumed to be pure. It seems that Rama did not doubt her himself. but wanted a demonstration of her purity for the benefit of the public. Sita was indignant and ordered her brother-in-law to construct a funeral pyre, so that she might die, but at the same time prayed to Agni (the god of fire) that since she was pure, he should not burn her. Agni accordingly refused to burn her and gave her back to Rama with the assurance that she was perfectly pure.

This was not enough to save her reputation, however, and after she returned to Ayodhya with Rama, people began to talk. Rama heard these rumours and with his exaggerated respect for public opinion, told his brother Laxmana to take her to the forest and leave her

there, but she was rescued by Walmiki, the author of the Ramayna, the story of Rama, the most ancient epic of the world.

Rama was known for his righteous life and this is why Mahatma Gandhi is always mentioning Rama-Rajya (the rule of Rama) as a desideratum. His righteousness was, however, marred by several ugly incidents. One can hardly approve of his abandonment of his devoted wife whom he knew to be faithful to him. Another cowardly thing to do was the way in which he killed Vali, the monkey chief, in order to secure the friendship of his brother. A fight was staged between the two brothers with Rama hidden in the vicinity. Vali, entirely unaware of this, was engaged in personal combat with his brother, when Rama killed him with an arrow, certainly a disgraceful act on the part of a hero. Vali charged him with treachery, and he had to give the lame excuse that he was the overlord, and in meting out punishment to criminals, common rules of decency could not be considered. Another act of his, which looks equally ugly to the modern mind, was the beheading of Shambuka on the ground that he had committed a crime by studying the Vedas, which, as a Shudra, he had no right to do, though orthodoxy defends this by saying that it was considered a crime in those days and that one must not judge Rama by current ethical ideas. All the same, all these acts were not entirely approved even in his time.

There are several fantastic stories connected with characters appearing in the Ramayana, which find no support in that epic itself. For instance, orthodox Hindus believe that Ravana had ten heads and twenty hands (not twenty feet!), and he has even been represented on the stage with ten heads: one in the normal place, one above it, and the others symmetrically arranged on both sides. The Ramayana, however, gives him only one head and two hands. These Rakshasas seem to have been much more intelligent than the gods. Ravana possessed an airplane, obtained by him by force from his step-brother Kubera, as also the island of Ceylon. Some people cite this as a proof that our ancestors had airplanes, but it is highly probable that this was only a poetic fancy. However, the poet does not credit the gods with any similar means of transport. In fact if Rama had anything like it, there would have been no difficulty in getting to Ceylon. Why an incarnation of god should be ignorant of the latest progress of science remains a mystery. As an incarnation, however, he was only a man and constantly bewailed his fate when he was separated from his wife, though this was to lead to a war with Ravana, whose destruction was the principal object of the incarnation.

Rama is described as having only one word (being a man of his word), one arrow (never requiring another to kill his enemy), and one wife. From this comes the expression "Rama-Bana" (arrow of Rama), applied to any effective remedy. Ravana was not, however, killed by his first arrow, and to keep up his reputation, he had to use the subterfuge of saying that the second arrow was not aimed at the same spot of his body. Again, a man who abandons his wife even when he is perfectly aware of her purity can hardly be called a man of his word. As for having one wife, one of our scholars, Mr. B. V. Jadhav, who was Minister of Education for some time, has found evidence in the Ramayana itself that he had a regular harem. Does this mean then that he neglected the other wives and kept company with Sita only? There is also a story about him, where he consents to an amorous interview with the wife of Ahi-Ravana (a friend of Ravana) on condition that she helped him to kill her husband. His devotee, Hanuman, who gave the promise on his behalf, made a condition that if the bed broke under Rama's weight, he would go away at once. After the husband was killed, Hanuman got some bees to bore through the wood of the bed, so that it collapsed as soon as Rama sat on it. Everything is fair in war and his reputation was saved by this trick! Mr. Jadhav also says, as a result of his researches, that the story of the Ramayana is not an Indian story at all, but an adaptation of an Egyptian story narrated to Walmiki by Narada, who was supposed to have access to the three worlds. He supports his thesis by pointing out that the geographical descriptions of the Ramayana do not agree with the situations of the places which are now popularly considered to correspond to those of the Ramayana.

Hanuman, the monkey devotee of Rama, is one of the principal characters in the poem. He is popularly supposed to live for ever and to be a Brahmachari, that is one who abstains completely from sex activity. Mr. Jadhav however points out that when Rama returned to his kingdom after killing Ravana, and everybody was rewarded for the help given in war, Hanuman was presented with sixteen young ladies, and there is no mention of his having

(Continued on page 192)

WHAT IS TIME?

By Dr. G. Y. CHITNIS.

THE POPULAR conception of time is very simple. It is a purely subjective conception and can be understood in terms of definite measurements. Time that we ordinarily know is divided into years, months, days, hours, minutes and seconds; but this idea, as I said, is purely subjective; because there is nothing in the objective world corresponding to these various units of time. Objectively speaking, time is a continuous whole and does not know anything about years, months or hours. We have a sort of vague feeling that this time implies movement and since the world can be conceived primarily as being in time, it is also in a constant flux. Flux implies not being but becoming, and our ancient sages had the audacious idea of getting rid of becoming in time and achieving completed being in eternity. I call this idea audacious because it is nothing but a pure metaphysical abstraction. If we could have asked these venerable sages as to what they meant by eternity, I dont think they would have been able to give an adequate answer. What after all, is eternity? How can we conceive eternity apart from time? Either we try to stretch time *ad infinitum* and call it eternity or we look upon eternity as timelessness, that is, negation of time. In either case the idea of eternity has a pure logical form but no content. Stated in terms of Hegelian dialectics, if time is thesis and timelessness is anti-thesis, then what is going to be the synthesis of these two concepts? I myself do not know and I dare say Hegel did not know either. The fact of the matter is that the Hegelian dialectical method cannot be applied to time; firstly because the method is wrong, secondly because time, implying as it does continuous movement, defies both the formal and dialectical laws of logic.

Shankar and Hegel.

Therefore, from a strictly philosophical point of view it is pure nonsense to talk of eternity as having any existence apart from time; but brushing aside the question of eternity does not help us in solving the problem of time; and this problem is not easy of solution because the entire history of philosophy is replete with speculations of the philosophers who have heroically tried to grapple with the problem and failed. For Shankar, the most distinguished among the Indian philosophers, the problem did not exist at all. He looked upon time as an illusion and eternity as the only reality. It is difficult to understand what he meant by reality; but it is clear that he was condemning what was real as unreal and exalting what was unreal as real. Eternity is not real, because it is a pure abstraction achieved merely by negativing the conception of time. Time is real because we have an actual direct experience of it; but philosophers, I suppose, especially distinguished philosophers are always accustomed to stand on their heads and then look at the world. Therefore, it is not surprising that they should mistake an abstraction for reality and reality for illusion. Hegel committed the same mistake as Shankar and although Marx claims to have inverted the Hegelian process of thinking, yet the cobwebs of dialectics that he inherited from Hegel landed him in an idealist position of which he was not conscious and of which even to this day, his followers are not conscious.

Newton and Kant.

Issac Newton looked upon time as objectively real and hence was led to the most important discovery of the law of gravitation; but Immanuel Kant again denied the objective reality of time and turned it into a pure ideal construction. To him both the time and space were forms of sensibility through the medium of which alone the phenomenal world could be understood. The noumenon or the *ding an sich* was unknown and unknowable. Man has to be content only with the knowledge of appearances. He cannot know anything about things in themselves. Kant in his celebrated work, "The critique of pure reason" thus reached a completely agnostic position. To Kant time was ideal because he wanted to make sure that his philosophic speculation would square with the results of pure mathematics. This was indeed a silly notion but Hegel, coming after Kant, by making the reality of time dependent upon the reality of timelessness, made it sillier still. But I need not go into the details of these speculations as they are quite irrelevant to my present theme.

Henry Bergson.

The French philosopher Henry Bergson gave an unqualified recognition to the objective

reality of time. To him time was the stuff of which reality was made, nay it was reality itself. His creative evolution visualises the world as in a continuous process of becoming and if life is nothing but movement then time is an integral part of life. Time cannot be separated from life and hence is real. He conceives life as a kind of cinematographic film in motion. If you take the film out of the projector you discover that it is made up of so many still pictures and it is only when motion is imparted to it that we get the view of the story in continuous movement. Our life is also in a flux but for practical purposes our intellect cuts it into so many pieces which are static. He gives another beautiful illustration of a flowing river. If we fill a number of jars with water and arrange it in a row, shall we be justified in ca'ling it a river? It does not give us any idea of the constant flow of the river at all. Similarly, says Bergson, our intellectual view of life is a static view which consists of sticking together so many bits of knowledge; but that is not the view of the real life, because the real life is flowing, bounding and jumping forward. This life cannot be understood in terms of intellectual conceptions. Time is the very essence of this bounding life; Kantian time belongs to the intellectual view of life and hence it is ideal and static; but the Bergsonian time is inseparable from a flowing life and therefore it is real, vital and dynamic. Finally Einstein has merged time in space and time-space in a four dimensional continuum, thereby rendering certain problems in physics easier of solution; but even Einstein has not thrown any light upon what is time and therefore, I think, for the present, the problem will remain insoluble.

Sign of Wisdom.

It is a sign of great wisdom to be able to answer all the questions that are asked! But I think it is a greater wisdom to know which questions could at all be legitimately asked. Without varifying the legitimacy of the question if the wise man is trapped into answering it, then the consequence is that the wise man involves himself in contradictions from which he cannot possibly extricate himself; therefore it is necessary to state frankly that the question which forms the title of this article is an illegitimate question. We may as well ask if the universe has a beginning, if the egg comes before the hen or *vice versa*, if the soul is immortal or what is the first cause of creation. It is easy to satisfy children when they ask who made the universe by saying that God made it. The answer is as silly as the question; but some children are more inquisitive and when they ask who made God, then the wise man is ignominiously stumped. Many of us are grown bodily but really possess juvenile minds. The scientific researches of a Newton or an Einstein may satisfy their curiosity but they do not satisfy the soientists themselves. Why Einstein himself has begun to express doubts about his own theory of relativity; perhaps a new Einstein will arise to destroy the theories of old Einstein.

Role of Science.

It does not mean that science is useless, that we should go back to religion and metaphysics. Science has a useful purpose to serve in so far as it continually tends to increase and improve the standard of human life; but when science forsakes this useful activity and begins to philosophise about things in general then it becomes worse than a nuisance; it becomes a nescience.

The Significance of Dasara

(*Continued from page* 190)

refused them, which is hardly consistent with his supposed continence! There is also a curious incident about drops of perspiration from his body falling into the mouth of an alligator (female) and making it pregnant and producing a child who was to help him later on when he was in difficulties. There are in fact several stories in the old epics which show an ignorance of the mechanism of pregnancy, while other references show a complete knowledge of it. It is possible that other ways were considered possible besides the normal way. The Christian idea of the immaculate conception can hardly be due to ignorance.

Ramayana, the famous epic of Rama, is a fine poem. The poet never intended it to be a religious book as it is now considered by Hindu orthodoxy. The Sanskrit epics abound with interesting stories though some of them may be supernatural. Homer can hardly stand comparison with them, though some critics allege that they are imitations of Homer. It is perhaps the other way round.

The Philosophical Revolution

BY ANIL

THE first intellectual awakening in India was brought about by Raja Rammohan Roy, the founder of the modern theistic movement. Born in 1772 in an intensely orthodox family of a high class Brahmin, it was natural that he should be made to study the ancient scriptures of the Hindus. Persian at that time was the court language and his parents wishing for their talented son a bright career made him study that language as well as Arabic. Before Rammohan was thirteen years of age he had read a good deal of religious literature in Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic. It was perhaps because of the impact of the Persian and Arabic culture on his mind that he lost his faith in idolatry and at the age of sixteen wrote an essay against it; his father's religious susceptibilities were so severely injured by his son's infidelity that he drove him out of the house. In his wanderings Rammohan came across many systems of religious thoughts and behaviour and began to be dimly conscious of the unity underlying all diverse faiths. At the age of twenty-two he began the study of the English language and during the next six years acquired such a thorough mastery over it that his subsequent writings written in that language are looked upon even to-day as models of excellent English. He studied the English translation of the Bible but not being satisfied with it he studied Hebrew and Greek to study the Old and the New Testaments in the original; his researches in the Hindu, Muslim and Christian scriptutes led him to the conclusion that God is one and the Hindu pantheon of millions of gods and the Christian doctrine of trinity were not at all sanctioned by the scriptures. He eloquently and passionately pleaded for rationalising religious thought and abolition of those social and religious traditions which offended against the principles of equality and justice.

Maker of New Epoch

Although in one sense Rammohan was the maker of a new epoch, yet in another sense he was the product of his age. He did not believe in caste distinctions and yet scrupulously observed all the rules of his caste. He was a rationalist at heart but at the same time he could not give up the authority of scriptures; he discarded the idea of many gods but could not go further and discard the idea of one God. All his polemical writings on Hinduism, Christianity and Islam show that he took for granted the authority and the infallibility of the Hindu, Christian and Muslim scriptures.

A new stage of development

Devendranath Tagore, the father of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore carried the religious investigations of Rammohan a stage further. By birth, temperament, and education he was out and out a Hindu; although he was acquainted with the Christian and Muslim religious literature, his principal inspiration was derived from Hindu scriptures, especially the Upanishads. In the beginning he shared Rammohan's belief in the infallibility of the Vedas and the Upanishads; but later on he found that the doctrine of the plenary inspiration of these religious books could not be upheld in view of the fact that they contained a large number of contradictions and inconsistencies and also a good deal of what could not possibly appeal to reason. With reluctance he discarded the doctrine of infallibility and tranferred the seat of authority from the external scriptures to the internal intuition of man.

The doctrine of intuition

Keshav Chunder Sen developed the doctrine of intuition more fully in the light of the philosophical speculations of the Scotch philosopher, Hamilton; but the doctrine of intuition as the chief source of religious inspiration could not hold the field very long and the more intelligent among Keshav's followers began to seek in reason the seat of authority in religion. They readapted Hegelian idealism to the religious needs of the country and made of it a new philosophy of life. But if reason, is once accepted as the source of inspiration, one finds that it does not countenance any religious belief; the attempts made by these early heralds of philosophic revolution in India to reconcile religion and science, faith and reason should have landed many of them in agnosticism if not in pure atheism; but I think that they themselves did not fully understand the implications of their own position but with a sublime and superb unconsciousness, let loose those

tremendous forces of free and progressive thought which were ultimately destined to shatter the very foundations of religion.

Development of free thought

Today Rammohan's great-grandson is an atheist and some years back when some one remarked on his atheism he said, "My great-grandfather sent thirty-three millions of gods to the limbo and kept only one god for himself. How can I claim to be the worthy great-grandson of this man if I do not send even that one god to the limbo?" This satirical anecdote pertinently illustrates the logical and inevitable development of theism into atheism. The proper culmination of the modern theistic movement is to be found in the Deva Samaj started by Mr. Agnihotri in the Punjab which developed a positivist outlook on life along the lines of Auguste Comte and Federick Harrison; but I am afraid that this Samaj has now degenerated into a cult and lost its original radiance. The founder who had carried on a valiant crusade against God to banish him from the universe has himself taken his place. He has written a book with a very intriguing title "The evolution of the highest life in me." So far as this Samaj is concerned evolution seems to have reached its end; there is nothing further to be done about it.

Movements of reaction

If I do not refer here to other modern religious movements like the Arya Samaj, Theosophy and Ramkrishna Mission, it is chiefly because they represent a definite reaction from the progressive urge embodied in the movement of philosophic theism.

Conclusion

Thus it will be seen that the light of reason was slowly breaking through the surrounding darkness of ignorance, superstition and time-honoured prejudices. If the light did not succeed in dispelling the darkness altogether, the reason for it is to be found in the peculiar political and economic conditions of the country. The East India Company had broken the Moghal and the Maratha Empires and was slowly establishing its sovereignty over the entire country. The East India Company came to India primarily as traders and they found that the best and the easiest way of securing high trade profits from a country was to establish political domination over it; and they found it very easy. Lack of national unity, political and family dissensions and cultural backwardness were among some of the causes that led to the downfall of the Marathas and the Moghul dynasty. But the chief cause was that both the Marathas and the Mognuls represented a backward social and economic system and the British traders brought with them the torch of a wider social freedom and greater economic opportunities which were the fruit of the Industrial Revolution in England. Therefore the British traders became the rulers of the country and Indians of all grades became hewers of wood and drawers of water. Under the impact of the new culture of our masters, the ancient institutions, traditions and superstitions began to crumble into dust and the various economic and industrial advantages that the country derived from the British rule created such a tremendous enthusiasm among certain politicians in our country that they began to look upon the British conquest of India as Providential. These were the politicians who represented the rising capitalists in India. Our capitalists had no independent growth of their own; if left alone they would have perhaps brought about a political and economic revolution in the country which meant that the philosophic revolution begun by Rammohan would have been carried forward by the standard-bearers of this rising culture. But the British capitalists intervened and the independent growth of the indigenous capitalists was arrested; naturally the philosophic revolution also had to halt in the middle. Not only that, but the total inability of the Indian capitalist class to recapture power and shape their own destiny stopped the forward march of the philosophic revolution which in sheer despair had to go back upon itself.

Therefore the philosophic revolution in India is yet to be completed as a preliminary condition for the ultimate capture of power by the people. The dominant class in the country had abdicated this task in favour of a more or less semi-prosperous economic life within the general scheme of the imperial system. The working class is too young and immature to perform this task; it has yet to outgrow its political and economic tutelage to the dominant class and is therefore totally incapable of becoming the bearer of a new culture.

The intellectual middle class is the only class that can carry forward and complete the long delayed philosophic revolution. The early heralds of this revolution have merely blazed the trail, but being overcome by the mightiness

(*Continued on page* 204)

THANKS TO HITLER

By Chapman Cohen

Reproduced from the *Freethinker*

THANKS to Hitler! I say this without the slightest degree of sarcasm. I say it although I detest the man, his methods, his aims, and if I had the power I would make it plain that whenever the war ends he and, more importantly, those leaders behind him should be placed beyond the pale of the usual treatment given to civilized enemies and treated as incurable criminals. That the gangster Government of Germany will be defeated I have not the slightest doubt. All its conquests are so many steps to that end. Even a generation that has been largely educated on newspaper scraps ought to realize that. Tyrannies rot from within, and from the impact of opposing ideas. And in the constant and indispensable propaganda of the Fascist Government there is always the danger of suggesting the opposite. That is a factor to which all intelligent teachers are keenly alive.

I say "Thanks to Hitler" because he has, inadvertently, given the world a lesson in the real nature of war, although it says little for the intelligence of the general public that it should have needed a second world-war to teach them the moral. The insincerity of the 1914 cry "A war to end war"—which Mr. Wells says he believed—must be replaced by a stern resolve to make that result a statement of fact. We can, if we will, make the end of this war a firm beginning of the process that will really end war. To do that the conquest of Hitlerism must be the prelude to the humanizing of the world.

Hitler has declared a "totalitarian war," that is, a whole-time war. He is doing this openly, boldly and without stint. He says, and I agree with him, that totalitarian war is a war against armed forces, against civilians, against old men, women and children, the sick and the hale. He has been denounced for saying this. I think the world ought to thank him for it. I do not believe he has enough intelligence to realize the full significance of his statement. To him it was a kind of apology to himself for being the ignorant brute he is. Nor is the statement destitute, as most psychologists will realize, of the element of fear. It is the expression of a character that is responsible for the confession that he is a liar, one who will not keep his word when it is to his interest to break it, and will stop at no savagery that will achieve his ends. Let us be just to Hitler, as I believe history will be just to him, and declare that from one point of view he has shown himself to be the most honest of dishonest statesmen, the most truthful liar of the modern political and diplomatic world. He has shown himself to be a straightforward scoundrel, and people, unused to that type of confessed scoundrelism, have been deceived right and left. Why at any time any one should even have professed to place reliance on his word it is difficult to say. Perhaps it was because our statesmen thought they could use Hitler. In the sum he used them, and left them a laughing stock for future historians.

x x x

The Nature of war

Hitler, as I have said, means by a totalitarian war one that includes the *whole* of a nation. Whether they actually carry arms or not is of no consequence. Much as I detest war I agree with him. I go further and say that there never has been a war between peoples or nations that was not a totalitarian war to the exact extent of opportunity. The only non-totalitarian war that I can think of would be one in which each side selected a champion and victory went to the nation to which the victor belonged. And even that would not be quite so, since there would remain the consequence of the peace to the vanquished. But short of that method, every war is totalitarian in its general conduct and in its consequences.

Let us go back a few years and imagine that Scotland has declared war on England. The Scottish troops reach as far south as York and invest the city. The investing army stops all and every kind of supply entering the city. If it uses artillery the missiles are not at all selective as to whom they kill. If the people of York suggested sending out the very young and the very old, the sick and the wounded, the besiegers would refuse to allow them to pass. The reply to such a suggestion would be that the fewer the people left to eat the longer the Yorkists could withstand the assault.

Meanwhile the people of Scotland would be manufacturing whatever arms were being sent, they would have to provide food, clothing and wages for the soldiers, they would be that part of the forces without which the war would quickly collapse. What is that but totalitarian war up to the limits of the situation?

Move up to modern times. We have developed so far as to agree that when a city is taken there *ought* to be no raping of women, nor robbery, nor ill-treatment of civilian survivors. But to what other extent have we altered the situation? We, or the enemy, establish a blockade. We will allow neither food nor medicine nor clothing to reach the civilian population, and neither we nor the enemy would permit medicines, food, or anything else reaching the armed forces. And it is certain that if it were suggested that all the sick, the aged, the infirm, the very young, were to be moved out of England or Germany, neither side would agree to it being done. It would be said, rightly said, that this was helping "the enemy." War, in this respect, has not altered. It has become more deadly, but it was always as deadly as it could be. And we are considering quality, not quantity. A war does not alter its quality because in the one case bows and arrows are used and in the other machine-guns. Death and destruction, demoralization and decay, punishing the children, the sick, the insane, are features of every war. Whether the aged and the young are killed as a secondary consequence of the war is not important.

The plain truth is that the *whole* of a people never have gone and never can go to the fighting front. When Mr. Bevin told the highly intelligent House of Commons that if *his* army—the army in the workshop, in the mines, the shipyards, etc.—were disheartened then we could count the war lost, he was coming down to cold unromantic facts. We are even recognizing it on posters and by appeals that we must all help to win the war if the war is to be won. This war is on the largest and on the most merciless scale that war has ever been waged, and more than ever it is clear that our whole resources, material and mental, must take part in it if we are to win.

In what way then can any of us be considered nonbelligerent? Is it the scientist in his laboratory who studies to make warfare more deadly than it is? Is it the man who can devise some method of securing ships from being sunk, or the man working in the field who must provide food for the people—including the army. Is it the journalist who helps at least to keep people amused, or interested? Is it the Minister of Foreign Affairs who believes there are a sufficient number of people in the country as stupid as himself, and that the war may be won by praying circles? Is it the King or the Archbishop of Canterbury who believe that a day of ordered prayer will help towards victory? Would Hitler be wrong, in a military sense, provided he believed that prayer would win the war, if he used a selective sort of a weapon that would kill everyone directly they started praying? Is it stupidity or just plain ordinary lying that keeps up the fiction that when a country is at war there are actually belligerents and non-belligerents?

This aspect of war is so clear that I take little credit to myself that one of my earliest contributions to this paper dwelt upon this truth. We are all realizing it now, and we are told that we are all in the war—this war. But we were all in every war the country has fought. And one feels a little ashamed that it needed the war of 1914, when for the first time the people of this country found themselves in the fighting line, to enable them to realize so obvious a truth. Hitler has shown the world the real character of war, and if we learn that lesson aright we must learn to say "never again" with a sincerity that is deeper and stronger than when it was used as a recruiting slogan in 1914-18.

x x x

Looking Forward

How is this to be realized? As is not unusual with great questions the answer is simple, because it affirms principles only. It is the application of the principles that is difficult, because that calls for patience, a realization of the difficulties in the way, and a sense of real values that must be developed if we are to succeed in our aim.

On one side there is a demand for the destruction of nationality. I do not see it in that light. In the imaginary new world of which some of us dream, English, German, French, Italian, life will be distinct if the development of the human race is to continue. Art, literature, music, all the higher aspects of life will retain their differences of manifestation. They must do so unless we are to become no better than robots. There will be the familiar association of persons, the love of local scenery, the attachment to local customs, and so forth. These will persist, and it is important that they should persist. For the condition of progress in all directions is diversity in unity, or unity in diversity, whichever way one cares to put it. This diversity is above other things valuable in matters of opinion. It is in religion alone that diversity spells destruction. Art, science, philosophy and literature exhibit this value of unity in diversity in the clearest manner. Even politics and sociology, so far as it has advanced has done so under the same conditions. It is as bad for groups to live alone as it is for in-

dividuals. Those pseudo-scientific folk who rail against nationality are on a level with a bird that objects to the atmosphere because it limits the speed at which it might go. Without it there would be no flight.

What has to be killed is not merely the idea that nations *ought* to live alone, but the idea that they *can* live alone. Our politicians and others, who but a short time back were talking against collective action, proved only their complete unfitness to guide public opinion. Collective action there must be wherever two groups of people come into contact. Then the behaviour of one group is determined by the behaviour of the other group. We may be in friendly relations and our conduct will be of one order, we may be in unfriendly relations and our conduct is of another order. There is collective action when the object is to join in the development of the friendly side of life, but there is equally collective action when we watch each with our fingers on the triggers of guns. Action and reaction between groups that are in contact is inevitable. Whether it is a friendly or unfriendly reaction is a matter of detail. The principle of collective action remains unaffected.

War may stop a dispute but it does not settle it. The application of force does not convince the losing party he is wrong, only that he is physically weaker than the other party. As 1914 proved to the world, submission is made by one of the parties in conditions that inevitably develop the desire to hit back somehow and at some time. The appeal to arms is an appeal to force whenever and however made. As in the present conflict, it may be that no other course is open, but that should not blind thoughtful men and women to the nature of the "settlement" that is to be achieved.

x x x

A Suggestion

At a critical moment of the war before the collapse of the French Army, our Prime Minister offered to establish a common citizenship with France. There was to be one army and navy and air force, one currency and a common citizenship. If that had been accepted at the outset of the war it might have meant a complete difference in the conduct of affairs. As it is, it indicates the kind of directton in which we ought to work. At the opening of the last war I said in these columns that we were in the midst of a civil war. That is doubly true of this one. Over a large part of the world it is sheer delusion to act as though the different nations were absolute entities. One might as well think of Manchester and London or Nuremburg and Berlin as being independent entities. There is not a country in the world that can build a wall round itself and so make itself independent. We have to work together or fight together. Peace, real peace, or world piracy is the choice before us. An "armed peace" is a sheer absurdity. It means living in a state of war in which the death-roll is reduced to its lowest, and the process of demoralization less active than during formal warfare.

Now suppose that the offer of Churchill to France had been accepted. Suppose, either during the war or after, the United States had entered the confederation, with a common agreement of free and equal access to the wealth of the "possessions" of these peoples. Suppose also that all other nations were invited to enter the confederation on the same terms, and that so long as it were necessary a common armed force should be maintained for the purpose of resisting aggression. Is there any nation in the world that would dare to attack such a combination? How many of the smaller and weaker nations would wish to stand outside?

The United States itself is an example of what may be done in that direction. If the North had, little more than two generations ago, submitted to the Southern States converting themselves into a separate federation, we might have seen two competing powers armed to the teeth, maintaining an armed peace; and the repercussion on Canada would not have been negligible.

It is well for us, at the moment, that Britannia rules the seas. But it is idiotic to assume that the civilized world will forever submit to one nation commanding movement along the highway of the world. We must take the first steps towards the creation of the super-State if civilization is to survive. To imagine that the world can gain a real peace merely by beating Germany is ridiculous. To think that war may be ended by the adoption of this or that economic or religious or ethical theory, is but to glorify this or that form of monomania. National differences must continue, with whatever differences of culture and rule that may be. Progress needs difference, rather than uniformity, for development. Our immediate task is to crush Hitlerism, but even that victory will fall short of its chief merit if it does not open our eyes to the larger issue.

That is why I have headed these notes "Thanks to Hitler."

Saving Christian Civilization

By: C. L. D'AVOINE

A perusal of some of the English papers to hand, convinces one that professional Christians and other religiously-minded persons in England, taking advantage of the War, are straining every nerve to boost Christianity. True to the traditions of their profession, the clergy know that in time of national calamity and disaster the minds of the people are full of anxiety and fear and they are thus easily persuaded to seek the help and consolation of religion. At such times the clergy literally make hay while the sun shines.

The Archbishop of Canterbury was early in the field in these troubled days to show to the people the importance of religion in national affairs and the mighty influence he himself wields with God. He started, as is well known, soon after the Munich conference when he thought that Mr. Chamberlain had made history in coming to a peaceful settlement with Hitler. According to the aged Archbishop the occasion was worthy of a solemn thanksgiving. He lost no time in holding such a service which was duly attended by Royalty and all the great ones of the land. All this proved to be futile for a few months later war began in right earnest. He then discovered that a day of solemn prayer was necessary to invoke God to be on our side in this mighty struggle. Almost immediately after, disaster upon disaster began to overtake us as the King of the Belgians surrendered; this was followed by the Flanders debacle. Not to be daunted, the worthy Archbishop decided that more prayers were necessary to appease the Almighty and with the consent of the King, prayers were ordered in all the Churches of England and the Empire. The answer to this blitzkrieg supplication was the collapse of France.

To many who must have given a thought to this display of piety, these disasters clearly showed that God was not willing to help us and that prayers were wasted on a Being, assuming that he really exists,—who appeared supremely indifferent to our appeal. On the contrary, He seemed to favour the enemy openly, otherwise it is difficult to account why disaster upon disaster followed our efforts to combat the evil designs of the Totalitarian States.

The ways of God are mysterious, say our theologians. Keep on hammering, they declare, and in the end He must come to our side for He is Justice and Righteousness and He will not allow Evil to triumph over Righteousness. For those of us who no longer believe that a Mighty Being controls the destiny of man, we cannot help wondering at this obstinate faith in Him when experience clearly shows that no Supernatural Being located in the sky takes any interest in the affairs of Man. Is not this one of those vagaries of the human mind which it is so difficult to shake?

So far failure to gain anything from God, instead of weakening the hopes of these Christians, seems to have stimulated them to greater efforts. Public prayers became more numerous and insistent and all kinds of spiritual advice were freely given on how to protect oneself and how to win divine favour.

Cardinal Hinsley, who on his side was as active as the Archbishop of Canterbury, made the important discovery that besides incessant prayers to the Holy Virgin and St. George, medals blessed by him and sold for a consideration were the best antidote against air-raids and sudden violent death, in the words of the Church,—Acts of God. Meanwhile the enemy rained bombs over England and over London in particular, destroying right and left, not sparing even the houses of God of which a large number have been destroyed, and in some instances killing people who were therein assembled to ask God for his protection! Just imagine a God who could not protect his own houses!

Religiously-minded politicians like Lord Halifax and others, the Radio and Cinemas came to the help of the clergy, and they announced that England was fighting to save Christian Civilization from the evil powers of the totalitarian States which have adopted Paganism, Atheism and Barbarism as their creed. This slogan caught on and was received with tumultous cheers and applause wherever it was reported. Most probably people swayed by emotion and other sentiments took all this as pure propaganda to stimulate their efforts to the utmost to resist and to destroy these powers that have no mercy and no morality in their methods of warfare. In war time it is, of course necessary to paint the enemy in his true colours and Germany and Italy have amply proved that their colours are of the blackest possible dye. The horrors they have commit-

ted on defenceless people, on the aged, women and children, on people whc till the last relied and trusted their word of honour, have sent a shudder through the world and every right-minded person is absolutely convinced that peace, liberty and security in this world are impossible unless these forces of evil are destroyed for ever.

It is perfectly true that in the Germans, England is fighting a real monster, incarnated devils in human form. But in spite of this the Germans and Italians are not pagans and atheists. Hitler boasts that God is on his side in the same manner that the ex-Kaiser boasted in 1914. He and Mussolini were brought up as Roman Catholics and there is every reason to think that are so now.

As a matter of fact, we have Hitler's own statement that he is a believer in God. Speaking at Munich in February last he declared that he believed in God as he believed 20 years ago, "I believe," he said, "that there is a God who created nations and gave them all equal rights. It cannot be that Providence would allow our nation to be ruined. This was my belief 20 years ago and it is my belief today. I am a Catholic and I know well the Catholic Church." Mussolini is not only a good Catholic, he has made a concordat with the Pope and he has consented to hand over all the children of Italy to be educated by Catholic priests. Hitler and Mussolini helped Franco, the Catholic champion to fight the Spanish Republicans, said to be under the influence of Bolshevic Russia. England allowed the Republicans to be beaten because she hated Godless Russia and hoped that Hitler would fight Russia. She lent Hitler millions to that effect. After this it is simply ridiculous for Christians in England to talk of the Germans and Italians being Pagans and Atheists.

England to her great credit and honour is fighting single—handed to defeat these infernal hordes who have made up their minds to persecute ruthlessly, to destroy all that civilization has built and to impose their tyrannical and despotic rules and domination over the world. England is fighting most gloriously with a bravery and heroism that has captured the imaginations of the world to save us from these sanguinary hordes. All of us feel in our heart of hearts that we must help the war efforts of England to the full so that victory will crown our sacrifices. But we deny that England is fighting to save Christian Civilization. This slogan is false.

One is glad to notice that in England there are some people who have seriously questioned this claim. They have energetically protested that England is not fighting to save Christian Civilization and they have pertinently asked: What, indeed, is Christian Civilization? It is true, they point out, that Christianity takes credit for all that is progressive and beneficial in our civilization, but has Christianity, they ask, really contributed anything to the civilization of the West?

This question must have gone home somewhere for some apologists have come out to lamely excuse the Christian claim by explaining that by "Christian Civilization" is meant the reign of righteousness, truth, liberty, brotherhood and peace which Christianity has introduced into the world for the last 1900 years.

To make even such a bold claim one must rely on the general ignorance of people who have been usually taught that before the advent of Christianity the world was sunk in moral darkness—these were the times of Paganism and Barbarism—that is to say of vice and social degradation.

Mr. A. Gowans Whyte of the Rationalist Press Association of London has done well to refute the preposterous claims of those Christians who say that all that is good, progressive and beneficial in our civilization is due to Christianity. In a pamphlet entitled "The Danger of Being an Atheist" he traces the record of Christianity soon after it rose into power till now.

It is a foul record of wars, brutality, atrocity, hatred and dissensions and ferocity from which even a Nazi might derive encouragement! Things did not improve after the Reformation. The history of the Inquisition alone makes one shudder. It is a familiar story to most of us who have taken the trouble to study it, but not to average Christians who are blissfully ignorant that such a Frankenstein, which lasted for centuries, ever existed in the world.

Mr. A. Gowans Whyte tells us something about the methods of that dreaded institution. "The victim suspected of heresy, or conveniently denounced by an enemy, was seized, subjected to a mockery of a trial, tortured with all the ingenuity that Holy Inquisitors could devise, and condemned either to a lingering death in a foul prison or to a briefer one at the

stake. In its essential technique, and even in details, the Inquisition seems to have been the model upon which the Gestapo and the Ogpu have organized their nefarious methods. Every thing done by these notorious modern persecutors can claim a host of Christian precedents. The claim extends even to the persecution of the Jews."

The religious Wars of the Chrisians alone, which extended during centuries, show a hatred and ferocity which will put even the Nazis to shame. Well, the less said about Christian Civilization the better. All we can say is that we would still be in the Jungle if we had followed the behests of Christianity to the letter. It never encouraged researches and discoveries; on the contrary it condemned these as the prompting of the Devil. This world was only a temporary abode; the goal was Heaven.

Western Civilization owes all that is good and progressive to science. It is the enlightenment of science that has softened the coarse and brutal manners of the Age of Faith. It is through science and not religion that we have learnt to improve conditions which make for better health and well-being. It is science that has brought about the annihilation of space and made possible communication with distant places and people. It is through freedom of thought, which religion denies us, that the world has become more tolerant and considerate. It is science that has taught us how to avert epidemics and famine, provided the means to combat deadly diseases. In fact science has provided all the amenities which make life worth living. It is under such conditions that Civilization is possible, but not by the promulgation of rigid dogmas. To religion, on the other hand, we owe sectarianism, ignorance, intolerance, superstition, bigotry and fanaticism. It is not under such conditions that Civilization can progress.

It would not be worth the fighting and the risk if the object was to save Christian Civilization. Non-Christians, Atheists, Hindus, Parsees, Buddhists, Jews, Muslims and others will no doubt give all the help in their power to see England triumph over Totalitarianism, but surely these people will not be interested to save Christian Civilization !

STANDARD WORKS BY FAMOUS FREETHINKERS

Thinkers' Library

Education: Intellectual, Moral and Physical by Herbert Spencer. A great book on a great subject.

A Short History of the World by H. G. Wells. In the pages of this book we review the pageant of earth, of life, of primitive man, and of civilisation, as seen by one of the most vivid writers of our day.

Anthropology (in 2 Vols) by Sir E. B. Tylor. This is the scientific "Book of Genesis." Vol. 1 describes the life of early Man and how he learned to talk and write. Vol. 2 deals with the arts of life and pleasure, and the growth of Knowledge and Religion.(Illustrated).

The Evolution of the Idea of God by Grant Allen. Twenty years were occupied in preparing and ten years in writing this standard work on the history of the God-idea—which is the history of religion itself.

The Churches and Modern Thought by Vivian Phelips. A frank, fearless, and fascinating study of the question "Is Christianity True ?"

The Martyrdom of Man by Winwood Reade. Acclaimed as a classic of the nineteenth century, unequalled in artistry of language and lucidity of style.

The Evidence for the Supernatural by Dr. Ivor, LL. Tuckett. Surveys the answer of Science to the question "Is Spiritualism True ?" Is the Supernatural Credible ?"

The Existence of God by Joseph McCabe. A scholarly and searching examination into the origin, history, and present position of the belief in God with a reply to Sir J. Jeans, Sir A. Eddington, and other apologists.

Psychology for Every Man (and Woman) by A. E. Mander. Gives a clear and concise introduction to the study of human character.

Letters on Reasoning by J. M. Robertson. A scholarly exposition on rational thinking.

Clearer Thinking; (Logic for Every Man) by A. E. Mander. A valuable and practical guide to clear and logical thinking.

Man and His Universe by J. Langdon-Davies. An excellent survey of Man's progress from a primitive outlook on life to a modern scientific one and the causes that contributed to it.

First Principles by Herbert Spencer (Rs. 2/-) A clear and orderly synthesis of knowledge.

The Rights of Man by Thomas Paine. A treatise in defence of those principles of freedom for which the author so valiantly fought and suffered.

The Universe of Science by Prof. H. Levy. An excellent book on the Philosophy of Science.

Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings by Henry Maudsley, M. D. Reveals the psychological processes by which man arrived at beliefs commonly attributed to mystical sources.

Price Re. 1-2-0 each, post free.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

REASON

(Estd. 1931)

The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road
Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris)

Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

We invite contributions of not more than 1,500 words on topics of interest to rationalists. They should be type-written. If not published they will not be returned unless stamps are enclosed.

R. A. I. Membership Rs. 5/- Foreign 8s. annually which includes "Reason".

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 3/- & Foreign 4s. 6d. or $1.25 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

NOTICE

Indian Institute of Sociology Hall
Near Opera House, Tram Terminus.

Thursday, November 14—Time 6-45 P.M.

The Test of Reason.

A Discussion.

Various Speakers.

Wednesday, November 27—Time 6-45 P.M.

Caste System in India.

Speaker: A. R. Desai

Followed by a discussion.

Public Lecture Anouncement.

See cover page ii

Notes & News.

WE are pleased to note the response received to the appeal made in the last issue for the Lecture Fund. As readers will note the first lecture has been fixed for 14th December next when Mr. M. N. Roy will speak on "The Spiritual Genius of India." We expect a crowded Hall and advise friends to apply for reserved seats early.

x x x

WE publish on page 205 in this issue a letter received from one of our members. It is a very interesting suggestion for a proper distribution of the financial burden of the R. A. I. It is to be seen what other members think of it. There is also a suggestion from another quarter that rationalists should donate to the R. A. I. an amount equivalent to what they spend on festivals such as Divali and Christmas. We pass on the suggestion without comment.

x x x

BEFORE the end of this month the R. A. I. will be publishing the second and revised edition of Mr. S. D. Nadkarni's excellent book *Rama-Rajya*. The book is in the form of an open letter to Mr. Gandhi and contains a masterly criticism of his ideal of Rama-Rajya. The new edition has a *Foreword* by the ex-premier Mr. B. G. Kher, and an *Introduction* by our editor. It is a timely publication and should be read by all. A *Marathi* edition will also be published shortly afterwards.

x x x

DUE to the War and delay of mails Free-thought journals from other parts of the world do not reach us very regularly. But just as we go to press the September issue of *The Rationalist* the official organ of the Rationalist Association of Australia and the August-September issue of *The N. Z. Rationalist* the official organ of the New Zealand Rationalist Association and Sunday Freedom League reach us. These two societies are doing considerable and magnificent work for the "best of causes." We wish them all success.

x x x

WE gratefully acknowledge the following. A. U., Agra, Rs. 5/-; Dr. S. Hurry, Lonavla, Rs. 10/-; G. B. Singh, Lahore, Rs. 10/-; Rup Kishore Mehra, Agra, Rs. 3/-. Donations to *Lecture Fund* acknowledged on cover page ii.

A. S.

Items of Interest

By **Abraham Solomon**

ABDUL Rehman Kabrudin, but known to one of his victims as Abu-ben-Adam and reputed to possess supernatural powers was allotted the maximum penalty allowed by law in the case, two years and nine months rigorous imprisonment.

x x x

HERE are his achievements. On the pretence that he could turn base metal into gold he duped several prosperous merchants to the tune of Rs 5,00,000 (about £ 38,000) directed one of his victims to recite a certain passage from the Quran 28,360 times daily, neither more nor less. The poor man tried doing it non-stop from 9 p. m. to 5 a. m. but was unable to recite it more than 3,000 times. Another even went to Kerbala where he was told to meet a man who would grant him the power to convert base metal into gold.

x x x

AND what did our Abu-ben-Adam do with the five lakhs of rupees? Well here you are! Among other things he gave Rs. 3,000 for a mosque in Poona, Rs. 13,000 for a mosque in Anand, Rs. 12,000 to the Silver Jubilee Fund, and Rs. 1,000 for the Muslim League, and married 12 times! Generosity resides in curious places. But what dupes these merchants be! Gad! Sir, Barnum was right! There's a sucker born into this world every minute!

x x x

WELL, here is another. Balkrishna Ragunath Palmist and astrologer is reported to have demanded three tolas of gold and "a virgin girl to be lodged at his house for one day" of a woman who sought a clue from him to the whereabouts of her lost son.

x x x

THE astrologer tied the piece of gold which the woman gave him in a piece of cloth and asked her to keep it in "a safe place" in her house. She is also stated to have taken a girl with her. The son returned after some time. She thereupon opened the packet given to her by the astrologer expecting to find the piece of gold. But lo! the gold had turned into a piece of brass!

x x x

EIGHT years ago Mr. Purshottam Tricumdas had arranged to stage his play "Naya". Miss Masani, the courageous Parsee lady who was to act was persuaded by Mr. Tricumdas and her brother to withdraw from the play which she did most unwillingly, as the organisers thought that this would satisfy the wounded feelings of the Parsee Community which considered the action of the Parsee lady very undesirable and had voiced its strong protests through the editorial and news columns of the orthodox and bigoted Parsee paper *Jam-e-Jamshed*.

x x x

THE play however could not be staged due to the crowds of the members of that community who gathered outside the theatre, some demanding that portions of the play should be deleted, some that copies of the play should be publicly burned, some did not want the play to be staged.

x x x

THERE does not seem to have been much progress made since the days of 1932. The peace of mind of some of our amicable Parsee brethren was greatly disturbed again recently. An amateur dramatic company was to stage a drama entitled "Aflatoon" in aid of the War Gifts Fund, in which some young ladies of that community were to take part. It may be noted that one Parsee lady who was to cat is a professional dancing teacher and conducts a Dancing school in Bombay.

x x x

ONE philanthrophic gentleman was even prepared to donate the whole amount of profit expected from the play, provided it was stopped. The play was however staged without any untoward incident and was well attended.

x x x

BUT the orthodox Parsee Paper *Jam-e-Jamshed* which had created such a hubbub eight years ago, and which many of our Parsee friends assure us that the would not care to touch even with a pair of tongs, remained silent. How come? The Parsee lady who took part happens to be the wife of one of the Proprietors of that paper. All honour to her anyway.

x x x

OUR Parsee friends are indeed a puzzle to us. They are eager to pick up the latest in dress, style, art, etc. but where religion and social customs are concerned they bid fare to compete with the most bigoted and ignorant communities in India. No one can say that the community is illiterate. The percentage of education is higher than that of any

other community in India. But at least for this community, it seems to have failed miserably; in them it has not developed that breadth of vision and love of progress that one always associates with culture.

x x x

IT is however encouraging to note that many members of that community strongly disliked the recent show of ignorance and bigotry and many a young man is openly attacking and condemning the crude religious beliefs and customs of that community. We hope this is the outcome of a firm conviction of the harmfulness, falsity and futility of these beliefs and customs and not a mere show of superficial modernity.

x x x

THE religious organisation of the Parsee community is one of the most efficient business organisations, competing in efficiency if not in subtlety even with the Catholic Church. With millions of rupees invested in tax-free landed property managed by trusts, the priest class is assured of a most easy and luxurious life. Births, marriages and deaths, to say nothing of the hundred and one other religious ceremonies like "Dosla" etc. are a source of much money to the priests. Besides, the Fire Temples are the beneficieries in the legacy left by every Parsee, as a part of it is given to them as a matter of course.

x x x

WE know of the case of an old Parsee gentleman living or rather existing on a bare income of Rs. 40/- per month whose life's savings amount to about Rs. 8,000/- Having become old he is now thinking of doing something to assure himself a safe passage to the more blissful world. This is what he is thinking of doing. Rs. 2,000/- to be set apart for his own funeral rites, Rs. 2,000 for those of his wife, and a trust to be made of the remaining Rs. 4,000/-, the income from which is to be used for religious observances for his two sons and their sons and grandsons and so forth, as both of them are indifferent to religion and he does not expect them to indulge in any religious observances. Just imagine! The whole life's savings of a man to be handed over lock stock and barrel to the priests, while the poor fellow ekes out a precarious existence on a bare forty rupees a month. Unless some courageous young men with means determine to free the community from the clutches of superstition and their powerful religious organisations the outlook is indeed very dark.

EVEN the most eminent and rich members of the Parsee Community like Sir Cowasji Jehangir and others had to give way some years ago before the fanaticism and bigotry of their co-religionists. When the multi-millionaire the late Mr. F. E. Dinshaw died, although he had made a specific clause in his will that he should be burried by the side of his wife where he had purchased a piece of land for the purpose, his son and other rich and well-known members of the community could not succeed in carrying out his wishes. Even some of his trustees would not take the grave risks of going against the fanatical fury of their bigoted co-religionists, and Mr. F. E. Dinshaw was in the usual manner delivered unto the vultures.

x x x

A cyclone unprecedented in strength and fury in the memory of the present generation swept over Bombay causing tremendous damage and loss of life. More than a hundred persons lost their lives and the destruction of property is estimated at more than Rs. 75,00,000. The Coroner of Bombay passing judgment over the dead bodies of fishermen who lost their lives trying to save their boats and huts, their only means of livelihood entered them as "Acts of God." Had this devastation been the act of man we wonder what would have happened to him. Hitler is doing it and there is such a ballyhoo. We shall not be surprised if some people think of having a day of thanksgiving to the most merciful God because the cyclone was not more destructive than it was.

x x x

A Mahomedan landlord who owns a bungalow at Andheri was very distressed when he saw the havoc that the cyclone had played with his property. As this happened in the holy month of *Ramzan* a season when itinerant holy fakirs are very active one of these happened to visit the Mahomedan landlord just as he was lamenting over his loss. "You can thank your stars," said the fakir, "that your house and all round about here was not washed away completely." "God, as a matter of fact," he said, "had made up his mind to submerge Bombay completely but at the last moment relented, and only sent strong winds to remind people of his existence and their duty towards holy men during the month of *Ramzan*."

x x x

THE landlord, of course was very much impressed. He made the fakir stay and fed him for three days. At the end of which, the fakir assured the landlord that no-

thing would happen to his property henceforth as he had blessed it and all his belongings.

x x x

NOW here we have a fakir who actually knew the views of God beforehand. We would ask our Rationalist friends not to laugh at this. Judging from many things we hear and read now-a-days there are many professors of religion who certainly claim more culture and knowledge than that poor fakir, but who nevertheless are in the same boat with that Mahomedan mendicant. They seem to know the object and designs of God.

x x x

THE present war for instance has given them the best opportunity to explain to the less informed their views of God and His reason for allowing the present halocaust. According to Rev. Acland the Anglican Bishop of Bombay, speaking at a Rotary Club Dinner recently, God Has given man "free-will" and we cannot blame him for the present chaos, misery and war. But is not God supposed to have forseen, even predestined the exact degree of strength or weakness of will in each human being?

x x x

WE recommend to Rev. Acland and others of his way of thinking, the following from the excellent booklet "The God of War" by Mr. Joseph McCabe:

You may tell the mother who bends over the bed where her blue-eyed child lies in the grip of diphtheria that God is saving it from the perils and temptations of earthly life, but the agony goes on. You may tell the soldier's widow in whose hand the cruel telegram flutters that God has taken his servant to himself, but the shadow remains upon her life and that of her children. You may talk about the punishment of sin, as the priests did in Babylon a thousand years ago, when an earthquake shakes ten thousand happy homes into ruins, when a brave small nation writhes in its blood under the blows and kicks of a bully, when millions face the winter with thin clothing and scant food during the years of depression, when famine goes through a land like the tooth of a lean wolf, but men and women wonder in their simple way, why God who is so wise cannot punish—if punishment *is* a divine attribute—the cruel and vicious without smiting so many who are not cruel and vicious; and why a God, who is so rich in all good things, devised an earth in which there are not enough good things to go round.

The Philosophical Revolution

(*Concluded from page* 194.)

of the task. they could not proceed further. That glorious trail has yet to be followed to its end. The revolution must somehow be completed; because unless it is completed it is impossible to make any headway in the political or the economic field. Mahatma Gandhi has already set in motion a most terrible reaction against this half-born revolution. I am not sure if it has not succeeded in practically killing it. It was the business of the philosophic revolution to set the mind of man free from mysticism, magic and miracles. Gandhi has reintroduced these elements in our social and political life and thus pushed back this revolution at least by a hundred years. Gandhism represents the greatest danger to the freedom and progress of the country. Unless the mind of man is freed from the shackles of blind prejudice, uncritical faith and backward social and religious customs he cannot possibly achieve his political emancipation. Gandhism is today strengthening the bonds that bind man to a decadent system of thought and behaviour. The first and foremost duty of every intellectual, therefore, is to destroy Gandhism root and branch as a condition precedent for completing the philosophic revolution.

INDISPENSABLE TO ALL SERIOUS STUDENTS.

1 INDIAN FEUDAL STATES AND NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE... ... 0-4-0

2 PROBLEM OF AGRARIAN INDEBTEDNESS. 0-2-0

3 GANDHI'S TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE X-RAYED. 0-2-0

4 EXIT GOD! 0-2-0

By A. R. DESAI.

Can be had from:

The Hindustan Newspapers Limited.

21, Dalal Street, Fort,

BOMBAY.

A Call To Rationalists

The following letter has been received from one of our members who as readers will note is a keen and active rationalist. He has always helped the R. A. I. from the very beginning and when help was most needed. It is due to such members as he that the R. A. I. has been able to keep the flag of Freethought aloft in spite of heavy odds. Letters like these help to make us realize that our efforts are being appreciated. We take this opportunity of expressing our thanks to our correspondent for his keen interest in the R. A. I.

—Hon. Secretaries R. A. I.

Dear Mr. Solomon.

Few Rationalists will deny that the Rationalist Association of India is doing excellent work for the enlightenment of and the inculcation of a scientific outlook among the people of this country. Again, even among non-rationalists few will deny that religion has been the bulwark of the most reactionary, unprogressive and ignorant elements in this country and has proved to be the greatest obstacle to the happiness and prosperity of our people.

Every year millions of rupees are spent for the propitiation of gods and the up-keep of priests. Every believer thinks it his duty to do his utmost to support his particular brand of belief and spends a definite part of his income for the same.

We who are fortunate enough to be freed from the shackles of superstition should pause to consider what our duty is. It is not enough to rest content after having enlightened ourselves and having given up crude and harmful religious beliefs and practices to feel that they are not worth bothering about. It is not enough merely to send Rs. 5/- every year and be members of the Rationalist Association of India.

If we believe in the philosophy of life which is based on the mental attitude known as Rationalism and if we truly believe that the spread of Rationalism will mean greater human happiness, greater social justice, we have a definite duty to perform. And every Rationalist must realize this.

I would like our members to realize the debt they owe to courageous workers in the Rationalist movement due to whose arduous work we are able to have some independence of thought and action. I would like them to realize if it is possible to maintain and increase our intellectual liberties in the absence of a strong and organised Rationalist Association for the purpose.

And yet it is a pity that the Rationalist Association of India which is the only free-thought organisation in the whole of India should have to languish for want of sufficient funds.

It is a point which should force itself up the minds of Rationalists in India that the activities of a body which seeks to further the cause of intellectual liberty and social justice should be hampered for want of funds.

And also that the Rationalist Association of India has been existing for eleven years due to the sincere and completely honorary work of a few Rationalists who have even to spend from their own pockets for the same.

I would like Rationalists to realize how much money believers spend for the upkeep of their particular religion, their beliefs, customs and ceremonies. I would like them to realize how much they themselves would have spent had they still believed in all that nonsense.

Having realized this I suggest that every member of the Rationalist Association of India should voluntarily donate every year just one day's income to the Association. The income of just one day out of three hundred and sixty five is nothing compared to what they would have spent on religion had they been believers.

I do not believe in mere words. Words should be accompanied by actions. And accordingly I am sending herewith a cheque for Rs. 35/- as my share.

If members do not wish to disclose their incomes they should give a pseudonym under which their donations should be acknowledged in *Reason*.

With every appreciation of your excellent efforts for a noble cause and personal regards,

Yours very sincerely,

N. M. B.

Rationalism and Religion

By W. Galnville Cook.

Reproduced from the *Rationalist*, Australia.

IN the New Testament there is a parable from which we as rationalists should learn something. It tells of an unclean spirit that had gone out of a man. Returning to its former abode and finding it empty it went and found seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and all of them entered into possession of that man's soul. So that the last state of that man was worse than the first.

Now we believe that religion is not true, that it leads mankind into ways that are at best blind alleys, and at worst lead to destruction.

We endeavour by the use of calm dispassionate reason to replace the false by the true, to teach man reliance on human effort rather than on a non-existent supernatural being.

That men should lose faith in the God of the religions is but a first step on the difficult way that leads to wisdom. And if the second step is not taken then the last stage may be worse than the first.

In times of great unrest, when terrific stresses tear society apart, the emotionally unstable will seek refuge in all kinds of queer irrational cults.

The man who loses faith in orthodox Christianity, if he does not take the second step of acquiring a scientific outlook and approach to hurman problems, may be an easy prey for the Christian Scientist, the British Israelite, the astrologer, the spiritualist or some other sect as irrational as orthodox christianity, and possibly even more harmful.

The decay of Christian religion in Nazi Germany has not been a blessing to that country for it has been replaced by mystical cults enthroning sadist brutalities and overthrowing reason.

The rationalist then desires, not merely to eliminate religion but to substitute for it a reliance on reason, on the application of the scientific method to all our problems, and on a strenuous human effort for progress.

To charge rationalism with being only negative and destructive is to fail to understand rationalism.

It is a common query to ask the rationalist what he is going to put in place of religion. There are many answers to this. To replace the false by the true is itself a positive and not a negative thing.

However, we now wish to stress that the person who talks as if the destruction of the Churches was the be-all and end-all of rationalism is not a rationalist. He has no understanding of what rationalism is. Marx wrote these pregnant words, "Merely to deny religion is futile. It is a dialectical result of man's essential nature being negated by material conditions of life."

We must try to understand all the implications of this. Religion flourishes on the frustrations under which man frets. It finds its best soil where men are denied justice, where there is helpless unhappiness, where man is the plaything of forces beyond his control.

As Marx has also written of religion. "It is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the kindliness of a heartless world, the spirit of unspiritual conditions. Criticism of religion is therefore at heart a criticism of the vale of misery for which religion is the promised vision. Criticism has torn away the imaginary flowers with which his chains were bedecked, not in order that man should wear his chains without the comfort of illusions, but that he may throw off the chains and pluck the living flowers."

This must be remembered if we are to be truly rationalists working for human betterment. Religion may be logically wrong, based on unreason, intellectually bankrupt. We believe that it is. But whilst injustice and social wrongs prevail religion will have a psychological role to play that will tend to defeat the critical attack.

It is necessary then to work for the removal of those wrongs in society that give rise to religious consolations. The Christian may balance the miseries of this life by eternal bliss in the hereafter. This way of escape is closed to the rationalist. He knows that if happiness is to be won it must be won here and now; he must realize that if reason is to hold sway, and the fantastic shadows of religion be dispelled by the rising of the sun of truth, then he must build a world wherein no man is denied the full and free development of the best that is in him.

A lucid exposition of the Philosophy of Freethought by one of the greatest Freethinkers of our day.

FOUR LECTURES ON FREETHOUGHT AND LIFE

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

PRICE 12 As. POSTAGE 1 ANNA.

ROOT OF THE TROUBLE
And Rooting It Out

By: V. S. MUDVEDKAR

I—Introductory.

Sign of Demoralisation.

IT was probably Macaulay who said that the sign of deterioration was not deformity but misplaced beauty. Similarly the sign of demoralisation is not the fall of the low—who are too low to fall—thefts by beggars, fights by roughs, quarrels among fools, or abuses amongst the vulgar; but similar deeds—though under different names or in different fields—by the high-placed, the respected, the emulated, the venerated—by writers, litterateurs, leaders, rulers, soldiers—vulgar recrimination under the name of discussion; duplicity and trickery under the name of politics; art and intrigue under the name of diplomacy; circumlocution, equivocation, procrastination, under the name of statesmanship; silly obstinacy under the name of prestige; large-scale barbarity under the name of war!

Fatality, Imbecility, or Bravery?

2. The history of the world, ancient, modern, current—which is the history of savage wars and shameful intrigues—is nothing but a huge chronicle of the degeneration and demoralization of the leaders of men. And the pity of it is that the position, far from improving by the bitter experience of 2000 years, is on the way to greater deterioration day by day! Look at the international wars abroad and the civil wars at home, over the entire world. Starving the poor, cheating the simple, frightening the weak, bowing before the strong, has been the politics of the day at the one end; and at the other, deadly wars without declaration and dirty wars with acclamation; official neutrality in the face of open instigation and abetment; isolation in the prospect of general conflagration; mutual petty pacts of trade and commerce in the midst of universal rain of death and hunger! Oh God! Is this the fatalists' struggle of vindicating the doctrine of fatality, by translating it into action? Or, is it the effect of incorrigible human imbecility, or of the stupid notion of bravery? Can there be deeper degradation and demoralisation of the ideal, intellectual, vaunting, prating, Man? Is there no hope of recovery from this disgraceful state?

Stale notion of Patriotism.

3. Or take the simpler instance of love of one's country. This is a stale notion of love, centuries old. Why its praise and parade in the year of grace 1940, by people who have seen the disastrous war of 1914-18, are engaged in the more devastating war of 1939-?, and are in daily apprehension of a perpetual, ghastly, beastly war? Why the praise, song, shout, brawl, about national freedom and patriotism, like tender school-children under the guidance of country school-teachers, by scientists and statesmen, by sages and philosophers, by jurists and journalists, by senators and premiers, by Hitlers and Stalins, by Chamberlains and Daladiers, by Roosevelts and Mussolinis, by Shaws and Wells, by Mahatmas and Sardars, by Natarajans and Hornimans? Why not freedom of the world and happiness of the human race instead?

World as a Family.

4. The time has certainly now arrived, in view of the development of fast communications and the inventions of quick destruction and devastation of humanity and property—which, however, can easily be turned into means of preserving, elevating, enriching humanity—to consider the world as a large family, and tackle the problem of bread—and also of pride—along the lines of typical family lives of the day.

Differences Inevitable.

5. Of course, there have always been—and there will necessarily be—differences, of opinion, taste, whim, among the different members of every family—between brothers, sisters, father and son, husband and wife. But are the differences ever allowed to reach the limit of strangling each other, starving each other, hacking each other—except, of course, in very rare cases of absolutely rude, incompetent, and idiotic management of family affairs? And, what is the secret of the happiness of normal family lives? The head, who has the responsibility of managing the family, has no interest of "his", different from that of the family—no axe of his to grind, no bread of his to butter. His interest—and his pride—is in the successful and beautiful management of the family, and and taking celestial pleasure at the success.

Impossible ?

6. Why should not the world be similarly managed, in an age in which one can travel round the world in a week, in which one nation can almost raze to the ground another nation in a week? And, as a matter of fact, the earth is so vast, nature is so bountiful, science so munificent, and the intelligence of man so fruitful, that, with the help of the present amount of resources that is now being employed for the destruction and devastation of humanity and property, the present population of the world can, not only be fed—and clothed and sheltered—but the present standard of living of the different sections can even be considerably raised. And, if the daily progress of science and the cunning of man be hereafter found to be unequal to meet the needs of the daily increasing amount of population, it would at least surely be found to be equal to the task of regulating the growth of population, so as to keep it within the limits of the available outturn of provisions and space, by means far less painful, far less shameful, far less horrible, and far more honourable, than that of bombs, guns, gas.

Similarity of People and Systems.

7. Further, I do not think the people of the different countries of the world are essentially different from one another, any more than the different sections of the different peoples or the different members of different families are. That is to say, I do not think that the people of one country are humans, of another are brutes, of a third are devils, of a fourth are angels. Similarly, the different political or territorial units and their respective system or theories striving for the welfare of their peoples, such as imperialism, nationalism, capitalism, socialism, Marxism, Gandhism, are so many different branches of the same tree, the roots of which have been worm-eaten if not have become absolutely rotten. If some of the systems as imperialism, nationalism, capitalism, are clearly and avowedly sectarian, others like socialism and communism are not sufficiently comprehensive—all-loving or all-embracing. And that is the root of the constant clash and continuous strife in the world—as in the land.

Similarity of wars and quarrels.

8. Nor is there any fundamental difference between the essence of international wars and the essence of political party quarrels in the land—between Congress, Liberals, Democrats Labourites, Muslim-Leaguers, Mahasabhaites. As in the international so in the national field also, the leaders are quarrelling and fighting for something more theoretical, sentimental, sectional, or ceremonial, than for the essential or substantial matter, for which they profess, proclaim, and perhaps believe to be fighting viz. the well-being of the entire people. An explanation of the one trouble would thus appear to be sufficient to furnish an explanation of the other.

Absence of Improvement.

9. There has not been the least improvement in the condition of the people of the land, notwithstanding the several changes in the political system, from the Mogul to the Mahratta, from the Native to the British, from the British to the Congress. The beggars are begging, the thieves are stealing, the poor are crying, the rich are enjoying, the farmer is toiling and starving with a loin-cloth round his waist and a broken plough in his hand, and the labourer is sweating and striking for a belly-full of meal a day; today as in the days of yore. Nay, a clear change has been brought about the other way! To the ancient miseries and crimes of begging and robbing have been added new miseries of educated young men wandering, wasting, and dying for want of work, and young girls pining, withering, and drowning for want of marriage; and new crimes as mavalism, mass disobedience, passive resistance. Not only has there been no improvement in this respect, but no thoughtful attempt has been made to find out the cause and uproot these evils. All the fight has been—and is being—for power, fame, freedom, culture, religion! One fails to understand the worth or beauty of these things in juxtaposition of the above evils. The condition of the bulk of people of other free and forward countries might naturally be much better than that of a slave and stagnant country like ours, but there too it does not appear to be quite satisfactory.

Gloomy Prospect.

10. Nor is there any reason to believe that this state of things will suddenly or surely improve, even if we get tomorrow the highly coveted political prize of Dominion Status or Independence, for the attainment of which—and to prevent the attainment of which—the leaders of the different parties are spending and wasting all their precious resources, moral, mental, material. Otherwise, wherefore the absence of happiness and contentment in countries, and peace and friendship between countries, that are already enjoying Dominion Status or Independence? Wherefore the frequent occurrence and recurrence of wars, and

the constant and continuous hanging of war clouds, in Europe and the Far East?

Muddling and Bungling.

11. It is thus clear that the whole world has been thinking wrong and is treading astray —muddling and bungling through to a precarious existence. All the systems or theories of the different countries or parties, have been based on isolated and short-sighted notions of interest, and prompted and guided rather by pride, selfishness, and ignorance, than by wide sympathy, deep thought, or mutual regard. That is to say, they are all local, superficial, or ephemeral remedies, affording temporary relief, but not reaching the root of the trouble or comprehending the entire constitution of the world. They are thus unrelated if not antagonistic to one another, and to the common well-being of man; and therefore, however highly praised or advertised by the progenitors and propagators of the respective faiths, are scorned and rejected by the sponsors of the other cults.

The Only Way.

12. In the circumstances, the only way out of the impasse is to liquidate all the current political and territorial units and social and economical "isms" in the world, and consolidate them into a common, universal system, the broad principles of which and the brief method of putting which into action, may be summarised as under.

II—Fundamental Principles.

Distribution of Wealth.

13. It is impossible to effect an equal or absolutely just distribution of wealth or pleasures in the world among the peoples of the world, much less among the individuals of the world. Nor is it either fair or desirable to try to do so by means of force or violence. That will only add to the chaos and wretchedness that already exists. The present abnormally uneven distribution can, however certainly be rendered much more equitable with little injustice. But the continuance of a certain degree of unevenness is as natural and inevitable as the hills and valleys and trees and shrubs of nature, so long as the qualities of ability, intelligence, skill and valour of man continue to be uneven, as they are bound to, as long as Nature continues to be Nature—as long as the sun continues to shine and the sea to be salt.

Sign of Superiority.

14. It is manifestly foolish to call oneself —one's religion, culture, colour, custom, anything, in short, of self—superior to others. If this were the test of superiority, any fool, rogue or rascal can call himself superior! True superiority does not, therefore, consist in beating one's breast and shouting oneself to be superior, but in being so called and admired by *others*. Boasters of superiority should at least understand this simple thing.

Futility of Egoism.

15. The world is so mutable that what appears as good today may turn out wretched tomorrow, and what appears as bad to one may appear best to another, and *vice versa*. For example, look at the divorces of love marriages and the happy lives of child marriages; the practices of meat-eating and wine-drinking; or the intrigues and treasons as against the devotions and disciplines in politics. The human race is far more precarious in the development of its constitution and character than the animal and vegetable kingdoms, on account of its special qualities of meditation, communication, discussion, and the highly excitable passion, in extremely varying degrees, without apparent cause. The law of sow wheat and grow wheat, sow gram and grow gram, does not apply to the human field, where wheat often produces gram, pomegranate produces plaintain, thistle gives birth to jasmine. Otherwise we would not have had Shakespeare, Napoleon, Lokamanya, Mahatma; or we would not have had a breed of them.

Only Way of Improvement.

16. It would similarly be found that there are as many cultured men—as also beautiful women—among the Jews as among the Germans, among the Indians as among the Americans, amongst the Muslims as among the Brahmins, among the peasants as among the princes, among the atheists as among the divines and priests. So also, there would always be rogues and rascals, dwarfs and brutes, actual and potential, in all classes and races, high and low, black and white, of East and West. In the circumstances, the only way to improve oneself—and improve the world—is to find out, appreciate, encourage, enjoy, whatever is really good and great, grand and noble, sublime and beautiful, without reference to where it is or how it came—without caring or enquiring whether the lotus grows in mud or in milk, whether the diamond is found in the mine or on the mountain.

Root of Strife.

17. If history has any important lesson to teach to mankind, it is the futility and harmful-

ness of fighting through blind egoism—whatever is mine is good, and everything yours is bad. This is the secret of the origin and expansion of the strife in the world, of the dismal course the history of the world has taken and is taking to date.

Inexcusable.

18. This state of things, however, may have been excusable centuries ago, when the different nations lived in different worlds as it were, and were in the habit of thinking in the manner of the proverbial frog in the pond. But today, when the entire world has almost been brought within the ambit of a family, physically, morally, intellectually, the present gross and hideous sort of partiality and cruelty between man and man is absolutely unjustifiable, extremely contemptible, utterly inexcusable, and enormously harmful to all in the end.

Stupidity of War.

12. The notion of protecting, consolidating, and expanding one's race by means of war again, is as wrong and impossible in principle as it is stupid and impracticable in practice. The campaign of war may prosper for a time, but it is bound to lead to self-suffering and self-destruction of the aggressor in the long run, as surely as it is murderous and merciless to the victim at the moment. Suppose, for example, the Germans are enabled today to dominate the world and purge it of all elements non-German. But tomorrow, i.e. a few centuries hence, when the world would again be full—now with people of only the purest German blood—and the problem of bread would again be as acute, the Germans of America will wage a war against the Germans of Europe, the Germans of China against the Germans of Japan, the Germans of Russia against Germans of Germany! And, how brutal, ferocious, or heinous this war would be can be better imagined than described. And, what is the root and fruit of all this barbarity, shaming even the brutes and barbarians of the dark and dusky ages? Refined purified Germans, taking pride in their culture, civilisation, intelligence, assassinating and mutilating their brother Germans, for no valid or sensible reason as such, in a world of over-flowing bounty!

Result of coalition of crooks.

20. But this is an extreme supposition. Neither the Germans, nor the Russians, nor the Japanese, nor a combination of them, would be able to dominate the world and purge it of all non-German-Russian-Japanese elements, peacefully divide the world among themselves, and live a happy life for ever. Even supposing they succeed, by dexterous intrigue and enormous bloodshed, of other people as well as of their own men, in this impossible monstrosity of dividing the world between a few powerful nations, their principle of grab, pride and blood, and habit of bloodshed—their very philosophy, in short, of the highwayman and the slaughter-house—would rather accelerate than put off the day of their own perdition. The competition for grab and grapple would then commence between these surviving blind, arrogant, ignorant, intoxicated, infuriated nations, with the help of up-to-date instruments and inventions of slaughter. And the dim distant centuries of self-suffering and self-effacement would thus soon dwindle into near and clear decades, and quickly disappear into simple years and present days—as in the case of the present war. And this process of destruction and devastation will go on repeating, at shorter intervals, with sharper instruments, until perhaps the inanimate engines of destruction refuse to destroy, in utter shame and grief, unknown to the civilised, sentient, boastful, philosophical, man!

Effect of War.

21. War-mongers should further understand the simple thing that the effects of war linger and fester in the breasts of the vanquished, and form the basis and causes for the preparation and perpetration of fresh wars. Secondly, partners of today in unjust and selfish wars—as all wars generally are—like those in theft or gambling, will be enemies tomorrow, on the division of the spoil, when their wants or their strength are increased. All pacts and treaties, however plausible, ingenious, or expedient at the moment, unless they are strictly just and fair, are like the agreement of gamblers or robbers, bound to revive disputes and lead to wars—as has actually happened in the case of the present war.

Notion of Bravery.

22. Another misconception of the degenerate politicians and soldiers of the day is that they consider high-handedness, recklessness, and arrogance to be the highest forms of heroism—as intrigue, cunning, equivocation, and verbosity to be the highest forms of wisdom. They undoubtedly are so regarded by the low, and they do dazzle the rude, frighten the weak, and prosper for a time. But in fact they are no better than mavalism or street hooliganism,

and as such, they are eventually bound to collapse. That is how several great empires in the past, founded on similar foolish and short-sighted notions, and many great despots inspired by similar petty and arrogant ambitions, have mixed with the dust till now, to be pitied and hissed by subsequent generations, rather than be contemplated with pride and admiration for them and hope and light for the future. That is how the late war of 1914-18 fared and ended; and that is how the present war of 1939 – ? promises to fare and end.

Scope for Bravery.

There are many other ways and fields for showing one's bravery—or digesting one's arrogance—instead of doing human butchery and other devilish savagery. Drive out disease, ignorance and wretchedness from the world; replace thatched huts by concrete structures, and concrete structures by marble palaces; turn deserts into lakes and bogs into gardens; make cars without wheels and planes without wings; reduce working hours from 8 to 4, from 4 to 0; make rivers flow with milk and lakes stagnate with honey; yoke tigers gnd lions to carts, and dragons and unicorns to coaches: invade the moon and raid Mars; make the clouds rain to order, and the sun emit moonshine; make the moon be full every night, and the stars twinkle by day!

III.—Outline of Action.

World as a Family.

24. In the circumstances, the only way to preserve permanent peace and ensure steady progress in one's country or of one's people, is to consider the world as a vast country or family and the different nations as members of that family, and to help towards the maintenance of the joint peace and prosperity of the world. Notions like "I" and "you," "mine" and "yours", should go; and slogans like "India for Indians," "England for English", must cease. "The earth for all", should take their place. It would then be as easy and pleasurable to solve the problem of bread—and also of butter and sugar—of the different countries, as the head of a family living in the country-house surrounded by gardens and fields, solves his daily petty problems of his kitchen, hall, stable, yard.

Universal Congress of Men.

25. Of course, in order to work out the details and chalk out the plans of putting into action such a huge programme of universal happiness and progress, the establishment of an equally huge and competent institution is apparently essential. The defunct, inert, or powerless and ill-conceived League of Nations—with, however, the vast array of its experts and enthusiasts—may be revived, radically reformed, remodelled, re-constituted, re-juvenated—and re-named if necessary as the Universal Congress of Men—so as to enable it to take up this vaster yet easier, more fruitful, more practicable, more abiding, more exhilarating work—corresponding almost to that of the noble head of a noble family—in right earnest. It should, however, be clearly realised that the object of this Congress is not, as was or turned out to be that of the late League, to protect and exploit the weak and defeat and castrate the strong, but to protect both strong and weak from the wicked, to protect the human race, to guard the human name, to raise the human fame.

Government of the World.

26. The business of this Congress would thus broadly be to conduct the government of the world, on the lines of a model Government of a country, or the model conduct of a model family. It will have to proceed along the following lines for this purpose:—

(1) It will owe no allegiance or loyalty to any particular nation or country, the entire world being its nation or country.

(2) It will profess no religion, all religions being equal in its view.

(3) It will give no quarter in its Code of conduct to such slogans or catch-words as empire, independence, democracy, self-determination, etc., etc., or to abstract theories as socialism, communism, capitalism, Marxism, Gandhism.

(4) It will see that the different countries together produce the requirements of life, according to their respective natural facilities and aptitudes for same, in sufficient quantity for the world.

(5) It will regulate the exchange of these commodities, according to the requirements of the different countries; and establish a common currency for the facility of the exchange.

(6) It will see that the different countries regulate the growth of their respective populations, according to a prescribed uniform rate, if necessary and as may be decided upon by the Congress from time to time. And

(7) It will see that the internal administrations of the different countries are carried on or guided by the following principles, with suitable local alterations as may be found necessary, but not incompatible with the spirit of these fundamental principles. Namely:—

(a) Free ingress and egress of any people into and out of any country.

(b) One rule for all, in matters material or civil, without distinction of caste, creed, colour, birth, or sex. The distinction to be only on account of such things as ability, honesty, intelligence, skill, valour—fitness, in short, for the particular post or purpose.

(c) Preference to civil rights over religious, superstitious, or sentimental.

(d) Questions like religion, culture, marriage, etc., to be the private concern of individuals—like eating shaving, smoking, walking.

(e) Maintenance of a minimum standard of life, approximating to that of a common soldier of the present day, for a maximum amount of labour, say of 6 or 7 hours a day or 40 hours a week.

(f) Establishment of asylums or infirmaries for the treatment and maintenance of the invalid and the disabled.

(g) Enactment of absolutely deterrent and summary laws for the prevention of crimes of all sorts, from the spitting or throwing of dust and waste from upper stories, and including mob or mass offences or actions—resistance or defiance—begging, idleness, wastages, and "accidents" like the daily accidents of motor vehicles. And

(h) Full scope or freedom to bring about any improvement or revolution, by peaceful methods of logic, reason, persuasion.

Laugh or Weep.

27. This, in brief and in rough—is the only way to peace, progress, happiness; universal, local, individual, perpetual—the only way of ushering in the real and lasting New Order or Millennium. There seems to be no other way. It is, however, to be seen whether our leaders—Hitlers and Stalins, Chamberlains and Daladiers, Churchills and Lloyds, Roosevelts and Mussolinis, Francos and Valeras, Gandhis and Nehrus, Sardars and Savarkars, Jinnahs and Sikandars, Rajajis and Malaviyas, Boses and Roys—would even now wake up, stand up, see sense, shake off their cramped notions and ancient doctrines, and act as men, of advanced times, of the age of science and intelligence, reason and logic; or all will continue to drift, struggle, shriek, weep and sink, like ship-wrecked women and children as heretofore.

Books of interest to Rationalists

FROM SAVAGERY TO CIVILIZATION

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 1/8 By Post Rs. 1/10.

*

HERESIES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 1/8 By Post Rs. 1/10.

*

MATERIALISM

AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 2/- (Cloth) By Post Rs. 2/12.

MAN AND NATURE

(A Symposium of Modern Knowledge)

BY

EMINENT SCIENTISTS

(Frazer, Taylor, Haldane, Baker, Huxley & Levy.)

PRICE Rs. 2/- By Post Rs. 2/4.

*

Available through:—

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donation in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000/-.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer,
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

❋ If you recognise Human Equality,

❋ If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,

❋ If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy,

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office-Bearers:

President:—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D. *Vice-Presidents:*—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. and Mr. R. B. Lotewalla. *Hony. Treasurer:*—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee:*—Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Dr. S. B. Gadgil, B.A., L.M.S., F.R.C.S. (Eng.) D. Ph. (Lon.), Mr. J. M. Cooper, F. R. G. S., Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. A. R. Desai, B.A., LL.B., Mr. A. Husein. *Jt. Hony. Secretaries:*—Mr. S. B. Rath, Mr. Abraham Solomon.

For further particulars please write to:—

The Secretaries,
Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,
BOMBAY 2.

IF YOU WANT

To read choicest books,
To discuss modern problems,
To get correct information about current topics,
To have contact with intellectuals, and
To understand the making and growth of our Society —

Then You Must Remain in Touch with

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY.

OBJECTS.

To promote the Sociological interest of the Indian people, to gather and disseminate all sorts of sociological information, to facilitate the study of sociology, to focus the views of experts on such questions, to form and maintain a Library, etc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Donors Rs. 500/- or more. Life Members Rs. 100/- or more. Ordinary Members Rs. 3/- per year payable half-yearly. R. L. T. Library Deposit Rs. 5/-.

All members have the free use of the Library which contains a good collection of books on Economics, and also the Library of the R. L. Trust Hostel which also contains an excellent collection of latest books on all branches of sociology, namely, Economics, Ethics, Eugenics, Psychology, Philosophy, Politics, History, Biography and Fiction on current social problems.

Members are also entitled to publications of the Institute at such concessions as may be determined by the Managing Committee from time to time, as also one Magazine can be supplied at the cost of the Institute and any other Magazine for which concessions could be secured by the Institute for its members by any special agreement with its Publishers.

Rules, Regulations, Entrance Form can be had from:—

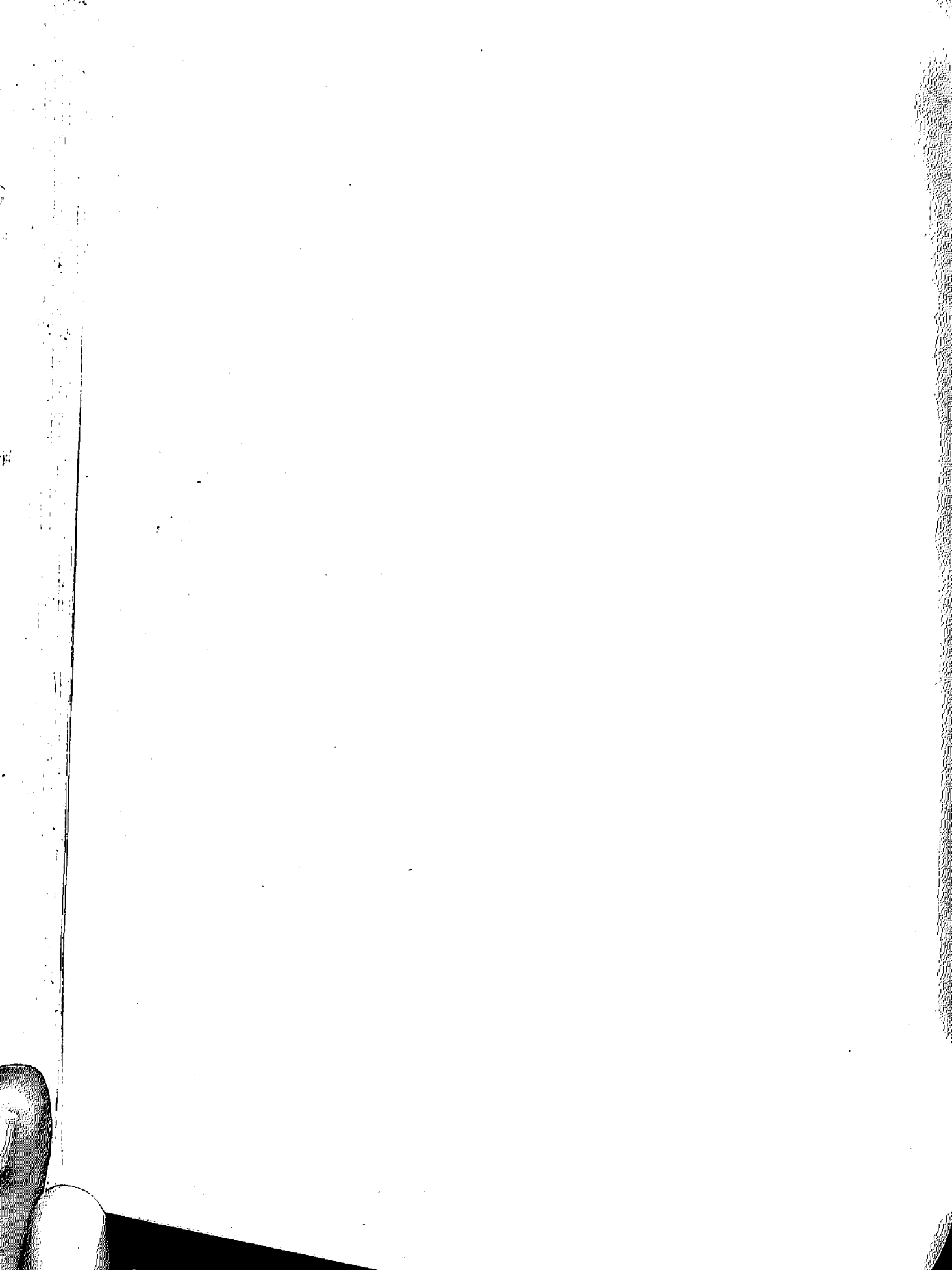
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY,

R. L. TRUST, 'RANCHHOD BHUVAN,'
Near Opera House, Tram Terminus,
BOMBAY 4.

15th January 1940.

G. S. POHEKAR. R. D. NADKARNI.
Hon. Secretaries:

Printed by B. M. Shet at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay 1, Edited and Published by R. D. Karve, M.A. for the Rationalist Association of India at 13, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.



REASON

DEC. 1940.
Vol. VIII No. 12.
PRICE 4 ANNAS.



THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Objects of the Rationalist Association of India.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

RELIGIOUS STUPIDITY
By R. D. KARVE.

SPINOZA
By E. M. ABRAHAM.

THE CONQUEST OF LIFE
By G. Y. CHITNIS.

H. G. WELLS & INDIA
By ATIB USMANI.

RELIGION & ADMINISTRATION
By V. S. MUDVEDKAR.

NOTES & NEWS ETC.

Editor :
R. D. KARVE, M. A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris).

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD, BOMBAY.

PUBLIC LECTURE

AT

THE BLAVATSKY LODGE HALL, French Bridge Chawpatty.

THE "SPIRITUAL GENIUS" OF INDIA

SPEAKER:

M. N. ROY

Saturday 14th December 1940. at 6 p. m.

RESERVED SEATS FOR MEMBERS OF THE R. A. I. AND THEIR FRIENDS ONLY.

Members should write to the Hon. Secretaries giving the number of seats required on or before 11th December 1940.

LECTURE FUND

The R. A I. has decided to arrange one Public Lecture every month in addition to the fortnightly discussions arranged at the Indian Institute of Sociology. The expenses for each lecture will be approximately Rs. 15/- Donations to this fund will be used exclusively for this purpose.

The total amount required is Rs. 195/- for thirteen lectures up to December 1941.

DONATIONS RECEIVED

N. M. Bhethena	Rs. 15/-
D. R. D. Wadia	" 5/-
Dr. M. G. Pradhan	" 5/-
Nur Jehan Azad	" 2/-
Akbar Frosh	Re. 1/-
Lt. Col. K. C. Sanjana	Rs. 5/-
Total	Rs. 33/-

Hon. Treasurer.

Series of talks broadcast from the Bombay Station of the All India Radio on 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 30th & 31st Oct. 1939.

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER

Represented by

His Grace Dr. Roberts
Catholic Archbishop of Bombay

His Holiness Khalifa Bashiruddin Mahomed

Dastur Kaikushru Mahiar Kutar
Parsee High Priest

His Holiness Jagadguru Shri Shankaracharya Dr. Kurtkoti

AND

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.,
President, Rationalist Association of India.

PRICE 4 As. FOREIGN 6d.

Available from

The Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Restless, onward must thou strive,
Never halt or langour know.
—*Schiller.*

REASON

Vol. VIII | DECEMBER 1940 | No. 12

Religious Stupidity

By R. D. KARVE

ABOUT a century back, one Mr. Deshmukh, one of the first to receive an English education in Maharashtra, wrote a series of letters to a journal of his time under the pseudonym "Lokahitavadi," (which is practically a translation of "pro bono publico"), which have now been published in Marathi in book form, and which make very interesting reading. He was a pioneer social reformer and denounced the evils of his time in very strong language. The wonder is that he came of an orthodox Brahman family, and his father was in receipt of a pension from the last Peshwa, Bajirao the second, who was deposed by the British government and made to live in retirement on a pension. He was educated on the proceeds of that pension, of which he was able to secure a continuation even after his father's death, and the use he made of that education was to denounce in no uncertain terms the religious abuses rampant under the peshwas, who were Brahmans themselves.

He expresses very modern ideas and was in many respects in advance of his time. He was himself a government servant, but was not afraid to write about politics as well. He took up a very strong attitude against the ancient lore of the Brahmans, the stupidity which paraded as knowledge. His advice was: "Don't learn by heart without understanding the meaning; acquire real knowledge; do not put blind faith in the Puranas which contain absurd stories; there are plenty of temples, so do not build new ones, but spend that money on schools and libraries; religion should not be taught in Sanscrit, which is a dead language, but in the language of the people; do not keep women in ignorance, educated women will produce better children; do not persecute widows, let them marry again if they want to; foreigners come to our country, so you go to theirs; the coming of the British causes famine even when there is rain, so you should learn commerce like the British; do not marry children off when they are too young, let them grow up and choose their own mates; and so on.

What further can we write even at present? He was not an atheist, which is surprising in a man with his powers of reasoning, but which only shows how difficult it is to get rid of ideas imbibed in childhood. Still he attacks Brahmans for helping to spread absurd ideas. "Some people say that there are seven seas, consisting of milk, ghee, wine etc., with the mountain Meru in the centre". An orthodox explanation of the saltness of sea-water is that the Sage Agasti once drank up the sea and then urinated to form the present sea. "Some say the English are marine animals, some say they are monkeys, whom Rama had promised a kingdom in return for their help in finding out his abducted wife." And he adds, "When I hear such talk, I think, 'Are these people pigs?' ".

His criticism of the orthodox may lead one to imagine that he was enamoured of the British government, but he was quite aware of the evils due to it. "Cotton traders should decide not to sell cotton to the British, but cloth made from it." "Rich people spend so much money unnecessarily on foreign articles and this goes out of the country." "Glass, cloth, cutlery, wooden furniture, watches and all kinds of machinery are sold here in quantities by the British. These should be manufactured here and what cannot be sold here should be sold in foreign countries."

Any intelligent man who thinks honestly and acquires some modern knowledge is bound to get such ideas and the people who stick to old orthodox notions instanced above must be

either fools or hypocrites. In India, people still think it necessary to take a purificatory bath at an eclipse, though educated people know quite well the causes of eclipses and that these do not involve any pollution. Tilak's paper, the 'Kesari', during his lifetime, raised a row on religious grounds because the Fergusson College was not closed for an eclipse, not because Tilak was an ignoramus, but because he wanted to please orthodoxy, with a view to secure their co-operation for political purposes. Tilak was a mathematician, but this was done as the policy of his paper.

What is more surprising is that Gladstone should have made a fool of himself by trying to defend the Bible account of the creation of the world, from which it would seem that what led Gladstone to fame was not his intelligence but his oratory. The principal ingredient in oratory is, or was at that time at any rate, a powerful voice which could reach an audience of thousands. This factor does not count so much in these days of loud-speakers.

Another unintelligent orator was Mr. William Jennings Bryan, who once stood for the Presidentship of the United States. He made a tour of India about that time and I remember how people flocked to the Town Hall here to hear the great orator. I was one of them and you can imagine my disgust when he started orating on the greatness of Christianity. It required some cheek to inflict a speech of that type on an audience representing all religions. Unfortunately the hall was so packed that it was impossible to leave before the end.

My estimate of his intelligence is confirmed by the account of the celebrated Tennessee trial of the schoolmaster who was dismissed for teaching the evolution theory. He was being defended by Darrow, the well-known agnostic and he tore Bryan to shreds. I find the following in "We Saw It Happen," in an article by Robert Owen, Reporter of the New York Times (Harrap & Co., London). 'And Bryan, the apostle of temperance, was intemperate in his own way. Darrow, who liked his whisky and soda, lived to be eighty.....but Bryan, the prohibitionist, ate himself to death in the stifling Tennessee heat.....There was a dinner. Bryan asked for black bread, or whole wheat, saying that he could not eat much starch, and then ate quantities of mashed white potatoes, not knowing that they contain starch! 'Bryan died after a heavy dinner, when most of us were content with the minimum amount of food on which we could exist.' During the trial, 'Darrow asked him if he believed that the whale swallowed Jonah and then spewed him forth, and Bryan said he did if the Bible said so. "And I suppose if the Bible said that Jonah swallowed the whale, would you believe that?" thundered Darrow. Bryan allowed that he might. "And when Adam and Eve were thrown out of Eden, the snake was made to crawl upon his belly for having tempted Eve?" "Yes", said Bryan. "What did he do before? Walk on his tail?" shouted Darrow. 'So terrible was Darrow's attack that even those who loved Bryan in the crowd below sometimes applauded the famous agnostic.' But in the end, the judge being as obtuse as Bryan, the case went against the schoolmaster.

There is really nothing to choose between the absurdities of one religion and another. In most religions the priests stand to gain by encouraging a belief in these absurdities, in which they themselves very often do not believe. The principal part of every religious ceremony from the priest's point of view is the fee paid to him, and the more these ceremonies are multiplied, the better for the priest. Of course the actual mechanism by which the priest derives his income may be different in different religions, but the fact remains that the priest makes his living by encouraging ignorance and stupidity on the part of believers. The Bible is available practically in all languages but Roman Catholics are not allowed to read it and interpret it for themselves, but must accept the interpretation put on it by the Pope or his mouthpiece. Hindu religious books are not so easily available at all, and in any case, hardly anybody reads them. Some modern religious sects have translated the "mantras" (magic incantations) used at marriages and conduct these ceremonies in the vernaculars, but people like Mrs. Besant, who was by no means a fool, have expressed the opinion that the magic effect of a 'mantra' being due to the succession of sounds in it, the effect is lost by translation. This is a logical pronouncement, provided the original magic effect is taken for granted, an assumption which would be hardly compatible with intelligence. It was a pleasure to listen to Mrs. Besant on any subject except religion, but what became of her intelligence when she lapsed into religion? It is hardly possible that she suddenly lost it and the only other explanation is some ulterior motive behind these stupid pronouncements. It is well known that she had to play second fiddle so long as Bradlaugh was leading rationalistic thought and this may be a reason why she suddenly turned Theosophist.

THE CONQUEST OF LIFE.

By G. Y. Chitnis.

THE rationalist is a man who has accepted reason as the rule of life; he does not take anything on trust nor does he give way to the impulse of credulity. There is in all of us a strong irrational element which is perhaps inherited from those tendencies in the previous forms of life which are essentially life-destroying. The French philosopher Bergson talks of life unmaking itself; what he really means is that unless reason asserts itself in life, life has no chance of surviving the destructive tendencies of nature and those embedded in man's mind.

Social Development.

Many of us take it for granted that life is always progressive and that ultimately a time will come when our actions will be guided solely by the dictates of reason; when, in other words, it will reach perfection; but are we sure that this goal is inevitable? No matter what we do, life is bound to progress towards a wider comprehension and larger social sympathies? This is not certain and unless we are careful it is equally possible that it may degenerate into the purest form of barbarism if it does not become utterly extinct by its own ineptitude and unworthiness. Since we are agreed that there is no divine providence shaping our destinies, we cannot be indifferent to what will ultimately happen to life; so far life has won in its battle against inertness; so far it looks that it may enter a new phase of social development in which man may learn to think rationally and function in a rational manner.

New Emotionalism.

But the signs of the times today are rather disquieting. The smug complacency with which the rationalists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries foretold the advent of reason as the supreme principle in the national and international life of man seems rather ridiculous today in view of the vast changes which are taking place before our eyes and which are definitely making for a complete reversal to unreason. In the sphere of philosophy, art, science and literature, reason seems to have almost lost its influence that it possessed in the last two centuries. In fact there is a kind of new emotionalism running rampant which bids fair to destroy everything that has even a remote semblance to a clear and rational way of thinking; pragmatism, instrumentalism, and even creative evolutionism of Bergson are, really speaking, the philosophical forerunners of irrational politics and the absurd theories of social and economic reaction.

Growth of Reason.

The growth of reason is possible only on the basis of the complete freedom of the individual and the society and this freedom is available so long as there is economic prosperity. In the hayday of capitalism it was possible to relieve the urgent economic wants of the people of Europe and therefore they were given a degree of social freedom which expressed itself in a revolt against the established church and blind authoritarian practices. This was the so-called age of democracy when reason ruled supreme and everything was subjected to its rule. The rationalists of the last two centureis foresaw the coming of this democracy and therefore they were confident that along with democracy reason also will come into its own.

False Optimism.

What they did not foresee was the possible decay of capitalist economy and the consequent efforts to stabilise it on the basis of curtailment of individual and social freedom. Hencc their optimism in regard to the ultimate triumph of reason has been more than falsified. This was bound to happen; because those venerable rationalists who suffered immense persecution and underwent untold hardship in order that the torch of reason may be kept burning, did not realise that reason to be absolutely and finally triumphant in human life must have a solid basis if not in complete economic equality at least in fair abundance of economic resources for everybody. They foresaw the miraculous growth of science and concluded therefrom that these scientific achievements would provide for abundant life for everybody if they were utilised rationally, that is, for the good of all. They did not realise the strength of the motive for private profit which makes use of these achievements for securing greater profits for a fortunate few and bring misery, poverty and ill-health for the unfortunate many. Reason itself becomes

helpless in presence of this all-devouring, soul-destroying profit-motive.

Reason itself cannot countenance the idea that only a few should secure all the amenities of life which are denied to many; and therefore in order to justify this iniquitous system and invest it with the halo of divine sanction reason itself must be put down and trampled upon. Upon the ruins of rationalism is built up the temple of a new religion which exalts all the irrational impulses of man into a new divine revelation.

Future of Man.

This resurgence of irrationalism would be looked upon by every serious rationalist as screamingly funny were it not so very disastrous in its consequences to the future of mankind. When a man who is more like a donkey than a man is worshipped by a whole nation as a demi-god, when the most idiotic utterances of this man are accepted as gospel truths, when the smallest incidents of his life which ought to provoke the wildest laughter are remembered and set down as something worthy of being followed with a religious zeal by the younger generation, when finally the mad dream that this hysterical fool dreams of world conquest and of ushering in the new order is taken seriously by a whole nation which is not ashamed to go into hysterics itself for the new vision that is vouchsafed to them, these things may make one smile; but when we realise the immense danger to freedom and rationalism that this madness involves, we begin to smile at the other side of our mouth.

The Same Disease.

These signs, as I said, are certainly disquieting; but what is more disquieting is that those who are fighting against these forces of irrationalism are themselves being infected with the same disease. The pride and arrogance, the confidence and the certainty with which the most uptodate irrational nonsense is being doled out from the Berlin wireless upset the convictions of our uncertain rationalists and timid lovers of freedom and democracy and make them wonder if after all these madmen may not be right and they in the wrong. The gullibility of the general public has reached such an appalling level of juvenile credulity that a man has only to repeat his latest nonsense several times to have it accepted by the people as an axiomatic truth.

Only a Fashion.

Our easy-going rationalists and democrats are no exceptions; for them democracy was all right because in the period of prosperity it gave them everything that they wanted; but now democracy is being trampled upon under feet and they have no real conviction nor courage to get up on their legs and say that this is wrong, that no matter what happens, if democracy goes everything that is of value in human life will also go. No, they cannot say this because to them democracy has been only a fashion to put on and off as they like. If it were a burning conviction with them, an integral part of their life, then they would not be swayed by any amount of false propaganda that carries with it its own refutation.

New Perspctive.

I am all for rejecting this half-hearted shamefaced rationalism; those for whom rationalism is a deep and abiding principle must see the present efforts that are being made both by the avowed opponents and the half-hearted proponents to undervalue the role and function of reason in human life are set at naught by resetting reason in a new perspective.

Facile Optimism.

This task has become all the more imperative today because unless reason reassumes charge of human affairs the entire human race will perish or return to barbarism to begin its evolution again. The facile optimist who takes the ultimate triumph of reason for granted does not realise that reason does not descend upon men as a grace from heaven; it has to be consciously and systematcally developed by the effort of man himself; reason is not inherent in the constitution of nature; it is created by the supreme will of man; it is only when men will be rational that rationalism will win; otherwise it will be beaten in its struggle against unreason. The will to reason must be strengthened and fortified; unreason must be eradicated but this task is not easy because it is so much easier for men to be irrationally impulsive than to be rationally sober. But it must be done because that is the only way in which the human race can save itself from exinction; all other ways lead to murder, slaughter and slavery on a large scale. In other words we have to come to such a pass that unless we are prepared to reorganise our lives on an international scale upon the basis of mutual understanding and trust which are the twin children of healthy rationalism, we must face the dire consequences

(Continued on page 222)

The Return to the Trenches

By PRABHAKAR PADHYE.

MR. Winston Churchill recently said in Parliament that the present war is but a continuation of the last war. This is an obvious platitude; but coming from these quarters it acquires a tremendous significance. It gives an effective reply to the Royist mystification that this is not an Imperialist War. Mr. Roy would agree that the last war was an Imperialist war. Logically its continuation also must be imperialistic. But Mr. Roy would employ his super-logic of dialectics and try to defend his position. Dielectics is a dangerous weapon. It is not merely double-edged, it is in fact multi-edged. I would not readily succumb to it. I would admit that the character of the present conflict is somewhat different from that of the last one; but it is fundamentally imperialistic. The only difference is that whereas in the last war the principle of democracy was invoked but really not involved, in the present war democracy is both invoked and involved. The reason why this should be so is fairly simple. The Germany of the last war, although Monarchist, was not fundamentally and philosophically opposed to democracy whereas Nazi Germany is fundamentally an enemy of any and every form of Democracy.

But that is not my present argument. I quote Mr. Churchill's words to emphasize the fact that the period between the two wars is merely an interlude, a war-weary break. It is true that many were not consciously aware of it. But that is only because they could not consciously bear the thought. When England after the Treaty of Versailles returned to its peace-time life, she thought, for a while, that she had finally banished war from this earth. True, conflicts would arise, but there was the League of Nations to settle them peacefully. Democracy was secure because kings were either dead or in exile. The bloody Bolsheviks were, of course, in control of that land of anarchists and pogroms, but they were sure to fall. That was the happy secure mood of the English nation. The horizontal layers of society were all in a satisfied mood. The imperialists were the most relieved, nay satisfied. Their empire was not only free from all threat; many more acres were added to it. The politicians were happy because they had come out of an ordeal triumphantly and their prestige was on top. The labour party, beautifully deceived by democractic slogans lustily uttered during the frantic years of war, thought that it was at the gates of the Paradise of Democracy.

But disillusionment came very soon. The transition from war-economy to peace-economy was not easy, and it created all the problems of economic convalescence. The imperialists soon realised that the empire was preserved, but its economic strength was considerably sapped. that their title to imperial property remained but it began to bring in less profits. The labour people began to realise that the problem of unemployment not merely became more acute but it threatened to become (as Mr. Baldwin once put it) 'endemic'. The 'tommies', who were proclaimed heroes and lovingly looked upon by enthusiastic lasses, again became their former miserable selves, unemployed and living on 'dole'. Democracy was not totally annihilated, but many of the sections of DORA remained in operation and liberties were actually less than before the war. The League of Nations was the most dazzling and the most hopeful child of the War, but it was at its inception maimed by the fact that America repudiated President Wilson (its God-father) and chose to have nothing to do with that august body. Intelligent persons soon realised that the possibilities of the League looked pathetic indeed. All classes of people were caught in the web of disillusion. They soon began to doubt whether they had really won the war; at best it could be said that they had won a battle.

England very soon began to learn the precious lesson of history that a victory on the battlefield is not necessarily a victory at home, that a military triumph is not necessarily a spiritual triumph. She soon realised that the spiritual and ideological aims of the war, so loudly proclaimed and so confidently cherished while the thing was on, were now nowhere on the horizon and that all was a depressing blank. So far as these aims were concerned she realised that the conflict was not conclusive. The battle was won, but the war was not. It was certainly not lost; but the conflict had not concluded. Germany may have been put down, but other imperialist competitors were rising. Very soon it was realised that Germany

in reality was not put down. The military defeat had temporarily shattered her morale, but she was speedily recovering it. Even before the Nazi Germany arose out of the ashes of defeat, England began to realise that her war-aims (proclaimed and unproclaimed) had proved a mirage, and in order to give them a reality she must return to the trenches. But she was most unwilling to do this. The flower of her youth had seen the horrors of war from close quarters. A good part of it had withered under fire; the rest was depressed and unnerved. It was a bad form of war-weariness: the consciousness that you must take up the rifle, but absolute lack of mental and physical energy to do it. England became pathologically pacifist; she began to talk of peace out of sheer war-weariness!

This was the prevailing mood of England which continued even after the proclamation of the present war. Nothing expresses this better than the post-war English literature. Literature after all is the soul of a nation and therein you can read its shades. I am not referring here merely to such works as Siegfried Sassoon's "Memoirs of an Infantry Officer," Robert Graves' "Good-bye to All That", and Richard Aldington's "Death of a Hero." These works do loudly protest against war and express disgust for everything connected with it. The war-weariness I am speaking of permeated almost the whole of the post-war literature.

It is interesting in this connection to see how England treated the literary masters of the pre-war period. It is one of the tricks of the English people that whenever they have no more use for a person they lift him up and put him above the common standards, thereby preserving his honour and preserving themselves. A recent example is that of Sir John Simon. With the fall of the Chamberlain Government the English had no more use for this gentleman and they sent him to the House of Lords. They did the same thing with Mr. George Bernard Shaw in 1924 after he wrote St Joan. He was canonised almost in the manner St. Joan was canonized. He became the national Old Gentleman. Henceforth he was revered but never listened to. Mr. H. G. Wells continued to hold the audiences. But he himself began to soar high up in the skies and began to construct Utopias of the type of 'The Shape of Things to Come.' The people had no use for them. Mr. Chesterton continued to play the Pyramid of English Literature trying to balance the broad base of modern civilization on the narrow edge of mediaeval make-belief, before a distracted people.

The people began to turn to new authors like Aldous Huxley, Virginia Woolfe, D. H. Lawrence, Lytton Strachey and others who expressed their mood much better than the old masters. They were the moderns and they expressed the decadent individualistic and introspective mood of the post-war populace. They would not look outside their own mind: They were afraid to look objectively into the face of things as they were. Their's was a mood of war-weariness, of the consciousness that the war was not yet won, but of unwillingness to go back to the battle. This mood naturally hated all external authority and discipline but was powerless to develop an internal one. It ran away from the exterior and took refuge into the interior. Therefore the recrudescence of the psychological novel in the Post-War period.

This, in fact, created a crisis in the literary theory. Was literature an expression or communication? Did literature concern itself with the expression of the Artist's thoughts and feelings or did it aim at communicating the same to the readers? Tolstoy believed literature to be communication and gave a grand exposition of the theory in his immortal essay, What is Art? But the new post-war artists thought otherwise. They did not like to look into the face of the outside world which was full of frustrations; therefore they thought it safe to ignore it, and if possible to forget it. They thought that they were the only reality and art its mere expression. They, therefore, became higly introspective and wrote in a language which tended to differ from the ordinary one of social communication. In this James Joyce achieved a sort of whimsical perfection which meant a good deal of freedom from ordinary rules of language and even of commonsense. You find the same thing in what is called Modernist Poetry with its shattered metre and meaning.

Mr. James Joyce merely represents the culmination of a tendency which is current in almost all others. Joyce's morbid individualism finds a somewhat different expression in D. H. Lawrence. Lawrence with his insistence on individual rights and inner experience set on purifying the inner of the inner things viz. sex. He wanted to purify sex and bestow upon it a dignity which we attach to many social things. He wanted to rid mankind of the shame-complex. But he began his crusade with such crudity and savagery that ultimately he seems to take all culture out of it. Again

and again his female character gives herself to the man-of-the-people who is only powerful flesh and devoid of all culture!

Mr. Aldous Huxley and Virginia Woolfe are more decent, but their introspective individualism is not more fruitiul. It comes to a dead stop. Mr. Aldous Huxley (as his book *Point Counter Point* proves) has the satirical quality of a Swift or a Dickens. But because of his inwardness and lack of all positive criteria it loses all its value. Talking of Dickens one is reminded of Mr. P. G. Wodehouse. Mr Wodehouse has an inimitable sense of humour. He has used it to expose a type of aristocratic gentry. His important contribution is the method of under-statement, which is a quality of civilized gentleness. But one suspects this is born of a lack of confidence which is expressive of the age. Mr. Wodehouse is the greatest humorist England has produced since the days of Dickens, but he entirely lacks the depth and intensity of Dickens's human wisdom. A war-weary mind can at moments forget itself and be genuinely funny, but it seems it cannot be humorously wise.

One real contribution of this mind is in the field of Biography. The disillusioned mind lost faith in the politicians and so-called heroes. It strove to remove the externals of even the Majesty and see if there is only jest within. Mr. Lytton Strachey did this in his biography of Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth. The people did for some time see the truth about these exalted ladies. Strachey's biographies did represent the landmark in the art of biography. That was a contribution.

Literature is generally the forerunner of thought. The above-mentioned mood was no less visible in the thought-currents of England. The most important contribution of this mood was to the science of Psychology which developed enormously during this period. The science of psycho-analysis which was treated with characteristic aloofness in the pre-war period was suddenly enshrined in the Temple of Thought, and Freud suddenly became a vogue, to such an extent that even the English Havelock Ellis whose works were banned in the pre-war period was over-shadowed by the Viennaese doctor. The study of abnormal psychology became the prevailing interest of students, both in literature and psychology.

Naturally moral protests gained in volume and strength, and moral standards began to collapse. The morality of Bohemia began to acquire a dignity which was till now the preserve of a certain class of Parisian Intelligentsia. But the British Intelligentsia which led this moral protest should be sharply distinguished from the Progressives of the pre-war period. The introspection, hamletism, introversion of this class was definitely decadent whereas the moral protest of Mr. Wells, Shaw and other leaders of the progressive thought was marked by a rationalistic approach and respect for moral sanctions which in their hands appealed to hygienic needs.

A similar crisis could be seen in the field of science and philosophy. Mr. Bernard Shaw did take leave of the 19th century mechanistic materialism and proclaim the mystical doctrine of creative evolution. But Shaw's mysticism was indicative of optimism whereas the desperate scientists of the post-war war-weary period began to read in scientific developments the call of God and justification of the pessimistic doctrine of *Free-Will*. Of course, science cannot be entirely devoid of sanity, or else it would cease to be scientific and therefore British science did produce Russels, Hogbens, Levys and Haldanes who carried on the battle of materialism i.e. the battle of scientific sanity.

The worst effects of this war-weariness could be seen in the field of British politics which entirely lost its moorings and began to loiter waywardly in the narrow paths of Appeasement. The Labour Party thought that it had come into its own, for it sat on the Government benches twice, but in reality it had stained its soul. Its best leaders became betrayers and those who somehow remained in the old fold began to talk of pacifism, which was in fact a cowardly unwillingness to fight on for the fulfilment of those principles which it had proclaimed from the house-tops. This pacifism, it must be noted, became a bane of all democratic politics. Democracy forgot that it must fight or perish. Like a decripit old gentleman it began to cling to the early principles of unrealistic liberalism and allowed the anti-democratic elements throughout the world to triumph. Democracy in fact began to commit suicide. Its limbs in Germany, Italy, Spain and Russia were completely paralysed. There Fascism triumphed in all its nakedness; and yet British democracy practised Appeasement! This doctrine of Appeasement was the direct result of the British unwillingness to return to the trenches.

The politics of the period of Appeasement culminating in the ghastly murder of Czechoslovakia are fairly familiar and I will not deal with them here. Suffice it to say that the

(*Continued on page* 220)

"Translucidation" and Sir Oliver

I have always maintained that the only people likely to be of any use as detective-observers at a Spiritualist seance are not men of science, but conjurers. Anyone who feels inclined to challenge such an opinion should read a book like Mr. David Devant's *Secrets of My Magic*. Mr. Devant first describes his tricks, and then explains the means by which he achieves the inexplicable or apparently impossible. Again and again one is struck by the fact that where the mystery is deepest the explanation is simplest and often crudest.

An amusing account is given of Sir Oliver Lodge's superstitious awe in face of the performance known as "translucidation." Members of the audience were asked to write on small cards, which were placed in envelopes, sealed, marked, and placed in a bag held by Miss Devant, who was seated on the platform:—

"My sister would simply take an envelope out and put it on her forehead and then read the contents. This was duly carried out with the six envelopes. Each one, after it had been read, was handed over the footlights immediately, and passed on to the person who claimed it. It seemed impossible and inexplicable; so much so that one day Sir Oliver Lodge came to the performance armed with a specially-sealed envelope, which he challenged my sister to read. She read it with the rest, and he was so surprised that he got up from his seat in the stalls and made a short speech to the audience. He said he could not understand by what means this marvel had been accomplished, as he knew nothing in science that could account for it, and finally hinted that I was using some higher powers. Mr. Nevil Maskelyne and I saw him after the performance and tried to assure him it was trickery; but he frankly said he did not believe it."

You may learn from the book itself how the trick was worked; it involved a trap-door, two accomplices, and a powerful electric lamp. So simple! But, alas! not nearly so simple as the mentality of this great man of science–the High Priest of Spiritualism.

PROTONIUS in the LITERARY GUIDE.

CIVILIZATION.

Civilization—the finest expression of the deeper nature of man—is the result of freedom—freedom to live, freedom to think, freedom to speak, freedom to dream, and freedom to dare seek the truth. Where such impulses are denied, and where the search for truth is suppressed and persecuted, there is the scene of the slow death of a civilization.—E. HALDEMAN-JULIUS.

If, as many believe, this age of ours is going to turn away from the golden prospect that was opened to it and pass into a prolonged period of reaction, it will be the fault of the organs of public instruction. School education, bossed by our clerical and political sergeant-majors, is a deliberate discouragement to independent thinking on matters of importance. It is a preparation of the young for easy capture by the partisan, corrupt, mendacious, or hypocritical influences which are waiting for every one who thinks of something other than the job and jazz, crooning, Mickey Mouse, and baseball. The press has become a tragi-comedy. Four millionaires in America and Great Britain guide the "thinking" of about 40,000,000 people; and not one of the four is capable of thinking out a sound philosophy of life or sees the world as anything except a field in which adventurers like themselves can dig up uplimited gold. The elementary blunders and hypocracies of these formidable guides of the race from 1904 to 1914 let the world drift into the horrible tragedy of 1914-1918. Their elementary blunders and hypocrisies since the war kept the public from perceiving that it was drifting into the terrible catastrophe of the depression years and was permitting incarnate brutality to entrench itself and prepare to flood the world with poison-gas.

JOSEPH MCCABE.

April 1936.

The Return to the Trenches

(*Concluded from page* 219.)

suicidal pacifism of the English nation continued even after the war was declared on Germany. The false lullaby of Appeasement (as Roosevelt calls it) had put the English spirit to sleep—which was of course not comfortable but disturbed by bad dreams—and the complacency of the Chamberlain Government was powerless to awaken it. It took the whipping realism of Churchill and the fall of France to rouse it. Now I believe the English nation is thoroughly roused; and it has gained back its former robust spirit which will fight for the triumph of the decent principle of Democracy.

But the interlude between the two wars should teach the English that the fight for civilization is not won by merely military victories. Last time the Allies won the war and immediately lost it in the hall of Versailles. This tragic mistake must not be repeated. The Peace Treaty must be a treaty of Democracy and not of Imperialism. Or else the 1918-39 interlude will give place to a new one, with worse results.

Mr. H. G. WELLS AND INDIA

By ATIB USMANI.

PERHAPS it would not be wise on my part to criticise such a great author of our times as Mr. Herbert George Wells on his latest and most thought-provoking book, the "Fate of Homo Sapiens," without a word of apology. I am a great admirer of Mr. Wells and have read most of his books, but never before did I admire him better than after reading the "Fate of Homo Sapiens." In spite of this I do not find myself in agreement with certain things that he says about India in it, and I want to contradict them. My apology is only this: although I am a mere nobody in India my readers, after they have gone through all that I have to say, will find that I have tried simply to voice their own objections in a representative fashion and rectify them.

It is in chapter 20, entitled "Subject Peoples," that Mr. Wells mentions about India. He mentions very little indeed. And the little he mentions he justifies by saying, in the beginning of the chapter, "The argument of this book is framed on such a scale that the lives and death of scores of millions appear as details of microscopic size in the general ant-hill." Nevertheless it must be an unreliable "anti-microscope," to coin a term after Wellsian fashion, that minifies an object out of recognition. I do not disagree with his general remarks about Indian peoples when he says, "They seem destined to play only a secondary and supporting role in any unification of human affairs that is achieved, not by reason of any inherent inferiority, but because they are debarred by their complicated mental barriers and divisions from any collective understanding of modern constructive ideas." But when he so decisively asserts, "At present *none* of their cultural movements displays an original line of its own that amounts *even to a slight* contribution to world reorganisation," (Italics mine), he totally ignores the immense possibilities of the Rationalist Association of India, and that it stands for human brotherhood and unity with a full consciousness of what he appropriately terms "the ecological view of life." Small as it is, it is significant enough to be mentioned in a book which seeks to find in every country factors making for a "world civilisation." When he could see Brahmo Samaj through the "anti-microscope" of his book he could surely see the R. A. I. also. But let me hasten to add that Mr. Wells has no respect for the Brahmo Samaj. He clearly says, "A culture which said, 'We are ignorant, divided and condemned to a collective sterility by our ignorance, and we mean to recognize our mental energy and stock our minds to play our proper part in human unity,' would be a culture to respect. But even the Brahmo Samaj, most liberal of Indian cultures, does not say that." What else can you infer from this? Regarding the R. A. I., perhaps he is not aware of its existence, or why should he ignore it?

Once again he exhibits his unawareness of the existence of the Rationalist Movement when he says, "There would be much to be said for an Indian nationalism based upon the idea of brotherhood and the common future of mankind." The Rationalist Movement, if it stands for anything at all, it stands for this very sort of nationalism. It endeavours to "create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country;" Mr. Wells' "brotherhood and the common future of mankind" is the next step after this. He himself expresses this very idea when he says these inspiring words: "If these (Indian) peoples can be fused, the whole world can be fused."!

Further on Mr. Wells says, "In India there are numerous rich men, great industrialists, wealthy maharajas and the like, but it has still to dawn upon anyone of them, that a great, growing, liberating mass of knowledge exists in the world beyond the present reach of *any* Indian." I am sure he is wrong in saying that. I believe that "liberating mass of knowledge" is not at all outside the reach of any Indian (I hate to use this word for my countrymen because the Westerners use it to express their contempt of any coloured people) living under normal conditions. It is available to anybody who sufficiently cares to take the trouble to obtain it. The present writer is a case in point; he does more than flatter himself when he takes pride in believing that he is keenly alive to the Wellsian ideas and ideals and sincerely shares Wells' Utopianism with him. When India has provided "educational emancipation and opportunity" to one young man who is quite below thirty and just above humble living, it can surely provide the same to many more. I know Mr. Wells does not want to under-rate India but he surely under-estimates it.

So much of contradiction, and now I will write in appreciation of Mr. H. G. Wells.

I applaud Mr. Wells when he so rightly condemns Gandhism by saying, "Vague aspirations to an obviously fictitious nationalism of an imitative parliamentary kind, sustained by non-cooperation, preferential trading and the fasts of Mr. Gandhi, point to anything but the coming to the city of mankind," and certainly "Starving on the doorsteps of the ruler in the Gandhi fashion is a curiously unfair appeal to the ruler's decency. Directly it is used against anyone tough enough to say 'Starve then, and be damned to you', it becomes ineffective." So this is the picture of our Spiritual Leader and his satellites through the Westerner's eyes. No doubt if Gandhism succeeds it will reduce India to a horde of cringing curs ever whinning for crumbs of bread at the doorsteps of John-Bull or whatever master Fate may choose to provide them. But the Rationalist Movement, Mr. Wells should remember, is one bright spot of hope in the gathering darkness about India.

And here is ample food for thought for the followers of Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Jinnah and also for those who belong to the Indian Congress—I will not pretend to call it National. Mr. Wells says, "But speaking generally Indian nationalism is no sort of synthesis, it is based on a common understandable resentment at the British Imperial Government and on very little else. You cannot build a nation on a vanishing grievance. The old raj is not going to last for ever, and when it fades out the Hindu will still be wearing his caste marks and the Muslim slaughtering cattle at him in a derisive manner."

He gives a true picture of India when he says, "In India now there must be a score of potential Royal Societies, so to speak, running about in loin cloths and significant turbans and Gandhi caps and what not, running at lowly partisan level, and so running to waste." Between these lines I read a fair challenge to the Rationalist Association of India and I know it will take it up. The task before the R. A. I. is a colossal one; it has to unify "that great miscellany of peoples and cultures which is India." (Wells). A blight falls on our hopes when we see that India is such a divided country within itself, and so much obsessed by the religious, language and provincial prejudices, that it hardly deserves the name of a nation. We have to awaken it to a collective consciousness and let Wells' inspiring words, "If all these peoples can be fused, the whole world can be fused," be our fountain of hope.

In the end, I would welcome anybody who comes forward to show me if I have made any mistake anywhere. I shall feel only too thankful to him.

(It is certainly ridiculous of Mr. Wells to assert that any knowledge is out of reach of *any* Indian, since India has produced scientists of the calibre of Sir C. V. Raman, and P. C. Ray, but I do not blame him for ignoring the Rationalist Association, which is a microscopic body in comparison to the Brahmo Samaj. The way to remedy that is to bring in new members. Ed.)

IT is a curious conception of freedom that will permit a man to speak when he is right, but is not equally careful of guarding his right to speak when he is wrong. It is this last that needs carefully guarding. The first is admitted by the Roman Church, and by every brand of Fascism.

—CHAPMAN COHEN.

x x x

THE public mind does not act individually, but collectively, and the direction of mass mentality is mainly determined by the kind of special environmental influences that have been created.

— CHAPMAN COHEN.

x x x

ROUGH work, iconoclasm, but the only way to get at truth.

—D. W. HOLMES.

THE CONQUEST OF LIFE

(*Continued from page* 216)

of letting unreason rule our lives and go the way all other incompetent and inefficient species have gone.

Favoured Child.

Man is not a specially favoured child of nature; what he has achieved in the way of greater comprehension and social sympathies is the result of his own will; if he does not now reassert his will towards a more rational understanding of life it is possible that he will disappear from the face of the earth and nature perhaps will bring forth a more capable race that will more truly fulfil its object. Because this striving for a full and abundant life has to be fulfilled somehow and if man does not fulfil it he must make way for another race that will.

REASON

(ESTD. 1931)

The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India
5-12, Queen's Road
Bombay.

Editor:
Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
Diplome d'Etudes Superieures (Paris)

Asstt. Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Asstt. Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

We invite contributions of not more than 1,500 words on topics of interest to rationalists. They should be type-written. If not published they will not be returned unless stamps are enclosed.

R. A. I. Membership Rs. 5/- Foreign 8s. annually which includes "Reason".

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 3/- & Foreign 4s. 6d. or $1.25 annually.

All cheque, Money Order or Postal Order should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

NOTICE

There will be no fortnightly meeting during December.

Public Lecture.

See cover page ii

TIMIDITY in the expression of opinion breeds condescension in the orthodox, hypocrisy in the heretic and muddles the intelligence of both.

—CHAPMAN COHEN.

MEN fear thought as they fear nothing else on earth.

—BERTRAND RUSSELL.

Notes & News.

WE are pleased to note that as a result of the appeal by our President Dr. C. L. D'Avoine there has been a considerable increase in the membership of the R. A. I. We are thankful to our members for the efforts they are making in securing new members and subscribers.

x x x

AS our members and readers know the R. A. I. has greatly increased its activities during this year, particularly during the last four months. The War and other difficulties have hampered us a great deal, and much of what we intended to do had to be put aside for the time being.

x x x

APART from the increase in expenses consequent to the increase of our activities which we have been able to meet due to the generosity of some of our members and particularly that of our Vice-President Mr. R. B. Lotewalla, we now greatly feel the need for more workers.

x x x

WE admit that most of us have our own difficulties which have been increased by the prevailing conditions, but we are sure there are at least a few of our members in Bombay who can do some work, for the R. A. I. during their spare time. This will be a great relief to those who are at present carrying on the activities. It will then be also possible to look to other things regarding the R. A. I. which need attention.

x x x

AS we go to Press we receive long delayed (in transit) copies of the London *Freethinker* which has maintained its regular weekly appearence under the able editorship of Mr. Chapman Cohen in spite of very trying conditions. We are sorry to learn that the Freethinker office has been damaged by a bomb. Editor Cohen and his colleagues have the greatest admiration of freethinkers all over the world for the way in which they have kept aloft the flag of Freethought in England.

We gratefully acknowledge the following:—

A. Raptakos, Rs. 5/-, Dr. R. D. Muzumdar, Karwar. Rs. 3/-.

To *Reserve Fund*
Lt. Col. K. C. Sanjana, Poona, Rs. 10/-.

What is Time ?

(A Marxian Point of View)

By Marxist.

THE geometry of this Universe is the geometry of a continuum. It has no absolute space and absolute time, but these are welded into one block geometrically and each observer will devide the block differently into space and time; no division will be absolute or unique.

Relativity physics does not make all qualities relative–it sets them in a new absolute framework. Interval—in which both space and time figure–takes the place of distance as an absolute separation between events. The velocity of light is an absolute velocity, whatever the observer. The amount of matter in the Universe is absolutely constant and the conservation of momentum still holds absolutely as a law of nature. And the absolute framework in which these new qualities are set, is the continuum of space—time, specified by four dimensions.

The world commonsense has twofold appearance. It is permanent and veriable. It is is a continual state of flux, it is dynamic, incessantly changing, a world of perpetual novelty. By its very nature nothing is ever repeated, nothing remains the same. Such is the world we have to accept, the environment in which we find ourselves. Of it we are an essential part. In its evolution within this millein mankind has separated from this following process aspects that at first sight appear distinct and incapable of intermixture—Space, Time & Matter as the occupant of both. How he has come to make just this form of separation is itself an interesting problem in evolution. It is not improbably associated with two general characteristics that impress themselves on him in the changing world.

There is only one direction to time, viz. that is which the number registered increases. To suggest that the direction of time, or, as Eddington prefers to call it, the arrow of time, may be uncertain, or is reversible, is to imply that time is something completely independent of the unfolding process in nature from which the notion has been abstracted. The direction of time is involved in the sequence of events that constitute our Universe, and unidirection time is drawn with time by us from that process. They are inseparable. How, in fact, has mankind reached its conception or space and time? Obviously *in practice*. That we can repeatedly move ourselves from the *hither* side of a given object to the *beyond* side—that in the course of so doing we *pass* other objects and leave them *behind*—that all the things we scrutinise present themselves to our inspection before and behind, above and below, or side with each other–these are the *material* and *objective* facts from which Mankind generalise the conception of space—the objective possibility of machanical movement.

Similarly all the things we do, and all the things which are done to us happen after or before each other, or simultaneously with each other. And in their simultaneous happening they endure for differing intervals. Day alternates with night and while either endures things happen in the light or in the dark. From this practically experienced order of sensations of co-existences and successions—an order that we can reconstruct imaginatively but cannot possibly construct in the first place; from this objective experience we derive the concept Time-the general pre-requisite of all movements of co-existence and successions, all development and all practical production.

The space and time are opposites is self evident. We measure the one from a practically given point in the other—even though it be a moving point, as when we reckon the space moved through in a given time–interval (i. e., fixed quantity of time). That they are united is equally obvious, since nothing can happen "in" one which does not also happen "in" the other. That they are thus a unity of opposites need worry no one who has not pledged himself a priori to a dessecration of the grave of Hegel.

As we have demonstrated above, the Dialectic of space and Time is valid precisely because it has a material origin in the objective world of material practice, because it is in itself a subjective practice which reflects in

(Continued on page 228)

SPINOZA

By E. M. Abrahams.

"To be a Philosopher one must first be a Spinozist".—Hegel.

IT is a sad commentary on the history of civilized nations that they have persecuted and ill-treated some of its boldest thinkers. Galileo, in his old age was imprisoned and sentenced to repeat the Seven Penitential Psalms for differing from Aristotle and Moses and the teachings of the theologians. On hearing of Galileo's fate Descartes burned a book he had written 'On the World', lest he too should get into trouble.

In our day the case is not much different. Men like Freud and Einstein have the pain and the honour to draw upon themselves the utmost in fury, distortion, persecution and deprivation from pointing the way forward with their thinking.

Spinoza met with a similar fate. He was accused of impious boldness, of destroying and dragging down all that was holy. He was excommunicated. And even after his death the reactionary forces strove in vain to destroy the dead man.

Spinoza was born in 1632. He grew up in the Ghetto of Amsterdam. Though his father was a successful merchant, young Spinoza preferred to spend his time in and around the Synagogue.

He read the Bible and wondered why the Old Testament said nothing of immortality. He read the Guide to the Perplexed, but found more perplexities in it than guidance; studied Latin sedulously under a Dutch Scholar, Van den Ende. He fell in love with his Latin Master's daughter. But the young girl soon lost interest in him when another suitor came along bearing costly presents. No doubt it was at that moment that our hero became a philosopher.

Voltaire once said, "My trade is to say what I think." Spinoza said what he thought, only to find himself summoned before the elders of the Synagogue. He was charged of heresy. He had said that God might have a body; that angels might be hallucinations; that the soul might be merely life; that the old Testament said nothing of immortality.

He was offered an annuity of $500 if he would consent to maintain at least an external loyalty to his Synagogue and his faith. Spinoza refused. In 1656 he was ex-communicated. Let us quote a sentence from his ex-communication formula:—

"Let him be accused by day and accused by night; let him be accused in his lying down and accused in his rising up; accused in going out and accused in coming in.....No one abide under the same roof with him, no one approach four cubits length of him, and no one read any document dictated by him, or written by his hand."

But the fate of Spinoza was milder when compared with the fate of Uriel a Costa, who was ex-communicated in 1647, the year in which Spinoza attained his fifteenth year. Uriel a Costa was a passionate Jewish Youth who vigorously attacked the belief in another world. The Synagogue compelled him to retract.

The formula for retraction required that the proud author should lie across the threshold of the Synagogue while the members of the Congregation walked over his body. Uriel a Costa underwent this public retraction, came home, wrote a piece of denunciation of his persecutors and shot himself.

Spinoza's Philosophy.—A short article of this type will only permit a cursory treatment of Spinoza's philosophy.

God:-For Spinoza *substance* is the underlying reality. God, substance, Nature, the Eternal, the unchangeable, the One, are all one and the same thing. This is essentially a Hebrew idea, and belonged to Spinoza as part of his heritage.

What kind of a God is this? Is he like the God of Aristotle who sits apart in the skies unconcerned with what goes on in this world—a God who "reigns but does not rule?". No, Spinoza's God is single, independent, infinite, self-caused, and above all the necessary principle of all things. God is not apart from the world as Descartes held, an external cause acting on the world from without, but in the world. God is in the world and the world in him: He is the source of everything that is. God and the world are one.

God did not create this world. God did not utter fiats for six days creating one thing

after another. But this world flowed from the very nature of God, "in the same way as it follows from the nature of a triangle, from eternity to eternity, that its three angles are equal to two right angles." Even God himself could not have prevented this world from flowing from his nature.

As Spinoza says:

"Things could not have been brought into being by God in any manner or in any order different from that which has in fact obtained. Therefrom it follows that things have been brought into being by God in the highest perfection, in as much as they have necessarily followed from a most perfect nature."

But many will ask if all things follow from the absolutely perfect nature of God, why are there so many imperfections in nature? Why are there things so loathsome, deformed, evil, sinful? Spinoza answers in the following words:

"Whenever, then, anything in nature seems to us ridiculous, absurd or evil, it is because we have but a partial knowledge of things, and are in the main ignorant of the order and coherence of nature as a whole, and because we want everything to be arranged according to the dictates of our own reason; although, in fact, what our reason pronounces bad is not bad as regards the order and laws of universal nature, but only as regards the laws of our own nature taken separately.....As for the terms *good* and *bad*, they indicate nothing positive considered in themselves.....For one and the same thing can at the same time be good, bad and indifferent. For example, Music is good to the melancholy, bad to mourners, and indifferent to the dead."

Somewhere else Spinoza says:—

"To those who ask why God did not create all men, that they should be governed only by reason, I give no answer but this: because matter was not lacking to him for the creation of every degree of perfection from highest to lowest; or, *more strictly* because the laws of his nature are so vast, as to suffice for the production of everything conceivable by an infinite intelligence."

Attributes of God.

By an attribute Spinoza means that which the intellect perceives as constituting the essences of the substance or God.

God has an infinite number of attributes of which we know only two: "Thought is one of the infinite attributes of God. Extended substance is another attribute. Substance, Thinking, and Substance Extended are one and the same substance, comprehended now through one attribute, now through another."

Now, according to Spinoza, Thought and Extension (Mind and Body) are independent of each other. We cannot explain the mental by the physical, as materialism does, nor the physical by the mental, as spiritualism does. Both thought and extension are manifestations of one and the same reality, God. Neither is the cause nor the effect of the other, both are the effect of the same cause, both flow from the same substance.

For example, when I think of a circle, God is the cause of the circle in so far as he is a thinking being. And God as an extended being is the cause of the extended circle.

This theory of Spinoza is what modern psychology calls psycho-physical parallelism.

Modes.

"A mode is any individual thing or event, any particular form or shape, which reality (Substance) transiently assumes"; we, our bodies, our thoughts and all the particular things in this world are modes or modifications of the eternal and invariable reality God.

The attribute of Thought manifests itself in particular ideas; the attribute of extension, in particular bodies.

According to our philosopher, then, the connection between God and the world is of the most intimate kind. Spinoza says:

"The more we understand particular things, the more do we understand God."

Happiness.

"Thus in Life," says Spinoza, "it is before all things useful to perfect the understanding, or reason as far as we can, in this alone man's highest happiness or blessedness consists, indeed blessedness is nothing else but the contentment of spirit which arises from intuitive knowing of God: now to perfect the understanding is nothing else but to understand God, God's attributes, and the actions which follow from the necessity of his nature."

One of Spinoza's critics remarks:

"Spinoza did not seek to found a sect, and he founded none, yet all philosophy after him is permeated with his thought." Perhaps so many were influenced by him because he lends himself to so many interpretations, and yields new riches at every reading.

Nietzche says somewhere that the last Christian died upon the cross. He had forgotten Spinoza.

The Great Saint Bernard

Only on paper has humanity yet achieved glory, beauty, truth, knowledge, virtue, and abiding love.
—*Bernard Shaw.*

THAT unsubduable old veteran, Bernard Shaw, has written another play, and has been adding fresh scenes to a film of a former success. The play is as fresh as if it were the work of a young writer beginning his career, and is delighting present-day audiences as clearly as his earlier efforts charmed their parents nearly half a century ago. Over eighty years of age, he still dazzles with his genius, and he has even become a classic in his own life time. Such a career is remarkable, for the purely parochial success of an ordinary writer sinks into insignificance beside a wide reputation of this kind.

Shaw has challenged the world as critic, novelist and playwright, but his plays contain his best work. He has been at great pains to emphasize his technique and his philosophy, and to explain at length that his technique is old and his philosophy is new. Despite his bland assurances, neither is originally Shavian. The one is seen clearly in Henrik Ibsen, and the other plainly conveyed from Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. But Shaw's comedy is interesting and valuable. He has re-introduced high comedy on the English stage. So far as England is concerned, the comic spirit, as George Meredith so admirably calls it, has had few chances between Bernard Shaw and the Restoration dramatists. And, remember, the main secret of Congreve's and Wycherley's interplay of character is not mere depravity. It is the absolute equality of equipment with which men and women pitch their battles of wit. If you want anything better you have to go to Shakespeare.

The glory of Shaw, however, is not his wit, but his underlying seriousness. For Shaw, despite his chameleon-like changes, always maintains stoutly the rottenness of our civilization. He criticizes prevailing conditions in his novels, his dramas, his musical, sociological, and theatrical reviews. Like a scientist in his laboratory, he sets up these ideals, strips them, and puts them to the test, and the ordeal is the cleansing fire of truth and the scalding water of satire. So thorough is the process that few impostures may walk and live. He is so much more than a merely brilliant author such as Wilde. Underlying all his wit and irony, you will find sanity and balances good sense which mere smartness lacks. Now and again, as an Irishman, he justifies his reputation as a Celtic Mephistopheles, and grins in his motley, as in his attacks on Shakespeare, and his flirtations on religion. But the total impression left by his life-work is of a man grappling earnestly and seriously with social and theological problems, not of a rustic grinning through a horse-collar. And that impression is welcome, for, as Heine says finely, "unless wit is based on seriousness it is only a sneeze of the reason."

Shaw has not Shakespeare's temperament which suffers fools gladly, and when he is annoyed he is merciless. He tries to see all round a subject. Is he writing to Benjamin Tucker, the apostle of individualism, he will tell him that Individualism, can only be reached through Socialism. When addressing Socialists, he will warn them of the dangers of Bureaucracy to individual liberty. He will jibe at religious people for their barbarism and ignorance, and scoff at Free-thinkers for their devotion to science. When he belonged to the very select Shelley Society, he told the members bluntly that he expected all the members were Atheists, Republicans, and Vegetarians, and nearly broke up the meeting on the spot. Sometimes the victims get angry, but the ready Irish wit comes to the rescue, and the jester is forgiven for his audacity. "Rot!" roared a voice when he came forward, amid applause, at the end of one of his plays. "Rot! I fully agree with you, sir," Shaw said, "but what are we two against so many."

Indeed, the impress of his unique personality is on his work. Even his newspaper articles retain their freshness and survive the test of republication triumphantly. They are the work of a brilliant, clever, and witty man. With a strong, haughty, careless non challance he has expressed himself very freely. "Sardoodledom" is not a compliment to the popular author of "La Tosca." "Bardolatry" is applied to the worship of Shakespeare. His famous retort in the last war, "Sir Edward Grey is himself a Junker," was sardonic. So was his advice to the Free Churches that, if they were wise, they would place busts of Voltaire in their tabernacles. Shaw is too much in earnest to

be impartial. "I have never claimed for myself the divine attribute of justice," he says blandly. His emendation of the so-called "Golden Rule" is often quoted: "Do not do unto others as you would they should do unto you. Their tastes may not be the same." I like, too, that description of the aristocratic lady who "conceived the universe exactly as if it were a large house in Wilton Cresent."

Here are some comments taken at random:—

Greek scholars are privileged men. Few of them know Greek, and most of them know nothing else.

Leave it to the poor to pretend that poverty is a blessing; leave it to the coward to make a religion of his cowardice by preaching humility.

Alcohol makes life bearable to millions of people who could not endure their existence if they were quite sober.

Money is the most important thing in the world. It represents health, strength, honour, generosity and beauty as conspicuously as the want of it represents illness, weakness, disgrace, meanness and ugliness.

The history of the English factories, the American trusts, the exploitation of African gold, diamonds, ivory and rubber, outdoes in villainy the worst that has ever been imagined of the buccaneers of the Spanish main.

It is cheap work converting starving men with a Bible in one hand and a slice of bread in the other. I will undertake to convert West Ham to Mahommetanism on the same terms.

Bernard Shaw is the greatest living author using the English language. Like Byron, like Sterne, he is one of the select few who have an European reputation. His plays have crossed all frontiers, and been played in most of the chief cities of the civilized world. The nimble lightning of his wit rouses men everywhere. It is well, for his life-work is for sanity. He is like the east wind flashing through our civilization. He clears the atmosphere of fog. It is because he is a bracing tonic in a time of moral slackness that Bernard Shaw ranks highly. The brave old veteran knows this, for he says:—

I am of opinion that my life belongs to the whole community, and as long as I live it is my priviledge to do for it whatsoever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a splendid torch which I have got hold of, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generation.

MIMNERMUS.

Reproduced from the *Freethinker*.

WHAT IS TIME?

(*Continued from page* 224)

its content and formal movement the corresponding movements in objective reality; and, above all, because it is able to survive the acid test of objective practice.

It is this probably, which rouses the resentment of all the literary Josserini—like Dr. Chitnis and all lumpen intelligentsia who spend their days either in posing as more Marxist than Marx, more Leninist than Lenin, and more proletarian than the proletariate; or, alternatively, in natting at all three in the name of whatever-it-is which is the "Very Latest" Dialectical Materialism—the materialism of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin—reduces thinking both in theory and in practive to brain work! Beyond question, this is what has upset Dr. Chitnis—who does not discuss the dialectics so much as spit every time its name is mentioned.

"THE vain crowds, wandering blindly, led by lies."

—LUCRETIUS.

THE
THINKER'S FORUM
A NEW SERIES

THE GOD OF WAR
By JOSEPH MCCABE.

THE DANGER OF BEING AN ATHEIST
By A. GOWANS WHYTE.

TURKEY: THE MODERN MIRACLE
By F. W. TOMLIN.

SCIENCE: CURSE OR BLESSING
By PROF. H. LEVY.

MAKE YOUR OWN RELIGION
By A. GOWANS WHYTE.

Price As. 6. *By Post* As. 7.

Religion and Administration

By V. S. MUDVEDKAR.

Whatever the object-and it must have been a good one, though perhaps prompted by simplicity of understanding-of the founders of the different religions of the world, there is not the least doubt that the net effect of the several religions has been to create strife between the different groups and increase misery all round. Apart from the historical quarrels and wars between Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants, Hindus and Muslims, Shaivas and Vaishnavas; the present day persecution of Jews as such in Christian lands, the misery of the discarded Hindu wife in this Aryan land, the murderous Hindu-Muslim quarrels over such paltry things as music before mosques, and the wastage of time and intelligence spent on prayers and performance of rites and in the never-ending discussion about the unknown and unknowable, which time and intelligence could be turned to far better purposes; are live instances, of the antipathy between religions or the stupidity of religions, of which any sane man ought to be ashamed. The lengthy, learned, contradictory, unmeaning, confounding, misleading defences of the different religions, frequently put forth by priests and pundits, moulvies and Kazies, pastors and prelates, knaves and simpletons, only go to show the enormity of intelligence and labour wasted in the futile attempt of proving pain to be pleasure, falsehood to be truth, fancy to be reality, misery happiness, and shame honour.

2. The cause of the present deplorable state of affairs is the slavish mentality of considering religion-notwithstanding its absurdities, stupidities, and contradictions, some of which are patent to the naked eye or simple sense, and others stand exposed or exploded by science and logic-as having fallen from heaven, which heaven, again, is supposed to be a real and tangible place like this earth, though far grander and immensely blissful-and as helping to take one to such heaven, pardoning all one's sins and crimes-and therefore admitting of no change or improvement, or even discussion about its correctness, truthfulness, or usefulness. This kind of view may be pordonable in babies, boobies, or grandmas; but it is reprehensible in public men of the twentieth century, versed in the severities of science and logic, and acquainted with the atrocities of crusades and communal strifes, and yet professing the high ideal of serving and elevating humanity as a whole.

3. As a matter of fact, all religions are systems of rules, framed by men like ourselves, having two legs, two arms, two eyes, one nose, no horns, nor tails; but not having our experience, and perhaps even our logic-men, who had not seen aeroplanes and machine-guns, submarines and destroyers; had not heard the names of air raids, poison gas, x-rays, electrons; nor had dreamt of dastardly schemes like Pakistan and Nazistan. It is unthinkable that our fore-fathers, who were, and could not but be, backward to us in every kind of knowledge, were perfect, to the exclusion of the very idea of improvement or discussion about it, in this highly cotroversial and extremely harmful subject alone. Even granting, therefore, that those rules had distinctly been beneficial to the state of society for which they were designed, or of the time at which they were framed, it is sheer absurdity to hold that they must similarly be beneficial to us-and to our posterity to the end of time-notwhithstanding their gross, patent, evil effects, of everyday occurrence.

4. If, therefore, it be impossible—or otherwise inexpedient—to demolish religion *of the prevailing type*—altogether, it is at least high time that those priding themselves to be philosophical administrators-or practical philosophers—who are responsible for the welfare of the entire people under their charge, gather sense and spirit enough to declare religion to be the private concern of individuals—like eating, shaving, smoking, walking; and restrict themselves, in their public capacity to making general laws and rules, conducing to temporal peace and mundane progress, of the society as a whole.

A lucid exposition of the Philosophy of Freethought by one of the greatest Freethinkers of our day.

FOUR LECTURES ON FREETHOUGHT AND LIFE

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

PRICE 12 AS. POSTAGE 1 ANNA.

STANDARD WORKS BY FAMOUS FREETHINKERS

Thinkers' Library

Education: Intellectual, Moral and Physical by Herbert Spencer. A great book on a great subject.

A Short History of the World by H. G. Wells. In the pages of this book we review the pageant of earth, of life, of primitive man, and of civilisation, as seen by one of the most vivid writers of our day.

Anthropology (in 2 Vols) by Sir E. B. Tylor. This is the scientific "Book of Genesis." Vol. 1 describes the life of early Man and how he learned to talk and write. Vol. 2 deals with the arts of life and pleasure, and the growth of Knowledge and Religion.(Illustrated).

The Evolution of the Idea of God by Grant Allen. Twenty years were occupied in preparing and ten years in writing this standard work on the history of the God-idea—which is the history of religion itself.

The Churches and Modern Thought by Vivian Phelips. A frank, fearless, and fascinating study of the question "Is Christianity True?"

The Martyrdom of Man by Winwood Reade. Acclaimed as a classic of the nineteenth century, unequalled in artistry of language and lucidity of style.

The Evidence for the Supernatural by Dr. Ivor, LL. Tuckett. Surveys the answer of Science to the question "Is Spiritualism True?" Is the Supernatural Credible?"

The Existence of God by Joseph McCabe. A scholarly and searching examination into the origin, history, and present position of the belief in God with a reply to Sir J. Jeans, Sir A. Eddington, and other apologists.

Psychology for Every Man (and Woman) by A. E. Mander. Gives a clear and concise introduction to the study of human character.

Letters on Reasoning by J. M. Robertson. A scholarly exposition on rational thinking.

Clearer Thinking; (Logic for Every Man) by A. E. Mander. A valuable and practical guide to clear and logical thinking.

Man and His Universe by J. Langdon-Davies. An excellent survey of Man's progress from a primitive outlook on life to a modern scientific one and the causes that contributed to it.

First Principles by Herbert Spencer (Rs. 2/-) A clear and orderly synthesis of knowledge.

The Rights of Man by Thomas Paine. A treatise in defence of those principles of freedom for which the author so valiantly fought and suffered.

The Universe of Science by Prof. H. Levy. An excellent book on the Philosophy of Science.

Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings by Henry Maudsley, M. D. Reveals the psychological processes by which man arrived at beliefs commonly attributed to mystical sources.

Price 15 as postage 3 as.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA.
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Every Progressive Indian must read

THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM

BY

Dr. R. P. PARANJPYE, M.A., D.SC.

Price One Rupee. Post Free.

TO MEMBERS OF THE R. A. I.

Annas 8 only.

Books of interest to Rationalists

FROM SAVAGERY TO CIVILIZATION

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 1/8 By Post Rs. 1/10.

*

HERESIES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 1/8 By Post Rs. 1/10.

*

MATERIALISM

AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 2/8 (Cloth) By Post Rs. 2/12.

MAN AND NATURE

(A Symposium of Modern Knowledge)

BY

EMINENT SCIENTISTS

(Frazer, Taylor, Haldane, Baker, Huxley & Levy.)

PRICE Rs. 2/- By Post Rs. 2/4.

*

Available through:—

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

REASON

VOLUME VIII 1940.

Index to Contents.

By R. D. Karve.

Rationalism in Religion 2
Commercialized Religion 18
Freedom of Speech 33
The Spiritist Humbug 59
The Spiritist Humbug Again ... 75
National Planning 89
Another Champion of Spiritism ... 97
Rational Thinking 117
The Use of Prayer 143
Reason and Sentiment 165
The Significence of Dasara 189
Religious Stupidity 213

By G. Y. Chitnis.

Savage Civilization 4
Rebirth of an Artist 53
The Onslaught of Unreason 158
Materialism 179
What is time? 191
The Conquest of Life 215

By C. L. D'Avoine.

A New Year Message 8
Sir S. Radhakhrishnan "On the Need of Religion" 20
A Conceited Caviller 61
A Primitive Idea of God 121
The Future of Christianity 145
Saving Christian Civilization ... 198

By Anil.

A Dialogue Between an Atheist and a Missionary 155
This is Adolf Hitler 181
The Philosophical Revolution ... 193

By M. N. Roy.

The Cult of Asceticism and Renunciation 79
Continued 91
The Philosophy of Fascism 148

By Ali Akbar.

Predictions of the Future and other Frauds 35
But the Gods Are Dumb!! 147

By Chapman Cohen.

Does Man Desire God? 51
The Origin of Gods 62
Thanks to Hitler 195

By W. Glanville Cook.

The Liberation of Germany 48
Rationalism and Religion 205

By M. V. V. K. Rangachari.

Nietzsche and Modern Thought ... 22
Science and Social Limits 55
Toddle and Twaddle 84
Three Fundamentals 111
Continued 132
Where Leaders Meet 157

By Abraham Solomon.

Rationalism the True Philosophy of Life 43
The World as I See It 154
Items of Interest 202
Notes and News ... ... 9,25,45, 65, 81, 103, 129, 153, 177, 201,223.

By Akshayakumar R. Desai.

Exit God! 11
Continued 27
Caste System in India 174

By R. P. Paranjpye.

The Tyranny of Words 38

By Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.

Some Reflections on Hindu Philosophy 39

By H. G. Wells.

The Rights of Man 99

By Ernest Thurtle.
Emile Zola Centenary 109
By S. B. Rath.
Freedom of Opinion 71
By R. G. Gokhale.
Unveiling "The Isis Unveiled" ... 86
By H. S. Mukerjee.
In Defence of Spiritism 94
By R. S. Fontes.
St. Mathew's Gospel 23
The Faith of Our Fathers 71
By Mimnermus.
The Great Saint Bernard 227
By P. H. Gandhi.
Students and Life 171
By V. S. Mudvedkar.
Root of the Trouble and Rooting it Out 207
Religion and Administration... ... 229
By E. M. Abrahams.
Spinoza 225
By Atib Usmani.
H. G. Wells and India... 221
By A Marxist.
What is Time 224
By John Keracher.
The Basic Conceptions of History ... 123
By Winwoode Reade.
"Prophets" Analysed 127
By Prabhakar Padhye
The Return to the Trenches 217
By Astron.
Indian Pictures 96
By Pericles.
A Diatribe on Rationalism 170
By W. Ball.
Because the Bible Tells Me So ... 183

Reviews.
A Critical Examination of the Philosophy of Religion by Sadhu Shantinatha 21
On the Origin of Reason by Louis Zoul 21
The Liberation of Germany by Martin Abbotson 48
Prachya-Darshana-Samiksha by Sadhu Shantinatha 72
Papists are Traitors by C. R. Boyd Freeman 106
Veshya-Vyavasaya by R. D. Karve ... 137
Reason and Intuition by V. Subrahmanya Iyer 138
Almost an Autobiography by Chapman Cohen 138
The World as I See It by Albert Einstein 154
The Fate of Homo Sapiens by H. G. Wells 167
Materialism by M. N. Roy 179
Idiocy of Idealism by Oscar Levy ... 182

Miscellaneous.
Cultural Conference... 6
Messages to the R. A. I. on its 10th Anniversary 44
A Decade of Rationalism 47
The 10th Annual General Meeting and Dinner of Rationalist Association of India 63
A Charge of Obscenity Against our Editor 101
A Lecture on Atheism 102
The Bertrand Russell Case 105
Progress of the Russell Case 130
A Minority View 107
The Indian Institute of Sociology ... 115
Life of Leonard Nelson 139
Continued 160
Some Ideals of Fascism 141
Society to Promote Human Equality ... 186
A Call to Rationalists... 205
Correspondence 81,129,187

Obituaries.
Lakhmidas Rawjee Tairsee 10
D. R. Chaubal 130

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donation in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000 -.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer,
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

❁ If you recognise Human Equality,

❁ If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,

❁ If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy,

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office-Bearers:

President:—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.
Vice-Presidents:—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. and Mr. R. B. Lotewalla. *Hony. Treasurer:*—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee:*—Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Dr. S. B. Gadgil, B.A., L.M.S., F.R.C.S. (Eng.) D. Ph. (Lon.), Mr. J. M. Cooper, F. R. G. S., Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. A. R. Desai, B.A., LL.B., Mr. A. Husein. *Jt. Hony. Secretaries:*—Mr. S. B. Rath, Mr. Abraham Solomon.

For farther particulars please write to:—

The Secretaries,
Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,
BOMBAY 2.

IF YOU WANT

To read choicest books,
To discuss modern problems,
To get correct information about current topics,
To have contact with intellectuals, and
To understand the making and growth of our Society —

Then You Must Remain in Touch with

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY.

OBJECTS.

To promote the Sociological interest of the Indian people, to gather and disseminate all sorts of sociological information, to facilitate the study of sociology, to focus the views of experts on such questions, to form and maintain a Library, etc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Donors Rs. 500/- or more. Life Members Rs. 100/- or more. Ordinary Members Rs. 3/- per year payable half-yearly. R. L. T. Library Deposit Rs. 5/-.

All members have the free use of the Library which contains a good collection of books on Economics, and also the Library of the R. L. Trust Hostel which also contains an excellent collection of latest books on all branches of sociology, namely, Economics, Ethics, Eugenics, Psychology, Philosophy, Politics, History, Biography and Fiction on current social problems.

Members are also entitled to publications of the Institute at such concessions as may be determined by the Managing Committee from time to time, as also one Magazine can be supplied at the cost of the Institute and any other Magazine for which concessions could be secured by the Institute for its members by any special agreement with its Publishers.

Rules, Regulations, Entrance Form can be had from:—

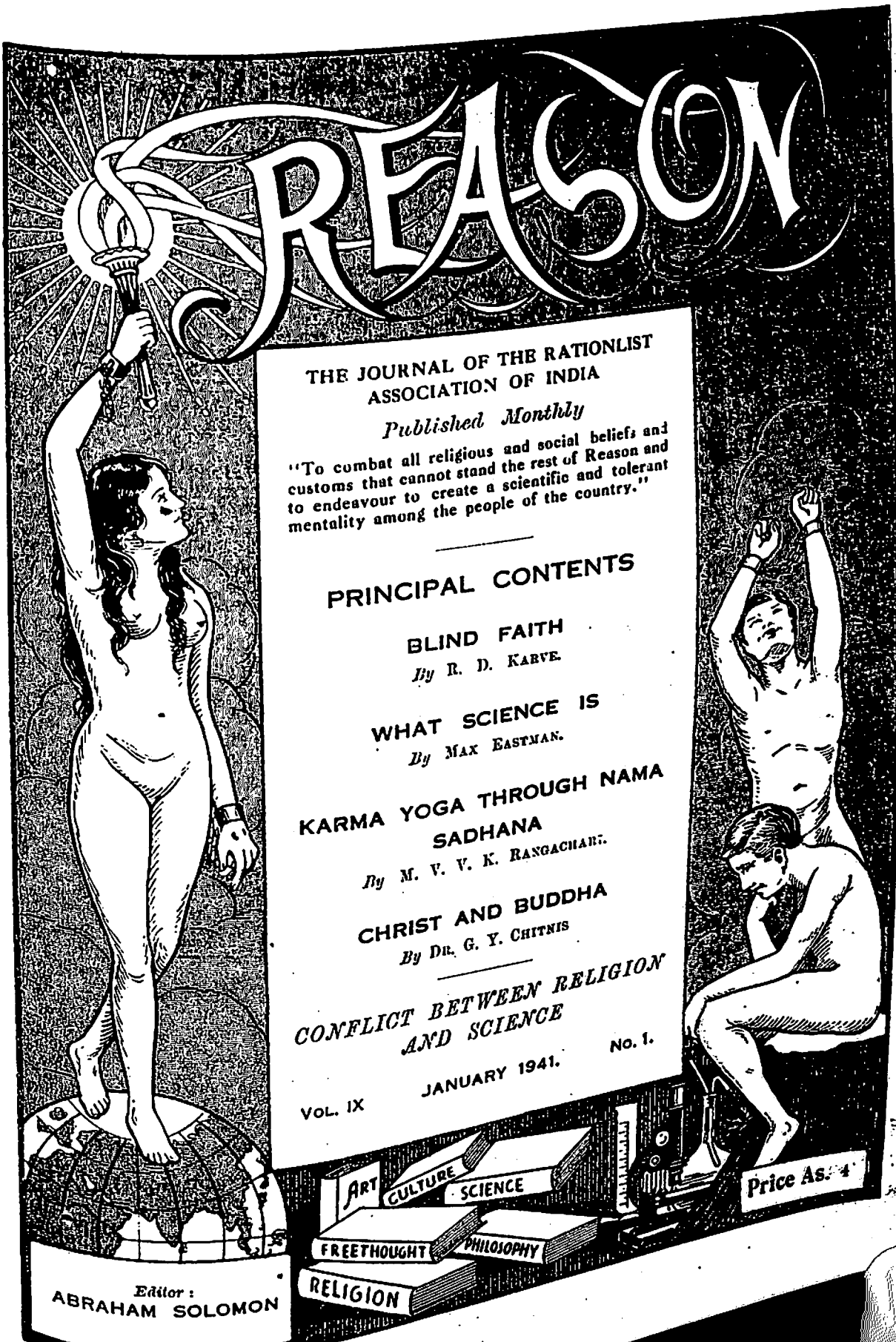
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY,

R. L. TRUST, 'RANCHHOD BHUVAN,'
Near Opera House, Tram Terminus,
BOMBAY 4.

15th January 1940.

G. S. POHEKAR. R. D. NADKARNI.
Hon. Secretaries:

Printed by B. M. Shet at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay 1. Edited and Published by R. D. Karve, M.A., for the Rationalist Association of India at 13, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.


REASON
THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONLIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA
Published Monthly
"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the rest of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of the country."
PRINCIPAL CONTENTS
BLIND FAITH
By R. D. KARVE.
WHAT SCIENCE IS
By MAX EASTMAN.
KARMA YOGA THROUGH NAMA SADHANA
By M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI.
CHRIST AND BUDDHA
By DR. G. Y. CHITNIS
CONFLICT BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE
VOL. IX
JANUARY 1941.
No. 1.
ART
CULTURE
SCIENCE
FREETHOUGHT
PHILOSOPHY
RELIGION
Price As. 4
Editor:
ABRAHAM SOLOMON

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE IN "REASON"

Because:

- It has a wide circulation all over India and abroad.
- It goes to all the important libraries in all parts of India.
- It is read by people in all walks of Lile.
- It contains articles of lasting interest.

For particuiars regarding advertising rates etc., write to:

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA.
5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD, BOMBAY.

LECTURE FUND

The R. A I. has decided to arrange one Public Lecture every month in addition to the fortnightly discussions arranged at the Indian Institute of Sociology. The expenses for each lecture will be approximately Rs. 15/- Donations to this fund will be used exclusively for this purpose.

The total amount required is Rs. 195/- for thirteen lectures up to December 1941.

DONATIONS RECEIVED

N. M. Bhethena	Rs. 15/-
D. R. D. Wadia	„ 5/-
Dr. M. G. Pradhan	„ 5/-
Nur Jehan Azad	„ 2/-
Akbar Frosh	Re. 1/-
Lt. Col. K. C. Sanjana	Rs. 5/-
Total	Rs. 33/-

Hon. Treasurer.

Series of talks broadcast from the Bombay Station of the All India Radio on 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 30th & 31st Oct. 1939.

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER

Represented by

His Grace Dr. Roberts
Catholic Archbishop of Bombay

His Holiness Khalifa Bashiruddin Mahomed

Dastur Kaikushru Mahiar Kutar
Parsee High Priest

His Holiness Jagadguru Shri Shankaracharya Dr. Kurtkoti

AND

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.,
President, Rationalist Association of India.

PRICE 4 As. FOREIGN 6d.

Available from
The Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

The vain crowds wandering
blindly, led by lies.

—*Lucretius.*

REASON

Vol. IX | JANUARY 1941 | No. 1

The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India
5-12. Queen's Road
Bombay.
(Estd. 1931)

Editor:
Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

We invite contributions of not more than 2,000 words on topics of interest to rationalists. They should be type-written. If not published they will not be returned unless stamps are enclosed.

R. A. I. Membership Rs. 5/- Foreign 8s. annually which includes "Reason".

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 3/- & Foreign 5s. or $1.25 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

CONTENTS

Editorial Munings 1
Blind Faith by B. D. Karve 3
Who is this Marxis ? by G. Y. Chitnis ... 5
Karma Yoga Through Nama-Sadhana by M. V. V. K. Rangachari 7
Science and Superstition by Anil 9
Items of Interest by A. Husein 11
Christ and Buddha by G. Y. Chitnis ... 13
What Since is by Max Eastman ... 17
That there is Fundamental Conflict Between Religion and Science ... 22



The time is out of joint. Oh cursed spite
That ever I was born to put it right.

—*Shakespeare*

GREETINGS to readers, friends and fellow-freethinkers all over the world. The admirable way in which freethinkers in other parts of the world are helping to keep aloft the flag of freethought in these difficult times, when few are prone to give heed to the voice of Reason, encourages and inspires us to greater efforts for the "best of causes".

Freedom and progress are never achieved by just a waving of flags and shouting of slogans. They depend on those silent workers who by spreading the light of knowledge, truth and a scientific outlook, strike at the very roots of ignorance, irrationalism, and intolerance which give rise to violence and brutality.

The task before freethinkers in India is a colossal one. With the increasing curtailment of freedom of thought and expression, increases the responsibility and importance of all those who claim to be fighters in the front ranks of freedom.

As if unconscious of the mighty upheavals going on in other parts of the world, self centered individuals in India advance ridiculous schemes which accentuate sectarianism

and religious differences. Self-appointed spokesmen of the Indian people hark back to the golden age of Indian civilisation. At the very time when India must unite as one nation and lift up her face to the future, she is asked to look back and drug herself with the past. But such appeals to the cultural backwardness of the people are loosing their sway on the rising generation of modern Indian youth. That is the one ray of hope for the raniassance of the Indian people.

The youth of a nation are the trustees of posterity. Youth must sweep aside the torteous barriers between man and man; these intellectual chains which mar the happiness and hamper the progress of the Indian people. They must build up a new outlook on life based on justice and equality. A philosophy of life which recognises the right of every individual to freedom of thought and expression and the fullest development of the best in him.

The mind of the vast bulk of the Indian people is dominated by ignorance, superstition and obscurantism. Indian society is burdened with outmoded and harmful social customs and dogmas and the duty of every progressive man and woman is to remove these obstacles to intellectual and social progress. India cannot progress unless it gives up its irrational medieval religious mode of thought. India must give up that philosophy of life which enthrones ignorance at the expense of knowledge, worships blind faith at the expense of reason, glorifies intellectual slavery and tramples upon intellectual liberty.

When we reflect on the past it is not difficult to distinguish the major forces which played a part in bringing about the present state of the world. Religion is one of them. It is the credulous and uncritical mental attitude which made the vast majority of mankind fall a prey to the corrupt, mendacious, and hypocritical influences of a few unscrupulous and powerdrunk, individuals.

"Religion takes its origin in fear, proceeds by intuition and the "inner light", engenders an atmosphere of blind credulity and intellectual panic, produces as its practical contribution to life the subordination of reason, science and humaneness to unreason, theologic ritual and a moral absolutism that is the essence of sadism. Religion is on the side of the vested interests, opposes, novelty and reform, foments counter-revolution (economic and cultural), uses the cunning of the mind to make ignorance more attractive than knowledge, supports always and everywhere the reactionary point of view." (Schmalhansen).

Religion has been a collossal failure. It is high time the Indian people woke up from the stupor of blind faith and fatalism and adopted a braver and more courageous outlook on life.

We must remember that on the way in which we face the problems of the present times, on the courage and foresight with which we do so, will depend the state in which we shall find ourselves in the future.

Let us, therefore, not waste time, idly waiting for some unknowable, mystical strangely merciful power, to rescue us from the morass which is the creation of our own ignorance. But armed with the power of knowledge and the wisdom born of painful experience mould with our own bare hands our future destiny in keeping with the highest aspirations of our greatest thinkers. Let us prove once more, the oft proven historical truth, that man is the master of his own destiny.

BETWEEN OURSELVES.

THE sudden change in the editorship of *Reason* will come as a surprise to our readers and members. But the events which led to this change were beyond our control, and I have assumed the editorship more by virtue of necessity than that of merit.

Be that as it may; Readers will be pleased to know that although Prof. R. D. Karve is unable to continue as editor, he will contribute his most interesting and instructive articles to *Reason* regularly. Prof. Karve guided the destines of this journal through some of its most difficult periods and for that the Rationalist Association of India will always remain grateful to him.

ABRAHAM SOLOMON.

Blind Faith

By R. D. KARVE

All rights reserved by the writer.

THE October issue of the Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society contains a very curious review of two books by Sadhu Santinatha, which have already been reviewed in *Reason*: (1) The Critical Examination of the Philosophy of Religion, and (2) Sadhana or Spiritual Discipline. The review is written by Prof. V. A. Gadgil, who admits that "the author's contribution and achievement are worthy of a humble and sincere truth-seeker who has devoted more than thirty years of his life to an earnest and continuous search for the ultimate Truth", and further that "the author's exposition of different systems and theories is, on the whole, correct. One may also endorse his view that reverence for the Scriptures, faith in God or some supernatural being, adherence to the Law of '*Karma*', belief in the self as distinct from the body and its capacity for spiritual self-discipline (Sadhana) and finally attainment of liberation are generally recognized as essential features of religion." Then he remarks that "it is really gratifying to note his admission that each of these features can even be supported by strong raticnal arguments. The author however, strangely doubts their validity because none of them is based on unassailable grounds." The reviewer implies that it is all right to make use of rational arguments so long as they support religion, but finds it preposterous that the author should look for unassailable grounds before he believes in it. In fact, says Prof. Gadgil, "his so-called logical method of approach to the subject of his critical examination is not, indeed, the only criterion by which such problems as he has discussed may be solved. Nay, that method, as a matter of fact, is not at all calculated to lead to the solution of the riddle of the Universe. We would like to remind the learned Sadhu of what the great *Upanisadic* seer has said in this conection, 'Naishamatistarkenapaniya'. Mere intelligence cannot ascertain the nature of Reality. It is in the state of *Samadhi* alone that the ultimate Truth is realized, especially in a *Samadhi* known as *Nirvikalpa*, where the self becomes one with the Reality." Now this is what the Sadhu claims to have attained. Is his word to be doubted simply bccause he reaches a different conclusion from Prof. Gadgil? The gist of all that the reviewer says comes to this, that a critical examination should not be too critical, or perhaps that it is utterly wrong to make a critical examination of religion, because otherwise it is impossible to see how a critical examination can stop short of a logical conclusion, how it can examine logically so long as arguments in support of religion can go and then suddenly remember the dictum of the Upanishadic seer and stop there. That is cartainly not what a critical mind can do and Prof. Gadgil should really have condemned the method altogether instead of being gratified that some rational grounds can be found for religious beliefs. Instead of which, the reviewer goes on to remark that "it is sheer irony of fate that a spiritual seeker and staunch believer who attained to the state of *Samadhi*, as the learned Sadhu would have us believe, (note the insulting doubt, R. D. K.) should not be able to reach the ultimate Reality, but should find, to our utter dismay, the faculty of reasoning as his saviour and thus end his spiritual journey as an inveterate agnostic after a very strenuous and long period of self-discipline. With his mind thus divorced from

the Reality and consquently feeling shaky about the existence of higher spiritual powers, the author endeavours to interpret and measure religious concepts and their influence on human life in the terms of an agnostic, with the result that one can read his sense of utter failure and disappointment writ large on every page of the work which would otherwise have been a monumental achievement to the eternal glory of the learned Sadhu." So the author of these works is to be considered a failure because he reaches a different coclusion from the one which Prof. Gadgil would have him reach, in spite of the fact that his work is based on more than thirty years spent in an "earnest and continuous search for the ultimate Truth." Here, on the one hand, we have an author who spends thirty years in trying to get at the so-called Truth with a capital T, and finds ultimately that it exists only in the imagination, and, on the other hand, an arm-chair critic—for I can hardly believe that a professor's life is compatible with the kind of effort that the Sadhu has made—smugly pitying the Sadhu for failing to attain the Reality as visualized by Prof. Gadgil, and expressing dismay at the fact that the Sadhu falls back on his reasoning faculty when he found that all the so-called religious means of attaining the Truth, such as Samadhi, have proved failures! And in his own learned way, Prof. Gadgil goes on to explain why the Sadhu failed to find the Realiry. "The only explanation of this strange and unfortunate condition that can be offered is that the author had not the good luck of meeting a worthy *Guru* for a disciple of his type." He ends with a prayer to God to bless the Sadhu with the guidance of a worthy *Guru*. Unfortunately I cannot pray to a nonexistent God to develop Prof. Gadgil's reasoning faculty a little further and teach him that it is hardly honest to make use of reason so long as it serves your purpose and then pretend that logic is no good, even on the strength of a dictum from the *Upanishads*.

If the intellsct is not to be used, the only other alternative is blind faith, which is really what Prof. Gadgil advocates. It is difficult to see what he means by saying that the logical method of approach is not the only criterion by which such problems can be solved. Does he mean that it is one of the criteria? In the first place, a criterion is not a method of solving any problem at all. A criterion is a test, a means of judging the truth of something, and I mantain that logic is the only criterion of truth. Nothing can be true if it is incompatible with logic. Even if we assume that truth can be guessed at by other means, the only means of testing it will have to be logic, and if it does not stand the test, it has to be dismissed as an untruth.

Prof. Gadgil thinks that a *Guru* could have helped the Sadhu to arrive at the conclusion desired by Prof. Gadgil, otherwise, of course, he would be a bad *Guru*, But what can a *Guru* do? Will a logical mind submit to a *Guru's* dictum? A logical mind cannot help reasoning even if blind faith is enjoined. So it is utterly futile to hope that even with a *Guru*, the Sadhu would have arrived at the "Siddhanta" view-point, "according to which the existence of God or the ultimate Reality is established beyond doubt by the revelations of our great *Seers*." How a so-called revelation can establish beyond doubt the existence of anything at all passes my comprehension. Of course there will be blind followers who will believe in the 'revelation', but there will equally of course be doubters whom nothing but a logical proof will convince. The blind faith of believers can never prove anything. If it did, all religions would be equally proved which is impossible since they are contradictory. Contradictory statements cannot be simultaneously true, though they may be simultaneously false, and anybody who considers the absurdity of the statements made by different religions can only come to the conclu-

(Continued on page 32)

WHO IS THIS MARXIST?

By Dr. G. Y. CHITNIS.

IN the last issue of "Reason", there is a very curious article written by a Marxist on "What is Time?" Therein he claims to have presented the marxian point of view.

I do not call myself a marxist, because I do not swear by everything that Marx, Engels or Lenin wrote; but that does not mean that I consider myself more "Marxist than Marx" or more "Leninist than Lenin".

I do not also believe in Dialectical Materialism, because I find that the processes of nature cannot be subjected to one immutable law, human or divine. I may not have discussed Dialectics with this unknown Marxist, but there are a number of well-known Marxists in the country with whom I have had the pleasure of discussing it almost threadbare and not one of them complained that I "spit every time its name is mentioned." Even now I am prepared to discuss it with any Marxist except this self-styled one not because I have any grudge against him, but simply because he himself does not understand Dialectics. He seems to be under the impression that if one believes in a thing, it is not necessary for one to understand it. This Marxist pretends to be a staunch believer in Dialectical Materialism and therefore he has gracefully dispensed with the necessity of understanding it.

The Marxian view of Time that this literary *dilletante* has given is so blatantly false, hopelessly crude and so terribly confused and unintelligible that I have begun to feel a little sorry for Marx. I have been at times a very severe critic of Dialectical Materialism, but I think a time is coming when I shall have to take up my pen to defend Marx and his philosophy from the wellmeaning but foolish iconoclastic literary activities of these pseudo-Marxists. For I daresay that an unintelligible, vague and incorrect article of this type will destroy Marxism much more effectively than all the non-Marxian criticisms put together.

I am not, therefore called upon to refute the Marxian view of Time because no Marxian view of Time is given and I refuse to enter into discussion of this theme with people who do not possess the intelligence to understand even the rudiments of Marxism. A very funny charge this socalled Marxist makes against me viz. Dialectical Materialism reduces thinking to brain work and that is why it upsets me. I call this charge funny, because in the first place the brain work that is exhibited in this article is a veritable brain storm which may quite possibly have ended in brain fever, and secondly it is precisely because of the opposite reason that I reject Dialectical Materialism. This philosophy has today become a dogma and as such dispenses with brain work altogether. The juvenile Marxists who are profoundly overawed by the enormous intelectual output of Marx and Lenin and who cannot conceive of human intelligence being so vast naturally come to the conclusion that they represent the last stage of intellectual development and any body who has the impudence to criticise or disagree with these intellectual giants must be a bit of a humbug or a rascal or both. This is precisely what the hirelings of the established church said in the middle ages about those who had the temerity to question the infallibility of the Bible and Aristotle. Even in those days the orthodox defenders of the Bible and Aristotle did not understand either the Bible or Aristotle. The socalled heretics and the apostates were more diligent students of both than the priests and their acolytes.

Coming to the article proper, the very first sentence in it is rather rattling. "The geometry of the universe is the geometry of a continuum." What does it mean precisely? There is another sentence equally learned and equally meaningless "Relativity physics does not make all qualities relative—it sets them in

new absolute framework." Then again "The absolute framework in which these new qualities are set is the continuum of space-time specified by four dimensions." If the continuum of space, to use the grandiloquent phrase of this Marxist, provides an *absolute* framework where is the sense in saying that the universe has no absolute space and absolute time? Thus every paragraph of this article contradicts every other paragraph. But after some time he comes down from his Olympian heights and descends to vulgar common places which even an infant in arms takes for granted. "How in fact" this Marxist asks "has mankind reached its conception of space and time? Obviously *in practice*. That we can repeatedly move ourselves from the *hither* side of a given object to the beyond side – that in the course of so doing we pass other objects and *leave* them behind.....similarly all things we do and all things which are done to us happen after or before each other or simultaneously with each other.....day alternates with night and while either endures, things happen in the light or in the dark.". So you see this is how mankind acquires its ideas of space and time. I do not think any body will object to this statement even if it is very crudely put. If I say that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, no body I am sure, is going to object to that statement.

But after this he again enters into a jugglery of words and achieves something like a grand success in becoming entirely unintelligible. Here is an example. "There is only one direction to time, viz. that which the number registered increases. To suggest that the direction of time, or, as Eddington prefers to call it, the arrow of time, may be uncertain, or is reversible, is to imply that time is something completely independent of the unfolding process in nature from which the notion has been abstracted. The direction of time is involved in the sequence of events that constitute our Universe, and unidirection time is drawn with time by us from that process."

I would also like to give an example of the un-Marxian manner in which this Marxist treats his subject.

"That space and time are opposites is self evident.....that they are united is equally obvious since nothing can happen in one which does not also happen in the other. That they are thus a unity of opposites need worry no one who has not pledged himself *a priori* to a desecration of the grave of Hegel."

Since I have no desire to desecrate the grave of Hegal, the unity of opposites does not worry me in the least. What worries me is that this Marxist who talks so glibly of the unity of opposites does not himself understand what that means and therefore it is he who is desecrating the twin graves of Hegel and Marx. Taking for granted that time and space are opposites they cannot be united as simple opposites but can only be reconciled in a higher synthesis. The Marxist has somehow managed to miss this most important aspect of the Hegelian and Marxian Dialectics and therefore his short sketchy, jumpy but learned-looking dissertation on the Marxian view of Time reads like an expurgated edition of Shakespeare's Hamlet from which the charactor of Hamlet is entirely eliminated.

I can easily forgive him for being rude to me; his attack upon me is absolutely unprovoked and uncalled for; but I do not mind, because I can well understand it. After having selected a subject he could not cope with he adopted the brilliant method of ending his article with choice words of abuse intended for my humble self. He had no other way of getting out of the difficulty. But what I cannot possibly forgive is that under the pretext of presenting a Marxian view of Time he has insulted and abused Marx and Hegel in a way that not even the worst enemy of these great philosophers would dream of.

By the way, who is this Marxist? And who on earth is Josserini?

Karma-Yoga Through Nama-Sadhana

By M. V. V. K. Rangachari,

"SRI Vallabhethi, varadeti, dayapareti, Bhaktapriyeti, bhavalunthana kovideti, Natheti nagasayaneti jagannivasety alapanam pratipadam kurume Mukunda" Thus commenced Kulasekhar, the kingly saint of the south, the well-known rapture-song: Mukundamala. At every step, at each word, Oh, Mukunda, let me utter your name: "Lord of the Goddess (Sri) of affluence", "he who bestows boons", "kindness laden", "lover of devotees", "expert in dispelling the sin of Samsara", "lord, master" "he who rests on the serpent", and "he whose residence is the entire universe" and several others.

What is in the name? If we are to formulate the significance of a word, we have to reach up to the association that it raises in the mind. When we hear the word 'fruit' or 'mango' uttered by some one, we are reminded of the attributes or qualities that pertain to it, since the associated sensations of the taste like sweetness, smell and flavour, and softness to touch &c. are mentally reproduced, or revived in imagination. Now these attributes are qualities that inhere in the picture of the name, as Krishna is at once understood to be black. The qualities themselves are modes of behaviour of the substance conceived through the name. They constitute the activities, Kriyas, which the object involves itself in. When we say that the mango is sweet, we mean that the fruit produced and continues to produce the sensation of sweetness when enjoyed. All forms of qualititative differentiation are thus merely the statements of peculiar actions or forms of activity of substances.

Our habit of differentiating parts of speech is merely an abstraction. The noun is indeed nothing different from its various adjectives that enter into its definition. These adjectives in their turn are nothing apart from the verbs, or activities, modes of behaviour, of the thing denoted by the noun. Thus we reach the unity of our thought-content, when we realise that the name that we utter is not merely a conventional symbol, but has behind it an association of the Kriyas (verbs) or activities which in their discriminative import constitute its adjectival or attributive factors. As nothing may be known except through its attributes or qualities, and as these qualities are themselves statements of the mode of behaviour under different conditions, the identity of the Name (noun) with its Viseshana (adjective) implying the Kriya-Sakti (verb) logically deduced.

But in our endeavour to investigate the activities of any object, we may not overlook the limitations inherent in the pursuit. At no time in life will it become possible to learn all the predicates, and through them to deduce all the qualities of the objects of study. Names and forms are themselves limitations while they serve to present before us some clear images of the actions and attributes, which alone concrete life is able to grasp. The attributeless, actionless Infinity and Eternity is beyond human apprehension. We may use Names in regard thereto, but we express our very inability to express anything thereby. As an object of conscious application, the mysterious fusion of the Unmanifest into the Manifest is somehow left in the back-ground, without the scrutiny of consistent logical examination. There, all our names fail, our adjectives are

powerless, and void of distinctive significance, and our verbs are notionless, out of action. There is Nama beyond all names, Viseshana above all adjectives, and Kriya that out-does all other forms of activity. Into that do all names, verbs and adjectives merge, and out of that do these emerge, as a process of the evolution of consciousness.

The human content of these names is manifest. The qualities that they signify tend to human welfare. The deeds that they stand for bear close reference to the beneficience of social effort and the anihilation of all contrary forces of social evil. They are Kalyana-Gunas through which the highest and best in man stands revealed. That in itself is the concretisation of an abstract Impersonal Ideal, even the conferment of a Super Personality upon the highest concept ever attempted by the human mind. The sublimity of human achievement merits the one-thousand appellations ever uttered in our invocation. The highest possessions, mental, moral as well as physical, pertain to the race, justifying, the proud title of the lord of fortune (Shri Vallabha). Humanity is the one great boon (Varada), and kindness is human nature *in esse* (Dayapara). The response that man gives to the finer devotional attitude in life is immediate (Bhakta-priya). Man, again, it is, that has any potentiality to annihilate sin, for, taking him out of account, virtue would loose all meaning. (Bhava lunthana kovida). Man is the mastermind in the universe of experience which is slowly coming under comprehension (Natha). Resting on the coils of infinite time, man's head is under the shade of that wise hood, significantly proclaiming that in man is to be found the latest edition of life's evolution. (Naga sayana). The one conscious dweller in the universe is man, the dweller that is of any consequence among those that breathe, that has endowed life with a moral value, in that he shoulders responsibility in action and effort (Purusha prayatna). He whose abode is the universe (Jagannivasa) is human-born. We contemplate ever on the essense of man in all his relations. Life spent in the exercise is the fullest ever lived, if each step that is laid is laid with the full knowledge of human potentialities." The idea back of Nama-Sadhana is thus identical with the raising of appropriate associations in the mind in regard to helpful and beneficient human activities. It is a process of reviving mental pictures of the highest attributes, and concentrating on them (Bhagavad Guna Anubhava). Whenever anything that man does, amounts to conduct, in all the conscious human activity that has any bearing on life, the recollection of the appropriate attribute or Kriya (verb) is facilitated through the Sahasra-Nama-Anusandhana, which touches life at all points. In any situation, it only requires to call out the appropriate Nama, to resolve the problem, in the larger human sense. When evil thoughts cross the mind, think on Bhava Lunthana Kovida, and they fade. When some-one approaches you with a request, deport thyself into VARADA. Confronted with cruelty, Dayapara would yield solace. To the oppressed and down-trodden, there is the Natha, he who is the just ruler. The descent of the Infinite into thought is through denomination in positive language. Speech is the immediate response of our inner-most urge to express what would otherwise remain inexpressible. Japa (Nama Sadhana) is the concentration through practice (Abhyasa) in the waking life to strengthen the hold of the Ideal on our otherwise uncharted movements. To repeat the name is to get permeated with the theught-content of its attributes linked to its doings, and where the name stands for higher integration of society, it should not fail to accomplish or aid the march of evolution.

You can always do one of these things:

1. **Get new members for the R.A.I.**
2. **Get new readers for REASON.**
3. **Send a donation.**

MAKE 1941 A YEAR FOR REASON

BookReview.

By ANIL.

Roy's new publication,

Science and Superstition

COMRADE Roy has brought out another interesting book entitled "Science and Superstition". It contains four essays in all—what Comrade Roy calls random notes—the first of which deals with the superstition of the transmigration of soul, the second with hysteria which is generally misunderstood for spiritual trance and the remaining two with crime and punishment. Roy is perhaps justified in calling them random notes because the four essays do not constitute a connected whole and the general manner of dealing with the subject is almost popular.

Survival of memory

In the first he considers the possibility of survival of memory connected with one's previous existence and demonstrates by a psycho-physiological analysis that memories apart from brain cannot exist and since the brain has a purely material origin its survival in a spiritual form is unthinkable; therefore he comes to the conclusion tkat the transmigration of soul is a physiological impossbility. His robust materialism makes an absolutely short work of all the evidence that has been adduced in favour of this theory and the arguments he has advanced make a very delightful reading.

Psychology of the seer

The second essay deals with the psychology of the seer. He investigates the causes that contribute to the inducing of a religious trance and affirms that religious trance is nothing but a form of hysteria which is to be treated in a psychopathological clinic and it has not the slightest ethical value.

Criminology

The remaining two essays are very important making as they do a very strong plea for treating criminology as a branch of social science. In a very clear and concise manner he shows that most of the crimes which are committed in this country are the result of the peculiar social and religious traditions that have been handed down to us from generation to generation. The crimes which are committed in the city of Chicago are the natural consequence of the economic and social conditions which obtain in the United States of America. Similarly in India the doctrine of Karma and the cruel custom which condemns virgin widows to perpetual celibacy are, among other things, responsible for a large number of crimes in India.

The root of evil

Even then it is easy to see that the root of crimes as of all evils is primarily economic. Our social customs and peculiar religious traditions are bound up with the patriarchal-feudal system which is still prevalent in the Indian villages. The ancient mode of tilling the soil which demands maximum of labour which is proportionately unproductive and the uneconomic manner in which the entire agricultural system is organised are the main causes that lead to crimes and other allied evils.

Aim and Purpose

Every religious tradition in so far as it is essentially religious leads to the exploitation of the many for the benefit of the few, that is its sole aim and purpose. Therefore the question arises whether the uprooting of all religious and social traditions which have outlived their usefulness is the *sine-qua-non* of the political awakening among the people or a consciousness of their growing political worth is first of all necessary to uproot all the outworn religious and social traditions? It is really difficult to answer this question. According to

certain schools of Marxists the rise of Protestantism in Europe was due to the necessity of emphasising precisely those ethical virtues which led to the development and prosperity of capitalist society; according to some others the Industrial Revolution and the consequent rise of capitalism rendered the movement of the Reformation inevitable

The Industrial Revolution

What is, of course, of vital importance to remember in this connection is that the Industrial Revolution which created conditions for the rise of capitalism in Europe has also impinged upon the Indian society, shaking it to its very foundation. The Indian nationalist movement which is the result of this impact is driven by an historical necessity to uphold some sort of programme of agrarian revolution. Now my contention is that this programme which the nationalist movement will be unable to carry out in its entirety will at the same time create conditions for a wider social outlook and broader religious sympathies. I do not know for certain if it will destroy the Indian religious mode of thought altogether and replace it with a purely materialist philosophy of life; but what is certain is that this religious mode of thought may become so much liberalised that it will hardly be distinguishable from a scientific mode of thought. It does not mean that the large masses of people will know anything about science but they will at least give up their belief in the doctrine of Karma and the transmigration of soul and will abandon many other stupid religious beliefs which keep them under perpetual economic and political bondage.

What's the Use ?

What then, it may well be asked, is the use of books like the one under review? I admit that for the masses it is of no use whatsoever. But for the intelligentsia it is of tremendous importance. The movement of an intellectual rebirth is not the movement of the masses; the masses are merely the pawns in this intellectual as well as political game. They will enthusiastically follow and make a god of anybody who takes the slightest trouble to despise them. In other words the general mass of people assimilate the ideas of the class they worship but fundamentally their attitude is frankly materialistic. The theory of the transmigration of soul and the doctrine of Karma are not invented by the masses; they are invented by the dominant class for its own ulterior purpose.

Transfer of power

When therefore, the ruling class which is wedded to an outmoded ideology is driven out of its position of privilege and its place is taken by another class, then the latter adopts a new ideology to secure its own position of privilege. In this trasfer of power from one class to another the condition of the masses becomes slightly improved and therefore they become the enthusiastic supporters of the new regime and the new ideology.

No Difference

In this sense I make no distinction between the doctrine of the transmigration of soul and the doctrine of Dialectical Materialism. The Russian peasant whose appalling ignorance did not permit him to know the difference between the creeds of Athnasius and Arius nor to unravel the mystery of the triune nature of God could not have within the last twenty years advanced intellectually so much as to unravel the mystery of the triune nature of the Marxian Dialecties.

Therefore I contend that all intellectual movements proceed from the upper classes and they are accepted by the masses on trust without understanding anything about them. The book under review is a welcome contribution to the birth of a new intellectual movement which in course of time will be made acceptable to the general mass of Indian people when the heralds of the new movement will capture political power and become the new dominant class.

Items of Interests

By A. HUSEIN.

IN spite of the onslaught on reason going on around us we are carrying *Reason* into 1941, with hope that the darkness that has enveloped the earth and the insanity that has gripped civilisation in its mad orgy of butchery of man by man will end and that an age of reason will soon return and prevail.

x x x

I must say that it is only with the whole-hearted cooperation and support of our young and old members that we are able to continue our activities in these difficult times and present this issue of *Reason* amply improved in its appearance, quality and contents.

x x x

THE excellent drawing on the cover page bears evidence to the artistic capabilities of our young editor Mr. Solomon. I am sure we could not have had a better composition of ideas than that. At the risk of inviting the editorial blue pencil, I must say that Art is Mr. Solomon's neglected love (though not very neglected as we can see), rationalism having taken first place.

x x x

IT is trial that brings forth the best in man, and the present time *is* the crucial test for us rationalists. This topsy-turvy world must be put right once again. With the zeal and enthusiasm evinced by many young and old members of our Association to serve the "best of course", I am confident we shall carry on our fight into the very heart of superstition, ignorance and irrationalism with increasing success.

x x x

THE public lecture arranged by the R. A. I. on 14th December last, at the Blavatsky Lodge, when Mr. M. N. Roy spoke on "The Spiritual Genius of India," was a great success. The hall was full to capacity, more than 500 persons being present. Many had to stand for want of sitting accommodation. Mr. Roy made the subject very interesting and instructive and presented his arguments in his usual able manner. He succeeded in debunking the prevalent notion that spirituality is the monopoly of Indian civilisation. He effectively proved that Western civilisation had also passed this phase of "spirituality" at a certain stage of its development. We hope to publish the full speech in our next issue.

x x x

THE proposals of peace to warring nations to end the present conflict coming from His Holiness the Pope sound strange when we remember the record of Vatican diplomacy so effectively and devastatingly revealed by Mr. Joseph McCable in his *Papacy in Politics To-dag*. It is too much to expect us to forget so soon the Pope's alliance with Hitler and Mussolini, the *Te Deum* sung at the Catheral of Milan after the rape of Abyssinia, the picture of Catholic bishops blessing Italian armies and instruments of destruction going out to pour death and ruin on fellow Christian across the frontier and the record of Catholic intrigue in Spain. And now, after doing all that can be done to promote violence and brutality they want to sooth our ears with proposals of peace but we know that a leapord never changes its spots.

x x x

THE Ismailites Khoja community, a microscopic sect of Indian Muslims is all agog with preparations to celebrate the Dimond Jubile of its religious Head (Hazar Imam) the Aga Khan. Who does not know the Aga Khan with all his fabulous wealth, his horses

and English wife. The occassion being the Dimond Jubilee of his accessation to the religious-gadi of his community, he will be weighed against his weight and dimonds.

x x x

THE purchase of thousands of dimonds necessary to equal the weight of the Aga Khan will be done with donations made by each and every member of his community and on being weighed, the dimonds will be presented to the Aga Khan. On his Golden Jubilee he was weighed against his weight in gold. And, he ain't a small weight either, over 300 lbs. I should say.

x x x

JUST think of it! A man may spend his lifetime digging for dimonds in the mines of Kimberley, and I am afraid, he would not collect dimonds even one-fourth his own weight. And now, just imagine, finding yourself one fine morning in possession of dimonds equal to the weight of your own body. Isn't it astounding, incredible?

x x x

HERE'S another instance of what colossal wealth is spent on religious institutions and religious heads. His Holiness the Taher Saifuddin, the Head-priest of the Dawoodi Bohras, another miscroscopic sect of Indian Muslims, with donations collected from the members of his community has made a canopy of gold and silver (gold 5,000 tolas and silver 450,000 tolas) costing in all Rs. 10,00,000 about £70,000. This canopy is to be sent to Najaf in Iraq to be placed on the tomb of Hazat Ali, the first Calipha after Prophet Mohamed as believed by Shia Muslims. (There are two vast divisions of Muslims; One Shia and the other Sunni; the former believe Ali as the first Calipha and the latter do not). Ali lived some 1300 years ago. The present canopy on his tomb was made of copper which now will be replaced by the one made of gold and silver.

CORRESPONDENCE

Rama and Sambuka

Dear Mr. Karve,

I have just received, and have gone through the leading article by your-self in the November issue of REASON. In that excellent article of yours, please let me point out the slight slip which occurs where you say that Rama beheaded Sambuka for 'studying the Vedas'. *Perhaps* it may be a popular notion (and I am not at all sure of it) that the (of course) unjustifiable beheading was due to that cause or excuse. But as you may see from our RAMA-RAJYA, it was the practising of *tapas*, which, as stated in all our Ramayanic legends (and themes, including the *Uttara-Rama-charitam*), earned for Sambuka the decapitation at Rama's hands. In RAMA-RAJYA, also, you will find even the point discussed, whether *tapas* could be deemed to be forbidden to Sudras (like Sambuka) according to the ideology of our ancients.

S. D. N.

(Karwar; 23.11-1940.)

IS it not strange while millions of people in India can hardly afford a square meal a day such fabulous amount should be spent for religious humbug. One is staggered by the depth of ignorance and brazeness of the exploitors of these poor deluded masses who toil and sweat all their life only to be deprived of a large part of the earning of their labour to be used for the perpetuation of their intellectual slavery.

x x x

JUST a little thought on the tremendous amount of harm done by ignorance, superstition and organised religion should urge all progressive minded men and women to do what they can to strenghten the Rationalist Association of India which is with such persistant courage, carrying on the mightly task of spreading the light of Reason throughout this country

CHRIST AND BUDDHA

Their teachings identical, yet different

By Dr. G. Y. Chitnis

CHRISTMAS is a very joyous occasion for the Christians; it is supposed that Jesus christ was born on the twenty-fifth of December; really speaking one does not know when he was born; the biographical information which is available in the authentic gospels indicates twenty third of December as the birth day of Jesus; but we need not enter into the domain of Higher Criticism; it is not vital to know if Jesus was born on the twenty-fifth of December or on the twenty-third; what is of greater importance is that he was born.

Strange identity

Five hundred years before the birth of Christ Gautama Buddha was born in India. There is such a strange likeness between the teachings of Buddha and Christ that scholars like Lokamanya Tilak were led to the conclusion that Christ must have borrowed his teaching from the Buddhists. But here again we need not enter into a detailed discussion of this theory; there is certainly a likeness between the teachings of these two great teachers. I will go further and suggest that from a purely ethical standpoint, Buddhist teaching stands on a much higher level than the teaching of Christ; even then we must remember that the general philosophical outlook of the one was fundamentally different from the other and it is because of this fundamental difference that we conclude that although the teaching of these two great prophets is almost identical we are not justified in saying that the one has borrowed it from the other.

What is soul

Buddha had developed a purely negative outlook on life. To him the soul was nothing but a bundle of impressions and sensations acquired through countless births and rebirths; that means that when this soul is freed from all these impressions and sensations, man attains freedom; the soul itself disappears; this is what Buddha calls *Nirvana*. In order to attain this condition every mortal must devote himself disinterestedly to social service; in order to facilitate the performance of social service Buddha began propagating a particular code of ethics.

Buddha and civilisation

It is obvious that it is not possible to build any kind of civilisation upon the basis of this negative attitude towards life. Because civilisation must always have a positive, materialist basis. To construct any kind of social system and any kind of civilisation it is necessary first to think in terms of materialism and from this point of view Buddha's code of ethics proved absolutely impractical. This was one of the principal reasons why Buddism was finally driven out of India; it is true that Buddhism has now spread in China, Japan and Burma but it must be remembered that this expanding Buddhism has given up its original negative outlook on life and has adopted a positive one.

Fundamental principles

In India the revival of Brahmanism became the lifework of the great philosopher, Shankaracharya; He of course played a vital part in driving Buddhism out of India yet there is such a close similarity between his doctrine of unqualified monism and the fundamental principles of original Buddhism that Ramanujacharya in his Shri Bhashya does not hesitate to call Shankar, Buddhist in disguise.

Unqualified monism

But Shankar was not content merely with reviving Brahmanism; he was also concerned with the reconstruction of Hindu society and it was impossible to achieve that task on the basis of unqualified monism; that is why he introduced the doctrine of Maya which left a good deal of scope of the material reconstruction of society; he had of course proclained to the world that the world was unreal yet at the same time he realised that an enduring society must have a materialist basis. The principle of *varnashramdharma* was a part of the current tradition; he made use of it for reconstituting Hindu society. But his socioiogical principles were vitiated by the inherent contradiction between philosophical nihilism and practical positivism and the historian has made known to us the tragic consequences of that contradiction from which the Hindu society has ever since been suffering.

A Carpenter

Jesus Christ followed exactly the opposite method; he was not a sanyasi; he had not given up the world; aware that he was an illegitimate child he did not hesitate to carry on his step-father's business. Joseph was a carpenter and Jesus when he came of age also became a carpenter.

His followers

At the age of thirty he began to preach his gospel; his first followers were drawn from the fishermen, the publicans and ths prostitutes: He collected them together and began to preach; the burden of his preaching was "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." To Jesus the greatest sin was the sin of hypocrisy. The winebibbers, and the debauchees, he was firmly convinced, could get rid of their sins if only their hearts could be purified by the fire of repentance; but those who make a profession of religion, are always anxious to be regarded as religous and pure and who wear a perpetual mask of hypocrisy to maintain their prestige can never attain Salvation. They will be thrown in outer darkness where their is gnashing of teeth," To conduct regular divine service, to wear long robes and phylacteries and shout one's prayers aloud so that every body will hear them will not lead to the Kingdom of Heaven; but those who are pure in heart and meek and love men as brothers will easily enter the Kingdom of God even if they do not perform their worship according a precribed form. "If thou bringest thy offering to God and rememberest thou hast aught against thy brother, leave the offering and first get reconciled to thy brother."

Interim-Ethics

This part of the teaching of Christ is positive and an average man can easily practise it; but the second part of his teaching is really impractical and cannot be of the slightest use for social reconstruction. The life of Christ can be divided in two parts; in the beginning he started his preaching just like an ordinary Jewish Rabbi; afterwards he developed the notion that he was the special messenger of God and since then his teaching became purely eschatological; the complexion of his teaching suddenly changed when he thought that the world was coming to an end immediately and that the Kingdom of God would be established on earth before his very eyes. He then formulated a certain code of conduct to be practiced during the waiting period and this is known as the interim ethics.

Universalism

From the standpoint of civilisation the negative teaching of Buddha and the eschatological teaching of Christ are equally useless; because as I have said above civilisation must have an essentially materialist basis; man is a social animal and hence if he wants to build up family life and create some social system of which this family is a unit, he has to discard the teaching of Christ and Buddha. Every social reconstruction must base itself upon a practical recognition of man's desires, his ambitions and his needs. As this society progresses man's out-

look on life becomes more liberal and wider; today he concerns himself only with his family; but tomorrow he will look upon his own community as a family; day after tomorrow he may develop the same intensity of affection and love for his own country and a time will come when he will look upon the whole human race as one family. But if you try to reconstruct society upon the basis of the principles of universalism without taking into account man's intellectual and spiritual limitations, the society will perish and man will regress to a more barbarous condition.

That is why man should alway have his feet firmly planted upon the earth and then if he could look at the stars in heaven that will be a sign of progress; but if he leaves his foot-hold on the ground and begins to soar high to catch hold of the stars he is sure to fall down and break his neck.

Books of interest to Rationalists

FROM SAVAGERY TO CIVILIZATION

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 1/8 By Post Rs. 1/10.

*

HERESIES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 1/8 By Post Rs. 1/10.

*

MATERIALISM

AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 2/8 (Cloth) By Post Rs. 2/12.

MAN AND NATURE

(A Symposium of Modern Knowledge)

BY

EMINENT SCIENTISTS

(Frazer, Taylor, Haldane, Baker, Huxley & Levy.)

PRICE Rs. 2/- By Post Rs. 2/4.

*

Available through:—

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

STANDARD WORKS BY FAMOUS FREETHINKERS

Thinkers' Library

Education: Intellectual, Moral and Physical by Herbert Spencer. A great book on a great subject.

A Short History of the World by H. G. Wells. In the pages of this book we review the pageant of earth, of life, of primitive man, and of civilisation, as seen by one of the most vivid writers of our day.

Anthropology (in 2 Vols) by Sir E. B. Tylor. This is the scientific "Book of Genesis." Vol. 1 describes the life of early Man and how he learned to talk and write. Vol. 2 deals with the arts of life and pleasure, and the growth of Knowledge and Religion.(Illustrated).

The Evolution of the Idea of God by Grant Allen. Twenty years were occupied in preparing and ten years in writing this standard work on the history of the God-idea—which is the history of religion itself.

The Churches and Modern Thought by Vivian Phelips. A frank, fearless, and fascinating study of the question "Is Christianity True?"

The Martyrdom of Man by Winwood Reade. Acclaimed as a classic of the nineteenth century, unequalled in artistry of language and lucidity of style.

The Evidence for the Supernatural by Dr. Ivor, LL. Tuckett. Surveys the answer of Science to the question "Is Spiritualism True?" Is the Supernatural Credible?"

The Existence of God by Joseph McCabe. A scholarly and searching examination into the origin, history, and present position of the belief in God with a reply to Sir J. Jeans, Sir A. Eddington, and other apologists.

Psychology for Every Man (and Woman) by A. E. Mander. Gives a clear and concise introduction to the study of human character.

Letters on Reasoning by J. M. Robertson A scholarly exposition on rational thinking.

Clearer Thinking; (Logic for Every Man) by A. E. Mander. A valuable and practical guide to clear and logical thinking.

Man and His Universe by J. Langdon-Davies. An excellent survey of Man's progress from a primitive outlook on life to a modern scientific one and the causes that contributed to it.

First Principles by Herbert Spencer (Rs. 2/-) A clear and orderly synthesis of knowledge.

The Rights of Man by Thomas Paine. A treatise in defence of those principles of freedom for which the author so valiantly fought and suffered.

The Universe of Science by Prof. H. Levy. An excellent book on the Philosophy of Science.

Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings by Henry Maudsley, M. D. Reveals the psychological processes by which man arrived at beliefs commonly attributed to mystical sources.

Price 15 as. postage 3 as.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

THE COSMO CIRCLE

A series of lectures on the "New World Order" will be delivered at the Bandra Club Hall, Hill Road, Bandra under the auspicies of the *Cosmo Circle*.

Each lecture will be followed by a miniature symposium in which members of the *Circle* will participate. One of the aims and objects of the *Cosmo Circle* being to provide an opportunity for young men and women to exchange views on various subjects.

Programme.

Sunday, January 5, 1941— Time 5 p. m.
"The Church and the New World Order"
Speaker: Rev. Sr. Balaguer S.J.
President: Prof. J. C. P. Andrade.

Sunday, January 19, 1941— Time 5 p. m.
"The Moral Basis of the New World Order"
Speaker: Mr. K. F. Nariman.

Sunday, January 26, 1941— Time 5 p. m.
"Rationalism and the New World Order"
Speaker: Prof. R. D. Karve.

Sunday, February 2, 1941 — Time 5 p. m.
"Science and the New World Order"
Speaker: Dr. Chfford Mansherdt.

Announcement will also appear in local papers on the respective days.

There will be a very nominal entrance fee.

Those interested should write to:—

The Jt. Hon, Secretaries,
The Cosmo Circle,
Opp. Bandra West Post Office,
Hill Road, Bandra.

THE
THINKER'S FORUM

A NEW SERIES

THE GOD OF WAR
By Joseph McCabe.

THE DANGER OF BEING AN ATHEIST
By A. Gowans Whyte.

TURKEY: THE MODERN MIRACLE
By F. W. Tomlin.

SCIENCE: CURSE OR BLESSING
By Prof. H. Levy.

MAKE YOUR OWN RELIGION
By A. Gowans Whyte.

Price As. 6. *By Post* As. 7.

INDISPENSABLE TO ALL SERIOUS STUDENTS.

1 INDIAN FEUDAL STATES AND NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE... ... 0-4-0

2 PROBLEM OF AGRARIAN INDEBTEDNESS. 0-2-0

3 GANDHI'S TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE X-RAYED. 0-2-0

4 EXIT GOD! 0-2-0

By A. R. DESAI.

Can be had from:
The Hindustan Newspapers Limited.
21, Dalal Street, Fort,
BOMBAY.

What Science Is

By Max Eastman.

(Reproduced from THE MODERN QUARTERLY)

SEEING the Wonders Wrought by Scientists in the sphere of physics, chemistry, biology, we cannot help reflecting that if the same methods could be brought to bear on social and political problems, all might be well. That is the thought behind the Brain Trust. It explains the late craze for Pareto. It is the main reason why Marxism gains such a hold upon our progressive intelligentsia. We are confronted as a society with desperate probems and have lost our faith in untrained common sense, in magic formulae, poetic vision, prayer or pious faith, to solve them. We feel that scientific understanding and procedure, the scientific attitude of mind as a public policy, is our sole hope.

It is of general importance, therefore, to be very definite about what science is. It is of special importance to radicals in their task of reappraising the Marxian philosophy.

Science stems mainly from practical common sense, and to its major prophet, Professor Huxley, "trained and organized common sense" seemed an adequate definition of it. Its results aspire to be "common"—that is, accessible to, and verifiable by, everybody who has the leisure and ability to understand them; it has no kinship with privately delightful subjective belief; and its concept of the source and nature of knowledge as derived ultimately from experience, derived by the methods of observation, experiment and rational calculation, and subject to the obvious practical test of action. To be sensible—if you could be sensible enough!—is for a scientific mind the highest wisdom.

There is indeed little to distinguish the scientific thinker from the man of practical, or "good," common sense, except the superior system, order, scope, exactitude of his data, and his more strenuous and thoughtful discipline—in short, as Huxley said, *training* and *organization*. Common sense is amateur; science is expert.

In order to become expert, however, practical common sense had to isolate itself from certain more ingratiating preoccupations with which in its amateur condition it had often been confused: from sorcery and magic, charlatanism, pseudo-science, poetry, religion and religious metaphysics. To complete Huxley's definition, therefore, we have to distinguish science from what is centrally implied by each of these other terms.

II.

It is fairly obvious that the witch who proposed to cure cancer with a poultice of toad's knuckles and the ears of bats killed in the third phase of the moon in October, and pronouncing over it the syllables *Me mo fi fum fidoo fidoofiducium*, was not using her mind the way a man was who when wounded in battle tightened a thong round his limb to stop the blood-flow. And yet it is not easy, especially when the two kinds of thinking are mingled as is usual in the same mind, to define this difference It might seem sufficient to distinguiih science from magic by saying that its assertions are reliable, its predictions come true, its procedures actually produce the proposed result. But why is this so? The distinction between them is not one of emotional motive nor general mental attitude; both the scientist and the magician attempt to change, or adjust themselves to, a world which they conceive as impersonal. The distinction lies in their attitude to the unchangeable or uncontrollable element in that world. The magician ignores this element, or reduces it in his conceptions to a minimum. The desired end plays the predominant part in his thinking; the given facts play almost no part at all, but in many cases, he spends the major part of his time ascertaining their exact character and defining the relations among them that are fixed—the manner in which they invariably coexist and succeed one another. He may indeed spend all of his time that way, in clean oblivion of any wish to change or control the world. But in any case his effort at change or control are based upon and guided by a definition of what is unchangeable and uncontrollable. They are based upon what is called "irreduceable fact." The scientist has, to recall the words of Professor Bridgman, an attitude of almost religious humi- lity before fact.

He has also, however, a rather irreligious pride in dragging facts out into the open sunshine where they can be passed around for inspection, and have their presumed relations debated and exhaustively tried out. That too differentiates him from the Magician.

an implacable enemy of the occult. He really want sto know; the magician wants not to know. The "numerologists," for instance, a frequent survival of this type in our American leisure class, can tell you by name the amount of love-genius in your soul. But they cannot point out any factual connection between the spelling of your name and the attributes of your soul. And it is of the essence of their pleasure in numerology that no such connection should be revealed. Nothing would more quickly destroy and disperse their cult than for somebody actually to discover, verify, delimit, and define a dependable relation between one's character and the number of letters in his name. Their whole doctrine would then come down from the world of mystery into the matter-of-fact world, and be no longer either of interest or profit to them.

III.

Between the man of expert common sense and the primitive magician there stands a wavering type, also commonly identified as an enemy of science, the quack or charlatan. Charlatanism arises in almost every branch of knowledge. It seems an invevitable by-product of the evolution of the scientific point-of-view, and is no such simple thing as deliberate swindling of the public. The charlatan has often a genuine interest in knowledge, and will offer his good offices on oocasion with no pecuniary motive whatever. He dwells in a mental twilight where the line between science and some magic practice is unclear. He dwells in a moral twilight which does not demand that lines be clear. He deceives himself as well as his victim; he keeps up in himself with ingenious skill a more primitive mental condition than such skill warrants. He cultivates credulity. He is a reversion rather than a perversion, and stubbornly but half aware of his kinship with savages—often, indeed, sincerely self-convinced that he represents an outpost in the slow march of knowledge.

It is the charlatanism in Alexis Carrel's book, *Man the Unknown*, which made it so prodigiously popular—charlatanism mixed up in fatal does with science. A purer example of the charlatan in our midst is the Georgian or Armenian, Gurdjieff, whom I had the pleasure of meeting at his institute at Fontainebleau, an institute of health made dubiously famous by the death therein of Katherine Mansfield. Gurdjieff was friendly to me because of my radicalism, and admitted me into an inner conclave where I heard readings from a manuscript which had been dictated to the world through his lips by Beelzebub. While a pale young man read the manuscript, Gurdjieff watched the auditors with a Beelzebubian expression, or the expression of a mischievously benevolent barn-owl, on his dark and handsome features. When the reading was over and I asked a question, he explained—I thought very astutely—that since Beelzebub was not now present, he could not answer questions, nor enter into any discussion of the text. But notwithstanding his astuteness, and that owlish expression, and Beelzebub's commonplace thoughts and very bad literary style —perhaps in part because of this—I felt that the man possessed a qualified sincerity and a genuine wish to do good. I doubt if a person so sensitive as Katherine Mansfield could have accepted his ministrations had he not. His apostle to America, A. R. Orage, one of the most cultivated and benign men of our time, was still less to be dismissed offhand as a fakir. And yet I have heard him solemnly enunciate, in a Park Avenue drawing room, beliefs literaliy drawn from the lore of the medicine-man and the witch-doctor. It was something more austere than honesty that he lacked—that humility before fact, that pride in overt understanding, that taste for utter clarity. which has, through the long ages, combletely divorced expert common sense from magic.

IV.

Although thus deeply opposed to it, magic contributed to the growih of science something that common sense could not, a specialized preoccupation with the control of nature. The sorcerers, however inexpert they were, were professional. And science in many cases arose as a gradual introduction of common sense standards of validity into the moonings and brewings of this profession. Certain sciences thus passed through a transitional period in which the occult was mixed enough matter-of-fact knowledge to make it acceptable even to great scientific minds. Sir Isaac Newton spent about a third of his time dabbling in alchemy, and there are many relics of this half-way science in the famous book of Robert Boyle which marked the birth of modern chemistry. Astrology was mingled in the same way with the beginnings of astronomy. The astronomer engaged by Magellan to guide him round the earth abandoned the voyage because he had cast his own horoscope and found the stars unfavourable to his going. Admiral Byrd would be glad to say good-bye to such an astronomer and it may be that Magellan was too. The man was not "scientific" enough. That is to

say, he was credulous of occult beliefs supported only by tradition, and not able to rest in doubt matters upon which real knowledge was inaccessible.

This ability to rest in doubt, to withhold belief where belief is not warranted by methodical investigation—yet more, to *suspend judgment* while such investigation is in progress—is indispensable to expert common sense and it is the part most difficult for amateurs to learn. Scepticism as a mood or habitual attitude is as old as belief and is a fruitless thing. But affirmative or scientific scepticism—the ability and resolution to say "I don't know" when, and only exactly when, that is the fact—is a comparatively new thing in the world. It is the real "philosophy" of the scientist, and is so peculiar to him as to seem almost his defining trait. Still it is only the inseparable reverse side of that humility before fact and passion for daylight understanding, that trained and organized practical matter of-factness, which we have already discussed.

V.

Besides restraining belief and disregarding sensation the scientist is compelled to set aside his emotional predilections. He must not let his liking for this or that solution of a problem affect his choice. He must not let any interest of his—place, power, fortune, comfort in love, or comfortable feeling of the world—he must not let even so insidious a thing as a wish to be the solver of a problem—influence his solution. That is why the tale is so often told of how Charles Darwin almost lost the honour of introducing the theory of natural selection because he spent twenty years collecting evidence before he would give his great idea to the public—and of Isaac Newton, waiting almost as long for similar reasons before announcing his theory of gravitation. Those two incidents are symbolic of what is morally most impressive about science, its passion for an impersonal goal. A patriot may have more or less pure devotion to his country; a warrior, a poet, a philanthropist, may reconcile many motives in his overheated breast. But a scientist, by his very definition, and in so far as he is a scientist, must be single in his search of truth. His very test of truth, his litmus paper for detecting its presence, is that it shall be capable of objective verification—capable of verification by all honest and adequate minds, no matter what their tastes and points of view and passionate wishes in the field may be. By taking that word "common"—so lightly spoken in the phrase common sense—and raising it up into a standard of the validity and inward respectability of his own thoughts, he has condemned himself to a kind of sainthood that is hard to find elsewhere in this modern world. He may be more or less of a scientist, but in so far as he is a scientist he has singleness of purpose.

This does not mean—I hope it is obvious—that scientists are without feeling, or that their researches are pure of all relevance to action and supernaturally cut off from the usual theme of the brain's labor. What to do? An examination of the body of ideas actually called science would show that an exceedingly small part of it is irrelevant either to man's interests or his purposeful activities. Therefore there is something unscientific as well as snobbish bound up in the cult of "pure" science—the Aluminum Tower attitude, as we might call it, for it is similar *in* texture and surface polish to the Ivory Tower in art. There is such a thing, of course, as pure curiosity, but it is not at all elevated or unusual. Almost anybody would be interested to know, if he could be reliably informed, what is the average number of clover stems per square mile in the region between New York and Philadelphia taking the ocean for one boundary and the Pennsylvania R.R. for another, and what the ratio is therein of four-leaved to three-leaved clovers. The knowledge would be exact, quantitative, generalized. It would meet all the requirement of the concept of "pure" science, but anyone who set out to acquire it woule probably arrive in an insane asylum before he reached Newark, New Jersey.

No matter how pure science, it chooses its subject matter under the general guidance of human aims or interests and it orders this subject matter by means of a conceptual apparatus in the formation of which practical activites play a major part. On the other hand no matter how practical science is, nor how passionate the purpose that motivates it and marks out the field of its inquiry, that purpose and passion must be made clearly conscious and set deliberately aside during its inquiry, and must have no influence upon its definition of the relevant facts. In that sense practical science is entirely pure. And as pure science is to some degree invitably practical, there is no great depth to the distinction between them. They both stand in complete contrast to that kind of thinking in which our conception of

the facts is in any part determined by our passion. As Berirand Russell says:

> The kernel of the scientific outlook is a thing so simple, so obvious, so seemingly trivial, that the mention of it may almost excite derision. The kernel of the scientiffc outlook is the refusal to regard our own desires, tastes and interests as affording a key to the understanding of the world.

I do not know why Mr. Russell thinks this is so simple and trivial a thing, unless because he himself has so spontaneous a genius for it. To the average man the main object of speculation is to get hold of some sort of belief that will sit comfortably in his breast. And certainly the most persistent and most threatening enemy of the scientific attitude is the disposition of men to think what they want to think, and of men and institutions to bend the result even of experimental investigation, and prevert its authority, to the support of their purposes and states of passion.

In celebrating the five hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Heidelberg University, its Nazi professor of philosophy, Dr. Ernest Krieck, declared:

> The science of a nation is a part of its total life, and is therefore bound by the necessities, direction and purposes of the national life.....We seek a science that forms the whole of a man's character in accordance with the great racial and political task before us.

All mature minds, in Germany and elsewhere, realize that this attempt, not merely to employ the findings of science for the purposes of the totalitarian state, but to bend these findings to the demands of totalitarian passion, will be, if successful, the end of German science. It will perhaps appear in this retrospect the chief of Hitler's crimes against civilization.

VI.

A more ancient emotional and institutional enemy of science is religion. Religion conflicts with science not only as magic does by opposing its own occult procedure—prayer and sacrifice to the practical way of getting things done, but still more by opposing to the general attitude of restrained emotion and suspended judgment in which scientific investigation must proceed, its foreordained belief in an emotionally satisfying total picture of the world. I do not mean by religion, of course, a sense of the mystery of being, or the emotions which poetic people have had, and always will have, in contemplation of the concept of the unknown, I think Einstein is wrong in applying the word religion to his feeling of "the variety of human desires and aims, and the nobility and marvelous order which are revealed in nature and in the world of thought." Religion means, or in the interest of straight thinking ought to mean, belief that the external world, or some power in it, is interested in the interests of men. The religious believer persuades himself that the world is softer than it is, and that we know more about it than we do. The scientist has courage to face the hard facts of our human situation, and abide within the limits of our slowly advancing knowledge.

Thus the confiict between science and religion is more abrupt and violent than that between science and magic. The difference is not only one of procedure and degree of attention to fact; it is a clash of two contradictory attitudes toward the world. For this very reason it is easy to acquire the trick of keeping both science and religion alive in spearate chambers of the same brain. They do not conflict because of the completeness of the separation. Until the separation is accomplished, however, science cannot flourish in any brain. The slightest admixture of piety among the motives which bring a scientist to his conclusion would vitiate the conclusion. Even those scientists who in their private or Sabbath day selves are accustomed to commune with a Deity, will accept this statement. The more astute of those whose concern is to defend the belief in the Deity also accept it. St. Augustine himself, at the beginning of the long warfare between science and Christian theology, took such a position.

> It very often happens, that there is some question as to the earth or the sky, or the other elements of this world respecting which one who is not a Christian has knowledge derived from certain reasoning or observation, and it is very disgraceful and mischievous and of all things to be carefully avoided, that a Christian, speaking of such matter as being according to the Christian Scriptures, should be heard by an unbeliever talking such nonsense that the unbeliever, perceiving him to be as wide from the mark as east from west, can hardly restrain himself from laughing.

It was not difficult in those days to maintain such an equilibrium, because the field occupied by science was limited, its conclusions were not in a sweeping way contrary to those of the church. So long as it confined its question-

asking and its matter-of-fact investigation to things like "the earth or the sky"—and not disturb their relative positions as demanded by the stories in the Bible—it was just as well to allow science its soverignty and avoid being laughed at as an ignoramous.

When, however, science began to move the earth and the sky around, and perform similarly irreverent miracles with the other elements of this world, and moreover to extend inward its matter-of-fact investigation from this world to man himself—his mind, his morals, his political and social ways and destinies, which were the peculiar sphere of operaton of the church—it was no longer possible to get out of the argument by backing out. It became necessary either to destroy the scientist, or else to reduce the cogency and conclusiveness of his views by introducing into them, or, perhaps, around behind them, the more credulous conception of man's nature and position in the universe demanded by religion.

There thus arose, just as in the case of magic, a mixture of religion with science, or an effort to save religious faith in the face of science—to keep going, in spite of the scepticism and austere matter-of-factness of the scientific proccdure, *and out of range, of it*, a relic of the personal relation to the world. That mixture is philosophy, in the pious and soulupholding meaning of the term. It differs from theology in that, instead of opposing science with a contrary belief, it accepts the scientific procedure, but shows in some ingenious way—notably by demonstrating that the whole thing, facts and method results and all, is taking place witbin a "Universal Mind"—that the contrary belief is still true.

Unfortunately there is no word in our language to distinguish philosophy in this sense from the effort of sublimely curious minds to develop the most general implications of science, to reconcile its conflicts, investigate it with its own method, and criticize it from the standpoint of its own cool search for fact. That too is called philosophy, but it is really an integral part of the development of the scientific point-of-view. A very different thing from the wish-fulfillment philosophy the philosophy which abandons doubt and clarify and austere humility before fact, and where science mutters its honest "I don't know." cries seductively, "I can tell you!" Philosophy of this kind science had to set aside as substantially identical with religion in order to achieve its growth, and we must set it aside in order to achieve our definition of science.

VIII.

Science, then, is Distinguished from common sense by its degree of system and expertness; from magic and occult ritual, no matter how systemized and expert, by its concern for facts and the invariant relations among them; from charlatanism and pseudo-science by its austere mental honesty and its sceptical equilibrium; from poetic literature by its loyalty to generic and practical concepts as against particular and immediate perception; from religion and metaphysical belief by its refusal to allow interest or emotion to lnfluence its judgment of fact.

The traits of character required to develop a method and a body of results sufficient to distinguish science from these other uses of the mind, are: patience in investigation and clarity in calculation; singleness of purpose; the power to suspend judgment, to remain if need be for a lifetime in doubt: the gift of abstraction, of thinking about things definitely but without too much intrusion of their sensuous qualities; the skill to hold in suspense one's own tastes and passions, a skill which demands discipline of the must rigorous kind Without these traits, science, as a thing distinct from common sense, from magic, pseudo-science, charlatanism, poetry, religion, religious philosophy, and tendentious belief in general, could hardly have come into being. There are,however, two other traits which belong peculiarly to science in modern times. One is modesty, for science has become a coaperative enterprise in which the cranky and egotistical 'genius' is more than ever out of place. The other is openmindedness, for scientific knowledge is in a state of fluid growth, and even its most assured hypotheses are sub'ect to correction and development.

Every Progressive Indian must read
THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM
BY
Dr. R. P. PARANJPYE, M.A., D.SC.
Price One Rupee. Post Free.
TO MEMBERS OF THE R. A. I.
Annas 8 only.

That There is a Fundamental Conflict Between Religion and Science

Debate between Mr. W. G. Cook, of the Rationalist Society, Australia, and Mr. Frank Coaldrake, of the Brotherhood of St. Laurence.

(Reproduced from the **Rationalist** Australia)

Mr. W. G. Cook

NO one is better fitted to be the spokesman for biological science than is Professor Julian Huxley. In his book, "Religion Without Revelation," he makes what some of you may consider a rather surprising statement: "There are many well-intentioned people to-day who will tell you that the conflict between religion and science is over. *It is not so.* What has been rather loosely called the conflict between science and religion is just reaching its acute phase." (Emphasis is ours.)

Of late, in some quarters, not unsuspect, there has been fostered the legend that science has rediscovered God, that the long conflict, for no one would be so foolish as to deny that there has been a conflict, is over. Science has become more humble. Religion has been purified of unessential crudities. Their relations are now harmonious.

This is, I imagine, largely due to the writings of a few mathematical physicists, in no way representative of physicists generally, who in their popular works have shown some mystical trends. Einstein has said that there are certain physicists who are illogical and romantic in their popular works. Of Eddington's speculations on indeterminism and free will, Einstein says: "That nonsense is not merely nonsense: it is objectionable nonsense." (Reported in "Where Science is Going," by Max Planck.)

Still some people, who have taken the tentative speculations of these two men too seriously, have been, as Professor J. D. Bernal, tlie great crystallographer, points out, in "The Social Function of Science," "deluded into believing that idealism rules in science at a time when materialism is winning all along the line."

But whatever the reason for this wishful thinking on the part of the religionists, it is clear, I think, that not only has there been a conflict between religion and science, not only is there a conflict to-day, but there will always be a conflict while religion lingers on, for the conflict is a fundamental one which admits of no compromise.

At this stage it is desirable that we should define our terms. This is particularly necessary with the word religion, for there is no more ambiguous word in our language. We reject entirely all definitions in purely secular terms, such as devotion to the welfare of humanity. Our definition must be arrived at, not by an intellectual effort in which we construct a definition of religion that pleases us, but as a result of examining the evidence provided by the religions. We go to the cultural anthropologists who have made a special study of religious phenomena. Sir James Frazer, than whom there is no grater authority in the field of comparative magic and religion, gives this definition:

"By religion I understand a propitiation, or conciliation, of powers superior to man, which are believed to direct and control the course of Nature and of human life." He points out that there are two aspects of religion, a theoretical and a practical. There is a belief in a supernatural being, and a practice consequent on that belief. "No man is religious," he says, "who does not govern his conduct in some measure by the fear or love of God". We could quote similar definitions by other great sociologists, such as Westermarck, or by a specialist in the psychology of religion like Leuba, or by an anthropologist like Rivers. The theologians of the Christain Church, such as Dr. Rumble of the Roman Catholic Church, or the Rev. William Shaw of the Methodist Church, define religion in a way that accords with the above definition.

There is probably less difficulty about the word science. "Science," the great Huxley says, "is systematised natural knowledge." But we must go further. Bertrand Russell, in his book, "Religion and Science," says that "science is the attempt to discover, by means of observation and reasoning based upon it, first, particular facts about the world, and then

laws connecting facts with one another, and (in fortunate cases) making it possible to predict future occurrences."

Since we are concerned to-night more particularly with the Christian religion, though the conflict, as we will show, is a fundamental one between all religion and science, I may here refer to the primary Christian belief that a God created the world out of nothing.

For the scientist the existence of the world is a given fact about which it is foolish to ask the question, "Why?" The Christian believes that there is an intelligent and beneficent purpose in the stream of events. The scientist says, with Julian Huxley, that purpose is a term invented to denote a particular operation of the human mind, and should only be used where a psychological basis may reasonably be postulated; and remember that the neurologist, Professor Berry, never tires of reiterating "no neurone—no mind".

Rival World Views.

At this point we may just briefly note that religion knows a dual order—the natural and the supernatural, the profane and the sacred. Science knows only the natural order. Religion is other-worldly in its outlook; is concerned with this world only. Christianity tells us that the chief end of man is to glorify God and serve him forever. Its main concern has been the salvation of the individual soul, whatever that may be, in a "spiritual" world. The aim of science is to improve man's lot here.

We see, then, that the conflict between science and religion is the conflict between naturalism and supernaturalism. *It is a conflict between rival interpretations of the same phenomena.* The supernaturalist or religionist believes in super-human volition operating in Nature. He projects into the outside universe, and outside of the universe, certain human characteristics. Now, Sir James Frazer points out that a belief in superhuman beings who rule the world, and with whom we can maintain social relations, clearly assumes that the course of Nature is to some extent elastic or variable. This implied elasticity or variability of Nature is in direct and fundamental conflict with the basic principle of science, which is determinism, the inevitability of causal sequences, or, as we may put it, the uniformity of experience.

Let us illustrate the world view of religion, considering more particularly the Christian religion. It is based on the belief in a personal God who created and sustains the universe, and exercises a conscious control over it. We will illustrate this from the New Testament, and from the teachings of the churches to-day.

In St. Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 11, verse 25, we read: "At that Jesus answered, and said, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes'."

Again, at the time of the betrayal, we are told that Jesus said to Peter: "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels."

In our own time we have witnessed days of national prayer, in which all religious denominations from the Roman Catholic to the Salvation Army have taken part. *This shows that the belief in supernatural being who controls the course of Nature and of human life is still the basis of Christian religion.*

This, then, is a fundamental characteristic of the Christian religion, and, indeed, of religion itself, and therein lies its basic conflict with science. There are certain types of explanation that science cannot admit. The description of natural phenomena as due to providence or to disembodied spirits, or to a God, is incompatible with scientific determinism.

The general world view of science is therefore in conflict with the general world view of religion. Science reduces "God" to a nullity, for only so can it put forward an explanation of the changes that take place, as the consequence of the interaction of natural forces. A God who does nothing is no God, and has no meaning for religion. Science is based on a uniformity of experience, an unvarying and unvariable sequence of events. As Surgeon Rear-Admiral Beadnell says, "All the discoveries that have enriched civilisation have, without one single exception, been arrived at via the mechanistic and deterministic method of approach, while Idealism has ever been the clogging fog of obscurantism." We could multiply our authorities for this view endlessly. We will just quote one from physical science, one from biological science, and one from psychology.

Einstein says: "Indeterminism is quite an illogical concept." The great Cambridge biochemist, Joseph Needham, in "The Sceptical Biologist," says that "Determinism is the only air that science can breathe," and that "practically all working biologists admit that the scientific approach stands committed to the

mechanistic theory of life"; "the scientific and religious frames of mind are fundamentally antagonistic."

Hart, in his classic little work, "The Psychology of Insanity," says that "so long as we are thinking psychologically and scientifically, we must subscribe to all the implications of the law of causation."

Religion is based on belief in a capricious universe, a universe controlled by a directing mind that is not only immanent but also transcendent, while science will have none of this whatsoever.

Rival Methods.

From this fundamental conflict of world views, we pass on to the rival methods of attaining knowledge. Science follows the method of induction. Time allows us only to outline this method, without illustration.

The first step is the patient and laborious collection of facts, by observation and experiment.

The second step is the classification of these facts into series or sequences.

The third step is the formulation of an hypothesis, formula or law, which describes the classified facts in the most comprehensive and convenient manner. This general rule is at first not positively asserted. The theory is under the strict governance of facts. As soon as a fact incompatible with the theory is discovered, the theory must be modified so as to include the new fact, or, if that proves impossible, then the theory is abandoned. The theory is subjected to experimental tests, and applied to hitherto unobserved phenomena, and, if these take place in accordance with the theory, it is confirmed. This inductive method does not lead to absolute or final truth, and this is recognised by the scientist. The human mind with its imperfections, developed in response to a certain environment, is not capable of attaining to absolute knowledge.

Now it is obvious, I think, that the method of religion is quite opposed to this. The Catholic Church indeed teaches as a dogma that belief in God may be attained by the unaided reason; nevertheless, the method advocated is the deductive method, or reasoning from certain general principles. This is a dangerous method, for the first assumptions may be unverifiable or untrue, and the reasoning based on them fallacious. It is not the scientific method, which begins with particular facts.

But then religion, including the Catholic religion, professes to have a divine revelation of truths which the human intellect by itself cannot attain. Let me first quote the Rev. Dr. Rumble, of the Roman Catholic Church: "God", he says, "has given to mankind a supernatural destiny higher than any merely natural destiny, and this requires a revelation higher than that which could be attained by the merely natural reason". And again: "The perception of the vital force and the sheer reality of the truths God has revealed, with consequent belief in them, *requires grace from God.*" (Emphasis is ours).

You could not get a theory of knowledge in more fundamental opposition to the scientific method. And let me remind Mr. Coaldrake that three-fifths of the Christian world is Roman Catholic.

But essentially the same view is found throughout the Protestant sects. Rev. William Shaw, an official theologian for the Methodist Church in Australia, begins his list of Christian doctrines with this announcement: "That the Holy Scriptures are the record of God's revelation to mankind, and embody the authoritative doctrines of the Christian religion."

The gospel Jesus repeatedly refers to knowledge directly revealed by God, e.g., Matthew 16–17:

"Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

Even the modernists in the churches cling to a progressive revelation given by God to man, and not attained by man's own efforts, which culminated in the revelation of Jesus as found in the New Testament.

The Christian surely does not deny that there has been a revelation and that through that revelation religion reaches certain final truths, not otherwise attainable.

Dean Inge has admitted that the existence of God cannot be proved. He says: "Almost all sound theologians would now admit that no a priori proof of the existence of God is possible. The real proof is of the nature of a valid inference, and it falls short of demonstration." ("God and the Astronomers.")

Let us apply the inductive method to the belief in a benevolent and omnipotent deity who created the universe. This is fundamental in the Christian belief. Is it in accordance with all the facts, with the existence of evil, of suffering, particularly in children and in the animal kingdom and so on? Bishop Barnes tells us that in the evolutionary process harmful mutations arise as often as favourable ones. If an omnipotent Creator creates a universe with evil in it, is he not partially evil himself?

We are told this is one of the mysteries our finite minds cannot understand. But when faced with facts that are not harmonious with his theory, does the religious thinker modify or abandon it? No. He holds it despite the incompatible facts, and says with St. Paul: "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." This shows how antiscientific is the religious methods of acquiring knowledge.

Not only has the New Testament a supernatural revelation as its basis, and not only has the Christian Church throughout history and in all its denominations insisted on a Divine revelation, but it is extremely difficult to see how we could know *Divine* truths if they were not revealed. Therefore all Christians, and indeed, all religionists, could agree with these words of Pope Pius IX: "Moreover the Catholic Church has ever held, and now holds, that there exists a twofold order of knowledge, each of which is distinct from the other, both as to its principle and object. As to the principle, because in the one we know by natural reason in the other, by divine faith; as to the object, because beside those things to which natural reason can attain, there are proposed to our belief mysteries hidden in God, which, unless by Him revealed, cannot come to our knowledge."

Science will not admit such claims. Prof. Tyndall, in his famous Belfast address as President of the British Association, flung down the gage of battle. "We claim, and we shall wrest from theology, the entire domain of cosmological theory."

The Criteria of Truth.

The criterion of truth for the Roman Catholic is an infallible Church: for the Protestant it is the divine revelation in the Bible. Both criteria are rejected by the sciensist, whose sole criterion of truth, a partial and relative truth, is verification in nature.

There is, then, first a fundamental conflict between the world views of science and religion, and, secondly, a fundamental conflict in the methods by which science and religion build up their knowledge.

Rival Techniques.

Science and religion also provide us with techniques for controlling our environment and, to put it crudely, for getting what we want. And when I say for getting what we want, I do not refer only to our material needs, but also for the resolving of mental conflicts, the building of character, and for achieving a sound, sane, harmonious development of our best potentialities.

Since the world views of science and religion, and the methods of science and religion are in conflict, we would also expect their respective techniques to be in conflict, and this is indeed the case.

Let us begin with religion, for it occupied the field long before science developed. Religion began through primitive man's misinterpretation of subjective and objective phenomena in the times of his ignorance. Subjective experiences such as dreams and visions, the sight of the shadow, and reflections in water and so on, gave rise to a belief in a secondary self, and so the spirit world was created. The forces of nature were personified, or treated as having a mysterious life. And let us remember that all our modern conceptions of God, no matter how subtle or refined, or whether spoken of as God, or as an Absolute, or a Principle, of Concretion, are all just this primitive animism masquerading under new forms.

There was a time when the religious outlook pervaded every aspect of life. With the development of science its sphere has constantly been narrowed down.

Well, now, as Fosdick says, "In every realm of human want and craving, men have used religious methods to achieve their aims, and whether they desired good crops, large families, relief from pestilence, or success in war, they conceived themselves as dependent on the favour of heaven."

What are these religious methods, these practices which, as we saw in our definition, follow on belief in a supernatural being and form an essential part of religion itself?

By its own methods, which have already been outlined, it strives to learn what is the will of God and obey it. The religious technique combines prayer and praise, penances and a ritual observance. These have direct reference to the belief in the spiritual being worshipped by religion.

The gospel Jesus sanctified the religious method. We are told that He said: "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." If ye ask anything in my name, I will do it." (St. John 14-13, 14.) You all remember the parable of the importunate widow with its lesson that "men ought always to pray and never to faint." It is clear that the gospel Jesus believed in the power of petitionary prayer.

Take the practice of the Church to-day. We have already pointed out that all the Chris-

tian Churches throughout the Empire have been joining in days of national prayer. It is also true that the Italian Catholic Clergy, according to the journal, "Time," are praying for Italy's victory. This is to be expected. It is the religious technique and will be used by religion the world over. It is also true that immediately after one day of national prayer the Belgian King surrendered the Belgian Army, and the British Army had to leave Flanders after what Churchill described as a colossal disaster. But perhaps these things are irrelevant. The churches still advocate prayer and more prayer in this time of crisis. It is the religious technique, and of course, assumes that variability in nature which science denies.

We turn now to the scientific technique. Only the general principle can be stated here, for each science has its own characteristic application of that principle. It is this : learn the laws, the causal sequences, fulfil the conditions and the consequences follow. As Fosdick says "This is as true of mind as of matter, and as true of morals as of mind." The scientific method is everywhere displacing the religious method, so much so that the religions themselves no longer trust chiefly in the religious method, but are being secularised as a condition of their survival.

We have outlined very briefly the three fundamental conflicts between religion and science : what we may term their world views, are in conflict, and from this springs the conflict between their methods and their techniques.

An Historical Approach.

Since this is so we would expect to find this evidenced by the history of their relationship. And we do. We find that where science flourished religion was at a low ebb. When religion triumphed then science was completely suppressed. Throughout the Dark Ages there was no science in Christian Europe; with the ferment of ideas of the Renaissance science revived, and since then has developed in spite of the bitter opposition of the Church, until to-day in London less than 10 per cent. of the population attend places of worship. Let me briefly outline this history.

Science begins in Ionia in Greece about the sixth century B.C., and some authorities consider that it has never appeared anywhere except through the pervasive influence of Greek thought. Here was the cradle of free speculation about the universe. We think of Heraclitus who saw the world in a state of flux, and Democritus who performed the amazing feat of working out an atomic theory of the universe which was to be revived 2000 years later. As Prof. Bury says: "No fantastic tales of creation imposed by sacred authority, hampered these powerful brains". He points out two highly significant things. At this early period in science, this time of free enquiry, the Greeks had no Bible, and this was both an expression and an important condition of their freedom, and, secondly, there was an absence of sacerdotalism. The priesthood was not a powerful caste able to control the State and suppress irreligious opinion.

Next, Alexandrian science reached a high degree of development in the centuries preceding the Christian era. Mathematics were advanced—Euclid lived at this time. Astronomy was developed, e.g., the lunar theory of the tides was advanced. Archimedes discovered specific gravity and settled the fundamental principles of hydrostatics. Medical science also flourished; anatomy and physiology were on a scientific basis. Dissection of the human body was carried on. This fundamental requirement for a sound knowledge of anatomy was not allowed in Christian Europe till the sixteenth century.

And what was the final end of this advanced scientific development in Alexandria? It came in the fourth century A.D. In Hasting's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, we read: "There is no doubt that the adoption of Christianity as the State religion, and the rise of monasticism were the immediate fore-runnners of a period of steady deterioration throughout the Egyptian Church. The death-knell of paganism was already rung, and with it that of the culture and freedom of philosophic thought that had made Alexandria the intellectual centre of the Hellenistic world." The great library of Alexandria was destroyed in flames. The last act in this sombre tragedy of the death of a scientific culture was even more revolting. In Alexandria at this time there was a young, beautiful and talented woman, Hypatia, who attempted to keep alight the torch of pagan culture. She was a mathematician, a teacher of the Neo-Platonic philosophy, and she was cruelly murdered by a ravening pack of Christian monks, led by Peter the Reader, the underling of Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, and at that prelate's direct instigation. Cyril was later canonised by the Church With this, one of the vilest deeds history records, Christianity triumphed over pagan science.

Then came the Ages of Faith, and if there is a God who delights in the prayer and praise of his creatures this was the time when he would have been well pleased, for from the borders of Western Europe to the outermost bounds of far Cathay the rosary beads clicked and the incense of adoration ascended high.

Modern science begins with Vesalius and Galileo in the sixteenth century, and the first great blow was struck at the anthropocentric view of the universe held by religion. The Inquisition pronounced judgment.

"1. The proposition that the sun is in the centre of the world and immovable from its place is absurd, philosophically false, and formally heretical, because it is expressly contrary to the Holy Scriptures.

"2. The proposition that the earth is not the centre of the world, nor immovable, but that it moves, and also with a diurnal action, is also absurd, philosophically false, and theologically considered, at least erroneous in faith."

It was a conflict between the inductive method of science and the deductive method of religion. The Christian cosmogony with the heaven and hell was overthrown.

I must pass over many interesting and important events and come to the next major crisis in the history of religion and science.

This was the acceptance of evolution, notably the evolution of man from the lower animals that Darwin did so much to establish. Again the Christain Churches showed the greatest hostility to the new discoveries and Darwin was vilified.

This was the second severe blow at the anthropocentric view of the universe. It invalidated the Christian scheme of salvation, as you will find if you read St. Paul's logical statement of it in Romans: Chapter 5, verses 12 to 21. It also invalidated a popular argument for the existence of God, namely, the teleological, or from design in nature.

Bishop Wilberforce quite truly said, "the principle of natural selection is incompatible with the word of God," and Gladstone expressed the opinion of the religious word: "Upon the grounds of what is called evolution God is relieved of the labour of creation, and in the name of unchangeable laws is discharged from governing the world."

Then finally we may mention the great revolutionary changes made by Freud in psychology which have also been met with great hostility.

McDougall, a very well-known psychologist has said, "It is a matter of common knowledge that 'science' has given its verdict against the soul; has declared that the conception of the soul as a thing, or being, or substance, or mode of existence, or activity, different from, distinguishable from, or in any sense or degree independent of the body, is a mere survival from primitive culture, one of the many relics of savage superstition that obstinately persists among us in defiance of the clear teachings of modern science."

The science of cultural anthropology in the field of comparative mythology and religion has been most destructive of our religious beliefs, as readers of Sir James Frazer's monumental work, "The Golden Bough," are well aware.

That last stronghold of religion, the mystical religious experience, has been undermined by the analysis and explanations of psychologists such as Prof. Leuba and Dr. Forsyth. Here again religion vainly tries to hold back the onward march of science. Listen to this proclamation, "Psychology is trespassing beyond its proper limits in speaking on the question of religious experience." Science will not and cannot admit the claim.

The sociological sciences, still in their infancy, must be developed if society is to be stably organised and further progress is to be made. We cannot regress to outmoded and primitive habits of thought.

Mr. Frank Coaldrake

This is a matter of faith versus reason. It is a question of how far faith is relevant to the facts of the natural world and to life, and how far reason is relevant and adequate. My opponent has just admitted that while he is prepared to make a judgment on the facts he knows there may be some relevant facts he does not know, which are known to other people. No individual knows all the facts, If you were to sit down to make a plan for life, and insist on gathering in all the facts. you would spend more time than the long course of the history of science and get nowhere. It has taken millions of men thousands of years to know the facts that are known, and how far have we gone? To live on the human level we must adopt a plan partly based on fact, based on all the facts known but partly relying on guesswork as to the probable facts in matters which are incomprehensible to

finite minds. To know the knowable facts is not enough.

To know the facts is not all. That is basic to this question. On the basis of argument the rationalist must win. He is a man skilled in argument. But you cannot run your whole life on the basis of argument! Living is more than rational dealing with the facts. We must act in faith. That does not mean we have to displace reason, for there is no conflict between faith and reason. In true science and true religion there is an identity of purpose.

There are five contentions to discuss:

1. Man is not merely a rational animal. Most men are rational, but they are more. Experience is more than the acting of the intellect. If you cut out the whole sphere of the emotions and the will, you will live a very warped existence, and will never graduate at a university. The psychological explanation of experience as consisting in elements of intellact, emotion and will must be kept constantly in mind.

2. Faith is not just a vapourous attitude of mind. It is reliance on something—and it is inborn into every one of us to place our reliance on something. Faith is not screwing your courage to the sticking point; neither is it instilled by the reasoning of our fathers and mothers. The things in which men put their faith are many and varied, but say what you may, you will have a faith in something. Objects of faithful reliance to-day include the State—how many people rely ultimately on the State? How many people will in the long run rely ultimately on democracy? On Hitler, Chamberlain, Mr. Menzies or some other person? How many are influenced in their decisions by an ultimate reliance on money to secure their happiness and security? Or on prestige? Or on God as manifest in Christ?

That thing, person, or idea on which we rely ultimately, which carries final authority with us when we are reaching a decision, is something in which we have faith. These "taboos" have always played a part in man's decisions, and always will. The external things which have an influence on man have varied from age to age, but man always pays respect to some such things.

Mr. Cook relies on science, relies entirely on his reason. It would be intellectual dishonesty for him to accept anything his reason cannot explain. To be true to his ideas, he must suspend judgment on matters not covered by conclusive evidence. To be wholly and solely a scientist he will have to suspend judgment on so many matters that he will be forced to the inhuman situation of living in a state of suspended animation. What will he do about the myriad things he has not had time to attend to? He relies on the authority of others. Primarily his authority is his own reason and the reason of other men with the results of that reasoning summed up in the word science. He has a quite irrational faith in reason.

3. The sciences are different from Science, with a capital S. The sciences have nothing to say about reality as such, for in doing so they desert the realm of science and become philosophies. The sciences have a limited range of facts to deal with. They specialise in those facts and speak with authority on them. There is no science to put the results of all the sciences together and take a view of the whole. That is the task of a philosophy. If science undertakes the work of a philosophy it inevitably commits the fallacy of bringing the categories from one particular science to bear upon the results of the many particular sciences, each with its own categories, and the result is categorical confusion. When scientists speak on matters which they have not investigated, they speak as fools unless they rely on the findings of men who have investigated those matters.

Alexis Carrel, in "Man the Unknown," showed that if you take into consideration all the facts known scientifically about men, you still know nothing about man and mankind. There is no science to deal with man. If a science pronounces on matters beyond its sphere of reference, it is no longer scientific. Science has its limits within which it should and must work. Certain men owe it to the rest of men to work consistently by the scientific method, but not to extend such activities beyond the realm of their particular science without continuing to be scientific and take into account all the evidence available.

When a physicist pronounces on morals he speaks as a fool, unless he has read ethics as well as physics. The scientist who is a specialist in his own field may be a fool outside it.

It is the business of philosophy to take into account the findings of science and relate them to the fruits of aesthetic experience and the hardwon lessons of sheer living. There is as much to be learnt in the university of hard knocks as in the academic university. The

scientist will enlighten the ignorance of philosophy in some matters, but he will not remove the necessity for a philosophy which relates his discoveries to the results of aesthetic and practical experience.

4. Can a man know all? As Mr. Cook suggested, religion says a man cannot know all. That would be to put man on an equality with God. But religion says that man can know more than he does now, and that he can know enough for the purposes of a happy existence for all men. Religion does not say that God will reveal all if man bides his time. Man is not called to idleness. God is immanent in nature and history, and has left it to man to search actively and experiment daringly to discover the nature and purpose of God. Mr. Cook says man will know everything. Is that not just as great an act of faith as to say that man will not know everything? How do we know whether man can know all?

Man has progressively pushed back the barriers of ignorance, and knows more and more about more and more; that is, mankind as a whole does this. But individual man knows more and more about less and less. He specialises, and ipso facto, his communications with other specialists are disrupted as a consequence of relying on technical formularies. An age of specialisation becomes an age of disruption. Men have lost the secret of living together. Because he has forgotten to look for God's purpose, man cannot use his specialised knowledge to save himself. He uses it to destroy himself. This is well told in one of the stories of Book of Genesis. (But before I go on with this story, I must interpolate a comment on "Bible stories"; the stories which are preserved for us in the text of the Bible are paralleled by many stories extant in other sources. The two stories of the Creation in Genesis have many parallels in the writings of that time. They are written by the men who are the "scientists" of their age. By tyring to explain the Cosmos in terms of the facts they know, men like Eddington, Einstein and Jeans are to-day doing what the "scientists" were doing in earlier days in accounts such as those now contained in the Book of Genesis. The stories in Genesis have not been accepted by men as true because declared to be so by the authorities; they won their way to authority by the truth they contained. It is the fact of a Creation which has been believed when the explanation of its method in terms of ancient sciences has been outmoded.)

The story of the Tower of Babel is relevant on the subject of specialisation. Men set out to build a tower up to Heaven. They sought equality with God believing they knew as much as God. As they reached towards Heaven they became confused in their languages. Each man spoke a language, but there was confusion of tongues and their work was confounded. There is a parallel to-day. Man is avidly seeking to know all, is reaching for the omniscience of all. By the division of labour in the field of knowledge each man has become a specialist in this concerted effort; each man speaks his own language and there is confusion of languages. To-day in the realm of morals we cannot benefit by the work done in the realm of physics. They are different types of knowlege, diverse in their verbal expression. They can be harmonised only by the outlook which believes in man as a whole even while there are no scientific facts available about man as such.

5. There are lower and higher forms of religion. It is with religion as with science. Alchemy and witchcraft are the counterpart of superstition in religion. The sciences of to-day have risen above such elemental methods. Similarly the highest truths of religion are freed from the superstitions of idolatry and paganism. The supreme truths of religion are summed up in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, not of the Catholic Church. Looked at from this point of view, it is anomalous that men on both sides of the battle-field are now praying for victory. But not all Christians are praying for victory. Many are praying "Not my will but thine be done"—the model of prayer in the truest of religions is found in these words. The pagan attitude to prayer is that it is a method of getting your own way by bending the will of God to suit your own intentions. But prayer is not that. It is a difficult way of discovering what the will of God is. Mr. Cook has not dealt with religion at the supreme level of revealed religion. In accepting revealed religion, I do not stand for the idea that man should wait for things to be put upon him by an "inner voice." Mystical experience is real experience, but not all religionists have that experience. There is a reaching out of man's mind, an attempt to grasp stage by stage what the reality is which is embodied and manifest in the universe, in history and in man, and supremely in Christ. Religion, on any level higher than paganism, does not hinder the enquiring mind. Rather does it stimulate and foster it.

There are differences among the theologians, just as among scientists. They are main-

ly on points of interpretation, not on the fundamental point that God acts; on this, Christians are in agreement. No religionist would want to hide the fact that the Christian relies on God to do something. Religion, at this high level, is betting your life there is a God who will act reliably in a manner we must try to understand. But whatever God does there is still much left for man to do for himself in trying to come up to God's standard. There is scope for, and need of, the scientific method in the approach to these matters. The Christian says he will bring all the intellectual power at his command to bear on the situation and make up his mind as to the reasonable thing, having God in mind. Then he will act accordingly even if by ordinary standards his proposals seem impracticable. This is the pioneering spirit, and it is akin to that spirit which leads men to become discoverers in any realm of scientific investigation. This spirit has always been present in the church, even when it has not been the spirit of the authorities controlling the Church. It is not true that the Christian Church has always been traditional and conservative. It is not essentially so, since its Founder, and many of its earliest members, were the most completely revolutionary persons in history. There has always been within the church a prophetic element, not merely "foretelling," but rather with the spirit of the great prophets of Israel, daring to criticise the constituted authorities. They have dared to pioneer, dared to question conservative traditions, to risk persecution and death. There is a conservative element represented by the priests, but there is also the scientific, daring element which, in the light of the facts observed, dares to plunge ahead and make experiments in faith that they will work out. In their lives the religious method and the scientific method are not merely parallel but identical.

It is said that the scientist will explain everything. But the scientist has to speak in words and symbols. The scientist says that this table is a concatenation of atoms. Such an explanation of it is quite incomprehensible to the average man. In terms it is just as fantastic as any religious explanation and makes just as great a demand on the faith of the hearer. The expert theologian and the expert scientist have this common difficulty, that they have to make themselves understood by the inexpert learner.

The term God is a symbol for something. Whitehead says that God is something that stands beyond, behind and within the passing flux of immediate things. He cannot get it any clearer than that, but must go on searching. The religious attitude to life leads to that—a sure faith that the something which lies beyond our comprehension is nevertheless to be known in part. This is exactly parallel to the faith of the research worker who is held to his task by the tremendous hope that he will come at last to something at the heart which will have meaning. Faith holds him to his work. He is lead on by the faith that at the heart of things is a truth which can be discovered because there is a reliable orderliness in nature. This is exactly the attitude of faith which Mr. Cook would decry.

When any discovery explains something formerly unknown the discovery has not necessarily explained away the fact. We can find a truer explanation of some aspect to reality without explaining reality away.

The religious person believes that at the heart of the universe there is some order; and that there is a similar order within man's life. In that fluid mass called society there are certain laws and principles which must be obeyed if society is to live as such. By observing these principles and living in accordance with them, man will have a more secure and happy existence and will reach his fullest possible self-expression. It is in the endeavour to discover these principles of living within society that man searches with religious faith. He discovers that the surest practical guide is to be found in the life of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He finds that the God of the universe is a God who, in ordering the functioning of the universe, also ordered the functioning of society. God, as seen in this light, is not merely a benevolent old gentleman, but acts on a principle of justness. He is a God of wrath as well as of love, a God who has ordered things according to righteousness so that wrong-doing leads to punishing consequences.

Religion is scientific in its method, but deals specifically with matters not covered by any of the so-far recognised sciences. It is in line with the truest sciences in that it has faith to lead it on, works from the facts of life with a view to living, and does not merely build up a system of knowledge. Science, when it does its real job, is the handmaiden of religion.

Reply to Brother Coaldrake.

A careful reading of the arguments advanced by Bro. Coaldrake shows that he has made not even a pretence of meeting the argument advanced in the opening speech of the debate and printed in the September "Rationalist."

It was there maintained that there is a fundamental conflict between religion and science because they are rival interpretations of the same phenomena. There is first a conflict in the general world views of religion and science; then there is a conflict in the methods of attaining knowledge, science being inductive, and religion relying on faith and revelation; finally there is a fundamental conflict between the religious and scientific techniques. It was shown that the history of the relations between religion and science was evidence of this conflict.

It was Bro. Coaldrake's duty to meet this argument, with its three clearly stated propositions. He did not do so. He made no attempt to answer the affirmative case. Does it win by default?

Let us now consider the arguments presented to us. We will find that when the subject of the debate is involved it is usually in some vague and unsupported generalisation.

The opening section contains much that is repeated in later arguments; we will pause to note only two assertions. "There is no conflict between faith and reason." What is faith? We shall come to this later. "In true science and true religion there is an identity of purpose." What is "true science"? What is "true religion"? In what lies the identity of purpose? We are not told, and so cannot profitably discuss this dogmatic assertion.

Then we come to five main contentions. The first contains nothing that is new, and nothing that any atheist or agnostic or rationalist need dispute.

We ourselves have pointed out, in a leading article in this paper, that to attempt to deny the emotions their place in life is irrational, and is therefore condemned by our philosophy. The emotions are the motive forces to action, but not tools for discovering truth.

We agree with Bro. Coaldrake in his first contention, but point out its entire irrelevance to the subject under discussion, and indeed to any defence of religion.

The second argument deals with faith—defined as inborn reliance on something. The faith of the scientist, or the rationalist (in reason) or the Nazi (in Hitler) is looked upon as the same "faith" we meet with in religion.

There is an ambiguity in the use of the word "faith." When we sit in the barber's chair, we have faith. We cannot be certain that the white-coated gentleman who approaches us waving a flashing blade is not a homicidal maniac. Yet we bare our throats to him with some confidence. There is a certain uniformity of experience behind us. But our knowledge is only probable knowledge. It may be that one day we will meet a barber to whom our unguarded throat will prove an irresistible stimulus, and our faith in him will suddenly be proved unjustifiable.

We have to differentiate between a faith based on reason, on evidence, on a uniformity of experience, that is verifiable, and the faith needed in religion. This, by its very nature, is unverifiable. One theologian tells us that faith "teaches things that are beyond reason, revealed truths that are only known to God." This faith requires "grace from God."

This supernatural gift of faith is given to those of goodwill who "submit to God's authority and pray earnestly for the light." Need we labour the point any further? Bro. Coaldrake has either abandoned the religious concept of faith for a purely natural one, or he is lamentably confused on this issue.

The third contention may be summarised by saying that there is a need for philosophy to integrate the findings of the separate sciences. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, in this third section that need be denied by the atheist or rationalist. There is also nothing that helps Mr. Coaldrake in the debate, or in the defence of religion. As an interesting question we might discuss, if time and space were available, the quotation from Carrel, but it would have no bearing at all on the subject of the debate.

The fourth section has little more relevance. Religion, we would say in answer to Bro. Coaldrake, tells us that man can know a great many things that science and modern philosophy do not pretend to know. It is because religion tells us too much, and not because it does not know enough, that we are critical. It professes to know how the universe was created, when it was created and why. It is in the inmost counsels of the Almighty and can tell us His plans for mankind. Some clergymen give us the impression that the Deity takes no step at all without prior consultation with them. It tells us that the finite can know and hold social relations with some infinite power.

Far be it from us to say that man knows, or can know, everything. It is rationalism that

says "man can know more than he does know, and that he can know enough for the purposes of a happy existence for all men."

The same analogy between the progress of religion from superstition to a higher form, and the rise of science from alchemy and so on, that was made by the Rev. Eric Owen, is made by Bro. Coaldrake. We dealt with this in our reply to the Rev. E. Owen, in the September "Rationalist," and we will not cover the same ground again.

If the argument we established in our opening speech be studied, it will be seen that the superior form of religion now expounded is in fundamental conflict with science, for it believes in a personal God who controls the universe.

We are surprised to learn that in this year of grace, 1940, when the dive bomber lays waste great areas, and indiscriminately slaughters women and children, there are people who can murmur, "Not my will but Thine be done." Is God's will being done? If not, why not? Is he not all-powerful?

We cannot agree that the explanations of the scientist are as fantastic as religious explanations, and make as great demands on the hearer. The formulæ of the scientist are based on physical reality, and are tested and verified in a uniformity of experience. Religion explains the unknown by an incomprehensible.

Reference must be made to the final statement about science. When science is the handmaid of religion it makes no progress. It is a psuedo-science. Astrology was the hand-maid of religion. The science of astronomy is not. Psychology has only made progress as a science since it cut loose from religious, philosophical and metaphysical pre-conceptions. Science versus Religion. Naturalism versus Supernaturalism. There is the issue. To yearn for science as the hand-maid of religion is the most idle of wishful thinking.

BLIND FAITH.

(*Continued from page* 4)

sion that they are all false. Honest and intelligent religious writers have admitted that though they believe in God, his existence is a matter of faith, it cannot be proved. Such faith may possibly help them, but it is no good for anybody else and it is ridiculous to say that the existence of God is established beyond doubt. The statement shows utter absence of logic, and blind faith in an imaginary Reality which Sadhu Santinatha failed to find except in the imaginations of the faithful. I congrrtulate the Sadhu on his courage in declaring it to the world.

CATHOLIC—FASCISM

ON October 4, 1940, Bishop Franziskus Rarkowski issued a pastoral letter which was directed to all Nazi soldiers of the Catholic faith and which was read in all Catholic churches. In this formal. official document, the bishop praised the Catholics for supporting Hitler's war, and from which I quote:

"The German nation which has been waging war against those who envy it for years has an untroubled conscience and knows which nations have burdened themselves before God and history with the responsibility for the gigantic struggle now raging. It knows who wantonly unleashed the fury of this war. It knows that it is waging a just war.

"The German nation has a great duty to fulfill in the face of the Eternal Almighty. Abroad and at home the Fuehrer's thanks to God that his plea for His blessing for our good and just cause was expressed more than once, and was understood."

This helps round out the picture. The record shows that the Catholic Church has always supported Fascist ideology, beginning in Italy, swinging to Poland and Fthiopia, to Spain, to Catholic–Fascism in Petain "government," to Eastern Canada, to Father Coughlin's movement in the U. S. and to Hitler's Germany. Totalitarinism and Catholicism are one and the same thing. Brutalitarianism has always received the blessings of the Vatican.

E. HOLDMAN JULUIS.

The American Freeman January, 1941.

A lucid exposition of the Philosophy of Freethought by one of the greatest Freethinkers of our day.

FOUR LECTURES ON FREETHOUGHT AND LIFE

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

PRICE 12 As. POSTAGE 1 ANNA.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donation in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000/-.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer,
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

❋ If you recognise Human Equality,

❋ If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,

❋ If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy,

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office-Bearers:

President:—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D. *Vice-Presidents:*—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. and Mr. R. B. Lotewalla. *Hony. Treasurer:*—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee:*—Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Dr. S. B. Gadgil, B.A., L.M.S., F.R.C.S. (Eng.) D. Ph. (Lon.), Mr. J. M. Cooper, F. R. G. S., Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. A. R. Desai, B.A., LL.B., Mr. Abraham Solomon, *Jt. Hony. Secretaries:*—Mr. S. B. Rath, Mr. A. Husein.

For further particulars please write to:—

The Secretaries,
Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,
BOMBAY 2.

IF YOU WANT

To read choicest books,
To discuss modern problems,
To get correct information about current topics,
To have contact with intellectuals, and
To understand the making and growth of our Society—

Then You Must Remain in Touch with

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY.

OBJECTS.

To promote the Sociological interest of the Indian people, to gather and disseminate all sorts of sociological information, to facilitate the study of sociology, to focus the views of experts on such questions, to form and maintain a Library, etc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Donors Rs. 500/- or more. Life Members Rs. 100/- or more. Ordinary Members Rs. 3/- per year payable half-yearly. R. L. T. Library Deposit Rs. 5/-.

All members have the free use of the Library which contains a good collection of books on Economics, and also the Library of the R. L. Trust Hostel which also contains an excellent collection of latest books on all branches of sociology, namely, Economics, Ethics, Eugenics, Psychology, Philosophy, Politics, History, Biography and Fiction on current social problems.

Members are also entitled to publications of the Institute at such concessions as may be determined by the Managing Committee from time to time, as also one Magazine can be supplied at the cost of the Institute and any other Magazine for which concessions could be secured by the Institute for its members by any special agreement with its Publishers.

Rules, Regulations, Entrance Form can be had from:—

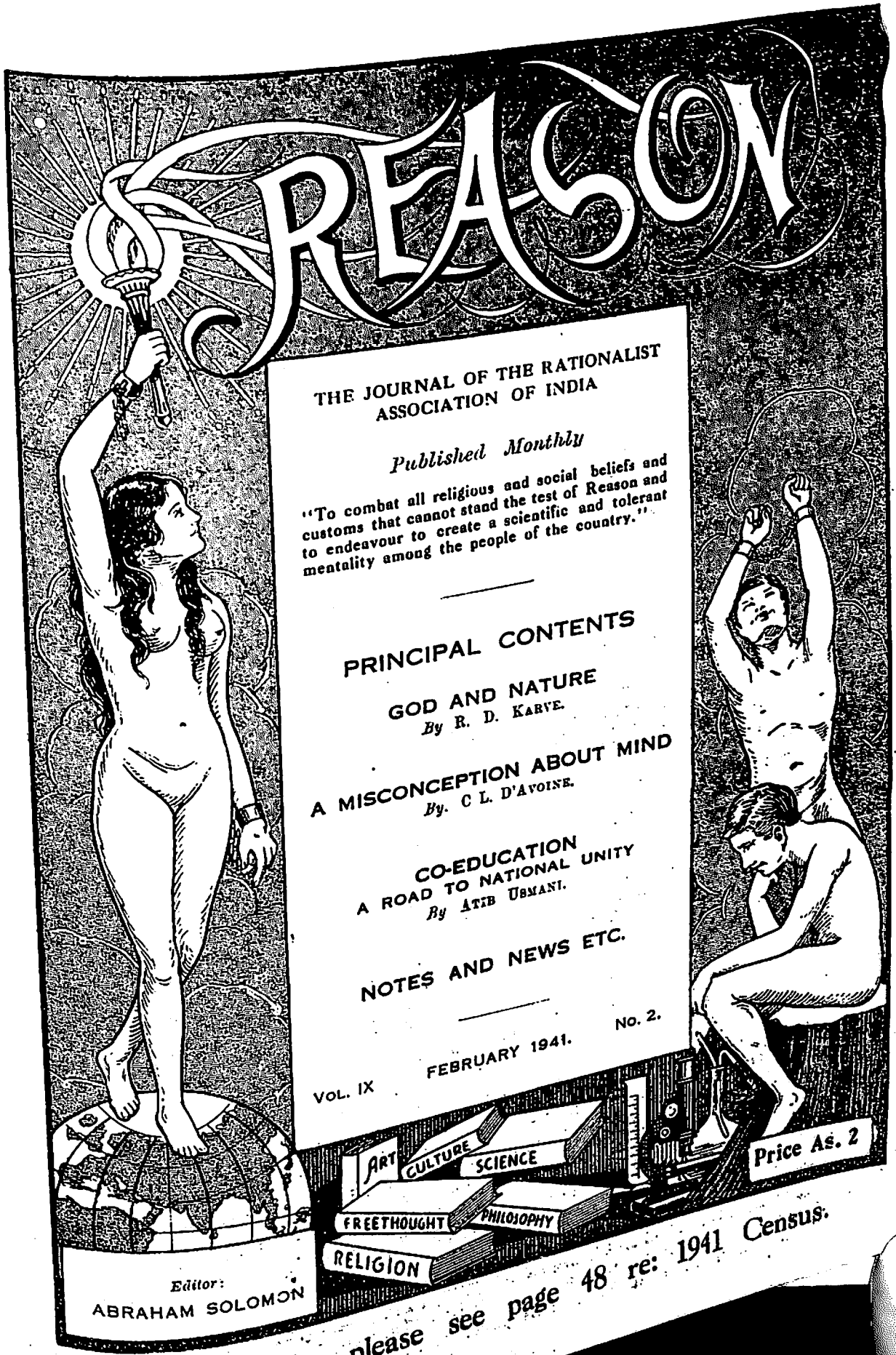
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY,

R. L. TRUST, 'RANCHHOD BHUVAN,'
Near Opera House, Tram Terminus,
BOMBAY 4.

15th January 1940.

G. S. POHEKAR. R. D. NADKARNI.
Hon. Secretaries:

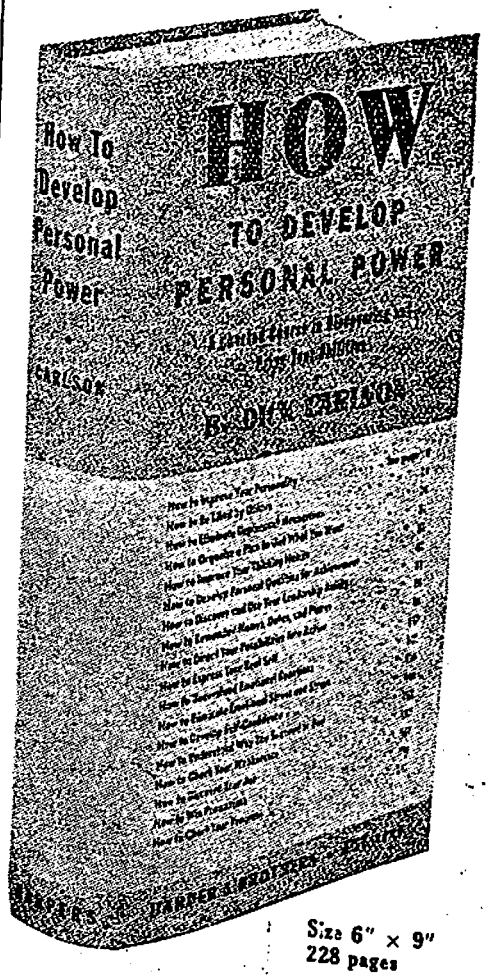
Printed by B. M. Shet at the "Advocate of India" Press, R. D. Karve, M.A., for the



kers please see page 48 re: 1941 Census.

THIS BOOK CAN HELP YOU TO ACHIEVE

POWER-PERSONALITY-HAPPINESS-SUCCESS



Size 6" × 9"
228 pages

Psychologists have long known that every human being has unlimited latent powers. By awakening and using them in daily affairs, any person can transform his life into joy and success.

INSPIRING AND EASY

This remarkable book is written by Dick Carlson, in readable and inspiring language. You will quickly learn with the aid of charts how to apply correctly the principles of Psychology to solve your every day problems and obtain results that had so far seemed beyond your reach.

WHY YOU MUST HAVE THIS BOOK

HOW TO DEVELOP PERSONAL POWER is Practical Psychology in a nutshell. It is a tried, tested and proved method of improving one's personal capabilities and will help men and women in all walks of life.

IT WILL TEACH YOU HOW TO:

Build Your Life Plan
Develop Forceful Personality
Develop Self-confidence
Train Your Memory
Banish Fear and Worry
Organize Your Daily Schedule
Express Your Real Self
Acquire Courage
Analyze Your Environment
Win Promotion
Attain Happiness and Success

WORTH MANY TIMES IN PRICE

This book is offered at a low price, by special arrangements with its publishers in America, at Rs. 6/12, delivered right in your home. This is not an expense but a sound investment which will bring returns over and over again throughout your life. Order your copy NOW!

Price Rs. 6/12/- Post Free.
CASH WITH ORDER.

Available through:

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

The world must be conquered, not by force of arms but by ideas that liberate.

—*Emile Zola.*

REASON

Vol. IX FEBRUARY 1941 No. 2

The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

(Estd. 1931)

Editor:

Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

We invite contributions of not more than 2,000 words on topics of interest to rationalists. They should be type-written. If not published they will not be returned unless stamps are enclosed.

R. A. I. Membership Rs. 5/- Foreign 8s. annually which includes "Reason".

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 2/- & Foreign 3s. 6d. or $1.00 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

CONTENTS

Editorial Musings 33

Notes and News by A. Husein 36

God and Nature by R. D. Karve 37

A Misconception about Mind by C. L. D'Avoine ... 39

Rev. Palmer and Atheism by S. W. Willatts ... 42

Unreliability of Astrology by R. J. Gokhale ... 42

Co-education—A Road to National Unity by Atib Usmani... ... 43

Rationalism in India by K. C. Sanjana ... 47



Know thou thyself, presume not God to scan:
The proper study of mankind is Man.

—*Pope.*

Sentiment in Life.

THERE seems to be a curious notion about, that rationalists give no place to sentiment in life. Even people who are more or less well acquainted with the rationalist attitude seem to be under this impression. One is not sure in what sense the word is used. These people generally do not feel the necessity of being particular as regards the meaning of the words they use though they demand accuracy on the part of a rationalist. But if by sentiment they mean feelings or emotions the charge is positively ludicrous.

It is certainly not denied that rationalists are human beings and one cannot imagine a human being without feelings or emotions though we are told of a God without "body, parts, or passions" who is loving and merciful, and, on His own authority, jealous and vengeful too! Nor can we imagine a person who denies the fact that most of our thoughts and actions are actuated by feelings or emotions.

It is impossible for a rationalist to make such a statement because he is by far the better acquainted with psychology than those who are less interested in this vale of tears. A rationalist certainly asserts that one's emotions should be subservient to reason and common sense.

If it is meant that rationalists are not capable of "finer feelings" since it is even hinted that they cannot enjoy and appreciate art, music and poetry which are supposed to have nothing to do with reason, it may be pointed out that the ranks of the best poets, writers and artists in all ages are flooded with sceptics and unbelievers, and that they flourished precisely during those periods of history which are conspicuous for the spread of scepticism and unbelief.

The Question of Morality

In argument when such people find themselves unable to hold their position in other fields such as that of anthropology, biology or psychology they either fall back on the notion just referred to or on the question of morality. They cannot believe that a person not believing in religion can at the same time be moral. And whenever they find that a person they know to be an unbeliever is straightforward, honest, and truthful, they think it a matter for generous mention as if it is an exception. But at the same time they never find it worthy of notice when they come across people who are very religious, in the accepted sense of the term, firmly believing in the much esteemed dogmas of religion, and yet possessing undesirable qualities. Perhaps that is because it is so common. Unbelief and right conduct are supposed to be incompatible, yet pious belief and undesirable qualities fit very well!

The argument that no sooner people cease to believe in God they will cease to behave themselves or be moral, is an insult to every intelligent person. It contains the insinuation that men and women need the threat of some supernatural being or of hell to keep them on the right path. It contains an insult to believers in particular as freethinkers are not found to be any worse citizens for their unbelief, in fact the contrary, while it is urged that the believers will no longer continue to be moral if deprived of their belief in God. I protest against such an insult to our fellowmen, since I do not think that, man for man, the believer is worse than the freethinker.

Then again considering the present state of the world and the extent to which rascality, dishonesty, and other undesirable qualities are found in communities and among people untouched by atheism or scepticism, one is inclined to think that a general acceptance of atheism will not make it any worse. In fact, I think it might be a definite change for the better.

However, this whole attitude is based on a confusion of thought on the question of morality. Let us first consider what morality is. It is only when we consider man in relation to others that we begin to understand the meaning and significance of morality. "In its lower forms morality is no more than an expression of those conditions under which social life is possible, and in its higher one, an expression of those ideal conditions under which corporate life is desirable." (C. Cohen) Morality implies the relation of one human being to another or others. Morality was implicit in human society before it was explicit. Man, to a very great extent acted morally, that is, behaved in a way that was not anti-social long before he gave any thought to the consequences of his actions. If that was not so the human race would have ceased to exist long ago. Cannibalism carried to its logical conclusion would mean the extinction of that particular group. It exists, but only partially; only in relation to members outside the group or clan. The moral code is not something revealed to man by some supernatural agency

but, in its lower forms, is the condition of life.

So a human being if he is to exist has got to be moral at least with regard to certain things. When knowledge increases and civilization advances men consciously reflect on the consequences of their actions and a code of morality is evolved. Moral injunctions differ in different parts of the world depending on the development, knowledge and experience of the particular peoples. Though we find that most of the modes of behaviour imposed on men and women in the past are incorrect and even harmful they were imposed with the belief that they were necessary to the welfare of the individual, group or community.

It is said that all religions teach people to be virtuous, to be honest, truthful, etc., and that no religion preaches murder. The plain fact is that it dare not. If any religion preaches anti-social qualities the society it dominates will disappear or its teachings will be accepted only in a modified form.

Morality is the outcome of social evolution. The fact that morality varies with time, place and circumstance proves that it is not something divinely given. Moral ideas like our intellectual concepts are constantly undergoing revision—adaptation to changing conditions. Morality is concerned with man's relation to man, not to God.

The morality of religion is a system of restraints. Instead of teaching that right thinking and right acting are necessary conditions of a full and happy life we are taught that we must refrain from certain acts because they are displeasing to God. History has shown the utter inadequacy, to put it mildly, of such teaching.

Moral and intellectual progress has coincided with the growth of scepticism. Rationalism encourages scepticism, right-thinking and right action which are indispensable to the development of character.

Books of interest to Rationalists

FROM SAVAGERY TO CIVILIZATION

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 1/8 By Post Rs. 1/10.

*

HERESIES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 1/8 By Post Rs. 1/10.

*

SCIENCE AND SUPERSTITION

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 1/8 By Post Rs. 1/10.

*

MATERIALISM

AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT

By M. N. ROY.

PRICE Rs. 2/8 (Cloth) By Post Rs. 2/12.

MAN AND NATURE

(A Symposium of Modern Knowledge)

BY

EMINENT SCIENTISTS

(Frazer, Taylor, Haldane, Baker, Huxley & Levy.)

PRICE Rs. 2/- By Post Rs. 2/4.

*

Available through:—

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Notes & News.

ON 2nd January our editor had a very successful evening at the Cosmo Circle, Bandra, where he spoke on "Belief in Reason" to an informal gathering of the members of that Circle. The questions and discussion that followed, showed a sincere desire on the part of the speakers to understand the rationalist viewpoint.

x x x

WE learn that the Cosmo Circle is coming up against opposition from orthodox circles in Bandra because of its progressive tendencies. One has nothing to fear from open opposition which always strengthens rather than weakens a progressive movement but the opposition that one generally gets from religious orthodoxy is of a different kind. The Cosmo Circle which caters to the social and intellectual needs of young men and women in Bandra should receive the full and unstinted support of progressive-minded persons. We wish the energetic workers of the Circle every success.

x x x

PROF. R. D. Karve was one of the speakers in the series of public lectures on the "New World Order", arranged by the Cosmo Circle, a further announcement of which appears elsewhere in this issue. Prof. Karve spoke on "Rationalism and the New World Order". Prof. A. M. Moulvi presided. There was a large audience and Prof. Karve dealt with the subject in a very able manner. He first explained the rationalist attitude and then stated what he as a rationalist desired and worked for in a New World Order. His exposition was lucid and forceful, and his replies to the questions raised by the speakers who followed were brilllant and convincing. Prof. Moulvi who knew Prof. Karve as a colleague in the Karnatak College twenty-one years ago gave instances to show that Prof. Karve was a man of unbending will, a rationalist to the core and practiced what he preached. He, however, differed from many ideas expressed by Prof. Karve and gave some views in favour of the belief in God. A summary of the lecture will appear in the next issue.

x x x

THE Eleventh Annual Dinner and Reunion of the R. A. I. will be held on the 16th of March at the Taj. Details regarding the same and names of speakers will be announced in the next issue of *Reason*. We request members to make note of the date and make it a point to attend along with their friends.

x x x

KNOWING that two things cannot occupy the same space at the same time, some people still want to do the impossible and break one another's head if they cannot. Religion, we are told, teaches brotherly love. Experience has proved that it is quite the contrary from numerous communal riots we hear of. But when riots take place between members professing the same religion, the claim that religion inculcates a spirit of brotherliness is simply preposterous. Here is an instance. On the last Idd day, it was reported that at Munshiganj there was a riot between two parties of Muslims. Both the parties happened to select the same spot for sacrifising a cow, as is the custom amongst Muslims to do so on this particular day, *Idul Ziah*, followed by a feast. One party reached the chosen spot and the other party arrived just after, demanding the same place for the same purpose. Mischief was afoot, and God watched on in complacent silence! Perhaps it was because in the old, old times human blood was far more satisfying to Him, and He still has a liking for human sacrifice.

This is how religious fanaticism creates animosity and religious rituals lead to bloodshed. Where religion comes in reason and tolerance are at a discount.

A. HUSEIN.

GOD AND NATURE

By R. D. KARVE

(All Rights Reserved by the Writer)

WHERE the orthodox man speaks of God, the modern man speaks of Nature as being more in conformity with scientific ideas. But he often speaks of Nature with a capital N and attributes the same qualities to it as are usually attributed to God by the orthodox. Thus he speaks of the intentions of Nature and arrangements made by Nature with a specific purpose and so on, attributing intelligence and will-power and engineering ability to Nature. A little consideration will show, however, that this is perfectly absurd. This absurdity has gone so far that Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary defines Nature as "the power which creates and which regulates the material world." After this, one can hardly blame the man in the street for speaking of Nature in that way. The same dictionary gives another definition of the word viz. "the established order of things, the universe." Even "the established order of things" raises the question, "established by whom?", and is, therefore, objectionable since it presupposes a creator. "The universe" will do as a definition of Nature, since this in reality is a word used to denote all that exists, without attributing any qualities to it.

I was very much surprised to read in the *Rationalists Annual** an article by Sir Arthur Keith in which he speaks of the mechanism by which Nature works out its evolutionary purpose. It is hardly permissible for a scientist to speak of Nature as if it was a synonym of God. No wonder if lesser lights make the same blunder. In a recent debate on birth-control, Dr. Alban DeSouza quoted an eminent surgeon as saying that the perfect contraceptive had not only not yet been found, but that it would be impossible to find it, because Nature would oppose tooth and nail any interference with its intention of unlimited multiplication. The good doctor is a Catholic and he brought in Nature because a previous speaker had predicted that he would use the religious argument and he therefore preferred to speak of Nature rather than God. To speak of Nature in this way is either camouflage or ignorance. It is much more sensible to speak of God if one wants to speak of creation and the intelligence and benevolence behind it and the mechanism by means of which evolution is brought about.

This reminds me of a recent case in America, when two doctors and a nurse in charge of a Maternity Health Centre in Waterbury (Connecticut) were prosecuted for violating the law by giving contraceptive advice to a married woman on medical grounds and the latter was also prosecuted for following that advice. The doctors had done it in good faith, believing that they had the right to give such advice on medical grounds, and so they were ultimately let off with a warning, but the legal interpretations of the law which dated from 1879 are interesting. The lower court acquitted them, but the higher court declared that several attempts made to change that law so as to allow doctors to give such advice having failed, it was beyond the power of courts to exempt doctors even if they gave the advice on medical grounds. A funny point was raised on behalf of the accused, whose pleader asked the court that as certain days in a month were believed to be free from the danger of concep-

* Rationalists Annual 1941 (Watts 1s.)

tion, would a calendar indicating these days be considered a contraceptive device? To this the court said "No". The reader may wonder what this has to do with God and Nature. The point is that this prosecution was undertaken at the instigation of an institution of Roman Catholic priests, who declared that birth-control was immoral according to the Catholic church because it was *unnatural*. Since even Roman Catholic priests do not go about in a state of nature and live in houses which are quite as unnatural as their clothes and almost every other convenience of modern life of which they take full advantage, why should birth-control alone be condemned on that ground? They could easily have declared that God was against it, but even Roman Catholic priests are afraid to parade their intimate acquaintance with God now-a-days. That is as it should be, but the argument they gave in lieu of that was still more ridiculous.

The same confusion of thought which makes people speak of Nature as if that word was a synonym of God, is responsible for the warning often given by moralists against breaking the laws of Nature. The laws of nature are not like the Commandments of God. It seems it is easy for us to break these Commandments in spite of the Omnipotence of God, but the laws of nature are such that nobody can break them. The warning not to break them is therefore futile. Nature never tells you to do or not to do this or that, as God is supposed to do. The laws of nature are always hypothetical truths. If you do this, the consequence will be that, and it is a necessary consequence. God is supposed to have given orders to some individuals by revelation but nature gives no such orders. The knowledge of the laws of nature has been obtained by man by observation and experiment. Religious people pretend that these laws are revealed to man when God thinks fit, but it is to be remarked that they are never revealed to a Pope or other religious head, but always to scientists, who have often to work hard for the knowledge, whatever their views on religion may be, and it is to be noted that the majority of scientists are atheists. Would they have obtained the knowledge if God had anything to do with it?

That some kind of law and order is found in the universe is very often given as an argument in favour of the existence of God. Really speaking, it is nothing of the kind. In fact, some kind of order is inevitable and it is impossible even to imagine a state of things in which there is no order, in which, for instance, hydrogen and oxygen combined in certain proportions will sometimes form water and sometimes milk. There is nothing surprising in the existence of order. Bertrand Russell has given a mathematical explanation of the necessity of order. Everybody knows that any three points in space must not only lie in a plane, but that they must also lie on a circle, or in other words, that a circle can be drawn through any three given points. Students of mathematics also know that a parabola can be drawn through any four given points in a plane and a hyperbola through any five points. Now it is perfectly obvious that however powerful a god may be imagined to be, he cannot arrange three points in such a way that a circle cannot be drawn through them. The kind of order seen here is obviously inevitable. I have often asked orthodox people the question whether God with all his Omnipotence could make a piece of paper have the shape of a square and a circle at the same time. Orthodox people naturally say that this is physically impossible and that is why even God cannot do it. The order which we find in the world is of that kind. It is there because nothing else is possible. So the fact that there is order in the world need not trouble the atheist at all. The order need not be put there by God or Nature with a capital N. It is there because

(Continued on page 46)

A Common Misconception About Mind

By C. L. D'AVOINE.

THE New Book Co., Hornby Road, Bombay, are good enough to send me regularly their catalogue of the best publications they recommend. Their latest, that of December 1940, contains also a review of some books by Marion Pickett. One of the books reviewed by that person is "Mind in Transition" by Prof. Joseph K. Hart which, from her description of the same, appears to me to be one of those books on mind which is dealt with in the proper scientific manner. Books on Mind were, till recently, generally written by people without proper scientific training to deal with such a difficult subject and they were therefore full of mystical ideas about mind which most of these writers took to be an entity independent of the body.

Marion Pickett, who, I presume, is a lady, seems to belong to that school which takes a mystical view of mind. She says that she disagrees with Prof. Hart when he says that man has inherited his mind from his animal ancestors, namely, those ape-like animals who lived millions of years ago.

"I do not think," she says, "that animals have "Mind" but only a brain which responds to the need of the flesh, whereas the mind of Man inspires him with the love of beauty, of all the arts and with desire to go forward and not to remain static which seem to satisfy the ape." Despite this disagreement with Prof. Hart, Marion Pickett reviews Prof. Hart's book in a sympathetic manner and actually recommends it.

She seems to agree with Prof. Hart who says that a new world is impossible after this war unless the new world understands the mystery of man better than the old.

How is this possible unless the study of the Mind of Man proceeds along the line of its evolution from the lower animals? Marion Pickett appears to recognize that there is still a good deal of the animal brutality in Man and yet she disagrees that the mind of Man is inherited from animal ancestors!

She takes the mind of a highly cultured civilized and intelligent individual and compares the same with that of the ape. This is not the way to study the evolution of mind and small wonder she falls into the common misconception on the question.

She says that she is certain that the mind of man is not derived from the ape because she appears to believe the Story of Genesis about the creation of man though she naively professes not to take that story literally. This explains her reluctance to accept the scientific findings that the mind of man is derived from the *lower* animals. Religion has created that prejudice and doubtless *with people* who have swallowed that Biblical story, that prejudice *is* deep-seated.

"Without taking Genesis literally," she says, "it is not difficult to believe that the Creator—no matter in what form we visualise him—breathed into man a "soul" and left in him that spark of God which makes him different to the animals, but I would not go so far as to say that all men possess souls."

It is rather amusing to be told that it matters not how we visualize the Creator. Yes, indeed, one is curious to know what is the form of that Creator who breathed a soul into man. Surely he must have a mouth to breathe and having a mouth he must also have a face, a head and the rest of the body. Does not the picture of an old, bearded man, dressed in blue and living in the clouds suit him well? Marion Pickett must have had such a picture in mind when she tells us that it is not difficult to believe that such a Creator breathed a soul into man.

Marion Pickett tries to be facetious when she says that she does not believe that that Creator gave all men souls. That would have

been a very invidious act on the part of the Creator, but she says this just to hint that Hitler has no soul and does not believe in God, hence the fearful war we are having. Whether Hitler and his associates have souls or not, it is certain that Hitler believes in God. He affirmed this in his Munich speech in February 1940 when he said that he believed in God and he was sure that God would not let the German people down.

It is clear that Marion Pickett is rather confused about her idea of the Creator, the soul, mind or spirit. One would have left it at that and passed on. Unfortunately, she makes a serious allegation likely to mislead the uninformed and this must not be allowed to go unchallenged.

She says, "Professor Hart may be right in his theory that it is because the "mind" of man is trammelled with the pattern of the ape that he brings about disasters, such as we are facing today."

"Unfortunately", she continues, "Scientists refuse to accept a theory which cannot be supported by scientific fact, and this in my opinion has been a deterrent in the understanding of man. Scientists for years denied the existence of man's soul or spirit or mind whichever one may be pleased to call it, but to-day many admit that they are constantly coming up against something which cannot be explained by scientific facts, and to which no formula can be applied. Some call it the fourth entity which may as time passes give to the world a better understanding of Man."

Marion Pickett is undoubtedly romancing in telling such nonsense. I am sure she will be hard put to it to mention only three biologists of repute who could utter such an absurdity. On the contrary, most authorities, who are competent to speak on the subject, assure us that mind is not an independent entity as the mystics would have it. The brain, they say, is the organ of mind and to understand mind one must study its evolution from the lower animals upward. Marion Pickett, who seems to be repeating what the Fundamentalists are fond of saying when they are out to deny the theory of evolution, would do well to read what Professor James Harvey Robinson, an acknowledged authority on Mind, says in his book: "The Mind in the Making"

"There are four historical layers underlying the minds of civilized men—the animal mind, the child mind, the savage mind, and the traditional civilized mind. We are all animals and never can cease to be; we were all children at our most impressionable age and can never get over the effects of that; our human ancestors have lived in savagery during practically the whole existence of the race, say five thousand or a million years, and the primitive mind is ever with us; finally, we are all born into an elaborate civilization, the constant pressure of which we can by no means escape."

"Each of these underlying minds has its special sciences and appropriate literatures. The new discipline of animal or comparative psychology deals with the first; genetic and analytical psychology with the second; anthropology, ethnology and comparative religion with the third; and the history of philosophy, science, theology, and literature with the fourth."

"We may grow beyond these underlying minds and in the light of new knowledge we may criticize their findings and even persuade ourselves that we have successfully transcended them. But if we are fair with ourselves we shall find that their hold on us is really inexorable. We can only transcend them artificially and precariously in certain highly favourable conditions. Depression, anger, fear or ordinary irrtiation will speedily prove the insecurity of any artificial structure that we manage to rear on our four-fold foundation. Such fundamental and vital preoccupations as religion, love, war, and the chase stir impules that lie far back in human history and which effectually repudiate the cavillings of ratiocination."

"It is now generally conceded by all who have studied the varied evidence, and have

freed themselves from ancient prejudice, that if we traced back our human lineage far enough we should come to a point where our human ancestors had no civilization and lived a speechless, naked, houseless, fireless and toolless life, similar to that of the existing primates with which we are zoologically closely connected."

"This is one of the most fully substantiated of historical facts and one which we can never neglect in our attempt to explain man as he now is. We are furthermore still animals with not only an animal body but with an animal mind. And this animal body and animal mind are the original foundations on which even the most subtle and refined intellectual life must perforce rest."

"We are ready to classify certain of our most essential desires as brutish—hunger and thirst, the urgency of sleep, and especially sexual longing. We know of blind animal rage, of striking, biting, scratching, howling, snarling, of irrational fears and ignominious flight. We share our senses with the higher animals; have ears, eyes, noses and tongues much like theirs; heart, lungs, and other viscera, and four limbs. They have brains which stand them in good stead, although their heads are not so good as ours. But when one speaks of the animal mind he should think of still other resemblances between the brute and man."

The idea that animals have brain and no mind and that the gulf which separates man from the higher animals is unbridgeable is still taught in Seminaries. Of late, certain theologians, (some Jesuits among them) who find the verdict for the evolution of man to be unquestionable, advance the theory that man is certainly descended from the lower animals but at certain stage of his evolution God breathed a soul into him. When that took place they leave one to conjecture. Marion Pickett, however, believes that the soul was breathed into man at the Creation. She is, therefore, no believer in Evolution and is still in the religious classroom,

STANDARD WORKS BY FAMOUS FREETHINKERS.

Thinkers' Library.

Education: Intellectual, Moral, And Physical ... ...Herbert Spencer
The Riddle of the Universe ...Ernst Haeckel
Humanity's Gain From Unbelief, Charles Bradlaugh
On Liberty ... ...J. S. Mill
A Short History of the World ...H. G. Wells
(Revised edition to 1938)
The Origin of Species ... ...Charles Darwin
History of Modern Philosophy ...A. W. Benn
Anthropology (in 2 vols.; illus.), Sir E.B. Tylor, Kt.
Lectures and Essays ... ...T. H. Huxley
The Evolution of The Idea of God ...Grant Allen
The Churches & Modern Thought...Vivian Phelps
Penguin Island ... ...Anatole France
The Pathetic Fallacy ... ...Llewelyn Powys
The Martyrdom of Man... ...Winwood Reade
The Evidence for the Supernatural, ...Dr. Ivor Ll. Tuckett
On Compromise, John Viscount Morley, O.M.,P.C.
The Existence of God ... ...Joseph McCabe
History of Anthropology (with Portraits) ...Dr. A. C. Haddon
The Mind in the Making ..James Harvey Robinson
The Social Record of Christianity, Joseph McCabe
Selected Works of Voltaire, Trans. by Joseph McCabe
History of Ancient Philosophy ...A. W. Benn
What is Man? ... ...Mark Twain
Man and His Universe ...J. Langdon-Davies
First Principles (Rs. 1-14-0) ...Herbert Spencer
Rights of Man ... ...Thomas Paine
(With Foreword by G. D. H. Cole)
Dictionary of Scientific Terms, ...C. M. Beadnell, C. B., F. Z. S.
The Universe of Science (Revised edition) ...Prof. H. Levy
The Age of Reason ... ... Thomas Paine
A Short History of Women.. John Longdon-Davies
Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings ...Henry Maudsley, M. D.
The World As I See It ... ... Albert Einstein
Jocasta's Crime: An Anthropological Study. ...Lord Raglan

Price 15 as. Postage 3 as.
RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Rev. PALMER AND ATHEISM.

Says the Very Rev. W. A. Palmer, Dean of Johannesburg, S. Africa (vide Rand Daily Mail, Sep. 23rd.) speaking on the breakdown of all that is finest in Christian civilisation:

"Over and against these conditions are the multitudes that seem to live without any thought of God. They are not Atheists, *for they have not given any thought to the matter*. There is just no sense that anything is missing in life. Just as such people can live without music or art, so they are content to live a life which leaves religion and God out of mind."

That's just it, Mr. Dean, they are not Atheists just because they have not come into touch with a freethinking active body. An inquiring Rationalist would get from them the fact that they were Catholic or Protestant, and would look staggered if asked if they were Trinitarians or Unitarians. Ask such people to buy a car or a horse, they would never accept the seller's word, but would inspect and criticize it from A. to Z. But religion is a different matter. They do not have to buy it, in fact, it is forced upon them as "tiny tots," with the result they can never "*give any thought to the matter*" unless they happen to hear a friend or fellow-passenger discuss it in some form or another. Rationalist books and pamphlets must be of the simplest, primary kind, cheaply sold and short in bulk. For instance, they would sooner accept, or pick up Ingersoll's "Mistakes of Moses" at twopence, than they would accept or pick up his "Reply to Cardinal Manning". A recent issue from the Psychic Press, of "Bible Blunders" (sixpence) would and should make them inquisitive. And beyond the Dean's indifferent multitudes, are those that I class as the "dumb-dest of the dumb". They can read their bible and not see a mistake or fault in it. They have a "thus far, and no further brain", in fact, their case is pathological, they have the "bible-class" mind.

Australia.

S. W. WILLATTS.

UNRELIABILITY OF ASTROLOGY.

I

Statistical test goes against astrological laws.

1. Prof. Farnsworth of Starford University Ca., after examining about fifteen hundred persons from Key's Musicians, 'Who is Who' found that "the data give no support to astrological claims so far as they relate to the aesthetic aspect of Character and Personality."

2. Dr. Stokely of the Fels Planetarium says that an American friend of his carried out a statistical test on 22 thousand persons included in the year Book of American Men of Science and found that the *aspects associated with the 'best minds' were not found to answer the test*.

II

Prediction of particular events Charlatanism.

Ptolemy, the famous astrologer of ancient times, says, "It is not possible that particular forms of events could be declared by any astrologer, however scientific. Those only who are inspired by the Deity can predict particular events.

The British Journal of Astrology has been repeating for several months the dictum that "Astrology is a science of warning. They who contended that it is anything more than this are either charlatans or humbugs."

Will believers in Astrology note the above and cease to rely too much on it?

R. J. GOKHALE.

"REASON" GRAB-BAG.

Don't Miss this Splendid Opportunity.

Send Re. 1 and get selected old copies of *Reason* worth double, prior to December 1939, containing excellent articles of lasting interest.

Post Free.

CO-EDUCATION
A ROAD TO NATIONAL UNITY

By ATIB USMANI

ALTHOUGH nationalism is proving a curse in all European countries in the form of war, and such great thinkers of our time as Prof. Albert Einstein and Mr. Herbert George Wells regard it as an evil, nevertheless, I look upon it as a necessary stage in the development of all countries towards that sublime ideal of a Modern World-State, to bring about which should be the desire of every educated and intelligent human being all over the world. Nationalism conceived as a milestone in the dynamic process of the formation of universal brotherhood of man is certainaly no evil, but when it becomes an end in itself and thus engenders mutual jealousies between neighbouring countries culminating in warfare, it falls into the category of all evils. It is as a transitory phase only, that I think of nationalism with respect to our country India—an object to be achieved but to be outgrown as we pass on to an ever expanding selflessness.

Today India is divided against itself. Even the most casual observer cannot fail to notice the forces that are tending to divide our country into ever narrowing interests. Such silly schemes as Pakistan, conceived by that demigod of Muslim Leaguers, Mr. Jinnah, the illusion of the revial of the ancient Hindu Culture entertained by that father of the Hindu Mahasabha, Pandit Malaviya, the ever-widening gulf between the followers of Socialism and Gandhism in the body of the Congress, the futile dispute over improvising an abortive Hindustani language, and such minority brands as Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, Quadianis and what-nots, each clamouring for its own separate existence, are forces tending to disintegrate India instead of unifying it as a single nation. India is not a nation in the real sense. To raise itself to the level of internationalism, it must first attain a really national status. Its condition has become so precarious internally that it can neither preserve its own identity if it happens to be drawn into the vortex of the present world war, nor can it join hands with other nations in the effort for the formation of a Modern World-State in which these nations will be required to participate in the not very distant future. In the face of these circumstances one of the speediest, most powerful and thoroughly effective means to unify India is co-education.

In the ensuing paragraphs I shall proceed to show what is meant by co-education; what are its material and psychological advantages; how it should be incorporated in our educational institutions; and the possibility of making India a true nation by transcending with its help all social and religious differences that now exist.

First of all I want to tell our college students that what they are familiar with as co-education in our institutions is not co-education at all. Co-education as we know in our colleges and universities is only a foolish pretence, a ceremonial nonsense that cannot serve any useful purpose. It leaves us where we are, if not the worse for it. When in a lecture room two or three solitary feminine figures are seen seated on a bench specially allotted to them and the boys sit as far removed from them and as closely crowded as possible with the professor's ever watchful eye on them, we believe we are having co-education. If instead of eradicating sex obsessions from the minds of young men and women, fresh restrictions and new forms of censorship have constantly to be imposed by our college authorities to keep a few girls in a predominantly masculine institution, the purpose of co-education is clearly defeated.

This is what is happening in our colleges today. And instead of producing emotionally healthy young men and women, they are manufacturing an increasing number gentlemen-at-large and women touch-me-nots every year. What happens in our colleges every day when a set of girls comes across a set of boys around the corner of the college building? The situation is at once comic and pathetic. The girls immediately stop talking and laughing and become serious, the modest casting their eyes downwards, the careful looking sideways, and the haughty ones fixing their eyes directly at infinity—in a word, all are transformed from the human beings they were a moment ago into Sphinxes of modesty. The boys at once brace up, each readjusting his collar and tie and drawing up his trousers to a position in which it would never stay long; and as they approach them, those who belong to our gentlemen-at-large class openly pass objectionable remarks and make gestures at them, those of less daring natures content themselves with a vicious look or smile, and some occasional romantic fellow, if he happens to be with them, gives a wistful, appealing glance to the lady who never condescends to notice it. If on certain rare occasions boys are allowed a certain degree of liberty with their fellow girl-students they approach them with ulterior motives in their hearts and behave in a way most annoying to them.* The vicious circle goes on, making the boys ever more sneaking and calculating fellows, and the girls morbidly modest and defiant. How are we to remedy this state of affairs? The answer lies in early co-education.

The co-education should begin in schools instead of colleges. Boys and girls should be first brought together when they are still below the age of adolescence. There should be no segregation in seating them, so that they may sit as they please, irrespective of sex. The same thing should be adopted in all the school functions, games and other activities. While it is essential that every form of religious instruction should be absolutely abolished in the interest of the growth of cosmopolitan ideas, it is imperative that a knowledge of rational ethics should be imparted to them. And as they grow up they should be gradually made familiar with the facts of sex and reproduction according to their age and intelligence.

When boys and girls shall grow up to be young men and women in such an environment they shall be healthier mentally as well as physically, and shall be free from all those traits that mark our gentlemen-at-large and women touch-me-nots. Moreover, they will possess a wider outlook on life then ever found among the products of our institutions. It is now a well established fact that a healthy mind is as necessary for a healthy body as a healthy body is necessary for healthy mind, and the one cannot exist apart from the other. The most eminent psychologists of our time, Frend and Jung, are in agreement as to the reciprocal influence of body and mind. Here it needs be explained as to what exactly is meant by a healthy body and a healthy mind. It is a mistake to suppose that physical health means simply freedom from disease. Nothing can help to form a better idea of physical health than a copy of one of the two well-known geographical magazines which often give pictures of white men as well as dark and black men of those countries where there is no segregation of the sexes. In India such bodies are rare. As regards the question of mental health I shall discuss it at length below.

It is an accepted fact that India is distinguished for the extreme religiousness and asceticism of its people. No other country in the world can compare with it in this respect. Now these very "virtues" are the evidence of its people's mental ill-health. The key to the problem lies in the practice of the most rigorous forms of censorship imposed on the freedom of young men and women by our elders, who look ask-

*This is true as far as the writer's observation goes but he cannot claim that this is always so.

ance even at the perfectly innocent association of boys and girls who are still of tender age. How this is brought about would be clear from what follows. At this place I shall prefer to give a gist of the findings of world authorities like Havelock Ellis, Bertrand Russell and Judge Lindsey, rather than my own notions on the subject. They have found that when boys and girls are segregated a conflict ensues in their minds between the ideas of conventional morality forced upon them by their elders and their own natural emotions. As they pass on from the age of childhood through adolescence to maturity the conflict grows in depth and intensity and retires into the unconscious mind. But it seldom succeeds in becoming wholly unconscious and finds various expressions in men and women of which extreme religiousness, asceticism, and the moral persecution of others, are the best camouflaged and most prevalent forms. Religious practices and physical self-torture are employed to produce a sort of emotional anaesthesia in the individual to maintain which a considerable part of physical and mental energy is dissipated. Thus the victims of the unconscious repressions of their natural emotions not only keep on wasting their energies which might otherwise have been usefully employed, but they also become a positive menace to the society in their direct or indirect influence. They assume a moral guardianship of every body and heavily censor and persecute those rare, fortunate, free souls who happen to be in their circle. Social circles in India consist of a large majority of mentally morbid grown-ups who are constantly wasting their energies and a major part of their life in outvying one another in making life unbearable for the younger generation. More often than not this results in converting the younger people into the same kind of mentally unhealthy persons who in their turn begin to persecute their young. Hence it becomes obvious that the secret of the division of our country lies in the personalities of its people that are divided against themselves.

The fact that the segregation of the sexes is the chief cause of mental ill-health of the people of our country brings us directly to the importance of co-education. In the co-educational institutions there is no possibility of this cause coming into operation. Therefore when boys and girls receiving education in such institutions will grow up into men and women they would make for better citizens in every respect. And it is in such healthy material that we can place our hope of making India a true nation. It is often complained by our well-meaning but uninformed elders that the educated young people of this country lare too dispondent and unambitious. They say, "you people are such idlers you don't want to do anything; look at the people of western countries, how progressive they are." That is perfectly true. But, perhaps they do not know that the most powerful incentive comes from the proximity of the opposite sex which is denied to them. It goes without saying that boys work better and play better when the girls are present, and *vice versa*. Let the separate institutions of boys and girls be abolished and co-educational institutions formed and the despondency and unambitiousness will disappear once for ever from the young people of our country. One great advantage of early co-education would be that young men and women shall fall in love and marry irrespective of the castes, communities or religions to which they belong. Thus a real amalgamation would ensue and all forms of social and religious differences would automatically vanish.

Our moralists and religionists would rise up in awe and indignation at this suggestion and cry. "What! Shall we sacrifice the morals of our young men and women and our religions for the sake of national unity and freedom"? First of all let them know that no sacrifice is too great for the betterment of our country. Secondly, they should rest

assured that so far as the question of morals goes there is hardly any likelihood of corruption, because, as I have already mentioned, sexology and rational ethics will be taught in co-educational institutions. Wherever co-education has been tried together with a sound knowledge of sexology and rational ethics the evidence is in favour of this view. Moreover, it should be remembered that the danger does not lie in sound knowledge but in the half-baked ideas gleaned through devious ways—normally people err because of the want of knowledge and not inspite of it. And as for the question of the disappearance of religions, the sooner they disappear the better for us. I know that their respective religions are dear to those who were born in them, although there are many exceptions; but have they ever paused to reflect what after all is the significance of any religion when viewed in a proper space-and-time perspective. Scientists have shown that the drama of life has just begun—we are only four hundred generations away from the primordial man—and the period in the earth's age favourable to human life and achievements that lies in future, is so immeasurably greater than that which has already passed, that the most impregnable shapes of today would have gone and their places taken by shapes yet undreamed of. Then, who but a fool can say that the known religions to which we so unreasonably and tenaciously cling today would survive such a colossal change? To lament for the sacrifice of such transitory things as these religions that bar our way to national unity and freedom is childish vanity. The things that are here and before us, and the things that have been and are no more, will be nothing in comparison with the things to come.

[The present code of morality is based on the fundamentally wrong assumption that all sex expression is sin. Getting rid of this false notion will make for a saner and more rational society.—*Ed.*]

GOD AND NATURE

(*Concluded from page* 38.)

absence of that order is a physical impossibility and utter chaos cannot even be imagined.

This disposes of the most important argument in favour of the existence of God and proves at the same time the absurdity of thinking of Nature as having made certain laws which it is desirable to obey and as having certain intentions from which it cannot be turned. Man has in fact turned the laws of nature to his own use and can behave as he pleases if he is prepared to take the consequences. The laws of nature cannot be broken. They do not constitute a penal code involving punishment if they are broken. Scientists are, therefore, taking a dislike to the word "laws" in this connection because it leads to the kind of confusion just pointed out. They are inevitable sequences rather than laws and it would be desirable to find a new word for them.

Series of talks broadcast from the Bombay Station of the All India Radio on 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 30th & 31st Oct. 1939.

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER

Represented by

His Grace Dr. Roberts
Catholic Archbishop of Bombay

His Holiness Khalifa Bashiruddin Mahomed

Dastur Kaikushru Mahiar Kutar
Parsee High Priest

His Holiness Jagadguru Shri Shankaracharya Dr. Kurtkoti

AND

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.,
President, Rationalist Association of India.

PRICE 4 AS. FOREIGN 6d.

Available from

The Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Rationalism in India

IN a conservative country like India where religion permeates the everyday life of the people, where supernaturalism and superstitious practices have taken such deep roots in the mentality of the people, where emotionalism plays such a prominent part, it will be a very uphill task and require all our energies and resources to spread the light of Reason.

Mr. F. J. Gould in his concise *History of Religion* says, "Thus early (from the times of the Vedas) did the Hindu mind manifest its taste for subtle reflection and deep religious dreams, intent rather on abstractions and subtleties than on the outer practical sphere of life and experience. The sultry climate of India predisposes the mind to self-communion and reverie." Because of such mental make-up of the Hindus that Brahminism was able to oust the pure ethical and practical religion of Buddha from India, and charlatans like Madame Blavatsky, Mrs. Anne Besant &c. were able to secure a very large following. Even highly educated and cultured men threw their reasoning faculty to the winds and succumbed to the blandishments of these people. I reimember the late Mr. Subramanean Iyer, an emanent lawyer and High Court Judge of Mudras, once saying that famines in India were due to people not properly performing Shradha ceremonies.

Mr. Gandhi who is a good judge of human nature and knows how to play on men's emotion, has, apart from his unique and hypnotising personality, succeeded in acquiring such a domineering influence on his fellow-countrymen, chiefly his co-religionists, by simply assuming the role of an ascetic, (ascetism and practice of austerites being held in high esteem by the Hindus) and as a man of God like the Hebrew prophets of old, and thus playing on their religious emotions. It is no wonder that he is hailed as a Mahatma. He told the people of Bihar that the earthquake was sent by God as a visitation of His wrath for their sins! I wonder if he himself believes this!

When an obscurantist like Mr. Gandhi manages to wield such an immense influence on the minds of his fellowmen, what chance is there for Rationalism to make any headway in India.

Such an advanced community as that of the Parsees is intolerant and bigoted where religious matters are concerned. Look at the fuss they made when certain refined Parsee men and women wanted to start a burial ground in Poona, though in the mofussil where there are no Towers of Silence, the Parsee bury their dead. My own two daughters are buried in Madras. They are under the thumb of their priests, spend large amount of money on silly and superstitious funeral ceremonies without understanding the why and wherefore of such ceremonies, even priests do not understand and those who do will not enlighten their clients because if they did so and people came to know the real significance of these ceremonies their occupation would be gone. Every year thousands of rupees are, as if it were, burnt into smoke in shape of sandal wood offered to the holy fire in the fire-temple.

The present system of education is very much to blame for this state of affairs. No attempt is made to develop the reasoning faculty of the child. He is not taught to think for himself and form his own opinions. The result is that when he grows up into manhood he finds it difficult to get rid of whatever beliefs are inculcated in him during his childhood by his teachers, priests and parents. It is no wonder then that our Association has not yet made much headway, during its seven years' existence. Compare this poor result with that of the R. P. A. It had only 94 members and other subscribers in 1899. In 1906 this number rose to 1135 and in 1936 to 4376. It has received legacies to a total of £66,349 between the years 1908 and 1936. The Indians have yet much to learn from Englishmen. We talk, they act.

We not only want more members but also a large fund to enable us to institute lectures on rationalism, to print and distribute leaflets, conveying the message of freethought, chiefly to the student population.

Unless each and every member of the Association takes a keen interest in its welfare, not only by securing members but also by subscribing their mite to the Reserve Fund and in other ways, the result will be disappointing.

K. C. SANJANA.

(From a letter dated 15-11-37 to Mr. Abraham Solomon, from the late Lt.-Col. K. C. Sanjana of Poona.)

OBITUARIES.

Gulamali C. Moolji, 1876-1940.

It is with the deepest regret we record the sudden death of Mr. Gulamali C. Moolji who died of heart failure on December 31, 1940, at the age of 64. He was the oldest senior legal practitioner in the Small Causes Court having started practising in 1905. He was a keen and active rationalist and was very popular with the younger generation. Well versed in the Islamic religion and liturgy, there are few even among the molvies and priests who could stand up to him. He was connected with and helped many charitable and educational institutions. He was one of the oldest and staunchest members of the R. A. I. and regularly attended all its functions. He helped to spread the rationalist outlook in every possible way. In him we have lost a valued friend and a keen rationalist. We offer our deepest sympathies to his berieved family.

A. S.

Lt.-Col. K. C. Sanjana, 1853-1941,

Lt. Col. K. C. Sanjana, I.M.S. (retired) of Poona died on January 13, 1941 at the age of 88. He was a staunch rationalist of over 40 years standing, a member of the Rationalist Press Association since 1908, and of the R. A. I. since 1931, of which he became a life member in March 1940. He helped our Association constantly and whenever it needed help.

In his death the R. A. I. has lost a very keen and valued member.

We offer our deepest sympathies to his berieved family.

A. S.

NOTICE.

The next copy of *Reason* will be sent by V.P.P. to those who have not yet sent in their subscriptions.

We regret the last issue contained several typographical mistakes due to difficulties in the press and it being brought out in a hurry.

"Reason" will be out on the 10th of each month and will reach readers on the 13th. Due to a tightening of postal regulations, we are unable to post copies on any other day. Readers are, therefore, requested to inform us before 10th of each month if they require extra copies.

EDITOR,

THE COSMO CIRCLE

LECTURES.

Sunday, 2nd February, 5 p. m.

Science and the New World Order

Speaker: CLIFFORD MANSHARDT.

Sunday, 16th February, 5 p. m.

Philosophy and the New World Order

Speaker: PROF. J. ANDRADE.

Sunday, 23rd February, 5 p. m.

Some Implications of the New World Order

Speaker: PROF. P. A. WADIA.

Sunday, 2nd March, 5 p. m.

Economics and the New World Order

Speaker: PROF. J. J. ANJARIA.

1941 CENSUS.

The attention of Freethinkers is drawn to the fact that they may insist on entering "Atheist," "Agnostic" or "Rationalist" in the column for "Religion," in the 1941 census, to be taken on 1st March.

The instructions given by the authorities to enumerators as regards question 4 in the Census Form, which pertains to Religion are as follows:

"This question is for the *personal, individual* religion, professed by each person. Ask him what it is and *record the answer as given.* Examples are Hindu, Islam, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Christian, Brahmo, *Agnostic*, Confucian, etc." (Italics ours.)

We hope Freethinkers will make it a point to exercise their right. Any difficulty experienced should be reported to the Chief Census Officer.

IF YOU WANT

To read choicest books,
To discuss modern problems,
To get correct information about current topics,
To have contact with intellectuals, and
To understand the making and growth of our Society—

Then You Must Remain in Touch with

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY.

OBJECTS.

To promote the Sociological interest of the Indian people, to gather and disseminate all sorts of sociological information, to facilitate the study of sociology, to focus the views of experts on such questions, to form and maintain a Library, etc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Donors Rs. 500/- or more. Life Members Rs. 100/- or more. Ordinary Members Rs. 3/- per year payable half-yearly. R. L. T. Library Deposit Rs. 5/-.

All members have the free use of the Library which contains a good collection of books on Economics, and also the Library of the R. L. Trust Hostel which also contains an excellent collection of latest books on all branches of sociology, namely, Economics, Ethics, Eugenics, Psychology, Philosophy, Politics, History, Biography and Fiction on current social problems.

Members are also entitled to publications of the Institute at such concessions as may be determined by the Managing Committee from time to time, as also one Magazine can be supplied at the cost of the Institute and any other Magazine for which concessions could be secured by the Institute for its members by any special agreement with its Publishers.

Rules, Regulations, Entrance Form can be had from:—

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY,

R. L. TRUST, 'RANCHHOD BHUVAN,'
Near Opera House Tram Terminus,
BOMBAY 4.

G. S. POHEKAR, R. D. NADKARNI,
Hon. Secretaries.

15th January 1940.

If you recognise Human Equality
If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom
If you wish to dispel Superstition, Ignorance, Fanaticism, Bigotry, and Hypocrisy

JOIN

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

WHICH SEEKS:

1. To eradicate SUPERSTITION wherever and whenever it exists and under whatever guise, and to replace it by RATIONALISM which may be defined as the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of reason and aims at establishing a system of science, philosophy and ethics consistent with intellectual honesty, verifiable by experience, and independent of all arbitrary assumption or authority.

2. To stimulate freedom of thought and inquiry in reference to religious and social beliefs and customs and to encourage popular interest in science and the various branches of criticism and philosophy, as connected factors in that progressive human culture which is independent of theological creeds or dogmas.

3. To promote a secular and ethical system of education the main object of which shall be to cultivate in the young, moral and intellectual fitness for social and civic life.

MINIMUM ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION Rs. 5.

'REASON' sent free to members.

Members are allowed the free use of the Indian Institute of Sociology Library, Opp. Opera House Tram Terminus, containing excellent books on Religious, Social, Scientific and Philosophical subjects. Library deposit Rs. 5/-

OFFICE BEARERS:

President: Dr. L. D'Avoine, M.D.

Vice Presidents: Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M.D., B.S. and Mr. R. B. Lotwalla.

Hon. Treasurer: Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law.

Members of the Executive Committee:—Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M.A. (BOM.) D.SC. (LON.) B.E.S., Dr. S. B. Gadgil, B.A., L.M.S., F.R.C.S. (ENG.) D. PH. (LON.), Messrs. J. M. Cooper, F.R.G.S., J. R. Labelle, J. N. Patuck, A. R. Desai, B.A., LL.B., Abraham Solomon.

Jt. Hon. Secretaries: Messrs. S. B. Rath and A. Husein.

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD, BOMBAY.

Printed by B. M. Shett at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay, Published by R. D. Karve, M.A., for the Rationalist Association of India, at 13, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.

REASON

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of the country."

Principal Contents:

RATIONALISM AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER
By R. D. KARVE.

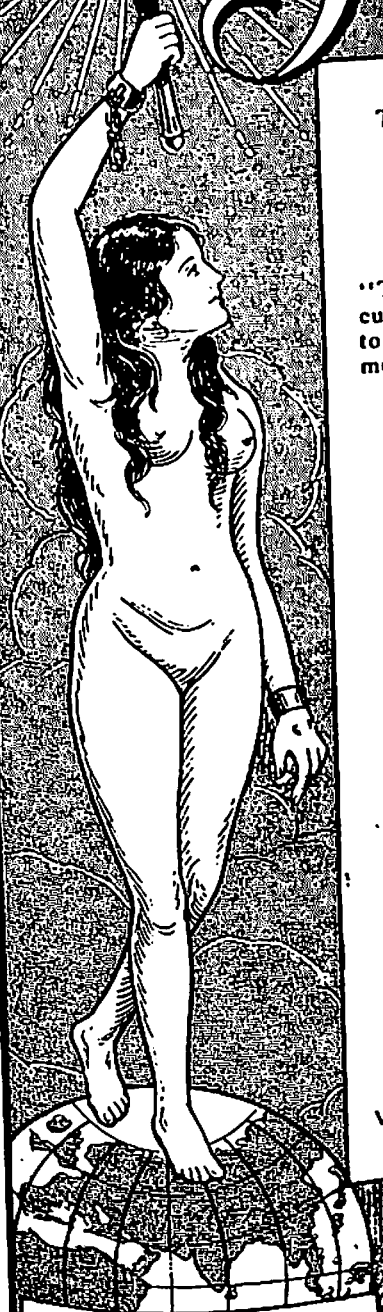
MISCONCEPTION ABOUT MIND
MARION PICKETT

WHY SLOW SPREAD OF RATIONALISM IN INDIA?
By A. R. DESAI.

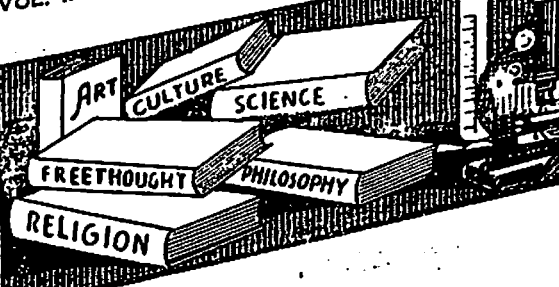
STREAMS OF REASON
By M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI.

NOTES & NEWS, REVIEWS, ETC.

VOL. IX MARCH 1941. No. 3.







Editor:
ABRAHAM SOLOMON

Price As. 2

Rationalist Association of India

5-12, Queen's Road, BOMBAY.

Sunday, 16th March

11th

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

AT THE

TAJ

PRINCES' CHAMBER.

Time 7-30 p. m.

Members are requested to attend without fail.

Rationalist Association of India

Sunday, 16th March

11th

ANNUAL DINNER

AT THE

TAJ

PRINCES' CHAMBER.

Principal Speaker:

Miss. SHAKUNTALA PARANJPYE

President:

Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE

Tickets Rs. 3 each. Time 8-30 p.m.

Dress Optional

Those wishing to attend should inform the Secretaries on or before 14th March.

* If you recognise Human Equality,

* If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,

* If you hate Superstition, Priest-craft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy,

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA.

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office-Bearers:

President:—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D. *Vice-Presidents:*—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. and Mr. R. B. Lotewalla. *Hony. Treasurer:*—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee:*—Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Dr. S. B. Gadgil, B.A., L.M.S., F.R.C.S. (Eng.) D. Ph. (Lon.), Mr. J. M. Cooper, F. R. G. S., Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. A. R. Desai, B.A.,LL.B., Mr. Abraham Solomon, *Jt. Hony. Secretaries:*—Mr. S. B. Rath, Mr. A. Husein.

For further particulars please write to:—

The Secretaries,

Rationalist Association of India,

5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,

BOMBAY 2.

If there is anything of value, it is liberty. Liberty is the air of the soul, the sunshine of life. Without it the world is a prison, and the Universe is an infinite dungeon.
—*Ingersoll.*

REASON

Vol. IX | MARCH 1941 | No. 3

The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

(Estd. 1931)

Editor:

Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

We invite contributions of not more than 2,000 words on topics of interest to rationalists. They should be type-written. If not published they will not be returned unless stamps are enclosed.

R. A. I. Membership Rs. 5/- Foreign 8s. annually which includes "Reason".

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 2/- & Foreign 3s. 6d. or $1.00 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

CONTENTS

Editorial Musings 49

Notes and News by A. Husein 51

Rationalism & the New World Order by R. D. Karve ... 53

Misconception about Mind by Marion Pickett ... 56

Why Slow Spread of Rationalism in India? by Akshayakumar R. Desai ... 58

Reviews 61

Streams of Reason by M. V. V. K. Rangachari... 64



Reason gains all men by compelling none.
—*Aaron Hill.*

ON the 16th of this month the Rationalist Association of India holds its Eleventh Annual Dinner and Reunion. One is inclined to pause a little and reflect on the circumstances in which we find ourselves. In spite of the difficult times the past year has been one of slow but steady progress. *Reason* continues to have a larger circulation and through it the message of rationalism reaches a wider area than formerly. Rationalist groups are springing up in different places and the R. A. I. must serve to coordinate their activities.

Rationalists in India must fully realize the task before them and attack with greater vigour the obstacle which impede the progress of rationalism in this country. Some of the causes for the slow progress of rationalism in this country have been dealt with by Mr. A. R. Desai elsewhere in this issue. There are other causes also and if rationalism is to make any headway they need the urgent attention of all those who are active workers in the cause o fenlightenment and progress.

The first and foremost thing to be done is to

increase the membership of the R. A. I. which is the only freethought organisation in this country and make it a powerful organisation to combat the forces of organised religion and ignorance.

There are many things that are likely to discourage a rationalist worker. One of them is that many who have discarded all belief in religion take no interest in the cause of rationalism. Having emancipated themselves they do nothing for the emancipation of others.

There are others who say that to oppose religion is to take it too seriously to give it an importance it does not deserve. They have outgrown religion so far that they are no longer interested in the subject from any point of view. These people are usually well off and are able to evade the disabilities that the middle and poorer class of rationalist has to face.

There are yet others who play for safety. As a friend of mine once said, "Though their intellect elevates them to the skies of freethought, their stomach keeps them down in the bog of ignorant superstition." One cannot blame them much because circumstances compel them to be this way. All the same, I think this should make them fight with greater vigour against that which demands this hypocrisy on their part, so that their example may help others to face the coercive activities of organised religion with greater courage.

At any rate it is quite clear that there are many freethinkers who are not associated with our work and also many who have not even heard of the R. A. I. or our journal *Reason*. The task of reaching these freethinkers lies with our members.

Freethought in this country is still in its infancy, and the task before us is a colossal one. Still we forge ahead, with our heads high, triumphant and unbeaten, convinced of the fact that only when man discards his primitive beliefs and learns to put greater confidence in his own ability to achieve greater happiness in this world, will he pass to higher and higher climes of advancement and progress.

The policeman who tackles armed burglars with no weapon but his staff, the fireman who forges his way through heat and smoke to save women and children, the lifeboat men who row through darkness and storm to rescue the shipwrecked, the unknown thousands whose lives are a daily sacrifice for beloved ones, the sufferers who hide their pain to spare relatives and friends, the martyrs of unpopular causes who face odium, obloquy, poverty, imprisonment, and sometimes death for their convictions—these display "the heroism of man," and though they talk very little about "faith" and "sanctification" and the "Eternal," attract no public attention like the heroes of battlefields, and have no statues in Trafalgar Square, they sweeten in silence and obscurity the life-blood of our race.

—*The Freethinker*, October 21, 1888.

Every Progressive Indian must read

THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM

BY

Dr. R. P. PARANJPYE, M.A., D.SC.

Price One Rupee. Post Free.

TO MEMBERS OF THE R. A. I.

Annas 8 only.

"REASON" GRAB-BAG.

Don't Miss this Splendid Opportunity.

Send Re. 1 and get selected old copies of *Reason* worth double, prior to December 1939, containing excellent articles of lasting interest.

Post Free.

Notes & News.

THERE is just time to remind members of the Eleventh Annual General Meeting and Dinner to be held at the Taj on the 16th inst. An announcement regarding the same appears on the second cover page of this issue. Those who wish to attend and have not yet informed the Secretaries should do so immediately stating the number of guests they wish to bring with them. We expect the attendance to be larger than the one we had last year.

x x x

MEMBERS will be pleased to know that Miss Shakuntala Paranjpye is the guest of honour and the principal speaker for the evening. Prof. H. V. Hampton and Prof. S. K. Muranjan have also kindly consented to speak.

x x x

WE are passing through trying times which promise to become more trying in the near future, and an enjoyable evening in the company of rationalists should not be missed. Our religious friends take pains to assure us that all rationalists are doomed to pass eternity in a certain place, so since we are all to be together, why not start getting used to it? We hasten to assure readers that the climatic conditions in the Princes' Chamber at the Taj will certainly be more pleasant than are supposed to exist in the place refered to by our worthy friends.

x x x

WE welcome the formation of the *Rationalist Club* at Santa Cruz (Suburb of Bombay) which held its first lecture on Sunday, 24th Feb. Prof. R. D. Karve spoke on "What is Rationalism?" to a large and interested audience. He expounded the subject in his usual able manner and emphasised the necessity of subjecting all problems of life to correct and logical reasoning. He effectively showed that the belief in God, soul and the life hereafter, had arisen due to incorrect reasoning and false assumptions. And that most of these beliefs when subjected to critical analysis and when seen in the light of present day knowledge, are absurd and ridiculous.

x x x

THE Rationalist Club also draws its members from places around Santa Cruz and consists of young people who are enthusiastic and keenly interested in the cause of rationalism and social advancement. We learn from its energetic secretaries that they intend to arrange lectures regularly and also conduct study-circles. We wish the energetic workers of the club every success and assure them our co-operation. Those wishing to get in touch should write to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Kantilal Raval, The Rationalist Club, Mithibai Balal Ashram, Gorebunder Road, Vile Parle.

x x x

IT is heartening to note that our efforts are receiving recognition from our older members. Mr. Amiruddin S. Tyebji, one of our founder members and formerly one of our vice-presidents, has sent a donation of Rs. 100/- to the R. A. I. Such appreciation goes a great way in encouraging us to pursue our efforts more vigorously for the cause of enlightenment and progress.

x x x

ADDRESSING the Missionary Students the Pope is reported to have told them that the cause of the present war is due to people no longer believing in God and he exhorted the priests to endeavour to restore that belief. Such a statement from a man, who is the head of an important Church, really makes one smile. To put it plainly, the Pope must be a simpleton to think like this and probably he thinks everybody is a simpleton like himself to make such an absurd statement.

One would like to ask whether there were no wars during the centuries that the belief in God was very strong in Europe and when the Popes

ruled supreme over the hearts of men. History shows that the worst wars on record took place during those times, that religion was the cause of the most destructive wars that ever disturbed the peace of the world.

People no longer believe in God as taught especially by the Catholic Church because education has made such a naive belief untenable. To ask his missionaries to endeavour to restore this belief is exactly like asking Nursery Maids to restore the belief in bogey man in grown up children.

x x x

A DOCTOR tells me of the religious customs of some Hindus which are really surprising if not shocking. It is the case of a boy aged 3 years who was recovering from a very serious illness. The child had become weak and emaciated and was constantly asking for food after his long illness. But his parents would not allow him any food except milk, because they had made a vow to take him to a temple in Southern India where his hair would be cut and a name given him. Not until these ceremonies and pilgrimage are performed, the child could be given any food, however hungry and weak he may be. For want of money the parents are not decided when he will be taken there.

Isn't it the height of religious stupidity? This is how religious bigotry drives people even to the point of killing their dear ones, and even their love for their children is neglected and ignored for the sake of religious humbug.

x x x

We gratefully acknowledge:—

Amirudin S. Tyebji Rs. 100/-; "Judex" Rs. 5/-; Clement Hurry Rs. 5/-; C. L. D'Avoine Rs. 5/-; Claude D'Avoine Rs. 5/-; S W. Willatts, Australia, Rs. 5/-; A. Rahim Beg Mirza, Peshawar, Rs. 5/-; I. D'Avoine Rs. 5/-; R. D. Karve Rs. 5/-; Col. K. G. Gharpure, Poona, Rs. 5/-; E. D'Avoine Rs. 5/-; Mrs. P. J. Brandon Brady Rs. 5/-; E. Benjamin Rs. 5/-; R. M. Rs. 5/-; H. R. Desai Re. 1/8.

A. HUSEIN.

Series of talks broadcast from the Bombay Station of the All India Radio on 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 30th & 31st Oct. 1939.

FOUR PASTORS AND AN UNBELIEVER

Represented by

His Grace Dr. Roberts
Catholic Archbishop of Bombay

His Holiness Khalifa Bashiruddin Mahomed

Dastur Kaikushru ahiar Kutar
Parsee High Priest

His Holiness Jagadguru Shri Shankaracharya Dr. Kurtkoti

AND

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D.,
President, Rationalist Association of India.

PRICE 4 As. FOREIGN 6d.

Available from

The Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

INDISPENSABLE TO ALL SERIOUS STUDENTS.

1 INDIAN FEUDAL STATES AND NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE... ... 0-4-0

2 PROBLEM OF AGRARIAN INDEBTEDNESS 0-2-0

3 GANDHI'S TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE X-RAYED. 0-2-0

4 EXIT GOD! 0-2-0

By A. R. DESAI.

Can be had from:
The Hindustan Newspapers Limited,
21, Dalal Street, Fort,
BOMBAY.

Rationalism And The New World Order

(Based on a lecture delivered at the Cosmo Circle, Bandra)

By R. D. Karve

(All rights reserved by the writer)

A FAVOURITE charge against rationalists is that they tend to be dogmatic. If that is so, it is the fault of individual rationalists, not of rationalism as such. Rationalism has no dogmas. Even atheism is not a dogma with it. In fact, many rationalists prefer to call themselves agnostics rather than atheists, though personally I think that this is due to a misapprehension of the correct atheistic attitude. When I call myself an atheist, I mean that belief in God is a dogma which I do not accept. It is obviouslv impossible for a rationalist to define God, in whose very existence he does not believe. It is for believers to give us their idea of God and to define him if possible. Nobody has yet proved the existence of God, nor even given an idea of God that is logically acceptable. There is no reason therefore for me to call myself an agnostic. Nobody can give me sufficient reason to make me admit the possibility that God may perhaps exist. That is why I am an atheist.

One argument frequently given in favour of the existence of God is that some kind of order is found in the world and that that order must be somebody's doing and in that case that somebody may be called God. This is one of the best arguments given, but it is not very sound. The order that is found in the world is there simply because it is inevitable. To take an instance, the mathematical property that a circle can be drawn through any three points in space is inevitably true and one cannot even imagine an omnipotent god finding three points which do not satisfy that property. It is as impossible as to invent a round square for instance. Why then give credit to God for an order which he could not have avoided even if he wanted to, on the supposition that there is an omnipotent God? All the order that is found in the world is equally inevitable and it is impossible even to imagine a chaos in which a combination of hydrogen and oxygen in a certain fixed proportion will sometimes give water and sometimes milk!

It may perhaps be said that the very insistence of rationalists on reason as the supreme guide to knowledge is in itself a dogma. This can hardly be maintained. Reason is what distinguishes man from other animals and what has given him supremacy in the world. Man is a reasoning animal and even those who do not theoretically accept its supremacy continue to use it in their daily life. Religion itself is derived from attempts at reasoning by primitive men. A child imagines its father to be all-powerful, since he can do a number of things beyond the power of the child and can also thrash the child for going against his wishes. The reverence for the father which is felt even after the child grows up is merely a continuation of this childish sentiment. If the father is so much greater than the son, how much greater must the father's father be! Going back in this way, one gets the idea of an omnipotent God, and Gandhi has recommended this method for getting a correct idea of god, who is even now called the heavenly Father. This is certainly reasoning, even if it is childish reasoning. Frightened by natural phenomena, primitive man imagined so many different deities corresponding to the powers of nature, the sun, the moon, the sea and so orn. Late on, some religions thought it better to concentrate power in one omnipotent being and call him the one and only God, which was not

a very brilliant idea, since the conflicts often seen in the world can be much better explained with a plurality of conflicting gods rather than with one omnipotent God, which forced certain religions to invent a Devil to explain the conflicts, though how the devil can combat omnipotence is a mystery. In any case it can be easily seen that the very idea of God is due to reasoning of sorts. In fact, man is an incorrigible reasoner, even in religious matters, which are usually supposed to be beyond the pale of reason. When a religious man believes that the simple act of uttering the name of God can secure him a place in Heaven, he argues that even if the name is uttered by accident, it should have the same effect, just as fire will burn whether you touch it by design or by accident. Our mythology abounds in stories of this kind. This is scientific reasoning, though based on absurd premises. How then can anybody call reason a dogma?

It is obvious from the above that reasoning may sometimes go wrong, and some people naturally object to its being considered a proper guide. It is a good objection, but the answer is that men is learning to reason better and better, and that in any case we have nothing better than reason to go by. Some people put forward the claims of intuition as against reason and the most modern advocate of intuition was the great French philosopher who died very recently, Henri Bergson. He maintained that reasoning about a thing is like going round it, which gives only superficial knowledge, while intuition enters into the very heart of it and so to say identifies itself with it. A little consideration will show, however, that intuition is likely to mislead us much more often than reason. One's knowledge about oneself, for instance, is obtained entirely from the inside, by intuition, and should therefore be perfectly reliable according to Bergson. It depends on intuition alone at least so far as mental states are concerned. Is Bergson's opinion confirmed by experience? It is not. On the contrary, everybody know that a man's opinion about himself is often worth nothing. A man is often incapable of seeing defects in himself which are patent to others, not only to his enemies, but even to his best friends. So also the opinion we form about a stranger when we meet him for the first time is based on intuition. We take a dislike to some people and a liking to others at first sight. These judgments are based on intuition, and they are certainly not always justified on a better acquaintance. Love, for instance, is proverbially blind, and yet people fall in love at first sight. The lover often feels that he knows the innermost feelings and thoughts of the loved one, but it is very often found that this intuitive feeling is not justified, as a disillusioned lover will perhaps be the first to admit. Intuition is, therefore, a much less reliable guide than reason.

Of course, intuition has its uses and it cannot be denied that we do often get correct knowledge by its means. But it has to be verified by experience before we can take it as correct, Even scientific discoveries are often made by a scientist making an intuitive guess at a scientific truth, but he will not announce it to the world as scientific truth unless he has first verified it by observation and experiment and logical reasoning based thereon.

People often distrust logic because it may lead to wrong results. Such people do not really understand logic. It is not an arbitrary set of rules imposed on the ordinary man by a set of philosophers. The rules of logic were in actual use by ordinary people before they were systematised and given the name of logic. They were such as met with universal acceptance even before they were formulated. As regards mistakes in reasoning, we shall have to consider deductive logic and inductive logic separately. Rules of the former are so easy to apply that mistakes can only arise from false premises being taken for granted or utter stupidity on the part of the reasoner. So it is usually inductive logic that is objected to, on

the ground that the generalisations with which it is concerned are not justified. For instance, we say that the sun will rise to-morrow morning at a particular hour on the strength of a generalisation based on thousands of years of observation, but of course, strictly speaking, we do not know for certain that it will rise. But the experience so often repeated give us such a great probability that we consider it a practical certainty. The greater the number of observations on which such a generalisation is based, the greater is the probability of its being true. It is not, however, an absolute certainty, and to that extent one may be justified in doubting it. Mahomedans, for instance, do not believe in such generalisations, and for the purposes of their calendar, the lunar month does not begin for them unless somebody actually sees the moon rise on the first day. Merely astronomical calculations do not satisfy them, but Hindus, using the lunar month, do believe in calculations, and their month begins at the calculated time even if the sky is cloudy and the moon is not seen. The Mahomedans are jistified in taking that point of view, but I do not admire them for it.

Even in deductive logic, the premises may be based on induction, i. e. on a generalisation from experience. Consider the syllogism: "Man is mortal; Mr. X is a man; therefore Mr. X is mortal". Here the first proposition is a generalisation from the fact that there is no instance of anybody having lived on up to the present day from the beginnings of mankind. This gives us a practical certainty that the first statement is true, and if the second is true, the conclusion follows. Even those who may raise theoretical doubts as to the validity of the first statement will in practice assume that they have to die some time and make their wills accordingly.

Another objection is frequently raised to logical reasoning, viz, that scientific theories, which are based on logical reasoning, are so often changing. Now this objection is due to ignorance of what constitutes a scientific theory. When a scientist wants to bring certain observed facts under a general rule, he makes an intuitive guess as to what that rule should be and then verifies that all the observed facts do come under it. Of course, there may be several ways of doing this, and so long as these several ways are all equally able to explain the facts, there is no choice between them, or perhaps the simplest of these theories is chosen as correct for the time being. If, however, another observed fact comes to light which cannot be explained by any of the existing theories, a new one has to be formed, or if only one or only some of the existing theories can explain it, the rest are automatically rejected and the choice is restricted to those that are capable of explaining the new fact as well as the old ones. And so on. It is impossible to say that the old theory was wrong and the new one right. One can only say that the new theory must be preferred to the old one because it can explain all the facts up to date, while the old one did not. There is no knowing, however, when a further fact may be discovered which is not adequately explained even by the new theory and so another theory may have to be formulated. These successive theories are merely successive approaches to the truth and one can never say that the exact truth has now been reached. A real scientist will, therefore, never be sorry if one of his theories has to be replaced by a new one, as this only means further progress.

This is the difference between religion and science. The former pretends that it has access to eternal truths which can never change, and so long as these refer to entirely imaginary things like god, soul, heaven, hell and so on, it is impossible either to prove or disprove them. But when a religion meddles with the material world, it is liable to be given the lie by science. The chapter on Genesis in the Bible, for instance, will hardly be accepted now by anybody who is in touch with modern scientific knowledge.

(To be concluded).

Misconception about Mind

Mrs. Marion Pickett

IN the February issue of a journal called "Reason" which was kindly sent to me because in it a Dr. D'Avoine attacks my remarks made in my review of Prof. Hart's book "Mind in Transition."

This review was published by the New Book Company in their monthly issue of the New Book Digest of December, 1940.

The doctor seemed surprised that, because I do not agree with part of this book, I should recommend it do others. What an extraordinary mind the doctor must have! Surely nothing could be more obstructional to a deeper understanding of man than to refuse to read a book because it differed from our own opinions. Could anything be more unreasonable?

It is considered a compliment when one's opponent attacks with bitterness, or ridicule. Dr. D'Avoine uses both, but especially the latter.

I have yet to be convinced that even if the theory of man's descent from the lowest animals is correct, that that does away with the possibility of their being a God.

Nor can I be convinced that because man is made of the same materials and functions in a similar fashion as the ape, that it was necessary for man to be born of an ape.

The fastest plane of today is made of similar material to the first plane which took to the air, and functions in a similar manner, but it would be ludicrous to imagine these materials developed of themselves.

Man is a Creator, but not yet has he reached to the stage where he can create life. Animal is no creator, he is a builder, but not a creator.

Man creates out of the crudest of things, but he cannot create the materials he uses, until he can, he is unable to prove that man came from the lowest of animals, that there is no God or Gods, or that he has conquered the forces of Nature which he can neither alter or destroy.

The whole of Nature is evidence that there is some being with a far greater mind than man's, and whose mathematical calculations are so perfect in the world of planets, stars, and other bodies in the Universe, that so far this tiny earth of ours steers its course through millions of years without clashing.

When we appreciate the complexities and the depths of unsuspected forces we grow more cautious about asserting anything.

The whole evolution which has taken place in our machinery, etc., since we discovered the power of steam, the laws of gravitation, and Electricity did not take place *in* those things, but in man's *mind*. I believe this was also possible in the Creator's mind hence my reference to Genesis. How many eons it took for this creation to reach the perfected creature 'man', I do not pretend to know, nor at which stage was man conscious of his soul.

In the heart of Australia there are still the altars hewn out of rock at which primitive man worshipped, also evidence that he was sensitive to his surroundings by the drawings and paintings which remain in places where primitive man is known no more.

Can any scientist in mathematical calculations find evidence of any animal being even conscious of his surroundings, except as it applies to his bodily comfort? Has he ever found evidence of any animal building altars to unknown gods? or any animal seeking food for his *mind* as well as his body as man does, even the most primitive?

I do not pretend to be able to answer why this is so, but I appreciate the difference between

man, and beast, and nowhere in the world I have travelled even in the most primitive of places where God's Nature is supreme, and which man's hand has not touched, have I ever found evidence that any living animal creates—but builds for body comforts and needs only—and that he 'destroys to live' while everywhere is evidence that man 'creates to live,' wherever he goes.

A living religious sense compels conviction and enters into man's consciousness. It is not necessary to express it in long prayers, emotional services, or gaudy vestments. It is alive in every tree, flower and mountain. Unfortunately, many crimes have been committed in the name of religion, and it is still used as a cloak to hide other things, (such as Hitler's declaration in his belief in God which Dr. D'Avoine evidently believes.....) but much is called religion which is merely a satisfaction for physical emotions.

That is no proof that there is no God or Gods.

If the New World has nothing better to offer than the old ideas of God and Man, than the idea that man sins because he came from the animals, then the New World is doomed. If man is to build a wew World he must first develop a New Mind, untrammelled by obsolete ideas, and he must find new truths to curb the tendencies of cocksure men.

Everyone of the doctor's assumptions of what I visualise, of my nonsense, facetiousness and being in the school room, I leave alone; it is not worth my time or space to refute what is so palpably a misconception of my mind.

Such an attack proves rather that he is afraid of anyone who may have 'reason' for their ideas, and therefore is not quite sure of his own.

One can find the most delightful minds in the simplest of men; I have never thought of 'brain'—which can be educated—as being the same as 'mind'; the two are quite different things; one is decidedly physical, the other still a mystery.

Material discoveries, chemical discoveries, etc., have been fast falling over themselves; each generation finds something which contradicts the mathematical calculations of their fathers. In the middle ages men were imprisoned for saying the world was 'round' and not 'flat' that the world revolved round the sun, and not the sun round the world! Some scientists freely acknowledge that the mind cannot be measured, weighed, or calculated, but most of them are atheists and these refuse to believe there is anything in man which cannot be proved by mathematical calculations.....

I think it is because these latter are in the majority that the world is as it is today, and until we take the trouble to seek the truth about man's existence without prejudice each so-called civilisation will pass as others have passed.

It never enters my head to visualise God, any more than to visualise space which cannot be measured because we are always discovering its boundlessness.

If the doctor finds amusements in what he thinks is my mind, well, he is welcome, it does not harm me, it merely reflects his own mind certainly, not mine.

Even if I believed all he states I do, it is exceedingly bad form to ridicule anyone's belief however crude and apparently stupid.

Dr. D'Avoine's Remarks on Mrs. Marion Pickett's Reply.

Mrs. Marion Pickett's personal ideas and belief about Mind, the descent of Man and God, however fantastic, are no concern of mine and I consider that it would be a waste of time and absolutely unprofitable to refute them. It is clear that she is not conversant with the theory of Evolution and what competent authorities say on the descent of Man. Such being the case, it is not at all surprising that she has also such ideas about Mind. As regards her ideas of God as the Creator of everything that exists, such a book as "The Existence of God" by

(Continued on page 60)

A little less spirituality, and the Indians would now be free—free from foreign domination and from the tyranny of their own prejudices and traditions.

—*Aldous Huxley.*

Why Slow Spread of Rationalism in India?

By: Akshayakumar R. Desai

ONE of the astounding facts about modern Indian Society is the extremely slow rate at which rationalist ideas and scientific materialist culture are spreading even among the educated strata of the people. In spite of the fact that Rationalism, both as a philosophy and a movement, came into existence a century and a half back in Europe, India, despite its organic, political and economic contact with European countries, continues to remain apparently an invulnerable fortress of irrational conceptions and ways of life. Not only the masses who can be excused for persisting in superstitious habits of thought and action due to their poverty, illiteracy and ignorance but even a great proportion of the intelligentsia who have been educated and have therefore access to rationalist culture, are in the grip of unscientific antiquated mode of thought and life.

The slow spread of Rationalism in our country in spite of the strenuous efforts of various rationalist groups including the Rationalist Association of India is due to a variety of historical and contemporary social causes. We shall try to locate these causes.

First, India is at present under foreign domination. The Indian people feel a natural and healthy resentment against this domination. They feel a patriotic hostility to the foreign rule. Now, this hostility, instead of being restricted to the political domination of India by a foreign nation, is *wrongly* extended to whatever pertains to the foreigner. An antagonistic attitude is taken not only towards the foreign rule but also towards the culture of the foreigners. Now Rationalist culture originated in Europe and was created by the advanced intellectuals of England, France and other countries. Indian Nationalism which has hitherto been dominated by leaders such as Tilak, Gandhi, etc., has not only condemned British Domination of India but also British Rationalist Culture. An integral part of Indian Nationalism has been till now its hatred of the Rationalist culture of the West.

This hostility to the foreign rule and the resultant uncritical aversion to the scientific culture of the West, felt by the Indian Nationalist nourished on the preachings of Tilak, Gandhi and others, makes him *idealise* the reactionary social institutions and backward culture of ancient India. He dreams of a renaissance, a modified revival of ancient Indian Culture, its 20th century edition. This recoil from the rationalist culture of the West because it is the culture of one who is holding India in bondage, is one of the main reasons why rationalism does not rapidly spread among the Indian people, why even the educated classes remain impervious to its appeal, why even the Indian Nationalist, instead of liquidating the reactionary ideological inheritance in the form of a mass of mind-deadening superstitions and religious mysticism, actually revels in day dreams of resurrecting the culture of India's hoary past.

There is a second reason for the tardy growth of the rationalist movement. The enlightened section of the people which has already freed itself from religious obscurantism and assimilated modern rationalist and materialist culture, fail to appreciate the necessity of propagating this culture among the people. A good proportion of these feel that the immediate, decisive and basic task before the Indian People to-day is to concentrate on the struggle for national freedom. They feel that the cultural

development will follow political emancipation. The healthy rebellious and iconoclastic energies of these individuals are therefore exclusively absorbed in the political movement.

Though it is indisputable that a rationalist culture on a nation-wide scale can be built up only after the Indian people have won political power which they can further use to legislate out of existence numerous, obsolete, tyrannical social institutions existing to-day and to organize cultural campaigns (using school, radio, stage, screen etc.) against all superstitious conceptions among the people, it should also be recognized that wide rationalist propaganda and educational work have to be done, even before that, to make the struggle for political freedom successful.

One of the fundamental (if not the fundamental) reasons why the nationalist movement to-day is unable to achieve national freedom is that this movement of millions is dominated by the Gandhian Ideology which is one of the most atrociously irrational ideologies that ever emerged. Unless a political movement is guided by a rational concept of its objective and the methods to reach that objective, it can only dissipate the energies of the participants. Unless a rational exposure of Gandhi's irrational programme such as unhistorical return to the Charkha, religionising of politics, Satyagraha and other planks, is carried on, how can the struggle for independence thrive and be successful?

Only those who have liberated themselves from reactionary ideas and have a scientific conception of life, society, social and political problems can successfully lead movements of popular freedom. They alone can guide the nation to higher and higher peaks of social and cultural progress.

Rationalism rose in the 18th century in Europe. In France, Voltaire, Diderot, Holbach Helvetious and others were the heroic pioneers of Rationalist thought. They thereby also became the precursors, ideological creators, of the titanic rational social phenomenon known as the French Revolution which blasted away all reactionary social and political institutions and freed the mind of the French people from the Catholic Christian superstition. Rationalism was supported in France and also in England and European countries by the socially and economically powerful class of society viz. the rising bourgeoisie (the class of enterprising merchants and manufacturers). This class found in rationalism a strong weapon to fight the Christian Church which enslaved the human mind in the prison of irrational social conceptions, like the Divine Right of Kings, the eternal validity of the decadent feudal system, the sacrosanct character of the privileges of the degenerate feudal nobles and which above all tried to strangulate the enterprising and inquiring impulses of man to explore the world and reach a scientific understanding of that world. The bourgeoisie needed for the expansion of their trade and manufacture, the development of science (use for navigation etc.), increase of the scientific knowledge of the world, the liberation of the people from irrational taboos which feudal Religion imposed on them. They adopted Rationalism as their powerful ideological artillery to storm the heights of superstition which the Church spread among the people.

In India, however, the bourgeoisie (except a microscopic part) while using the modern industrial technique which grew only out of the advance of science and rationalist culture, are opposed to Rationalism. Instead of warring on superstition, they ally with it and finance its propagation. They do not crusade against irrational social institutions like the caste system but strive to conserve it or at best rationalize it as if an irrationality can ever be rationalized. They subsidise religious institutions and groups which poison the people with misconceptions of the world and thereby stultify their mind.

In Europe the bourgeoisie supported the

Rationalist Movement rendering it financial and social aid. The rationalist movement was not handicapped as to the material means. In India, the wealthy classes themselves remain in the grip of religious superstition and are avowedly hostile to the Rationalist movement. This financial handicap is one of the reasons why the heroic band of rationalists in India are unable to extend their propaganda work.

Another striking feature of Indian society is that the healthy indignation against irrational institutions or practices is not highly developed even among the educated classes. Their cowardly adaptation and capitulation before reactionary customs, taboos and practices are incredible. The pressure of forces of social reaction has stifled their rational wrath against institutions which enslave man, cripple his mind and degrade him to the status of a robot.

There are isolated outbreaks against a social oppression or sporadic rebellion against a social taboo (stray cases of widow remarriage, or revolt against corrupt priesthood) but as a whole, the educated classes, unlike the intellectuals in China, or other backward countries, do not feel a vital anger against the whole complex of superstitious practices which form Indian life, they do not feel a healthy social horror at all anti-social things. They thereby only abdicate their glorious historical role of being the intellectual advance guard and leaders of the people organising them for an irreconcileable struggle against the effete social structure and its reactionary ideology.

While the Rationalist Movement progresses at a very slow tempo due to the above mentioned reasons, we should not underestimate one of the strongest obstacles to its advance viz. reactionary Gandhism. Gandhi is frankly opposed to Rationalism, Materialism, and all that comprises modern scientific culture. His assiduous propaganda for the last twenty years, through the Indian National Congress and with the aid of the unlimited financial aid of wealthy people, against modern Rationalism and in favour of Ram Rajya, the myth of the Inner Voice of God, conserving of caste-system, spiritualizing i. e. irrationalizing of politics, unhistorical return to the technique and economy of charkha, efficacy of prayer etc., has worked havoc on the mind of the Indian people. He has prevented the people including a big section of the intelligentsia from orienting towards Rationalist and Materialist ideology which he openly brands as un-Indian and un-spiritual. He frankly declares that he aims at spiritualizing of politics, injecting it with religion i.e. with irrationality.

Gandhism has worked as a dangerous ideological force paralysing the creative mental energy even of the intellectuals. The Rationalist Movement in India finds in Gandhism a formidable obstacle.

Dr. D'Avoine's Remarks

(*Continued from page* 57)

Joseph McCabe, might have made her realize how benighted she is on the subject.

I was only concerned with her assertion that scientists now-a-days refuse to accept a theory (namely, the evolution of the human mind from the lower animals) which, she says, cannot be supported by scientific fact. According to her, scientists no longer deny the existence of man's soul or spirit though they did that before, and now they call that supposed something in man a fourth entity which they hope may give a better understanding of man.

I called this pure nonsense and said that she was romancing in making such a statement about the alleged changes in the attitude of scientists on the question. I challenged her to name only three scientists, three biologists of repute, who could make such an absurd statement.

She has not named any and I dare say that she will be hard put to it to do so. It was really in this connection that I was interested in her review of Prof. Hart's book. I thought such a bold and untrue statement could not be allowed to go unchallenged and there my interest in Mrs. Marion Pickett's views ends.

REVIEWS

THE TRIAL CELESTIAL by Suryadutt J. Bhatt, Karnatak Publishing House, Chira Bazar, Bombay 2. 60pp. Price Re 1/-.

THIS little play in one act which can be read within an hour makes most interesting and thought-provoking reading. Mr. Bhatt subjects the whole ideological structure of orthodox nationalism and the belief in God to a devastating criticism. There is not a dull passage and the reader's interest is kept alive throughout. Mr. Bhatt depicts an old man in search of God and his final disillusionment. The style is forceful and uncompromising. The following description of the Celestial Hall of Justice will help to give readers an idea of the scathing criticism to which present day values are subjected. Scene II, page 23:—

"The Hall is evidently a hall of justice where the celestial law is administered, the sources of that law are found in divine love, freedom and laughter. The law is unwritten because the sources are pure and divine. No figure of the Goddess of Justice with scales in her hands is seen in the hall evidently because the scales have administered injustice merely according to the petrified law."

"The procedural law is exceptionally different from the one usual in civilized states on the Earth. In fact, there is no trial; no accuser and no accused; no plaintiff and no defendant. This is apparently because no two liars are set against each other to investigate the truth according to the earthly jurisprudence. In the jurisprudence of His Omnipotence investigation proceeds by disabusing the mind of the prisoner from ignorance and fear by inviting him to visualise the celestial truth. In fact, it is a process of enlightenment. In the end no sentence or degree is passed for they are superfluities."

"In the Hall there is no pomp and no splendour; for it is all idolatry. There is no law-books; for they are replete with crudities and vulgarities. There are no bailiffs and no guards; for the prisoner is free. And even there are no Masters of the Rolls; for His Omnipotence can see the dynamic reality."

"The law of the Almighty being pure and divine it was found that politicians stood charged with arson and rape for their speeches; the prophets with blasphemy, the kings with homicide, and the rich with brigandage. But as the celestial law forbade punishment, which could never be a means of refinement, the convicts were never punished."

Mr. Bhatt has shown Voltaire as sitting next to the throne of the Almighty. This is an interesting coincidence, as readers of the *Rationalist Annual* will remark, which contains Mr. Adams Gowans White excellent article on "Voltaire in Heaven." The fact that two writers in different parts of the world, and not knowing each other, say that Voltaire is in Heaven should be "evidence" enough for religionists to believe that the great infidel is really in heaven.

In fairness to Mr. Suryadutt J. Bhatt we may state that the play was written in February 1940 six months before the publication of the *Rationalist Annual for1941*.

We think Mr. Bhatt could have selected some character from Hindu Mythology or Indian Philosophy instead of Voltaire. The publication is very well got up and printed and we hope it will have a wide sale.

NEW LIFE. Monthly magazine published by the Lucknow University Writers' Association, Old Baradari, University of Lucknow. Annual subscription Rs. 6/-. Six months Rs. 3/4-.

New Life is a student magazine and as the Managing Editor, Mr. S. S. Suri, informs us, has the same ideals as "Reason." It contains interesting and informative articles on various

subjects. The February issue contains an article by Miss Sarawat Rahman on the "Unnecessity of Theism" in which she deals with the various arguments brought forward in support of theism and against atheism. Other articles are "New Life for Mankind" by S. Perti, "Modern Russian Literature" by S. S. Suri.

Its Editorial Board consists of Shakuntala Jaspal, *Chairwoman*; Ragindar, Mehta, B. P. Misra, H. Q. Rizvi, *Editors*. Mustasad Ahmad, *Study Circle Secretary*. S. S. Suri, *Secretary to the Editorial Board*.

We hope *New Life* has the wide circulation it deserves among students.

TEACHING. A Quarterly Technical Journal for Teachers. Oxford University Press, Post Box 31, Bombay. Annual subscription Rs 2/8/-. Single Copy 9 annas.

The journal is edited by Prof. H. V. Hampton and is of a high literary standard. The December 1940 issue contains an interesting article on "The Training of the Mind" by E. C. Marchant in which he discusses the ways in which to avoid producing "that irritatingly superficial type of person, bedecked with a sparkling veneer of new and undigested opinions," but to produce "a cultured gentleman with a body of assimilated knowledge and considered opinion of his own, solidly based on thought and sifted truth."

He writes: "Respect for absolute accuracy clear perception of the difference between fact and opinion is the (second) quality which we would encourage. It is supremely important in these days that those who read and are looked up to for information shall never fail immediately to distinguish that which is fact from that which is mere rumour or opinion. A boy with a trained respect for truth will refuse categorically to accept any of the headlines in the daily press until he is himself convinced by the evidence on which they are based."

He further writes, "Education merely begins at school. It finishes only with death. All that the schoolmaster can hope to do is to introduce the student to the manifold branches of knowledge, grip his interest in them and start him on the path of learning. In most cases his task is then finished. But the task of the student is by no means over. Throughout his whole life he will continue to learn. Some branches of knowledge will interest him more than others and to those he will devote much time and happy labour: but if his teachers' labours have not been in vain he will never divorce himself entirely from the pursuit of those studies which make up the whole pattern of human knowledge and experience."

But at the end of his article Mr. Marchant takes an excursion into a sphere in which we think his opinion is not "solidly based on thought and sifted truth."

"We turn finally", he writes, "to those mystical lands beyond the hills." "It is they which are really the ends for which we live: it is in order to pursue them that we seek material comfort, and their acquisition is in itself its own fullest reward." "There are still worlds beyond the realms of pure reason. If we fail to stretch out and commune with these worlds we are left unsatisfied, we are in no harmony with the universe." However, Mr. Merchant himself warns us against being led by empty phrases and catchwords.

A RATIONALIST REVIEWS THE BIBLE and OUTLINES RATIONALISM. By Henry J. Hayward. Issued by The Rationalist Association and Sunday Freedom League, 315 Victoria Arcade, Auckland. (C. 1.), New Zealand. 16pp. 3d.

This is a pamphlet putting forth some of the contradictions and absurdities found in the bible and will prove very useful and handy for rationalist propaganda among Christians. It may be ordered through the Rationalist Association at 3 annas each or Rs. 2/- per dozen, post free.

THE MONTHLY RECORD. Organ of the South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W. C. 1. Edited by F. G. Gould. Annual subscription 3s.

This journal publishes summaries of the weekly lectures delivered at the Conway Hall, which make interesting reading. The December issue contains summaries of lectures on "I believe in Man" by John Katz, "Is the Dark Age Returning" by Joseph McCabe, etc. Readers will find it interesting and worth subscribing to.

THE I. C. S. and other all-India Services by J. B. Petit, 55pp. Price not mentioned.

A reproduction in pamphlet form of the series of articles which appeared in the *Sunday Chronicle* of 6th October 1940 and subsequent issues. A criticism of the Services and suggestions for their improvement.

THE AGE OF MECHANISED FORCE by General de Gaulle. In French and English. Alliance Francaise of Bombay, 134, Apollo St., Fort, Bombay.

A reproduction in pamphlet form of the article which appeared in the *National Review* of London.

An inspection into the causes of the fall of France and a plea for organisation and greater action in the prosecution of the war.

ALSO RECEIVED

THE CONTEMPT OF FREEDOM. The Russian Experiment and After, by Prof. M. Polanyi, Watts & Co., 4 & 6 Johnson's Court, Fleet St., London, E. C. 4. 116 pp. Price 5s. net.

A keen and well-documented exposure of the cultural and economic failure of collectivism.

REVIEW OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION, January 1940.

A quarterly journal and organ of the Academy of Philosophy and Religion, 3-A Lowther Road, Allahabad. Annual subscription Rs. 6/-

Intellectual Freedom

THOSE to whom intellectual freedom is personally important may be in a minority in the community, but among them are the men of most importance to the future. We have seen the importance of Copernicus, Galileo and Darwin in the history of mankind, and it is not to be supposed that the future will produce no more such men. If they are prevented from doing their work and having their due effect, the human race will stagnate, and a new Dark Age will succeed, as the earlier Dark Age succeeded the brilliant period of antiquity. New truth is often uncomfortable, especially to the holders of power; nevertheless amid the long record of cruelty and bigotry, it is the most important achievement of our intelligent but wayward species.

—BERTRAND RUSSELL in *Religion and Science.*

NEW LIFE

PUBLISHED BY THE LUCKNOW UNIVERSITY WRITERS' ASSOCIATION.

Presents:

The young-mens' point of view on social and cultural questions of the day.

New Progressive Literature.

The Lucknow University's contribution to culture.

Published Monthly

Single Copy As. 4.

Annual Subscription Rs. 3, post free.

Write to:

THE LUCKNOW UNIVERSITY WRITERS' ASSOCIATION

BARADARI TOWER, LUCKNOW UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW.

Streams of Reason

M. V. V. K. Rangachari.

FLOATING down the memory, the early R. P. A. Cheap Reprints churned the Indian mind when the new century began. The crowded assemblage of creeds and cults attested Grant Allen's "Evolution of the Idea of God." Here was the clue to the phases of Animism, Polytheism and other varieties of belief, ritual and practice. It is evident that mankind—Indian or other—is of two tribes, "Thinker or Believer." H. Spencer's *Education* did service in the open field. The assessment of "Humanity's gain from Unbelief" was by no means inadequate, nor did the "Martyrdom of Man" freeze the spirit of enquiry. Fresh air breathed into the dungeon of superstition when "the Religion of the Open Mind" was hailed.

To the privilge of standing up for Rationalism in the country was added the personal direction in thought and expression from C. T. Gorham, F. J. Gould, Vevian Phelips etc., most of whom alas are not with us now. But the "Pioneers of Johnson's Court" and "Commonsense Thoughts" etc., were sailing from Ealing, London, while "the Churches and Modern Thought," "Modern Knowledge and old Beliefs" etc., were rounding the Cape of Good Hope. Many were the tracts, pamphlets and books from rationalist pens that bear witness to the cause sustained during long decades. Above them stands out Frazer's "Golden Bough" braving all ages and canvassing diverse climes. To wade through its Homeopathic Magic, mysticism and cults was stupendous exercise even in the Watts' abridged edition. Crawley's "Mystic Rose" was another research-work into primitive marriage-practice and belief. The celebration of the new vine, the corn-cake feastings, fertilisation by burial, eating the gods, fecundity—these are chapters in antropological observance which do not get dim with age.

Thus prepared, the "History of Sacerdotal Celibacy" does not shock us with its marvels of degradation and crime. Later, in answer to the neo-mysticisms of Jeans and Eddington, the mathematician Levy tackles the "Universe of Science." Our socio-political status is restored in C. E. M. Joad's "Liberty To-day'. While this sumptuous fare enlarges our appetite for science and sociology, H. G. Well's "Short History of the World" maintained the sense of proportion so very necessary to the correct reading of the world and "Man's Place in Nature," shows us what it is all about. The tendency to bitterness towards opposing ideas is well checked by Morley's "On Compromise;" holding to the fundamental faith in man's capacity to gain in truth, beauty and goodness, the Thinker's Library helps with its unmistakeable light towards progress in what should otherwise remain a darkened world.

It is pretentious to select some titles. Some aim at special targets like legends, stories, Christian and other. Our Puranas and myths are no less queer. Some works expound obtuse metaphysics, others theology. There are contradictions and revisions even as the Vedas and the Upanishads are bewildering, and the song of the Gita is one sublime antithesis. We know these and much more in verse and prose. But primarily the rationalist contacts, the Literary Guide, and the renewed Annuals keep me fit in my journey through life. My exercises in REASON reflect, however feebly, if anything, my own sense of obligation to these, time and again.

Cocanada,
23-2-1941.

RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

RESERVE FUND

The Rationalist Association of India was established in 1930 for the spread of Rationalism which may be defined as "the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of Reason and aims at establishing a system of Philosophy and ethics, verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority."

In order to gain its objects the Association holds lectures and debates, issues pamphlets and publishes its official journal "REASON" which serves as a medium for the free, frank and fearless expression of views and opinions on religious, philosophical and scientific subjects.

It has since its establishment firmly stood for freedom of thought, speech, publication and rational action. In the now historic "Reason Case", Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, editor emeritus, was prosecuted for blasphemy. His acquittal vindicated the freedom of the press.

It serves as a rallying point and vanguard for all those who value intellectual freedom and honesty and have the social and cultural progress of this country at heart.

The R. A. I. is able to carry on its activities due to the generosity of a few of its members.

All the work of the Association including the journal "Reason" is done honorary and no member derives any sort of profit, salary or honorarium.

In order that the R. A. I. should become self-supporting in so far as not having to depend on extra donation in addition to the usual memberships, a RESERVE FUND has been started and it is required to collect about Rs. 15,000/-.

As its name implies the capital will normally be kept intact and only its income will be used.

The Fund when completed will not only stabilise the Association but also enable it to conduct many other necessary activities which have hitherto not been possible, thus strengthening the Freethought movement in this country.

The Rationalist Association of India is the only Freethought organisation in India and it is not necessary here to stress its importance and necessity for the social and cultural progress of this country.

We make an earnest and urgent appeal to all readers, friends and sympathisers to donate liberally to the Reserve Fund.

Donations should be sent to:—

The Hon. Treasurer,
THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

STANDARD WORKS BY FAMOUS FREETHINKERS.

Thinkers' Library.

Education: Intellectual, Moral, And Physical ... ...Herbert Spencer
The Riddle of the Universe ...Ernst Haeckel
Humanity's Gain From Unbelief, Charles Bradlaugh
On Liberty ... ...J. S. Mill
A Short History of the World ...H. G. Wells
(Revised edition to 1938)
The Origin of Species ... ...Charles Darwin
History of Modern Philosophy ...A. W. Benn
Anthropology (in 2 vols.; illus.), Sir E.B. Tylor, Kt.
Lectures and Essays ... ...T. H. Huxley
The Evolution of The Idea of God ...Grant Allen
The Churches & Modern Thought...Vivian Phelps
Penguin Island ... ...Anatole France
The Pathetic Fallacy ... ...Llewelyn Powys
The Martyrdom of Man... ...Winwood Reade
The Evidence for the Supernatural, ...Dr. Ivor Ll. Tuckett
On Compromise, John Viscount Morley, O.M., P.C.
The Existence of God ... ...Joseph McCabe
History of Anthropology (with Portraits) ...Dr. A. C. Haddon
The Mind in the Making ..James Harvey Robinson
The Social Record of Christianity, Joseph McCabe
Selected Works of Voltaire, Trans. by Joseph McCabe
History of Ancient Philosophy ...A. W. Benn
What is Man? ... ...Mark Twain
Man and His Universe ...J. Langdon-Davies
First Principles (Rs. 1-14-0) ...Herbert Spencer
Rights of Man ... ...Thomas Paine
(With Foreword by G. D. H. Cole)
Dictionary of Scientific Terms, ...C. M. Beadnell, C. B., F. Z. S.
The Universe of Science (Revised edition) ...Prof. H. Levy
The Age of Reason ... ... Thomas Paine
A Short History of Women.. John Longdon-Davies
Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings ...Henry Maudsley, M. D.
The World As I See It ... ... Albert Ein tein
Jocasta's Crime: An Anthropological Study. ...Lord Raglan

Price 15 as. Postage 3 as.
RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

IF YOU WANT

To read choicest books,
To discuss modern problems,
To get correct information about current topics,
To have contact with intellectuals, and
To understand the making and growth of our Society—

Then You Must Remain in Touch with

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY.

OBJECTS.

To promote the Sociological interest of the Indian people, to gather and disseminate all sorts of sociological information, to facilitate the study of sociology, to focus the views of experts on such questions, to form and maintain a Library, etc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Donors Rs. 500/- or more. Life Members Rs. 100/- or more. Ordinary Members Rs. 3/- per year payable half-yearly. R. L. T. Library Deposit Rs. 5/-.

All members have the free use of the Library which contains a good collection of books on Economics, and also the Library of the R. L. Trust Hostel which also contains an excellent collection of latest books on all branches of sociology, namely, Economics, Ethics, Eugenics, Psychology, Philosophy, Politics, History, Biography and Fiction on current social problems.

Members are also entitled to publications of the Institute at such concessions as may be determined by the Managing Committee from time to time, as also one Magazine can be supplied at the cost of the Institute and any other Magazine for which concessions could be secured by the Institute for its members by any special agreement with its Publishers.

Rules, Regulations, Entrance Form can be had from:—

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY,

R. L. TRUST, 'RANCHHOD BHUVAN,'
Near Opera House Tram Terminus,
BOMBAY 4.

15th January 1940.

G. S. POHEKAR, R. D. NADKARNI,
Hon. Secretaries.

Printed by B. M. Shett at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay. Published by Abraham Solomon for the Rationalist Association of India, at 13, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.

REASON

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Published Monthly

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of the country."

Principal Contents:

RATIONALISM AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER
By R. D. KARVE.

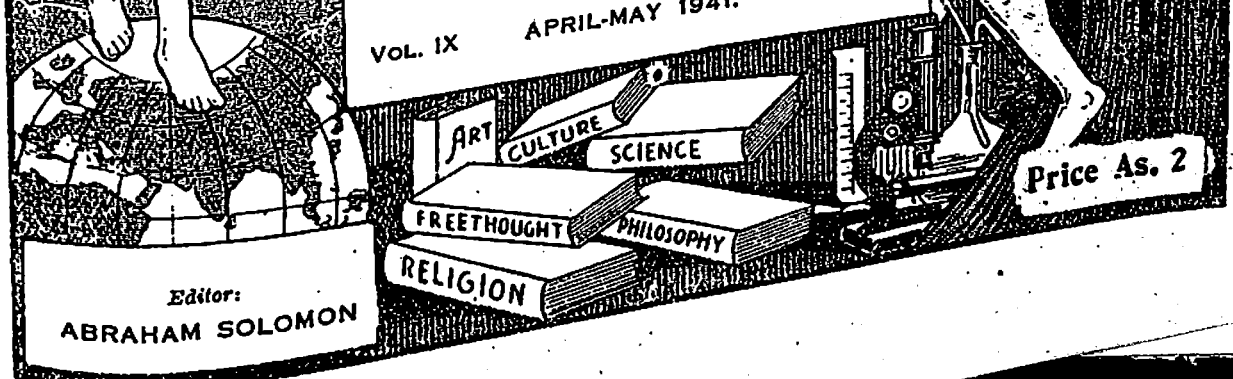
BOMBAY EASTER MESSAGES
By Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE.

PROBLEMS BEFORE RATIONALISTS IN INDIA
By A. R. DESAI.

REPORT OF THE 11TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & DINNER OF THE R. A. I.

NOTES & NEWS, REVIEWS, ETC.

VOL. IX APRIL-MAY 1941. No. 4-5.

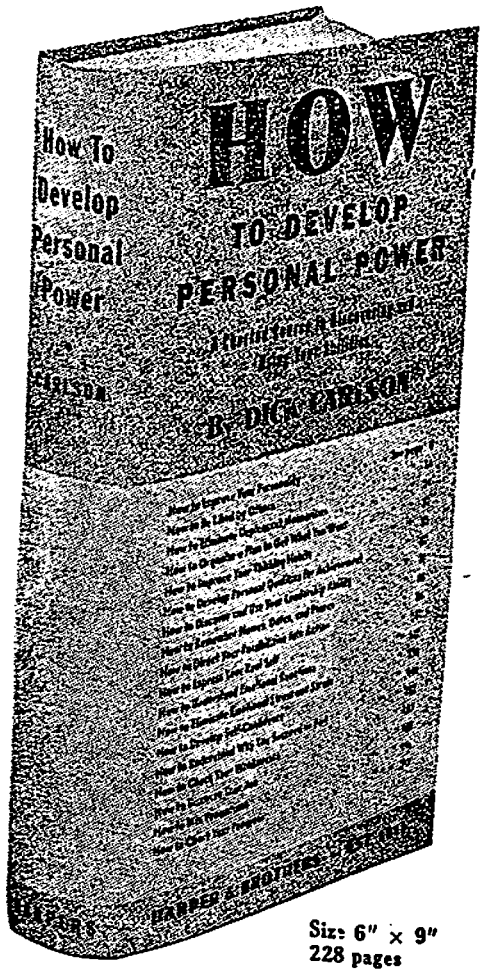


Price As. 2

Editor:
ABRAHAM SOLOMON

THIS BOOK CAN HELP YOU TO ACHIEVE

POWER — PERSONALITY — HAPPINESS — SUCCESS



Size: 6" × 9"
228 pages

Psychologists have long known that every human being has unlimited latent powers. By awakening and using them in daily affairs, any person can transform his life into joy and success.

INSPIRING AND EASY

This remarkable book is written by Dick Carlson, in readable and inspiring language. You will quickly learn with the aid of charts how to apply correctly the principles of Psychology to solve your every day problems and obtain results that had so far seemed beyond your reach.

WHY YOU MUST HAVE THIS BOOK

HOW TO DEVELOP PERSONAL POWER is Practical Psychology in a nutshell. It is a tried, tested and proved method of improving one's personal capabilities and will help men and women in all walks of life.

WORTH MANY TIMES IN PRICE

This book is offered at a low price, by special arrangements with its publishers in America, at Rs. 6/12, delivered right in your home. This is not an expense but a sound investment which will bring returns over and over again throughout your life. Order your copy NOW!

IT WILL TEACH YOU HOW TO:

Build Your Life Plan
Develop Forceful Personality
Develop Self-confidence
Train Your Memory
Banish Fear and Worry
Organize Your Daily Schedule
Express Your Real Self
Acquire Courage
Analyze Your Environment
Win Promotion
Attain Happiness and Success

Price Rs. 6/12/- Post Free.
CASH WITH ORDER.

Available through:

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

If there is anything of value, it is liberty. Liberty is the air of the soul, the sunshine of life. Without it the world is a prison, and the Universe is an infinite dungeon.
—*Ingersoll.*

REASON

Vol. IX | APRIL-MAY 1941 | No. 4-5

The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India

5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

(Estd. 1931)

Editor:

Abraham Solomon

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

All contributions, correspondence, press cuttings, Journals in exchange, enquiries regarding advertisement rates, etc., should be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, Editor, "REASON," 59, Karmani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11.

We invite contributions of not more than 2,000 words on topics of interest to rationalists. They should be type-written. If not published they will not be returned unless stamps are enclosed.

R. A. I. Membership Rs. 5/- Foreign 8s. annually which includes "Reason".

Subscription to "Reason" Rs. 2/- & Foreign 3s. 6d. or $1.00 annually.

All cheques, Money Orders or Postal Orders should be made payable to the Rationalist Association of India, 5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

CONTENTS

Editorial Musings 65

Notes and News by A. Husein 67

Rationalism & the New World Order by R. D. Karve ... 69

Bombay Easter Messages by Dr. C. L.D'Avoine... 71

Problems before Rationalists in India by Akshayakumar R. Desai ... 73

11th Annual General Meeting and Dinner of the Rationalist Association of India ... 77

Religion in Practice 81



THE spectre of fratricidal communalism is again haunting India. It has trailed a path of murder and arson from Dacca in the east, through Cawnpore and Ahmedabad, to Bombay in the west. Bitterness and misunderstanding between communities are hourly on the increase. Baronets, Zamindars and all manner of vested interests are rushing into the breach shouting that their respective religions are in danger and in the name of the holy religions they are sparing no effort to split the country into a thousand mutually hostile communal-stans. They play upon the religious emotions of the backward masses of this country to achieve a vain-glorious power in the mutilated fragments of India which they hope to set up. The fundamental economic unity of this country, the supreme questions of the hunger, poverty, and ignorance of the masses, the essential civil liberties of the people and social harmony are no concern of these honourable men who today loom large on the Indian political and social horizon. Bankruptcy of religion, especially of organised religion which thrives on superstitions and

ignorance and blind obedience of people cannot be revealed by more painful facts.

x x x

Human beings must retrace their steps from this suicidal ethics of murder and social bitterness. The government of this country cannot absolve itself of its responsibilities for what has happened and is threatening the future. Universal primary and secondary education of a secular and scientific character is one of the chief means of counteracting this vicious communalism. But the government has been callously negligent in providing this essential basis of social harmony and progress. It lays its favours on the most highly paid and unimaginable civil service in the world, on an army which besides swallowing up a far greater percentage than in many other countries also perpetuates all the caste and communal distinctions within the ranks. The percentage of the national budget that is available for education is deplorably low and the government must take its full blame for such a low national income and still lower percentage of expenditure on education.

x x x

The Bengal government under a premier who has described a full circle of evolution from Congress nationalism and agrarian radicalism to communalism has been responsible for introducing the communal virus even into primary and secondary education in Bengal. The changes that this government has recently brought about in the educational system of Bengal have been condemned as reactionary by an important committee appointed by the Calcutta University. This pollution and communal regimentation of young minds cannot be too strongly condemned. Without stopping at this the government proceeded further to introduce communalism into the Calcutta Municipal Corporation. Theocratic states and municipal bodies seem to be "the enlightened goal" of these defenders of religion. In such an atmosphere, artificially surcharged with religious passions, the rival communal groups started a most detestable exchange of abusive accusation over the census operations. The result has been an orgy of murder and arson by a group of inflamed and ignorant people in Dacca. You sow communalism and reap the whirlwind of destruction and mad fury.

An independent and impartial inquiry as demanded by the Ahmedabad Bar Association should be made as to the immediate causes of these riots and adequacy of such preventive and penal measures as adopted by the government. Those who have been behind the screen should be brought to book. Incompetence and bias among officials wherever present should be severely punished. Above all the government of this country should become subject to popular control. The communal and gutter press must be stopped and full freedom of discussion granted to those who seek communal harmony and peace. The progressive elements in the country should not sit back aghast at the sight of these unhealthy communal quarrels but should go forward to forge unity among the communities by bringing the large masses of poverty-stricken people of India into a common struggle for economic and social amelioration of this country.

x x x

The Hindu and Mohamedan social systems need radical overhauling. The urgency of this with regard to women's rights has been partially recognised by the appointment of a committee to study and make recommendations with regard to Hindu women. We hope that out of the investigations and deliberations of this committee a comprehensive scheme of progressive legislation would emerge. The piecemeal reforms carried out in recent years have proved inadequate. The enlightened public of this country must steadily educate the people about the necessity of progressive reforms and co-operation. In this connection we wholeheartedly support Dr. Deshmukh's Bill

which seeks to establish the right to divorce and judical separation.

x x x

The international situation is indeed perilous. Since the publication of the last issue of this journal, a couple of more nations have been bludgeoned into serfdom and the tide is swooping forward. It would seem that soon the war would spread to the Far East as well, engulfing within its insidious orbit millions more of innocent men and women. Amidst the fury and agony of such a gigantic struggle we should remember that victory of armies in the field would be sterile if the progressive forces of the world have not won the majority of the common men in all countries to a vision of an orderly, peaceful and just social system. We are afraid that the progress so far registered in this direction is very inadequate. The demands of democratic India remain unfulfilled and British Statesmen even in this hour of great peril have not realised the necessity of a free and progressive India.

x x x

The racial arrogance of the South African government is yet another indication that the human mind has progressed very little even in the face of such a catastrophe as the present war. The defence of the Versailles Treaty as a model for a new one, put up by the *Times of India* a few days back, makes dismal reading. Not only must Hitlerism be defeated but equally all allied systems of exploitation, and the people of the world must awaken themselves to a new sense of equality, peace and justice. Reason must prevail!

BETWEEN OURSELVES.

Readers will be pleased to know that Prof. R. D. Karve will again take up charge of the editorship of *Reason* from next month. We hope members will continue their efforts to increase the membership of the R. A. I. and help to spread the progressive influence of the rationalist outlook over a wider area. The R. A. I. now has some new keen members and we hope the Association will greatly increase its activities during this year.

Notes & News.

By A. HUSEIN

SEVERAL things have happened since the last issue of *Reason*. Members of the R. A. I. are already aware of some of them through the circular-letter which was sent before the Annual Meeting. We are very pleased to note that the appeal for Funds for the sustentation of *Reason* has received a fairly generous response.

x x x

WE regret we have been compelled to make this issue a combined one for April & May. This was due to unexpected difficulties and pressure of work. The preparation of this issue has also been greatly hampered due to the Curfew Order in the city. We crave the indulgence of our readers in this matter.

x x x

READERS will please note the change in the address of our Association which will henceforth be 41, Queen's Road, Bombay. In order that there should be no delay, we request that all correspondence regarding the R.A.I. as well as *Reason* should please be addressed to Mr. Abraham Solomon, 59, Kermani Building, Arthur Road, Bombay 11. But all payments, money-orders, cheques, etc. should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, at the office of the Association at 41, Queen's Road, Bombay.

x x x

THE Annual Meeting and Dinner held in March last received some publicity in the local papers and as a result the Association has gained some new members. The Dinner was well attended and a general need was felt and expressed all round for the expansion of the activities of the Association and the spread of the Rationalist movement in India. Freethinkers in this country must remember that the Rationalist movement here is still in its infancy and it will require much hard work and patience before it can become a dynamic

and powerful movement for the social and intellectual emancipation of the Indian people. And to make it so is the task of everyone who calls himself a Rationalist.

x x x

ON Sunday, 9th March, Professor R. D. Karve spoke in *Marathi* on "Rationalism" at the Guru Hall, Dadar, Bombay. The lecture was organised by the Sarvajanic Vidyalaya.

x x x

WE learn that some enthusiastic and progressive-minded students are arranging a play to be staged towards the end of May in Bandra. We have not yet received the details which will be announced later in local papers. We hope members and readers will try and attend and give them the encouragement they deserve.

x x x

WE congratulate Prof. Muranjan on his being awarded the D. Sc. Degree by the University of London for his book on *Modern Banking in India*. Dr. Muranjan is Professor of Banking at the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics, Bombay. After a brilliant career at the University of Bombay, passing the M.A. examination in the first class first, Mr. Muranjan joined the Bombay Educational Service as Professor of Economics and soon earned reputation as an educationist and an economist. Later, he took the B.Sc. Degree of the University of London and was allowed to proceed directly for the D.Sc. Degree as an exceptional case.

Dr. Muranjan has an excellent record of research work, and among the numerous books written by him may be mentioned *The Currency and Prices in India*, *The Study of Prices in India*. He is actively associated with the Indian Statistical Institute. Dr. Muranjan has been a member of the Executive Committee of the Rationalist Association of India for the last two years.

x x x

WE congratulate Miss Kapila Khandwala, formerly one of the Secretaries of the Association, on her election to the Bombay University Senate.

"REASON FUND"

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations to the *Reason Fund*.

N. M. Bathena, Bombay	...	Rs.	60
J. B. H. Wadia, Bombay	...	,,	10
D. R. D. Wadia, Bombay	...	,,	60
Rao Bahadur Dr. D. L. Sahasrabuddhe, Poona	...	,,	30
P. M. Wagle, Lahore	...	,,	10
C. L. D'Avoine, Bombay	...	,,	10
J. R. Labelle, Bombay	...	,,	5
D. D. Karve, Poona	...	,,	10
Joseph Sampson	...	,,	5

We gratefully acknowledge the following renewals of membership and new membership subscriptions:—

Homi Chinoy Rs. 10 -, Rufus Hurry Rs. 5 -, R. K. Jhaveri Rs. 5 -, S. R. Joglekar Rs. 5/-, D. D. Karve Rs. 5/-. J. F. Martin Rs. 5/-, Joseph I. Samson Rs. 5/-, Kabir Rs. 5/-, V. D. Satghare Rs. 5/-, M. M. Senapati Rs. 2/-, V. V. Sapre Rs. 2/-, S. F. Thaver Rs. 5/-, Salim Mahomed Rs. 5/-, V. R. Gupte Rs. 5/-, M. M. Razdan Rs. 5/-, R. K. Shinde Rs. 2/-, C. C. Basu Rs. 2/-, S. C. Sen Rs. 5/-, C. R. Kundi 3s. 6d. R. R. Shukla 3s 6d.

To *General Fund*

Dr. S. Hurry Rs. 10/-

To *Lecture Fund*

Dr. S. Hurry Rs. 2/-

D. R. D. Wadia,
Hon. Treasurer, R. A. I.

Every Progressive Indian must read
THE CRUX OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM
BY
Dr. R. P. PARANJPYE, M.A., D.SC.
Price One Rupee. Post Free.
TO MEMBERS OF THE R. A. I.
Annas 8 only.

Rationalism And The New World Order

(Based on a lecture delivered at the Cosmo Circle, Bandra)

By R. D. Karve

(All rights reserved by the writer)

(Continued from last issue)

Coming now to the second part of the subject, it is obvious that in any proposed reconstruction of the world on an equitable basis, no religion can even be considered, because in spite of the statements of some people that all religions have some common factors, it is obvious that these common factors are such that they are acceptable even to irreligious people, so that it is no use to introduce any religion in the new order. But as we have seen, even religious people are apt to reason in spite of themselves and rationalism can therefore be taken as the basis of reconstruction without necessarily offending even religious people, since complete freedom in religious matters will naturally be allowed to everybody by any rationalist as a matter of course.

As to how this reconstruction is to come into force, opinions may differ. Though communists maintain that a red revolution in the Russian style is absolutely necessary, I think it can be done in a much more reasonable way and that a gradual change will be all the more stable, and will avoid the enormous loss of life caused by the Russian experiment. If we are to accept humanitarian principles in the end, it seems hardly proper to start with a massacre and a dictatorship, which last may be very difficult to get rid of, considering the usual experience that people in power are hardly ever willing to give it up.

The charge is very often made against rationalists that they disregard sentiment. That is what they ought to do in so far as reasoning is concerned, because there is no doubt that sentiment interferes with reasoning. But even rationalists are perfectly well aware that human happiness has a great deal to do with sentiment and even sentiment can be considered dispassionately when it does not concern oneself individually.

Remembering that we are considering worldly happiness exclusively, the important point is to see what are the desiderata of the new order from this point of view. Happiness will be impossible unless the bare necessaries of life are unconditionally secured to every individual. Mr. H. G. Wells's small book on the "Rights of Man" is an excellent discussion of some of these, though not all. Without adequate food, enough clothing, which may not perhaps be at all necessary in tropical climates, adequate shelter, and medical attention whenever required, no man or woman can be really happy. Mr. Wells proposes that these should be secured to every individual in a community free of charge, that is at public expense, because if this is not done, it will be impossible to maintain health, and some people may fall ill and become a danger to the community. Though it may seem at first sight rather strange that persons who are too lazy to work for their living should be provided for by the community, a little consideration will show that this has perforce to be done as a defensive measure. It is arguable that this will remove all stimulus to work, but very few people will be satisfied with these bare necessaries and they will not get anything more without working for it. As a matter of fact, each community does provide for a certain number of beggars in one form or another and this is only a public recognition of that fact. It is certainly not normal for a man in good health to

be content to do nothing because his bare needs are provided for, but if there are any such people, they will have to be tolerated.

Further consideration of Mr. Wells's proposals show, however, that his idea of providing free food for everybody, sufficient in quantity and adequate in quality to maintain health, is a chimera for the present, as the world does not produce sufficient food for its population and there are very few countries considered independently that are self-supporting in this matter. The proposal may however be provisionally accepted as an ideal whenever the food supply is sufficient. We shall return to this point later on.

Leisure is another necessity which is very often overlooked. Nobody can be really happy if he has no leisure, and this can be secured to everbody with the help of machinery, if this is used, not for profit, but to satisfy the needs of the community. This will only be possible if the machinery is owned by the community instead of a few capitalists and is worked just enough and no more. The proper use of machinery is not to leave nine persons out of work because one man can do the work of ten with a machine, but to divide the work among all the ten, so that each will get both work and leisure.

The principle of equality has often been loudly proclaimed without any proper realisation of the extent to which it can possibly be applied. Russia tried to apply it at the beginning by making all salaries equal, but had soon to give up the attempt. It is obvious that there is no equality in nature, but all civilisation is an attempt in that direction. The jungle law, "Might is Right" is no longer accepted between individuals though it is still in force between nations. It must, however, be admitted that perfect equality is unattainable, since even if two individuals are artificially maintained in identical circumstances, they will not be on the same level physically and mentally, and these natural inequalities will gradually and inevitably increase. All that the community can do, therefore, in that direction is to provide equal opportunities for education and training to everybody and to consider everybody equal in the eyes of the law. It is also important to note that when everybody has his needs attended to, there will be much less room for discontent even if some people acquire more than their bare needs because they have greater ability. It is, really speaking, impossible to make everybody equally happy. Even the capacity for happiness is a matter of nerves and in this respect, everybody is not equally equipped. So equal happiness for everybody is an ideal not worth considering.

One important point however, remains to be considered. Sex plays an important part in the life of any one who is not sexless and the satisfaction of sex must, therefore, be included in the primary needs of any person. It may perhaps be said that a community can hardly provide sex satisfaction to everybody, but the community can do a great deal to make people happy in this respect by removing all the unnecessary hindrances to happiness which result from tradition. In fact, if it is recognised that individual liberty should be restricted as little as possible in the new order, these hindrances will automatically disappear. Present sex morals are based on the dependence of a woman on her father or husband, and if in the new order the two sexes are put exactly on the same level as they ought to be, these sex morals must necessarily go overboard. Sex relations between any two individuals will then be considered a private affair which concerns nobody else, unless they lead to progeny, which, of course, concerns the community. In that case, the community will have to provide for the proper rearing of the children if the parents are found to be unfit or unable to do it themselves. In any case, food will have to be provided by the community as we have decided, and even when the food production

(*Continued on page 76*)

Bombay Easter Messages

By C. L. D'Avoine

FOR some years now, it has become the practice of certain newspapers in England to entertain their readers with the silliest stuff imaginable on the occasion of such festivals as Christmas, Good Friday and Easter. Such occasions are thought to be fitting times to convey ethical and moral lessons believed to be of deep spiritual value to the people, and professional theologians in that country make use of both the pulpit and the press to issue their messages which are nothing more than pure make-belief.

Not to be behind the times, *The Times of India* here faithfully emulates those papers, and on such occasions never fails to serve its readers with those homilies which are replete with insincerity and cant.

Christmas, of course, is the season to remind Christians that the birth of Jesus heralded an era of peace on earth to men of good-will, and if only people were to remember that maxim and act accordingly, this earth would be a paradise.

Well this earth is certainly not a paradise yet, though 1900 years have elapsed; but Christians think they are very optimistic, and one of the virtues which they claim to be their own is Hope.

So they have hope that their faith will at last turn this planet into a paradise and every year they are reminded to strive to make it so. To live peacefully and to love one another are no doubt Christian precepts, but in practice Christians are the last people on earth to do so.

The War, of course, has opened wide the flood gates of emotion and sentimentalism, and the writers of such homilies in newspapers, who are generally priests, take full advantage of the times to bolster up their religion. People are told that the terrible calamity we are having now would have been impossible if people had not forsaken their religion and neglected God.

Though we, ourselves, they say, are God-fearing and decent people, it is clear that the enemy have abandoned all their Christian principles and have reverted to paganism and barbarism, and people are exhorted to go to Church, to pray and pray and as Jesus Christ sacrificed himself to save mankind, they also must make the greatest sacrifice possible in order to save Christian Civilization from such hordes.

To any intelligent person not overcome by religious feelings, it is clear that this is pure propaganda, not so much for the successful prosecution of the war, but to favour the Christian religion which is fast losing its hold on people in the West. Small wonder that many have denounced this false propaganda and said that Christian Civilization, whatever is meant by that, is not worth saving.

This false propaganda is, however, on the wing and everywhere the professional theologians, aided by religious bigots, the press and the radio, are doing their utmost to boost their religion and to push themselves forward.

Such being the case, one expected some such movement here on the occasion of Good Friday and Easter. This was duly provided by *The Times of India* which enlisted the services of three clerics of this city to give us a copious supply of the usual fatuous exhortations and maudlin sentimentalism which the death and resurrection of Jesus are supposed to symbolize.

In the issue of *The Times of India* of the 8th April last, the three clerics gave their messages. The first by the Right Rev. Richard Dyke Acland, the Anglican Bishop of Bombay, was a short one, but full of the usual insincerity.

The Bishop emphasised that Jesus lives.

He is, of course, sure of that. He came to life again, said the Bishop, to help him and to help you and me. You have only to believe in Jesus and have Jesus in you to feel peace and happiness within yourself and to be sure of eternal salvation hereafter. Jesus, said the Bishop, came to the world to save the world from such horrors as we are passing through now. Such a thing would have been impossible if the people believed in Christ and lived up to the precepts he taught.

One will note the insincerity of such a statement. Surely the Right Rev. R. Dyke Acland must surely know that Jesus is believed to have come to this world to atone for the Original Sin of Man. This, as every body knows, is the first and most important dogma of Christianity. Jesus had to sacrifice himself, so the Scriptures say, to appease his Father who would not be appeased by any other means for the first transgression of man. God wanted a blood sacrifice and nothing but the blood of his son could appease him! I dare say there are many cultured people now-a-days who see in this nothing but a repulsive barbarous idea, borrowed from primitive rites, and many such people who profess Christianity would rather attribute the alleged sacrifice of Jesus for more noble causes than the appeasement of an irate father for a mere trifle.

Jesus could not have had in mind the fact that people who did not follow him faithfully would turn the world 1900 years after him into a hell such as the one we are experiencing now. The world, moreover, has seen many such hells since Jesus died 1900 years ago. This alone might have restrained all these people who talk so glibly that Jesus Christ's mission was to save the World.

The truth is, if the Gospels can be relied upon, that he expected the end of the world soon. He actually predicted that it would come before the generation he was addressing would pass away. His slogan was: "The Kingdom of God is at hand, make haste make repentance." Nothing is clearer than this in the Gospels and no amount of quibbling can alter the meaning of what Jesus is reported to have said on the subject.

The message of His Grace, Dr. Roberts, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Bombay, was very short and simple. He did not indulge in any false sentimental appeal. One feels that he did not care to commit himself one way or other to any positive statement on the subject, He only alluded to the resurrection of Jesus upon which, he said, his religion is founded. He believed that it is a symbol of victory over death. Why victory over death since death is as natural an event as is birth, one is at a loss to understand.

Anyhow, the good Archbishop did not stress the fact, as so many of his colleagues are fond of doing, that Society would crumble to pieces if people ceased to believe in the resurrection of Jesus and in God.

If Dr. Roberts' message was short and sensible, such was not the case with that of the Rev. Father Gracias which was very long and verbose. It contained a lot of information about God, His likes and dislikes and so forth. One feels that the Rev. Father Gracias is actually more familiar with God than with his next door neighbour. Professor T. H. Huxley truly said that some men know more about God than scientists know about cockroaches.

Father Gracias must have considered the hospitality of *The Times of India* a good and unique opportunity to air his views. Unfortunately he talked a lot of nonsense.

He also drew attention to the fact that this war would have been impossible if people believed implicity in Jesus Christ. He said that the world is experiencing a crisis today which is unique in history, all due to the fact that most people have lost faith in Christianity. One would think that the world up to recently was a peaceful one and it is only now that we are passing through such awful times because the world has become more materialistic.

(Continued on page 84)

PROBLEMS BEFORE RATIONALISTS IN INDIA

By : AKSHAYAKUMAR R. DESAI

I

TO make Rationalist propaganda and educative work productive of tangible large scale results and to elevate the Rationalist Movement to the level of a living force in the social and intellectual life of the Indian people, it is vitally necessary for Rationalists in India to have a concrete conception of the specific problems and tasks confronting them in India. This requires a close study of the vast and complicated structure of modern Indian society, of the numerous religious and non-religious ideological currents which exercise a sway over the mind of the people and of the varied institutions, some ancient and hoary, others recently emerged, existing in the country. Rationalists must further determine the progressive or reactionary role of these ideologies and institutions and attack or endorse them in their propaganda. They must establish points of collision with *the specific type* of institutional reaction and irrationality existing in India and evolve forms and methods of propaganda suited to the *particular* psychology and existing intellectual level of the people. *Then alone*, can their propaganda be understood by the people, the particular group of superstitions holding their mind in bondage exploded, the particular category of institutions stifling their freedem exposed and the spread of Rationalism accelerated among them.

The spread of *general* principles of Rationalism and Materialist Philosophy though of vital value for building up of a scientific world outlook, can form *only a part* of the propaganda and educational activities of Rationalist Associations. This is no doubt indispensible to create properly-trained theoretical cadres for the Movement from among the intellectuals who form a minority of the population and who alone, due to the cultural advantage, can grasp these profound philosophical principles and concepts. Such training can, however, only be useful to prepare the Leadership of the Movement.

But to extend the influence of Rationalism among the broad sections of the people, the Rationalists must study concretely the specific social structure of the country, the peculiar type of ignorance and superstition rampant among the people, the particular type of reactionary institutions enslaving their mind and smothering their self-expression. Abstract criticism of Religion, superstition or priestcraft *in general* will remain incomprehensible to the people whose cultural level, under the present system, is tragically low. The Rationalists have to expose among the people not religion or superstition in general but those existing *in India*. They have, for instance, to explain the unscientific essence, the irrational conceptual basis of Hinduism, Mahomodenism and other religions and cults which exert almost a universal sway over the mind of the people crippling their creative energy, initiative and truth-detecting power. It is true, that these religions and cults are variants of the same basic error, an unscientific world outlook, but the mechanism of each of these variants has to be studied because, then alone, can appropriate forms of ideological attack on them be evolved and their weight among the people be successfully undermined.

Among various unscientific ideologies

having enormous influence among the Indian people, Gandhism stands in the forefront. It is a powerful though half-veiled religious force in India preventing the growth of a rational understanding of the world, life, society, political and economic problems and processes, social relations, among the people. Gandhi has mystified even such an obviously non-religious thing like politics by injecting it with religion. No religious leader in the past ever achieved such a feat. Gandhi declares that he shapes his political strategy according to the Inner Voice from God. He recommends prayer as an all-powerful weapon to accomplish things. When earthquakes erupt and devastate human life, he tells the victims that their suffering was only punishment meted out to them by God for sins committed in the past. Gandhi has been galvanizing the weakening religious impulse of the Indian people and infecting politics, economics and ethics with the confusing and paralysing power of the religious virus. One of the essential tasks of Indian Rationalism is to expose the ideology of Gandhism which retards the intellectual development of the Indian People

II

In the study of the institutions, customs, or cultures of a people, the rationalist approach must be synonymous with the historical approach. The rationalist must study the historical conditions under which a reactionary custom, institution or a culture evolved. Then alone, he can grasp the specific historical conditions under which these can vanish. If, for instance, Religion in all its mystical or metaphysical forms, emerged on the basis of man's helplessness and ignorance of the forces of nature and society and to-day persists due to the anarchy in social life and its active spread among the people by privileged social groups with a view to dull their mind, kill their discontent and thereby stabilize their privileged positions, the Rationalist at once realizes that the people can be *completely* freed from the chains of religion only if social anarchy is replaced by social organization and scientific knowledge brought to them. Again when the Rationalist knows that superstition prospers most where poverty is maximum, that proverty-stricken people are more inclined to lend ears to cock and bull stories of fictitious happiness in a mythical other world told to them by the priests, he is not simply content with refuting the idea of the afterworld as an intellectual error but also strives for the removal of the present economic system which breeds ever increasing poverty. He sees deeper and realizes that extreme poverty among the majority of the population provides a favourable economic condition for their psychological readiness to listen to the talk of priests who lavishly promise them riches in the next life while reconcile them to their poverty in this life.

So, the task of the Rationalists is not limited to the exposure of the mechanism of particular types of superstition and irrationality, pervading the institutions and culture of a people. They have also to strive for the removal of those social conditions which serve as a fertile breeding ground for irrational modes of thought and action. They should recognize superstition as the symptom of the disease pervading the social organism. As such, while treating this symptom, they should point out and attack the very social conditions which *predispose* people to develop irrational moods and attitudes and surrender their mind to the propaganda of mysticism and other reactionary ideas.

In the same way, the Rationalist should not merely indicate the irrational and oppressive character of a social institution. He should study, point out and stand for the abolition of those economic and historical conditions which brought into life and form the basis of such an institution. For example, let us consider the caste system of the Hindus. It is one of the most irrational and oppressive institutions in India. It throttles freedom of

action of the Hindus in most vital matters like marriage. It straightjackets their thoughts, emotions, impulses. The Rationalist will surely expose the tyranny and irrationality of the caste system. But if he is armed with a historical approach, he will not be satisfied only with this much. He will study the origin of the caste system and discover it in the economic division of prefeudal Indian society based on handicraft and agriculture. He will conclude from this that the destruction of this economic basis of the caste through progressive industrialization of India will work as a powerful disorganizer and solvent of this most rigid and undemocratic social form. He will, therefore, reinforce his campaign of exposure of caste with the demand for increased industrialization of India. He will attack all reactionary economic programmes aiming at perpetuating the economic backwardness on which some of the most reactionary institutions exist and thrive.

Industrialization integrates the nation as one economic unit, builds up national sentiment, undermines narrow, local or communal emotions, gathers people in national and class organizations and steadily breaks up caste and communal social forms resting on the economy of the pre-industrial period. It also brings in its wake scientific and materialist culture of which it is the result.

To take another illustration. Nazi Germany is swept with such irrational ideas as anti-semitism, anti-democracy, anti-Darwinism, barbaric race theory, "woman's place is in the kitchen and maternity hospital", anti-science, except so far as the needs of the Moloch of the military machine requires development of science. The Rationalist making a deeper analysis of the phenomenon, will not stop at exposing the irrationality and even barbarity of some of these concepts. He will realize that in the conditions of crisis of the entire structure of German society, out of sheer despair, the German people became predisposed to believe in such preposterous ideas. The ideological retrogression of Germany is linked up with the crisis of its social structure. The Rationalist, understanding this connection, will not halt at exposing the unscientific and socially reactionary nature of Nazi ideology, but would trace it to the social system which produces crises and renders the appearance of such forms of cultural reaction unavoidable. He will next suggest the change of the entire social system.

The Rationalist Organizations in Europe could not withstand the onslaught of Fascism and succumbed before the tide of cultural reaction because they did not build up organic alliance with progressive social forces struggling against Fascism. The Rationalists remained isolated groups of scientific intellectuals. This isolation was the outcome of their inability to realize *the social character of ideas and that ideas reflect the interests of definite social sections of the population.*

III

The Rationalist thus should not merely refute error, expose reaction and propagate scientific views but also fight for the elimination of the social environs where error can thrive and superstition spread and for the creation of a new social environs which, due to its sane, rational arrangement, makes it easy for the people to imbibe scientific culture. Surely, in this, they will come into conflict with those social groups which benefit by the present chaotic social system, which, therefore, always finance the spread of irrational ideas among the people, thus degrading them to a low level of cultural existence and are, further, hostile to the growth of Rationalism. But, in this struggle for a social change, the Rationalist will find allies in progressive social forces which are in open, political and other conflict with reactionary groups. In fact, the best portion of the Rationalists will play the glorious role of the *leaders* of these social forces. They will guide these forces in removing the present irrational social order and be also the architects of the new and rational order and culture

of the future which will be world-wide and truly human.

IV

So Rationalism strikes at and exposes whatever is irrational and therefore socially retrogressive in institutions, social relations, in the cultural life and ideological habits of a people. It wars on superstition preached by reactionary social groups to stabilise their "intellectual" hold over the people and safeguard the material benefits accruing to them by means of this hold. It crusades against social gradations not naturally emerged on the basis of diversity of talent among the individuals comprising a people but based on irrational conceptions of heredity and wealth. It storms the citadel of exclusive privileges, monopolist rights of some to culture and comfort. In the sphere of culture, it attacks ideas which are irrational, because they do not correspond to reality and therefore befog the mind of the people, distort their practical activity, make them capitulate in holy awe to secular or ecclesiastical tyrants, in fact, make them willing dupes of predatory social groups.

Scientific knowledge of natural and social worlds is the inevitable fruitful outcome of a rationalist approach to these worlds. The scientific knowledge when it reaches out to the people, gives them a rational understanding of institutions and events, frees them from mental miasma and in their hands becomes a power to dislodge from authority those who thrive by keeping them ignorant.

But the Rationalist also traces all irrationalities to its social source. He goes to the socio-historical roots of all errors, of all enchaining of human mind and body, of all shackling and paralysing of human will and intellect. While exposing an irrationality, he also calls for the removal of those social conditions in which the irrationality, emerged and found nutrition. He is a Doctor curing the disease and not a quack confounding the cure of the disease with the treatment of the symptom.

(*Continued from page 70*)

can cope with the population, the community will never have unlimited food, and some limit will have to be imposed on the number of children to keep the population from exceeding the limit set by the food supply, unless of course, as some people maintain, the birth-rate falls automatically when the standard of living rises. Supposing that it does not fall, people cannot be allowed to breed recklessly, though it is not easy to decide how birth-control is to be imposed on unwilling couples. This is hardly the place to consider that, but as marriage does not serve that purpose, it need not be recognized at all except with a view to bring up children properly. In any case, marriage should not give the two partners any monopoly rights on each other's bodies and should leave them at perfect liberty to follow their own inclinations as regards sex relations. Current sex morals are responsible for more misery in the world than perhaps any other single cause. The two reasons which may have made these restrictions desirable in the past were the fear of pregnancy and the fear of disease, but when it is recognized that pregnancy out of wedlock is no more a crime than within it, and that there are quite effective methods of preventing both pregnancy and disease, these reasons disappear and all the restrictions due to them become utterly unnecessary. One important cause of unhappiness will thus disappear with them.

When the necessaries of life are available to everybody without exception, when all facilities for education and development are provided equally for all without consideration of birth or sex, and when it is recognized that no unnecessary restricitions should be imposed on anybody in any matter whatsoever including sex, all the essentials of happiness will have been achieved by the new order and the world will be a much better place to live in after it comes into force, in whatever way it is achieved.

11th Annual General Meeting and Dinner of the Rationalist Association of India

THE 11th Annual Reunion of the Rationalist Association of India was held on Sunday, 16th March 1941, at 7-30 p.m. at the Taj Mahal Hotel. It was very well attended and in spite of many absentees the gathering was larger than that of last year.

Among those present were:

Miss Shakuntala Paranjpye, the guest of honour for the evening, Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, Prof. H. V. Hampton, Miss Margaret Benjamin, Prof. & Mrs. S. K. Muranjan, Mr. & Mrs. V. D. Satghare, Dr. & Mrs. H. P. Moolgaokar, Miss Alice D'Avoine, Mr. & Mrs. Kishore Premchand, Dr. M. G. Pardhan, Dr. Geo. Coelho, Dr. S. B. Gadgil, Mr. A. S. Sarela, Prof. R. D. Karve, Mr. & Mrs. A. S. Erulkar, Miss Alice D'Avoine, Miss Passanah, Dr. S. Hurry, Mr. & Mrs. Rovshan Mohamed, Mr. E. D'Avoine, Mr. I. D'Avoine, Mrs. Brendon-Brady, Mr. M. V. Parab, Mr. R. Hurry, Mr. Homi Chinoy, Mr. N. M. Bhatena, Mr. J. I. Samson, Miss Samson, Mr. Mosas Samson, Mr. K.T. Chandy, Mr. B.D. Solomon, Mr. I. Chatterji, Miss Alice D'Avoine, Mr. D. J. Solomon, Mr. Issac Abraham, Mr.E. Benjamin, Mr.Akbar Frosh, Mr. E. M. Jones, Mr. J. Ezekel, Mr. Gupta, Mr. S. B. Rath, Mr. Abraham Solomon, Mr. A. Husein and others.

At the meeting preceding the Dinner, the following Office-bearers were elected for the year 1941:

President:—Dr. A. S. Erulkar.
Vice Presidents:—Dr. C. L. C'Avoine,
Mr. R. B. Lotewala.
Hon. Treasurer:—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia.
Jt. Hon. Secretaries:—Mr. Abraham Solomon,
Mr. A. Husein.

The Secretaries' report for the year 1940 showed an all round improvement in the activities of the Association and also a small increase in the number of members.

The financial position of the Association left much to be desired but it may be noted that the Association had been able to meet the expenses during the year which were more than those of last year due to the increase in activities. On 31st December 1940 The *Reserve Fund* stood at Rs. 700-5-8. *Lecture Fund* Rs. 23/- and a Balance of Rs. 60-2-0.

The necessity for widening the activities of the Association and improving its financial position was felt all round and the new committee was requeted to direct its efforts towards that end. The necessity for each member to co-operate actively was also emphasised.

The following resolutions were passed unanimously:--

The Rationalist Association of India is deeply thankful to Mr. R. B. Lotwalla for having printed "Reason" for a nominal payment from January 1940 till now and wish to record its appreciation for this generosity shown at a critical moment.

2. This meeting of Rationalists in India views with admiration the courageous efforts of Freethinkers in England to keep aloft the flag of freethought in these difficult times in that country and sends them fraternal greetings meant for freethinkers in England in general and the National Secular Society and its president, Mr. Chapman Cohen.

3. This meeting records its deep concern for the sufferings of Freethinkers and others due to the reign of suppression and tyranny on the Continent of Europe and hopes that the present march of oppression will soon make way for the rebirth of liberty wherever it has been suppressed.

After Dinner Dr. C. L. D'Avoine made the following speech:—

Ladies and Gentlemen,

ANOTHER year has passed since we last met and a dreadful and sad one it has been. Throughout that time the work of destruction and death which is devastating Europe has gone on unabatingly and there is as yet no prospect that the end is in sight. One would think that our civilization is crumbling to pieces and that the reign of barbarism is returning.

Yet this mighty conflict has raised the hope in many that a new order of things in the world is bound to be established when it ends, and that many will be forced by the awful experiences they have passed through to recognise the delusion under which they have lived and to see the shining light of reason and be guided by it.

Be that as it may, I am, however, rather inclined to agree with Mr. H. G. Wells that a dismal reaction is inevitable after this war, and that this world will again see a revival of dark superstition and irrational beliefs which will prevail, at least, for some time. We are more likely to see broods of devotees and a crop of saints arising, drawing the people more and more into the great illusion than rationalists and philosophers spreading the message of common sense and sane thinking in eager ears the world over. In times of great danger and calamity, such as we are passing through now, people give way to fear and seek the consolation of religion and supernatural help. The priests know this well and they always take full advantage of the situation. As you all know, the clergy in England have not been idle during these stirring times. Their advice to the people how to save themselves is to pray and pray unceasingly and to serve God. God, they assure the public, will protect those who pray. The fact that many churches have been bombed when people were actually assembled in them, in the very act of prayer and most of them killed does not disconcert these priests and parsons. They can always satisfactorily explain away why God has behaved in this or that manner.

England has already had several days of public prayers by official sanction and each one of which has been followed by terrible disasters for the allies and of triumph for the enemy. If the people were reasonable and thoughtful they might have derived some food for thought in these remarkable coincidences and perhaps doubt the confidence they place in their God. But no; many are convinced that God not only heard their prayer and came to their help, but they say He did manifest himself unto His people by miraculously saving the soldiers at Dunkirk when everything seemed to be lost. The public are referred to the Books of Revelation to understand how mysteriously God works. Such is the power of religious propaganda and the blind belief of people in the supernatural. These calamities instead of making people realize that God is indifferent to this conflict, on the contrary would make it appear that God is no doubt punishing us for our transgressions, yet in the end will help us and make us triumph over the power of darkness. This extraordinary confidence and hope in God reminds one of the women of certain African tribes who say that the more their husbands kick them the more they love them. One has only to read the English papers to realize the utter nonsense and silly stuff that the clergy and other religiously-minded people in England are talking in these days. From some of the highest prelates down to the humblest priests and parsons statements are made which make one wonder whether these people are in their right minds. It is certain that they all rely on the rank stupidity of their hearers, otherwise it is difficult to explain how the people can hear them patiently and do not implore them not to make fools of themselves.

It must, of course, be the same in other countries afflicted by this dreadful war. Only

a few days ago, the Pope of Rome, the Head of the biggest Church in Christeaidom, addressing the Missionary Students, is reported to have told them that the cause of the War was due to people no longer believing in God, and he exhorted these Missionaries to restore that belief. One is reluctant to believe that the Pope spoke sincerely when he talked in that manner, for how could an educated and sincere man say such absurd things when he must know that the worst wars in history have been religious wars conducted by people who firmly believed in God!

To exhort his Missionaries to restore the belief in God, especially the God taught by Roman Catholicism, is like requesting grown up men to resort again to the game of playing marbles. The Pope evidently does not believe that education has killed the childish beliefs he teaches and that to make enlightened people believe like him is impossible. All the same, we must admit that sound education in the matter of beliefs is not spreading as fast as we would like. In this respect it works slowly and is hampered by all sorts of prejudices. For this reason intolerance and bigotry are still rampant and hence we must be constantly on our guard. I am reminded of this by a recent incident in Bombay. The Editor of the Bombay *Sunday Standard* has recently opened the columns of his paper to the ventilation of heterodox views and began the series by publishing Prof. Julian Huxley's article "Why I Am An Atheist."

It is true that that paper published the article after making an apology for doing so; all the same, some correspondents have already rushed to rebuke the Editor for daring to ventilate Atheistic views and to warn him of the harm that such views have on the world.

A bigot complains that he is horrified that Professor Huxley who, he says, is supposed to be an educated man should insult his Creator so much. Prof. Huxley according to that Christian must be a fool not to see the evidences of the existence of God in Nature. He, the Christian, sees that plainly and he pities Prof. Huxley for being so blind. Well, the evidences that this benighted Christian sees so plainly are nothing more than some of the arguments of Design which many educated divines themselves, have long ago rejected. Yet, that man is conceited enough to believe that he is very wise and those who cannot believe like him are crazy, wicked and dangerous. He actually goes so far as to say that Atheists are a miserable lot, are murderers and are capable of causing the greatest harm in the world. According to that man the Police should be after us tonight, for he is horrified that Atheistic doctrines should be spread.

Another correspondent of the *Sunday Standard*, a woman, evidently one of those missionary women who have such a fine time in this country, is also horrified that the Editor of the *Sunday Standard* should open his columns to make known atheistic views. According to her also, the views of Prof. Huxley about God were very wicked and caused harm. She is convinced, she says, that people who have not experienced the saving power and grace of Christ are miserable and are capable of doing the greatest harm in the world. To prove this she quotes amply from the Bible. Her letter is, no doubt, silly and contemptible, but people of her type are mischievous and do hinder the work of Rationalism. For one thing, it is they who terrify timid Editors of papers and prevent them from being fair and impartial in their dealings with the other side of the question. After this does any one doubt that the task of Rationalism is terribly difficult and that it will take a long time, a very long time, indeed, to make headway. Just imagine, ladies and gentlemen, the difficult task before us in this country. Only a few days ago, some well-known Indian national leaders among whom were some titled gentlemen, refused to meet at a Conference in Bombay in order to avoid the evil influence of the eclipse, which fell on the day of the Conference.

Ladies and gentlemen, if we have the cause of Rationalism at heart, if we are certain that it will play a salutary part in the new order of things expected, we must be patient and persevering. Religion has had a long start before Rationalism and it is only natural that progress of our cause must be slow and laborious.

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine then requested Miss Shakuntala Paranjpye to speak.

Miss Shakuntala Paranjpe.

Miss Shakuntala Paranjpye, the guest of honour, then delivered an interesting speech on the rights of woman in society. She said that in the present cry for equality for women is implied a recognition of the necessary but limited right of women to freely participate in all social activities. But, in her opinion, women were superior to and different from men in certain matters and as such should have more rights than men in regard to those matters. The enforcement of a rigid equality between men and women would deprive the latter of some essential rights pertaining to those functions which woman alone is better fitted than men to perform. She asserted that rights must correspond to talents and functions.

She then referred to the popular demand for the abolition of polygamy. In her opinion the numerical proportion between healthy and marriageable men and women was a question to be considered in this connection. The present war is upsetting the existing proportion; but unlike the last war, the present one is exacting a heavy toll of death of women and children as of men. Whatever proportion might result at the end of the war, woman's right to motherhood should not be denied in the name of any traditional view of marriage. She wondered if there was behind the obvious causes of this war a hidden purpose of Nature to pave the way for a society in which there would be a select breeding according to principles of eugenics.

Prof. H. Y. Hampton.

Prof. Hampton, in a humourous speech, traced the history of modern rationalism in India from the early 19th Century. He reminded the audience of the life and work of David Hare, the great rationalist and pioneer educationist of Bengal, who founded the Hindu Vidyalaya which has today grown up into the Presidency College of Calcutta. He was a great industrialist but he devoted most of his income to the establishment of an educational institution which spread a rationalist attitude among the young men of Bengal. He had to meet with tremendous opposition from Hindu orthodoxy and from government. The speaker then referred to the life of DeRozzio, Professor of Philosophy at a College in Calcutta in the 19th Century. As a young man of 22 DeRozzio was full of a desire to spread rationalism among the young men of India. As a Professor of Philosophy he put before his students not only the arguments for a belief in the existence of God but also the arguments against such a belief. This excited the fury of religious orthodoxy both in the government circles and among the people and he was promptly removed from his post.

Coming to the present day, the speaker referred to the great work of Dr. R. P. Paranjpye as a rationalist and educationist. The R. A. I., he said, should not confine itself to negative attacks on religion but should launch upon a wide educational campaign for the spread of an attitude of scientific criticism to all branches of human activities.

Prof. S. K. Muranjan.

Prof. Muranjan dealt with the communal passions and separatist mentality which are gaining ground in this country and he condemned the pugnacity and lust for power of communal leaders. He exhorted the audience to use every opportunity available to proclaim their rationalism. He narrated a personal incident of how he was once called upon to take the oath in a court of law and he refused to take a religious oath. In a country like India where the weight of religious tradition is so heavy, we must proclaim our attitude on every occasion with all the courage of our conviction.

Mr. K. T. Chandy gave a brief speech making some suggestions for strengthening the Rationalist movement in India.

Mr. Abraham Solomon then thanked the guest of honour and the other speakers and expressed the hope that at the next occasion we would meet in greater numbers and happier circumstances.

Religion In Practice

CASTE OPPRESSION

The following which appeared in the *Bombay Sentinel* of 17th April will come as an eye-opener to those who think that caste and class tyranny within a "great" religion is a thing of the past. It should also make people realize that superfluous reformist activities and theoretical preaching of brotherly love are of no use. Unless people go to the root of the trouble, the source of fanaticism and false belief and unless people throw overboard the mental attitude which breeds superstition; communal riots and intercaste tyranny will continue to mar the social and political life of the Indian people and lurking assassins in dark lanes become the champions of religion!—*Ed.*

A terrible tale of caste oppression practised on the Harijans during which the entire grain stock of the Untouchables is alleged to have been burnt down, the entire population of Harijans in a village forced to seek protection in a single house which was stoned and hammered for full four hours and the inmates, including women and children beaten, comes from one of the villages in Indore State.

The trouble arose out of one of the ugly practice of the Holi festival prevalent for centuries past under which caste Hindus of a village claim it to be their prescriptive right to blind-fold a Harijan woman, dress and adorn her to look like a buffoon, take her round the villages and then to bring her to the centre of the villages for men, women and children of the caste Hindu population to pour hot water on her and take sadistic delight in her sufferings.

The practice has been banned under orders issued by the State, but the ban is still ignored in many of the villages and so the villagers of Kithora and Lohgal this year decided to defy the ban and see that the Harijans submitted to the practice.

House Besieged

Accordingly on the Holi day the caste Hindus through the village Patel made the demand on the Harijans to send two specific Depressed Class married women to undergo the ordeal. The Harijans refused to comply with the demand. So the wife of the village Patel was sent out to get hold of the Harijan women and armed with a lathi, it is alleged, she entered the house of one of the "wanted" women and tried to drag her out.

The Patel's wife, apparently, could not cope with the job and reported the matter back to the caste Hindu village who threatened to burn down the Harijan huts and crack a few skulls if they defied the injunctions of religion.

When, in spite of these threats, the Harijans stood fast by their determination higher caste Hindus began collecting sticks and stones to make a general onslaught on the Harijans.

At this all the Harijans of the villages cooped themselves up in a single house with

corrugated sheet roof and walls and shut themselves in.

They could not seek protection in any of the other huts for the simple reason that they were afraid that those huts might be burnt down.

Fury Let Loose

This roused the caste Hindu fury to white heat. They could control themselves no longer and a regular bombardment of the house was begun. For full four hours stones, big and small, were hurled at the house till the roof and the walls were pounded, till the hands of the caste Hindu population were too tired to hurl stones any longer. Then they turned their attention to the grain stores stocked in an open yard after the harvesting of the crops, and set it on fire, the villagers looking on at the wanton incendiarism with devilish joy.

The fire raged uncontrolled and unmitigated till the entire stock was reduced to cinders and the year's food provision of the Untouchables destroyed.

Police Appear

By the time the fire was subsiding a few constables from the nearest police chowky came on the scene, surveyed the situation, quietened down the caste Hindu crowd and got the Untouchables to come out of the much-battered house that had saved the lives of not a few.

All this happened between 6 and 12 on the night of the Holi festival.

The next day more policemen, some police officers and others arrived on the scene, and made a panchnama which showed that over 200 large stones-there were hundreds of small ones—lay round about the house, that half a dozen people were injured and that the grain stores had been turned into ashes.

Deputation to Premier

The whole story was referred to the Harijan Seva Sangh by the local leaders who waited for one month to get some redress.

The Sangh, however, ignored the matter altogether and so it was taken to the Ambedkar Seva Sangh who got together all the facts and sent a deputation to the Prime Minister.

The deputation consisted of Messrs. Krishnarao Rokde and S. R. Masde who were accompanied by Champalal Pira, Unkar Khima, Savant Kalu, Bhera Bhaga, Savant Urmal and Bapu Valga Nanda.

The Prime Minister gave a patient and sympathetic hearing to the deputation and promised to do all he could to redress the grievances of the Harijans.

General Grievances

Apart from the story referred to above the deputation mentioned the general grievances which deserve mention here.

It was stated that untouchable villagers have to render free and forced labour to the caste Hindu villagers. They are forced to do domestic work like cutting wood, etc., for caste Hindu marriage festivals. They have to go round giving personal invitations during caste Hindu marriages, to carry kitsun light lamps during marriage processions and other ceremonies and festive occasions. All this is done free. If these services are refused the cattle belonging to Harijans are turned out of pastures and grass fields and thus starved.

The Harijans, it is alleged, are not allowed to wear new or even clean clothes. It they purchase new clothes they had to be deliberately dirtied before being put on. This is specially so in the case of women who are forced to remain as dirty as possible.

The Harijans are not allowed to make any sweets and other good preparations on their festive occasions and during weddings. If they do so caste Hindus come round and throw stones and dust in their cooking pots.

Harijan members of Village Panchayats are not allowed to sit on the carpets on which other panchayat members sit. They have to sit on bare ground at a distance from caste Hindu members.

REVIEWS

The Contempt of Freedom, by M. Polanyi, Watts & Co., Fleet St., London. Pp. 116. Sh. 5/- net (1940).

THIS book bears the sub-title, "The Russian Experiment and After" and contains essays on different aspects of Russian Communism, written between 1935 and 1940 and here collected together. In these four essays, the distinguished professor pleads the cause of Liberty as against Collectivism, whether of the German, Italian or Russian variety. This last seemed to have so much attraction for 'the most enterprising and generous minds of the period' that 'progress had become antagonistic to liberty' and the author here seeks to point out the disastrous consequences of this antagonism.

In the first essay on 'The Rights and Duties of Science,' he examines 'the Marxist claims, and those of Prof. Bernal in particular, for a radical reconsideration and readjustment of the duties of science' and points out how disastrous it would be for the progress of science in general to subject it to a central control with the idea of making it subserve the ends of the State. Science can never advance unless research workers are completely free to choose their own lines of research instead of being forced to work on lines prescribed by the State. Such independent research has always proved practically useful in ways which were impossible for the cleverest statesmen to foresee, indeed impossible for the scientists themselves to foresee. He illustrates this by the case of the 'electric discharge lamp' which is now coming into use for the lighting of roads. The theory that led to this was developed between 1900 and 1912 by Planck, Einstein, Rutherford and Bohr, and nobody could have directed them to discover the atomic theory. In spite of this, all scientists were subject to such control, with the single exception of Pavlov, who was at least free to talk as he pleased, but who was already an old man (77) when Stalin's regime started in 1927. In 1932, a journal was started for the 'application of Dialectical Materialism to physics', and though 'not one in a hundred physicists believed in this nonsense', no one could contradict it publicly. Everything was regulated by the Party, and a 'Journal for Marxist-Leninist Natural Science' was published regularly, till the Party saw the lunacy involved in it, but till then, no scientist in the U. S. S. R. could raise his voice against it.

The second essay on 'Collectivist Planning' contrasts this system with the system of 'Supervisory Authority' which the author would advocate. He points out how central planning signally failed in Russia as regards science and a new system called 'decentralized planning' was introduced in 1932. At the Physico-Technical Institute of Kharkow, for instance, "Each department draws up a plan for work from January 1 to December 31 of each year. The plan is given in detail for each quarter and there must even be a suggestion of what will be done on each day. At the end of each month, the research worker assesses what percentage he has accomplished of his plan. This is usually about 80 to 90 per cent, and the assessments are notably honest." Nobody who has the slightest acquaintance with scientific work will believe that it can be done in this way, but even eminent scientists had to accept the system at least outwardly, however foolish they thought it, if they wished to avoid arrest and deportation, as no evidence was required for condemnation.

Soviet economic planning led to disaster after disaster. 'The attempt to abolish the market broke down in 1921 and commercial life was again restored by Lenin' But as this led to too much liberty, private shops and

enterprises were again destroyed in 1927. But three years after this, a new economic disaster forced Stalin to another retreat. What prevails in Russia at present is no longer Communism, but Socialism. They started with the ideal of 'equal work and equal wages for everybody' and no private ownership, and all this has had to be definitely given up, and private ownersushiip had to be reintroduced, though under the supervision of the state.

The third lecture deals with the details of Soviet economics, and the fourth is on "Truth and Propaganda", showing how a dictatorship can be always represented as perfectly democratic for propaganda purposes, whether the underlying philosophy is Fascist, Nazi or Communist. "Experience shows that a small percentage of party members backed by police can bully the rest of any public meeting composed of indifferent or unorganized opponents of the Government into loyalty, causing the gathering to appear or even to be full of enthusiasm." But all dictatorships ultimately depend on police terror. "Every citizen has to know that he is under surveillance of an armed force wielding arbitrary powers to imprison or execute him on the suspicion of opposing the Government's policy." The legal aspect of Communism as represented in Mr. & Mrs. Webb's "Soviet Communism" may be extremely democratic, while the actual state is ruthless terrorism.

The book will be very interesting reading to anybody who is interested in the development of socialism in Russia. R. D. KARVE

"REASON" GRAB-BAG.

Don't Miss this Splendid Opportunity.

Send Re. 1 and get selected old copies of *Reason* worth double, prior to December 1939, containing excellent articles of lasting interest.

Post Free.

(*Continued from page 72*)

Father Gracias does not appear to remember that ever since the introduction of Christianity in Europe that Continent has seen century after century nothing but wars and political unrest.

If this war is more destructive and widespread than other wars, it is because conditions have changed, but the spirit of hatred and malevolence has remained the same throughout.

As a matter of fact, no wars were more bitter and furious than the religious wars which Christians fought among themselves. Father Gracias is a robust believer in religion like most of his countrymen, and we must admire his enormous capacity for belief.

For him, of course, the resurrection story is beyond any doubt, but he must be a very bold man to say that attempts to discredit that story are fanciful hypothesis which are out of date.

Fanciful hypothesis! Well, here is a case of the wish being father to the thought. Such wishful thinking must have relieved the credulous Father a good deal, but will carry no conviction with those who have studied the question thoroughly and impartially. It is an idle story fit for credulous people; for those who accept their religion on trust but do not care to examine it critically.

The resurrection of Jesus rests on no evidence except the discordant accounts one reads in the Gospels. It is strange that not one of the many cosmopolitan citizens of Jerusalem knew anything about it. Fancy such a stupendous and miraculous event as the resurrection of a dead man happening in a city like Jerusalem where there where many Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Syrians and others, besides Jews, and no one knew anything about it, except a few disciples who do not even agree among themselves of what really happened!

Christianity is losing its hold on well-informed people, because such a story is no longer credited. Father Gracias is only deceiving himself when he talks of fanciful hypothesis which are out of date regarding the reasons advanced for the non-acceptance of that story.

* If you recognise Human Equality,
* If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom,
* If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy,

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION

of

INDIA

which seeks:

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and endeavours to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

Minimum Annual Subscription Rs. 5/-
Foreign 8 Shillings.

Office-Bearers:

President:—Dr. A. S. Erulkar, M. D., B. S. *Vice-Presidents:*—Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M. D. and Mr. R. B. Lotewalla. *Hony. Treasurer:*—Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of the Ex. Committee:*—Prof. R. D. Karve, M. A., Prof. S. K. Muranjan, M. A. (Bom.) D. Sc. (Lon.) B. E. S., Dr. S. B. Gadgil, B.A., L.M.S., F.R.C.S. (Eng.) D. Ph. (Lon.), Dr. S. Hurry, M. B. B. S. Mr. J. R. Labelle, Mr. J. N. Patuck, Mr. A. R. Desai, B.A., LL.B., Mr. S. B. Rath, *Jt. Hony. Secretaries:*—Mr. Abraham Solomon, Mr. A. Husein.

For further particulars please write to:—

The Secretaries,
Rationalist Association of India,
5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,
BOMBAY 2.

STANDARD WORKS BY FAMOUS FREETHINKERS.

Thinkers' Library.

Education: Intellectual, Moral, And Physical ... ...Herbert Spencer
The Riddle of the Universe ...Ernst Haeckel
Humanity's Gain From Unbelief, Charles Bradlaugh
On Liberty ... ...J. S. Mill
A Short History of the World ...H. G. Wells
(Revised edition to 1938)
The Origin of Species ... ...Charles Darwin
History of Modern Philosophy ...A. W. Benn
Anthropology (in 2 vols.; illus.), Sir E.B. Tylor, Kt.
Lectures and Essays ... ...T. H. Huxley
The Evolution of The Idea of God ...Grant Allen
The Churches & Modern Thought...Vivian Phelps
Penguin Island ... ...Anatole France
The Pathetic Fallacy ... ...Llewelyn Powys
The Martyrdom of Man... ...Winwood Reade
The Evidence for the Supernatural, ...Dr. Ivor Ll. Tuckett
On Compromise, John Viscount Morley, O.M., P.C.
The Existence of God ... ...Joseph McCabe
History of Anthropology (with Portraits) ...Dr. A. C. Haddon
The Mind in the Making ..James Harvey Robinson
The Social Record of Christianity, Joseph McCabe
Selected Works of Voltaire, Trans. by Joseph McCabe
History of Ancient Philosophy ...A. W. Benn
What is Man? ... ...Mark Twain
Man and His Universe ...J. Langdon-Davies
First Principles (Rs. 1-14-0) ...Herbert Spencer
Rights of Man ... ...Thomas Paine
(With Foreword by G. D. H. Cole)
Dictionary of Scientific Terms, ...C. M. Beadnell, C. B., F. Z. S.
The Universe of Science (Revised edition) ...Prof. H. Levy
The Age of Reason ... ... Thomas Paine
A Short History of Women.. John Longdon-Davies
Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings ...Henry Maudsley, M. D.
The World As I See It ... ... Albert Ein tein
Jocasta's Crime: An Anthropological Study. ...Lord Raglan

Price 15 as. Postage 3 as.
RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA,
5-12, Queen's Road, Bombay.

IF YOU WANT

To read choicest books,
To discuss modern problems,
To get correct information about current topics,
To have contact with intellectuals, and
To understand the making and growth of our Society—

Then You Must Remain in Touch with

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY.

OBJECTS.

To promote the Sociological interest of the Indian people, to gather and disseminate all sorts of sociological information, to facilitate the study of sociology, to focus the views of experts on such questions, to form and maintain a Library, etc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Donors Rs. 500/- or more. Life Members Rs. 100/- or more. Ordinary Members Rs. 3/- per year payable half-yearly. R. L. T. Library Deposit Rs. 5/-.

All members have the free use of the Library which contains a good collection of books on Economics, and also the Library of the R. L. Trust Hostel which also contains an excellent collection of latest books on all branches of sociology, namely, Economics, Ethics, Eugenics, Psychology, Philosophy, Politics, History, Biography and Fiction on current social problems.

Members are also entitled to publications of the Institute at such concessions as may be determined by the Managing Committee from time to time, as also one Magazine can be supplied at the cost of the Institute and any other Magazine for which concessions could be secured by the Institute for its members by any special agreement with its Publishers.

Rules, Regulations, Entrance Form can be had from:—

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY,

R. L. TRUST, 'RANCHHOD BHUVAN,'
Near Opera House Tram Terminus,
BOMBAY 4.

15th January 1940.

G. S. POHEKAR, R. D. NADKARNI,
Hon. Secretaries.

Printed by B. M. Shett at the "Advocate of India" Press, 21, Dalal Street, Fort, Bombay. Published by Abraham Solomon for the Rationalist Association of India, at 13, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4.

Date Due



P149-705
Rea
145819

Regd. No. B 2069.

The Rationalists Association of India

Objects.

To combat all religions and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the masses of this country.

———:o:———

The Association was founded in March, 1930, as the Anti-Priestcraft Association with the above objects. Its name was changed to the Rationalist Association of India in February, 1931. Its membership is daily increasing, and consists of professional men, college professors, business men, and others with progressive ideas. The committee will be very pleased to hear of any ladies or gentlemen who will be willing to work as local Secretaries of the Association.

Reason.

"Reason" is the organ of the Association, and is published monthly. Though started recently, it has a wide circulation. It is one of the means of carrying out our objects. Members and sympathisers are cordially invited to contribute articles to the journal.

Membership.

Life Membership is Rupees Hundred. The annual subscription is Rupees Five. This entitles you to a copy of "Reason" free. If you are not already a member of the Association, write to us, and we will send you the next issue of "Reason" per V. P. P.

Office-Bearers.

President—G. V. Deshmukh, M.D., F.R.C.S. *Vice-Presidents*—A. S. Tyebji. C. L. D'Avoine, M.D. *Hony. Treasurer*—D. R. D. Wadia, Bar-at-Law. *Members of Executive Committee*—A. S. Erulkar, M.D., M. A. Somjee, Bar-at-Law., P. Tricumdas, Bar-at-Law., M. R. P. Masani, Bar-at-Law., S. A. Brelvi, M.A., LL.B., M. H. Vakil, M.A., LL.B., S. Megherian, Miss P. Nariman, P. Pereira, B.A. C. Sharma. *Hony. Secretaries*—G. Coelho, M.B., M.R.C.P., J. M. Cooper.

Enquiries.

All enquiries are to be addressed to the Hony. Secretaries, The Rationalist Association of India, Empire Automobile Building, Queen's Road, Bombay 4.

Printed by S. V. Kamat, at the Kamat Printing Press, Goverdhan Building, Parekh Street, Bombay 4,
Edited and Published by C. L. D'Avoine, M. D., for the Rationalist Association of India at