

Freedom

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Threepence

THE FRENCH STRIKES

Has Initiative Passed to the Union Leaders?

AT the time of going to press, the general strike in France which has spread considerably during the past week is still continuing. It seems certain that the extension of the strike—from a dispute of the postal workers to involve almost all government employees and bring economic life to a standstill—has remained entirely spontaneous. It is evidence of a deep-seated discontent with conditions of working class life and with the administration, but it does not seem to have any very clearly defined objects, remaining a movement of protest.

The more serious of the popular press describe some of the causes of this discontent. "An official publication" writes Nora Beloff in the *Observer* (16/8/53), "has revealed that they (the French workers) enjoy an even smaller proportion of the national revenue than before the war: the substantial rise in social benefits has been more than offset by the severe drop in real wages. The Civil Service is proportionately worse off than are the employees of private business. It is difficult to persuade these people to abandon direct action and to rely on Parliamentary processes to right their wrongs when these processes are constantly flouted by the upper income groups. It is similarly difficult to justify the imprisonment of recalcitrant strikers while tax defaulters, whose cost to the community is so much higher, are amnestied."

War Weariness

It also seems likely that the strikes reflect the discontent of French people with the war in Indo-China. Nora Beloff quotes a government official as saying: "Whatever replaces this government, its first and most popular action will be

21 Killed in Ceylon Demonstrations Against Price Increases

TWENTY-ONE people were killed and 380 arrested during demonstrations last week throughout Ceylon against increases in the price of rice and of railway, electricity and postal charges. Troops and police opened fire three times in Colombo, and the Government declared a state of emergency and imposed a curfew.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake, the Prime Minister, said that saboteurs had removed railway lines and in some cases destroyed trains and buses. He told the Lower House that arson had been reported in the capital. The rioters had held up buses, disrupted telegraph and telephone communications, and stoned public buildings. "Unscrupulous political leaders," he said, had incited the troubles, but the Government was determined to stamp out mob violence and maintain law and order. A Government spokesman said that the state of emergency and curfew would be effective for one month if the situation did not warrant their withdrawal. He made it clear that it was not martial law, but that the inspector-general of police had been given emergency powers. He would now have military assistance and was empowered to act on his own authority.

The food controller's office adjoining the principal railway station was also set on fire. The demonstrators were dispersed by police and the first was put out before it did any damage. The Mayor of Colombo, Mr. Greero, resigned at noon following the hoisting of a black flag on the Town Hall by Left-wing city councillors.

to terminate the Indo-Chinese War and use the additional funds and the psychological boom to launch a new recovery plan involving far more radical reforms than those we have proposed."

It seems likely that French economy is too highly geared to the war in the Far East for it to be terminated quite so easily, however. If the ending of the war became a political objective of the general strike and were successfully achieved by direct action, the situation would have become a revolutionary one, and the consequences of such success would raise economic and social problems requiring further revolutionary action.

Political Capital

Meanwhile, if the Communists had no hand in starting the strike (as is certain), the leaders of the trade unions are now trying to make political capital out of it. The lack of clearly defined objectives tends to allow the initiative to pass out of the hands of the workers into that of their "representatives". The Communist controlled C.G.T. has

declared its readiness to negotiate with the government, while the leaders of the Socialist and Catholic Unions have already been in conference with the Prime Minister.

Both the Socialist and Catholic union leaders on the one hand and the Communists on the other are aware of the political capital to be made out of the strike in preparation for the municipal elections. If they succeed in securing the initiative and "controlling" the workers, the strike will end in a few concessions, but its tremendous latent power will have been virtually unused. The situation is similar to that of the General Strike in England in 1926 when the union leaders in their negotiations with Stanley Baldwin brought the strike movement to an end with the workers once more reduced to virtual impotence.

At the moment, however, it is not clear whether the spontaneous movement has spent its force, or whether the efforts at negotiation by the union leaders may not succeed in adding fuel to the discontents and spreading the strike still further.

Behind the Malenkov Speech

MOST of the political commentators on Malenkov's "hydrogen bomb" speech have confined themselves to the question of the bomb, or to the light the speech sheds on the position of power attained by Malenkov, or to the repercussions of the speech for Soviet foreign policy and international relations generally.

Far more important however than these are the implications of the speech for Russian domestic policy. By far the most significant question here is a different attitude to the peasants and to agriculture. Ever since 1928 when the First Five Year Plan was inaugurated, the Russian State has been trying to turn individual peasants into wage workers through the collectivization of the farms on an industrial basis. This attempt was an expression of the traditional hostility of the Marxists towards peasants, and represents an attempt at proletarianizing the land workers, so as to reduce their political unpredictability and bring them into the fold of the messianic proletariat of Marxist ideology.

Malenkov's speech announces a reversal of this trend. After the famines of 1932 and 1933 caused by the collectivization of agriculture under the First Five Year Plan, the Russian government retraced its steps to some extent and allowed the peasants, even those in the collective farms, to own their own piece of land and to keep a cow and other stock. However, they returned to the Marxist attitude to the peasants later and tried once again to incorporate them in a fully State-operated agriculture. This drive has been especially vigorously pushed since the war. Now Malenkov's speech indicates an abandonment of this attempt. Instead of seeking to abolish peasant holdings and privately owned cows and chickens, the government now encourages the peasant to work hard on his holding and earn as much as he can. He is to be helped by a reduction in

taxation, by the wiping off of arrears in taxes, and by changes in the method of taxation, so that individual initiative on the land is encouraged. There are even tax rebates designed to encourage those whom the previous policy had forced to give up their cows to buy new animals.

The N.E.P. Once Again

We have already some weeks ago drawn attention to similar trends in agricultural policy in Eastern Germany and other Russian satellite countries. It has been described as a revolutionary change and as a liquidation of Stalin's policy but such judgments ignore past history. Lenin also sought to industrialize agriculture, and this policy contributed to produce the famines of 1918 to 1921. To restore economic stability Lenin also returned to private ownership and the encouragement of private trading in the programme known as the New Economic Policy (N.E.P.) launched in 1923. The various retreats from full collectivization under Stalin's

rule represent the same necessity to restore a disastrous economic policy on the land from the rigid application of theoretical Marxism.

The present Malenkov policy may be no more than a similar breathing space. It may be that the newer generation of Soviet administrators are less concerned with the theoretical application of Marxism and will return to a frankly capitalist type of economy dominated by State enterprises. (In this connection it is interesting that Beria is charged with just this tendency which the government is itself carrying out). Such a tendency would bring Russia more clearly into line with the other great powers and would again emphasize the similarities which exist between all government administrations. It represents in no sense however a "revolutionary" change, nor even a liquidation of Stalin's policy. Soviet history is the record of just such an alternation between collectivization and the N.E.P. and there is no reason to think that Malenkov's present proposals go outside this pattern.

Mutual Aid in an Essex Village

A SHRIMP and kipper shop is the latest welfare effort in Britain's "Utopia village where anyone in trouble is given a hand."

There have been strange goings-on at Parkston, Essex (population 2,000), these last few days. Ted Silver, 32-year-old hunter, who gets home from work at 10 p.m., has been up and about again at 3 a.m. to put to sea. He brings back the shrimps for the shop.

A few hours later 42-year-old George Coxshall, landlord of the Garland Hotel, is cycling round the village delivering to those who are too infirm to go to the shop.

The villagers decided to open the shop after two children had been injured on the road. Thus, they decided, was the best way to raise money for a children's

playground.

Now the housewives take turns behind the counter and trade is on the up and up.

Mrs. Katharine Baker, mother of five, said: "We sold 36 gallons of shrimps and over 300 kippers last week. We used to have to take a 6d. bus ride to buy shrimps at 1d. a pint dealer."

Said George Coxshall: "Our fund provides fruit and sweets for a kiddie in hospital, extra money for a man out of a job, and so on. We raise money with concerts and socials. This village is one big family."

Commented Mrs. Baker, a Scot, whose husband Frank is a ship's greaser: "I would not live anywhere else for the world."

—*News Chronicle*.

"Love . . . Idiotic word! What does the word stand for . . . to the patriot who's ready to die for his country—to die, and, in the meantime, to kill, steal, lie, swindle, and torture for it?"
—ALDOUS HUXLEY in "After Many a Summer".

Policemen Censors

THE BOOKSELLER this week carries the startling headline "Policemen read books". From the mental outlook of P.C.s this was sufficiently startling enough to merit mention. However, the literacy of policemen was not the item's main revelation.

It developed that a lending library, long guaranteed innocuous to maiden aunts of both sexes had unwittingly issued a subscription to a policeman who borrowed two books in the first week which so shocked his virgin susceptibilities that a summons was issued for unlawfully keeping obscene books for the purpose of lending them on hire.

It is obvious that the policeman was an agent provocateur and the laws governing obscenity (whatever that is) are so framed that any book can be deemed obscene on the judgment of a magistrate. One recalls the case where the Chief Constable of Bury borrowed James Hanley's *Boy* from the library and his sensibilities were so shocked that a case for obscenity was brought and won against librarian, bookseller, publisher, printer and author. The book *Boy* had been published five years when the prosecution was brought and in that time it had apparently never come to the view of one so pure as the Chief Constable of Bury.

The present case was adjourned to give the High Bailiff time to read the books in their entirety. This incident took place in the Isle of Man where the cats

are without tails, it seems that the citizens are in for a more serious loss.

The second item is that policemen queuing up for pay were invited to take home one or more of about 400 magazines confiscated in raids on retailers. A sergeant said: "Take them away and read them over the week-end. If you find anything you think is offensive to public decency, mark it clearly and return the magazine. This is not an order. Keep them from children."

So the vestal virgins of the blue lamp retired home for the week-end equipped with magazines and blue pencils. We imagine that suppressed gasps and guffaws were followed with drastic onslaughts with the blue pencils.

One never ceases to find incidents of this type where a concept of public decency is set up, which is entirely infantile and sterile and all books, plays, films, radio and television must conform to it and all departures are censored as "obscene". The latest rush of virtue is at seaside picture postcards many of which have slid "under the counter" to re-emerge at fancy prices.

In America, the Land of the Free, an American publishing firm has used one set of laws to defeat another by suing the police-chief of Youngstown, Ohio for unlawful suppression of distribution and sales of their books in Youngstown and winning the case. They claimed \$3,500 libel damages and \$50,000 for loss of business. The books were suppressed under a local ordinance and included books by Alberto Moravia, Christopher Isherwood, Georges Simenon, Erskine Caldwell and James T. Farrell.

The Judge held that the police chief had a right to act upon the local ordinance (which was based upon an outmoded definition of "obscenity") but he had no right to threaten local vendors of books (although he could prosecute for obscenity) since the publishers of the books were domiciled in New York and were not amenable to Youngstown law. Thus we see how the law of property must be defended even at a cost to the morals of Youngstown.

J.R.

Dockers Get Less Pay

THE annual report of the National Dock Labour Board has shown that in spite of increased rates of pay, actual income earned by dockers throughout the country has fallen by about seven shillings a week.

In 1951 the average earnings in the docks industry was £9 16s. 6d. a week. During 1952 (the year to which the report applies) the average had fallen to £9 9s. 6d.

The actual degree of unemployment in the docks is always masked by the decasualisation scheme, and the falling off of work has been further hidden in 1952 by the additional week's holiday, for that year was the first for the dockers to enjoy a fortnights' paid holiday.

The temporary release scheme, to enable registered dockers to leave the industry but to keep the door open for their return when needed, has not been a success. In the whole country a maximum of only 1,196 was reached.

The dockers' average earnings are still above the average for the country as a whole, but it must be remembered that those figures represent long hours and overtime some weeks, and no work at all others. It is still an erratic industry, but that any class of worker, in these days of rising prices, should be earning less, is a matter for concern.

THE GROWTH OF IDEAS

IN the midst of the record of disasters, of trains plunging over viaducts, of airplanes crashing into the sea, and now the beautiful Greek isles suddenly transformed into a vast cemetery by the forces of Nature, the progress report from Blengdale Forest, on the western fringe of the Lake District National Park, comes as a breath of fresh air and for anarchists, perhaps even as a symbol.

In 1928 the Forest Commission made the first of a number of purchases — totalling 829 acres — of moorland which were planted with young trees, so that to-day the moorland is a handsome forest with trees of up to 24 years old, and from which now much useful timber is being cut down. At the same time self sown seedlings have sprung up in places to regenerate it naturally. We quote from the *Manchester Guardian* report:

"Two successive thinnings have abolished the regimentation of the trunks; they are no longer in rows. Nor is it all black within. Patches of sunlight dapple the ground; the foresters think that grass, moss, and ferns will grow over it. The trees will be thinned again—every three years—until by 1980 only the largest and best of the original planting will be left. They will probably be 100ft. high and 18in. through the trunk at the bottom. Then they, too, will be felled for the sawmills, but other trees of various ages and species will be rising below them."

And to this once bleak moreland have come roe and fallow deer, and there are otters in the river Bleng. Forest flora and fauna are establishing themselves and soon the original conifers will be underplanted with hardwoods and "as they mature, what have been blocks of trees all of the same species, age and size will become mixed woodland".

To complete the picture, those 829 acres of moorland, have now added to the natural beauty of the surroundings, and, to quote again, "there is even now an atmosphere of the German folk songs about it".

By 1980 those seedlings will have reached full maturity. In all probability the men who planted them more than fifty years before will not be alive to see the fruits of their labour. But such considerations have, fortunately, never prevented Man from undertaking tasks the results of which only future generations will enjoy. Just as we enjoy today what has been produced by the past, so the future will enjoy many things started in the present which we of this generation will not live to see realised.

Ideas and ideals are like the forest of Blengdale, and if only this were more clearly understood perhaps the people as a whole would give more attention to the "anarchist dreamers", than they do at present, and less attention to the "realists" who in our time have succeeded in influencing thought to such an extent that all ideas which cannot be applied to the immediate situation are rejected out of hand as utopian and impractical. Trees do not grow in a day; nor will they grow in a thousand years if men were not prepared to plant them because they could not hope to live long enough to see them grow to their full stature.

Revolutionists who abandon their revolutionary ideas for the satisfaction of "seeing results" in Reformism are like the man who plants a forest of quick growing trees which are cut down in a few years for firewood. All that is left is a desert of tree-stumps. He has not allowed the original trees to grow nor the "self-sown seedlings" to spring up and regenerate the forest. There is no shortage of these impatient men in the world. And it would seem that they have in the inter-war and post-world-war years succeeded in contaminating the patient men and women who were prepared to plant forests with ideas that took an unforeseeable time to reach their full fruition, but which once they did left a permanent mark, something of value to mankind. And it is a quality of such forests that when the original ideas are outdated, there has grown up alongside them, the "self-sown seedlings" ready to play their rôle as did their predecessors. This is the natural process in the life of trees and of Man . . . and of ideas.

'Apple Polishers' in the Soviet Union

WE are always assured by the apologists of the workers' fatherland that capitalism and all its vices have been abolished in the Soviet Union. Yet in this period of "self-criticism" (excluding criticism of Malenkov and Co. of course, except by Malenkov and Co., and which ends in a Beria) all kinds of abuses are being revealed which must make our native C.P.'rs very uncomfortable. In *Pravda* recently (Aug. 5) reference is made to the fact that too many "capitalist-style apple-polishers" are getting ahead in the Communist party system.

The party organ, in a leading editorial broadcast by Moscow radio, rapped the knuckles of local party organizations for letting little groups of "mutual encouragement" creep into factories and state farms.

There are only two proper conditions for promoting workers and party members to local cadres, *Pravda* said. They are first "political reliability" and second, "suitability for any given job."

Complaining that this principle is frequently violated, *Pravda* said: "Some people select the cadres by the principle of personal devotion, comradeship relations, local patriotism or nepotism."

"At the same time," the newspaper added, "workers who are honest and know their job but who do not tolerate shortcomings, and therefore cause unpleasantness to their superiors, are squeezed out of

their jobs and replaced by others who are of doubtful use but who suit the leaders.

"Instead of a group of responsible workers," *Pravda* said, "a little family of close people is set up—a group whose members strive to live in peace with one another and keep their mistakes to themselves.

"Familiarity of this kind creates an intolerable situation of mutual encouragement under which there can be no place for criticism or self-criticism."

Pravda warned also that some people who are all right on efficiency

but doubtful as to political confidence have "penetrated into responsible posts." It reminded the faithful that "under conditions of capitalist encirclement, agents are being sent into our midst and will continue to be sent."

This "business-only attitude", it said, "would suit the imperial agents well enough."

It is all very well for the Comrades to say: "Well the beloved leaders are attacking these abuses". What we would like them to explain is how in this non-capitalist paradise such a situation has been allowed to develop.

Conditions in Italy

HOW far we are from having solved even the problem of every human being having the bare necessities of life is indicated by the findings of an Italian parliamentary Committee which has been investigating poverty in Italy. One of every nine Italian families lives in extreme poverty. One of every thirteen families never eats meat, drinks no wine and has no sugar. In actual figures this means that 1,357,000 families live in conditions of extreme want "at the lowest level of life", whilst an equal number live in conditions of extreme want "at the lowest level of life", and an equal number live in conditions of "less-acute poverty". 7,616,000 families are in "modest" conditions and 1,274,000 are "well-off". More than 80% of the families living in

extreme poverty are found in the South and in the islands, principally in Sicily and Sardinia.

As to housing, the report makes grim reading. The committee said that almost one-fourth of the population has less than adequate housing. Two per cent. live in cellars, garrets of warehouses. Eight-tenths of one per cent. or 92,000 families, live in barracks or caves. More than 8 per cent. are crowded into three persons per room, and another 12 per cent. live in habitation with two persons per room.

In Naples, biggest city in Southern Italy "19,000 people live without roofs over their heads or in barracks or caves".

It is not surprising that the incidence of illiteracy is highest in the South and on the islands. About

30% of the population in these areas can neither read nor write (compared with one-third of one per cent. in the industrial city of Milan). On a national basis the committee estimated illiteracy as ranging between 10 and 20 per cent.

A Ducking for Authority

EVEN the serious *New York Times* cannot resist reporting an incident which hardly encourages respect for those in high authority. It occurred on board the American battleship *Missouri* and the story was told by officers in this way:

Frank C. Naish, Assistant Secretary of Defence, boarded the *Missouri* when she stopped at Guantanamo on her way back to this port from a midshipman training cruise in South American and Caribbean waters.

Somewhere between Guantanamo and the Hampton Roads, arrangements were made to "transfer Mr. Naish from the Mighty Mo" to a destroyer in the training squadron. A line was rigged between the two ships and the Defence official climbed into the breeches buoy.

Out over the Atlantic Mr. Naish skimmed. When he was about midway something happened. Maybe it was accidental that the line became slack, maybe somebody thought it would be fun to dunk one of the top brass.

Anyhow, before one can say "Aye, aye, sir," the Assistant Secretary for Defence was down in "the drink".

Cameras clicked frantically as shutterbugs revelled in a field day. But soon after Mr. Naish reached the destroyer, safe and sound, but dripping wet, the word was passed that all film should be surrendered.

So it seems that posterity will be deprived of pictorial proof of the Pentagon's predicament.

The Nature and Validity of Mystical Experience Continued from p. 2

far from being identical, are really opposites. The really selfish person does not love himself too much, he loves himself too little—he really despises and hates himself he feels empty and frustrated and feels he must snatch from some source outside himself, the things which he thinks will make him happy. He can neither love others nor himself. This I describe as the Conservative solution of the problem created by self hatred. It is excused on the philosophy that each individual by his own initiative in acquiring as much of the world's wealth as possible, will, in the long run, benefit all. It is still the basic assumption underlying much of our social order, or disorder.

The other type of self-hate is the selfless person; he too experiences all the frustrations and inhibitions experienced by the former type, but he adopts a different solution, a solution which he calls unselfishness. The selfless person does not "want anything for himself" he "lives only for others" and does not consider himself important. In politics he will adopt the so-called Socialist solution, which demands the sacrifice of the individual for the sake of the corporate State, or the corporate society. In religion he will support the idea of "the mystical body of Christ" he will always seek to identify himself with something external to, and greater than himself, he will tend to regard himself and others in relation to the whole and to one another, as the members of a physical body are related to a central consciousness, and to one another—existing only for the sake of the whole and having no individual rights, no individual freedom, and no individual consciousness. This is of course the ideal of the mystic, complete surrender of individual rights, and complete identification with God—the unity without the multiplicity—the many swallowed up in the all embracing One.

If the foregoing analysis is correct it appears that both selfishness and selflessness spring from a common source—the lack of self-love in the individual, and his consequent inability to achieve satisfaction and happiness through his incapacity to love others. Selfishness is acknowledged by many to be a vice but selflessness is not always a virtue—the soldier is the most selfless person in the world, he throws his life into the furnace of war on behalf of his country or his ideology as one would cast a straw into a flame, having no love of self, he has no scruples about destroying others. The world would be a better place without

its soldiers, without its corporate States, and bureaucracies; all of which thrive upon the idea that coercion and interference in other peoples lives is a duty and a virtue.

The religious mystic however, does not always choose one of the professions I have just mentioned. He would admit that they bear certain resemblances to mysticism proper, but he would probably say that they are of a lower order, that they are a perversion of the true mystical instinct which is always restless until it finds rest in God. He would, also I imagine, deny that his ideal of self-effacement, and his craving for identity with the absolute has its source in asceticism, that his contempt for self draws its strength from both his repression of sexuality with consequent inability to experience human love; and his frustration of many other perfectly natural instincts and legitimate human activities. He will in fact regard all such forms of self denial from a purely negative point of view, he will say he abstains from these activities, because he wants to concentrate upon achieving mystical union with God. In fact he will say that his abstinence has no more significance than my refusal to go to the pictures to-night because I wanted to write this essay. However, as I have already tried to point out, if the findings of psychology and of human experience, including the frank admission of some mystics, are not completely misleading such a position cannot be held. I have not had time in the preparation of this essay to examine the lives of individual mystics with a view to proving or disproving this view but Prof. J. H. Leuba in his book *The Psychology of Religious Mysticism* says:—"Not one of the prominent representatives of mysticism lived a normal married life. (George Jose is no exception to this rule). The kind of love bestowed by them upon God and Christ is apparently incompatible with normal conjugal relations. Many of the curious phenomena to which most great mystics owe in part their fame or notoriety are due to perturbations of the sex function consequent upon repression."

Until supporters of mysticism can show that a person can have mystical experiences side by side with the living of a normal and full life, it seems to me that we are quite justified in seeking a rational explanation of mysticism in terms of repression and frustration of natural instincts. The other possible explanation is that all men possess a mystical instinct, which somehow has

become dormant in the majority and highly developed in the great mystics. Here it might be possible to explain their asceticism and self-denial as being helpful in attaining their object through the laws of compensation. It is a well known fact, for instance, that if a man becomes blind he develops a very keen sense of hearing, or if he becomes deaf his powers of observation improve. By the same analogy a mystical sense could develop to a very high point of efficiency when the other senses are put out of action. Such an explanation is not entirely inconsistent with the other explanation but in order to uphold it, one would require some evidence of a mystical instinct operating in parallel with the other instincts, and one would also expect its operation to be complementary, and not antagonistic to that of the other faculties.

I think it is important at this juncture to say something about the subject of irrationalism and super-rationalism. Mystics often claim that the revelations they have received are of a super-rational nature, i.e. they could not be discovered by reason, and it is beyond the capacity of reason to judge them. They would deny, however, that such judgments are actually contrary to human reason. It seems to me that there is a fallacy in this statement—human reason is fallible, it is possible to build up a completely false picture of reality by reason—through lack of all the relevant factors. Now if a mystic claims to have found a method of obtaining new knowledge which is superior to the rational method, is there any reason to suppose that such a revelation must be consistent with human reason? If, for instance, in the days when human reason and knowledge seemed to indicate a flat earth, it had been revealed directly to somebody that the earth was in fact a globe, such a revelation would have appeared irrational and could not be checked by reason on the basis of the data then available. Such a revelation would have been irrational from the point of view of the people then living. Similarly if we today accept the idea of super-rational revelation—there is no reason why such a revelation should not appear to us to be irrational although it may be perfectly rational in the light of new knowledge. If we accept the super-rational it seems to me that we need some safeguard against the nonsensical and the false being imposed upon us as higher knowledge. Our only defence would seem to be a refusal to accept anything that cannot be tested by reason, and it is difficult to see how a believer in the super-

rational could subject himself to such a limitation.

As I have gone to considerable length in criticising the defects and fallacies of mysticism, it is now fitting that I should consider the elements of truth which it contains, apart from the psychological factors which I think gave rise to it. In the first place I do not for one moment doubt the sincerity, neither do I doubt the subjective validity of the mystic's experience. I think however I have every reason to doubt its objective validity, as I doubted the objective validity of my Evangelical friends' experiences some ten years ago. If I had never been a Rationalist I could never have become a Unitarian, all I have learned about the religion of reason has strengthened rather than weakened my faith in it. When the Protestant mystic sees a vision of Jesus and the Catholic mystic sees a vision of the Blessed Virgin, and when the revelation received by one contradicts that received by the other I feel justified in doubting the objective validity of such experiences. On the other hand some of the basic assumptions of mysticism have a certain element of truth in them. Take the idea of turning away from the world, for instance. We know perfectly well that a society which demands that man must prostitute his creative instincts in order to live, is detrimental to spiritual life and it seems almost instinctive to turn away from it. But the cure for social evils is not to shut oneself up in a monastery and pretend that nature is inherently evil, but to work for social revolution. The idea of union with God is derived from the great truth that we must work with and not against the spiritual and physical laws of the universe, until such actions become instinctive. We can indeed pray with Tagore that our vision of the One may not be lost in the touch of the many, but we should also pray that our vision of the One may not blind our eyes to the many. Tagore expressly said that salvation was not for him in renunciation, he refused to shut his eyes to the sensual delights of the world, he saw God in all things. He was not blind either to the evils and abuses of our society. Similar remarks apply to Whitman and Carpenter. This seems to me to be the true mysticism. Blake expresses the difference between the two kinds of mysticism very well when he says:—

*God Appears and God is Light
To those poor souls who dwell in Night,
But does a Human Form Display
To those who dwell in Realms of Day.*
N. J. TEAPE.

