ANNIHILATION OF CASTE
WITH
A REPLY TO MAHATMA GANDHI

BY
B. R. AMBEDKAR

THIRD EDITION

“Know truth as truth and untruth as untruth.”
—BUDDHA

“He that WILL NOT reason is a bigot
He that CANNOT reason is a fool
He that DARE NOT reason is a slave.”
—H. DRUMMOND
First Edition 1936
Second Edition 1937
Third Edition 1945
PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

The second edition of this Essay appeared in 1937 and was exhausted within a very short period. A new edition has been in demand for a long time. It was my intention to recast the essay so as to incorporate into it another essay of mine called "Castes in India, Their origin and their Mechanism" which appeared in the issue of the Indian Antiquary for May 1917. But as I could not find time, and as there is very little prospect of my being able to do so and as the demand for it from the public is very insistent, I am content to let this be a mere reprint of the second edition.

I am glad to find that this essay has become so popular, and I hope that it will serve the purpose for which it was intended,

1st December 1944  
22, Prithwinaj Road, 
New Delhi. 

B. R. Ambedkar

THE AMBEDKAR SCHOOL OF THOUGHTS

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The speech prepared by me for the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal of Lahore has had an astonishingly warm reception from the Hindu public for whom it was primarily intended. The English edition of one thousand five hundred was exhausted within two months of its publication. It is translated into Gujarati and Tamil. It is being translated in Marathi, Hindi, Punjabi and Malayalam. The demand for the English text still continues unabated. To satisfy this demand it has become necessary to issue a second edition. Considerations of history and effectiveness of appeal have led me to retain the original form of the essay—namely the speech form although I was asked to recast it in the form of a direct narrative. To this edition I have added two appendices. I have collected in appendix (1) the two articles written by Mr. Gandhi by way of review of my speech in the Harijan, and his letter of Mr. Sant Ram, a member of the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal. In appendix (II) I have printed my views in reply to the articles of Mr. Gandhi collected in the appendix (I). Besides Mr. Gandhi many others have adversely criticised my views as expressed in my speech. But I have felt that in taking notice of such adverse comments I should limit myself to Mr. Gandhi. This I have done not because what he has said is so weighty as to deserve a reply but because to many a Hindu he is an oracle, so great that when he opens his lips it is expected that the argument must close and no dog must bark. But the world owes much to rebels who would dare to argue in the face of the pontiff and insist that he is not infallible. I do not care for the credit which every progressive society must give to its rebels. I shall be satisfied if I make the Hindus realize that they are the sick men of India and that their sickness is causing danger to the health and happiness of other Indians.

B. R. AMBEDKAR
PROLOGUE.

On December 12, 1935, I received the following letter from Mr. Sant Ram, the Secretary of the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal:—

My dear Doctor Saheb.

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 5th December. I have released it for press without your permission for which I beg your pardon, as I saw no harm in giving it publicity. You are a great thinker, and it is my well-considered opinion that none else has studied the problem of Caste so deeply as you have. I have always benefited myself and our Mandal from your ideas I have explained and preached it in the Kranti many times and I have even lectured on it many conferences. I am now very anxious to read the exposition of your new formula—"It is not possible to break Caste without annihilating the religious notions on which it, the Caste system, is founded". Please do explain it at length at your earliest convenience, so that we may take up the idea and emphasise it from press and platform. At present, it is not fully clear to me. ...

Our Executive Committee persists in having you as our President for our Annual Conference. We can change our dates to accommodate your convenience. Independent Harijans of Punjab are very much desirous to meet you and discuss with you their plans. So if you kindly accept our request and come to Lahore to preside over the Conference it will serve double purpose. We will invite Harijan leaders of all shades of opinion and you will get an opportunity of giving your ideas to them.

The Mandal has deputed our Assistant Secretary, Mr. Indra Singh to meet you at Bombay in Xmas and discuss with you the whole situation with a view to persuade you to please accept our request. ...
The Jat-Pat-Tolak Mandal, I was given to understand, to be an organization of Caste Hindu Social Reformers, with the one and only aim, namely to eradicate the Caste System from amongst the Hindus. As a rule, I do not like to take any part in a movement which is carried on by the Caste Hindus. Their attitude towards social reform is so different from mine that I have found it difficult to pull on with them. Indeed, I find their company quite uncongenial to me no account of our differences of opinion. Therefore when the Mandal first approached, me I declined their invitation to preside. The Mandal however would not take a refusal from me and sent down one of its members to Bombay to press me to accept the invitation. In the end I agreed to preside. The Annual Conference was to be held at Lahore, the headquarters of the Mandal. The Conference was to meet in Easter but was subsequently postponed to the middle of May 1936. The Reception Committee of the Mandal has now cancelled the Conference. The notice of cancellation came long after my Presidential address had been printed. The copies of this address are now lying with me. As I did not get an opportunity to deliver the address from the presidential chair the public has not had an opportunity to know my views on this problems created by the Caste System. To let the public know them and also to dispose of the printed copies which are lying on my hand, I have decided to put the printed copies of the address on the market. The accompanying pages contain the text of that address.

The public will be curious to know what led to the cancellation of my appointment as the President of the
Conference. At the start, a dispute arose over the printing of the address. I desired that the address should be printed in Bombay. The Mandal wished that it should be printed in Lahore on the ground of economy. I did not agree and insisted upon having it printed in Bombay. Instead of agreeing to my proposition I received a letter signed by several members of the Mandal from which I give the following extract:

Revered Dr. Ji,

Your letter of the 24th instant addressed to Sjt. Sant Ram has been shown to us. We were a little disappointed to read it. Perhaps you are not fully aware of the situation that has arisen here. Almost all the Hindus in the Punjab are against your being invited to this province. The Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal has been subjected to the bitterest criticism and has received censorious rebuke from all quarters. All the Hindu leaders among whom being Bhai Parmanand, M. L. A. (Ex-president, Hindu Maha Sabha), Mahatma Hans Raj, Dr. Gokal Chand Narang, Minister for Local Self-Government Raja Narendra Nath, M. L. C. etc, have dissociated themselves from this step of the Mandal.

Despite all this the runners of the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal, (the leading figure being Sjt. Sant Ram) are determined to wade through thick and thin but would not give up the idea of your presidentship. The Mandal has earned a bad name.

× × × × ×

Under the circumstances it becomes your duty to cooperate with the Mandal. On the one hand, they are being put to so much trouble and hardship by the Hindus and if on the other hand you too augment their difficulties it will be a most sad coincidence of bad luck for them.
We hope you will think over the matter and do what is good for us all.

This letter puzzled me greatly. I could not understand why the Mandal should displease me for the sake of a few Rupees in the matter of printing the address. Secondly, I could not believe that men like Sir Gokal Chand Narang had really resigned as a protest against my selection as President because I had received the following letter from Sir Gokal Chand himself:

5 Montgomery Road
Lahore, 7-2-36

Dear Doctor Ambedkar,

I am glad to learn from the workers of the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal that you have agreed to preside at their next anniversary to be held at Lahore during the Easter holidays. It will give me much pleasure if you stay with me while you are at Lahore.

More when we meet.

Yours sincerely
G. C. Narang.

Whatever be the truth I did not yield to this pressure. But even when the Mandal found that I was insisting upon having my address printed in Bombay instead of agreeing to my proposal the Mandal sent me a wire that they were sending Mr. Har Bhagwan to Bombay to "talk over matters personally". Mr. Har Bhagwan came to Bombay on the 9th of April. When I met Mr. Har Bhagwan I found that he had nothing to say regarding the issue. Indeed, he was so unconcerned regarding the printing of the address, whether it should be printed in Bombay or in Lahore, that he did not even mention it in the course of our conversation.
All that he was anxious for was to know the contents of the address. I was then convinced that in getting the address printed in Lahore the main object of the Mandal was not to save money but to get at the contents of the address. I gave him a copy. He did not feel very happy with some parts of it. He returned to Lahore. From Lahore, he wrote to me the following letter.

Lahore, Dated April 14, 1936.

My dear Doctor Sahib,

Since my arrival from Bombay, on the 12th, I have been indisposed owing to my having not slept continuously for 5 or 6 nights which were spent in the train. Reaching here I came to know that you had come to Amritsar. I would have seen you there if I were well enough to go about. I have made over your address to Mr. Sant Ram for translation and he has liked it very much, but he is not sure whether it could be translated by him for printing before the 25th. In any case, it would have a wide publicity and we are sure it would wake the Hindus up from their slumber.

The passage I pointed out to you at Bombay has been read by some of our friends with a little misgiving, and those of us who would like to see the Conference terminate without any untoward incident would prefer that at least the word “Veda” be left out for the time being. I leave this to your good sense. I hope, however, in your concluding paragraphs you will make it clear that the views expressed in the address are your own and that the responsibility does not lie on the Mandal. I hope you will not mind this statement of mine and would let us have 1000 copies of the address, for which we shall, of course, pay. To this effect I have sent you a telegram today. A cheque of Rs. 100 is enclosed herewith which kindly acknowledge, and send us your bills in due time.
I have called a meeting of the Reception Committee and shall communicate their decision to you immediately. In the meantime kindly accept my heartfelt thanks for the kindness shown to me and the great pains taken by you in the preparation of your address. You have really put us under a heavy debt of gratitude.

Yours sincerely,

Har Bhagwan.

P. S. Kindly send the copies of the address by passenger train as soon as it is printed, so that copies may be sent to the Press for publication.

Accordingly I handed over my manuscript to the Printer with an order to print 1000 copies. Eight days later, I received another letter from Mr. Har Bhagwan which I reproduce below:

Dear Dr. Ambedkar,

Lahore, 22-4-56

We are in receipt of your telegram and letter, for which kindly accept our thanks. In accordance with your desire, we have again postponed our Conference, but feel that it would have been much better to have it on the 25th and 26th, as the weather is growing warmer and warmer every day in the Punjab. In the middle of May it would be fairly hot, and the sittings in the day time would not be very pleasant and comfortable. However, we shall try our best to do all we can to make things as comfortable as possible if it is held in the middle of May.

There is, however, one thing that we have been compelled to bring to your kind attention. You will remember that when I pointed out to you the misgivings entertained by some of our people regarding your declaration on the subject of change of religion, you told me that it was unfortunate outside the scope of the Hariri and that you had no intention to say anything from outside, in that of
At the same time when the manuscript of your address was handed to me you assured me that that was the main portion of your address and that there were only two or three concluding paragraphs that you wanted to add. On receipt of the second instalment of your address we have been taken by surprise, as that would make it so lengthy, that we are afraid, very few people would read the whole of it. Besides that you have more than once stated in your address that you had decided to walk out of the fold of the Hindus and that that was your last address as a Hindu. You have also unnecessarily attacked the morality and reasonableness of the Vedas and other religious books of the Hindus, and have at length dwelt upon the technical side of Hindu religion, which has absolutely no connection with the problem at issue, so much so that some of the passages have become irrelevant and off the point. We would have been very pleased if you had confined your address to that portion given to me, or if an addition was necessary it would have been limited to what you had written on Brahminism, etc. The last portion which deals with the complete annihilation of Hindu religion and doubts the morality of the sacred books of the Hindus as well as a hint about your intention to leave the Hindu fold does not seem to me to be relevant.

I would therefore most humbly request you on behalf of the people responsible for the Conference to leave out the passages referred to above, and close the address with what was given to me or add a few paragraphs on Brahminism. We doubt the wisdom of making the address unnecessarily provocative and pinching. There are several of us who subscribe to your feelings and would very much want to be under your banner for remodelling of the Hindu religion. If you had decided to get together persons of your cult I can assure you a large number would have joined your army of reformers from the Punjab.
In fact, we thought you would give us a lead in the destruction of the evil of caste system, especially when you have studied the subject so thoroughly, and strengthen our hands by bringing about a revolution and making yourself as a nucleus in the gigantic effort, but declaration of the nature made by you when repeated loses its power, and becomes a hackneyed term. Under the circumstances I would request you to reconsider the whole matter and make your address more effective by saying that you would be glad to take a leading part in the destruction of the system caste if the Hindus are willing to work in right earnest toward that end, even if they had to forsake their kith and kin and the religious notions. In case you do so, I am sanguine that you would find a ready response from the Punjab in such an endeavour.

I shall be grateful if you will help us at this juncture as we have already undergone much expenditure and have been put to suspense, and let us know by the return of post that you have condescended to limit your address as above. In case, you still insist upon the printing of the address in toto, we very much regret it would not be possible—rather advisable for us to hold the Conference, and would prefer to postpone it sine die, although by doing so we shall be losing the goodwill of the people because of the repeated postponements. We should, however, like to point out that you have carved a niche in our hearts by writing such a wonderful treatises on the caste system, which excels all other treatises so far written and will prove to be a valuable heritage, so to say. We shall be ever indebted to you for the pains taken by you in its preparation.

Thanking you very much for your kindness and with best wishes,

I am, yours sincerely,

Har Bhagwan.
To this letter I sent the following reply:—

27th April 1936.

Dear Mr. Har Bhagwan,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 22nd April. I note with regret that the Reception Committee of the Jat--Pat--Todak Mandal "would prefer to postpone the Conference sine die"—if I insisted upon printing the address in toto. In reply I have to inform you that I also would prefer to have the Conference cancelled—I do not like to use vague terms— if the Mandal insisted upon having my address pruned to suit its circumstances. You may not like my decision. But I cannot give up, for the sake of the honour of presiding over the Conference, the liberty which every president must have in the preparation of the address. I cannot give up for the sake of pleasing the Mandal the duty which every President owes to the Conference over which he presides to give it a lead which he thinks right and proper. The issue is one of principle and I feel I must do nothing to compromise it in any way.

I would not have entered into any controversy as regards the propriety of the decision taken by the Reception Committee. But as you have given certain reasons which appear to throw the blame on me I am bound to answer them. In the first place, I must dispel the notion that the views contained in that part of the address to which objection has been taken by the Committee have come to the Mandal as a surprise. Mr. Sant Ram, I am sure, will bear me out when I say that in reply to one of his letters I had said that the real method of breaking up the Caste System was not to bring about inter-caste dinners and inter-caste marriages but to destroy the religious notions on which Caste was founded and that Mr. Sant Ram in return asked me to explain what he said was a novel point of view. It was in response to this invitation from Mr. Sant Ram that I thought I ought to elaborate in my address what I had stated in a sentence in my letter to him. You
cannot, therefore, say that the views expressed are new. At any rate, they are not new to Mr. Sant Ram who is the moving spirit and the leading light of your Mandal. But I go further and say that I wrote this part of my address not merely because I felt it desirable to do so. I wrote it because I thought that it was absolutely necessary to complete the argument. I am amazed to read that you characterize the portion of the speech to which your Committee objects as 'irrelevant and off the point.' You will allow me to say that I am a lawyer and I know the rules of relevancy as well as any member of your Committee. I most emphatically maintain that the portion objected to is not only most relevant but is also important. It is in that part of the address that I have discussed the ways and means of breaking up the Caste System. It may be that the conclusion. I have arrived at as to the best method of destroying Caste is startling and painful. You are entitled to say that my analysis is wrong. But you cannot say that in an address which deals with the problem of Caste it is not open to me to discuss how Caste can be destroy.

Your other complaint relates to the length of the address. I have pleaded guilty to the charge in the address itself. But, who is really responsible for this? I fear you have come rather late on the scene. Otherwise you would have known that originally I had planned to write a short address for my own convenience as I had neither the time nor the energy to engage myself in the preparation of an elaborate thesis. It was the Mandal who asked me to deal with the subject exhaustively and it was the Mandal which sent down to me a list of questions relating to the Caste System and asked me to answer them in the body of my address as they were questions which were often raised in the controversy between the Mandal and its opponents and which the Mandal found difficult to answer satisfactorily. It was in trying to meet the wishes of the Mandal in this respect that the address has grown to the length to which it has. In view of what I have
said I am sure you will agree that the fault respecting length of the address is not mine.

I did not expect that your Mandal would be so upset because I have spoken of the destruction of Hindu Religion. I thought it was only fools who were afraid of words. But lest there should be any misapprehension in the minds of the people I have taken great pains to explain what I mean by religion and destruction of religion. I am sure that nobody on reading my address could possibly misunderstand me. That your Mandal should have taken a fright at mere words as 'destruction of religion etc.' notwithstanding the explanation that accompanies them does not raise the Mandal in my estimation. One cannot have any respect or regard for men who take the position of the Reformer and then refuse even to see the logical consequences of that position, let alone following them out in action.

You will agree that I have never accepted to be limited in any way in the preparation of my address and the question as to what the address should or should not contain was never even discussed between myself and the Mandal. I had always taken for granted that I was free to express in the address such views as I held on the subject. Indeed until, you came to Bombay on the 9th April the Mandal did not know what sort of an address I was preparing. It was when you came to Bombay that I voluntarily told you that I had no desire to use your platform from which to advocate my views regarding change of religion by the Depressed Classes. I think I have scrupulously kept that promise in the preparation of the address. Beyond a passing reference of an indirect character where I say that "I am sorry I will not be here......etc." I have said nothing about the subject in my address. When I see you object even to such a passing and so indirect a reference, I feel bound to ask; did you think that in agreeing to preside over your Conference I would be agreeing to suspend or to give up my views regarding change
of faith by the Depressed Classe? If you did think so I must tell you that I am in no way responsible for such a mistake on your part. If any of you had even hinted to me that in exchange for the honour you were doing me by electing as President, I was to abjure my faith in my programme of conversion I would have told you in quite plain terms that I cared more for my faith than for any honour from you.

After your letter of the 14th, this letter of yours comes as a surprise to me. I am sure that any one who reads them will feel the same. I cannot account for this sudden volte face on the part of the Reception Committee. There is no difference in substance between the rough draft which was before the Committee when you wrote your letter of the 14th and the final draft on which the decision of the Committee communicated to me in your letter under reply was taken. You cannot point out a single new idea in the final draft which is not contained in the earlier draft. The ideas are the same. The only difference is that they have been worked out in greater detail in the final draft. If there was anything to object to in the address you could have said so on the 14th. But you did not. On the contrary you asked me to print off 1000 copies leaving me the liberty to accept or not the verbal changes which you suggested. Accordingly I got 1000 copies printed which are now lying with me. Eight days later you write to say that you object to the address and that if it is not amended the Conference will be cancelled. You ought to have known that there was no hope of any alteration being made in the address. I told you when you were in Bombay that I would not alter a comma, that I would not allow any censorship over my address and that you would have to accept the address as it came from me. I also told you that the responsibility for the views expressed in the address was entirely mine and if they were not liked by the Conference I would not mind at all if the Conference passed
a resolution condemning them. So anxious was I to relieve your Mandal from having to assume responsibility for my views and also with the object of not getting myself entangled by too intimate an association with your Conference, I suggested to you that I desired to have my address treated as a sort of an inaugural address and not as a Presidential address and that the Mandal should find some one else to preside over the Conference, and deal with the resolutions. Nobody could have been better placed to take a decision on the 14th than your Committee. The Committee failed to do that and in the meantime cost of printing has been incurred which, I am sure, with a little more firmness on the part of your Committee could have been saved.

I feel sure that the views expressed in my address have little to do with the decision of your Committee. I have reasons to believe that my presence at the Sikh Prachar Conference held at Amritsar has had a good deal to do with the decision of the Committee. Nothing else can satisfactorily explain the sudden volte face shown by the Committee between the 14th and the 22nd April. I must not however prolong this controversy and must request you to announce immediately that the Session of the Conference which was to meet under my Presidentship is cancelled. All the grace has by now run out and I shall not consent to preside even if your Committee agreed to accept my address as it is in toto. I thank you for your appreciation of the pains I have taken in the preparation of the address. I certainly have profited by the labour if no one else does. My only regret is that I was put to such hard labour at a time when my health was not equal to the strain it has caused

Yours sincerely,
B. R. Ambedkar.
This correspondence will disclose the reasons which have led to the cancellation by the Mandal of my appointment as President and the reader will be in a position to lay the blame where it ought properly to belong. This is I believe the first time when the appointment of a President is cancelled by the Reception Committee because it does not approve of the views of the President. But whether that is so or not, this is certainly the first time in my life to have been invited to preside over a conference of Caste Hindus. I am sorry that it has ended in a tragedy. But what can any one expect from a relationship so tragic as the relationship between the reforming sect of Caste Hindus and the self-respecting sect of Untouchables where the former have no desire to alienate their orthodox fellows and the latter have no alternative but to insist upon reform being carried out?

Rajgraha
Dadar, Bombay-14
15th May 1936.

B. R. AMBEDKAR
who is alleged to have inspired Shri Sai to establish a
clear by Ramdas a Brahmin saint from Maharashtra.
merely because he is well-versed. This is made very
do not permit a Hindu to accept any one as his Guru
lessons and from whom he should not. The Brahmins
fore knows from whom a Hindu should take his
friends.

friends.
ANNIHILATION OF CASTLE
and the battle was fought with your victory in either
form. For a decade the forces were evenly balanced
was whether social reform should precede political re-
form, a decade later it became two hostile camps. The point at issue
for the two parties was supported by the political Reform Party
the Social Conference. The two parties
represented the National Congress and the Social Reform
Party and the Social Conference. The two parties
developed into two parties, a Political Reform Party
sessions in the same pandal. But soon the two wings
of the Congress and the Conference worked as two wings
the organisation of the Hindu Society. For some time
the conference was held in the same pandal. But soon the two wings
the Congress and the Social Conference were held in the same
the Social Conference was held in the same pandal. But soon the two wings
on the country, the Social Conference was held in the same

It was at one time recognised that without social
the Socialists

The Socialists

class consists of political reformers and the other of
figures. The figures fall into two distinct classes. One
Social Reform in India has few friends and many
at any rate in India, as seen in many difficulties.
The path of social reform is like the path to heaven,
Annihilation of Castle
Let me take more recent facts. The Tyranny practiced
Hindu who might unconsciously happen to lead on it,
silk, lest his silk falling on earth should pollute a
hung in his neck wherever he went, for holding his
untouchable was required to carry an outward pot,
on the same should be polluted. In Poon, the
behind the dust he leaded on lost a Hindu walking
string from his waist, a broom to sweep away from
of the Peshwa, the untouchable was required to carry,
by his touch through mistake. In Poon, the capital
prevented the Hindus from getting themselves polluted
on his wrist or in this neck as a sign or a mark to
untouchable was required to have a black thread either
should pollute the Hindu by his shadow. The
public streets if a Hindu was coming alone lest he
community the untouchable was not allowed to use the
Under the rule of the Peshwas in the Maratha
my facts.

draw upon the treatment of the untouchables for
matter if I state the other side of the case. I will
another? It will help us to understand the
consideratively that social reform has no bearing on
does it prove that the victory
of Mr. Bonner? Then? Does it prove that the victory
do not leave the case for political reform as put
I have stated the case for political reform as put

raised to Oxford and Cambridge? (cheers).
The Hindus also let themselves be surrounded by Balis, owned by Hindus, the Balai could own a Hindu, so that if the Balai held a Hindu, the latter would be protected from passing through land not owned by a Hindu, so their cattle could not get water from the village wells; they were not allowed to go beyond the village limits. The Hindus often proceeded against them, Balais were not allowed to stay anywhere within a certain distance. The Balais refused to comply and the Hindus were often forced to give in. If the Balais do not agree to demand compensation, and must accept whatever a Hindoo woman, 7. Balais must render services without payment. 8. Women must attend all cases of confinement or hindrances. 9. They must not wear heavy gold or silver ornaments; before the processions and during the marriage. 10. In all Hindoo marriages, Balais must play music. 11. In every case of death of any Hindoo, they must convey information of the decease to the respective village Balais. 12. They must not wear clothes with coloured or fancy borders. 13. They must not wear gold lace-bordered subscriptions. 14. Then they must conform to the following rules: 1. Informed the Balais of their respective villages that if they wished to live among Hindus, the Balais in the respective villages (of the Indore State) informed the Balais of their respective villages. 2. The correspondent of the Times of India reported that high caste Hindus had arranged to get a report of this in the Times of India, an unapproachable community in Central India, will serve my purpose.
But while the assembly of Untouchables, in the presence of the Chief Minister, Mr. Gajadhar, also attended by the Prime Minister and several Ministers, was served an excellent dinner, the Untouchables of the village, as an act of religious feelings, unapproachable, gave a dinner to the President of the Untouchable community of Chakwara, who had returned from the village in Jafpur State. It seems from the reports in the newspapers that an assault was made upon the use of metal pots by the Untouchables, an assault upon the use of metal pots. The Hindus looked upon the use of metal pots for the ritual drinking of water in metal pots. Another instance occurred in Dwarahat, Deoria, Bihar, where the Untouchables of a village, in the presence of the Chief Minister, Mr. Gajadhar, also attended by the Prime Minister and several Ministers, were served an excellent dinner, the Untouchables of the village, as an act of religious feelings, unapproachable, gave a dinner to the President of the Untouchable community of Chakwara, who had returned from the village in Jafpur State. It seems from the reports in the newspapers that an assault was made upon the use of metal pots by the Untouchables, an assault upon the use of metal pots for the ritual drinking of water in metal pots.
This happened on or about the 1st of April 1896. Since it is an act of arrogance towards the Hindus, the Muslims and other races, it is an act of murder. This act was in accordance with the dignity of the Hindus. This means that in Amritsar, the Hindus could not be thought of as a superior race, since they had equal rights. The Hindus, therefore, were thought of as a lower race, and this act was undoubtedly a lynching for the sake of the uneducated untouchables. The reason given is that the untouchables had committed the crime of murder. And why was this murderous assault committed against uneducated untouchables? The answer is that the untouchables were despised, and when they served their food without pratice, the despised food was used for the purpose of the untouchables. The Hindus, in fact, were engaged in partaking of the food, and the Hindus in
the social reform in the sense of the break-up of the
social reform of the family. It did not relate to
The brake that was fought centered round the ques-
tion
them and which were personally felt by them: They
child marriages, etc., evils which prevailed among
greater urge to remove such evils as enforced widowhood,
courage to agitate for it. They felt quite naturally
agitation for the abolition of caste or had not the
high caste Hindus who did not feel the necessity for
Hindu Family. It consisted mostly of enlightened
concerned itself with the reform of the high caste
The Social Conference was a body which mainly
the latter relates to the abolition of the caste system,
relation to widow remarriage, child marriages, etc. While
reconstruction of the Hindu Society. The former has
social reform in the sense of the Reorganization and
in the sense of the reform of the Hindu Family and
necessary to make a distinction between social reform
reformers were agitating for. In this connection it is
to take note of the kind of social reform which the
the battle? To understand this correctly it is necessary,
the other class.

a country must admit that one class is not fit to
the dogma of Mill that one country is not fit to rule
an affirmative answer. Every Congress man who repeats
no sensible man will have the courage to give an
would have been the reply of Mr. Bannerman. I am sure
such questions. But then we will suppose: I wonder what
for political power even though you do not allow them
Communal Award, with its allocation of political power in
is evidence at home. What is the significance of the
But it is not necessary to go to Russia. These
society.

In those conditions of forces which exist in practice within
and permanence only when they actually express value
the country: hence political constitutions have value
only in the actual condition of force which exists in
The actual constitution of a country has its existence
instance not questions of right but questions of might.
The constitutional questions are in the first

in 1864, Lassalle said:—

In addressing a Prussian audience
person than Ferdinand Lassalle, the friend and co-worker
social forces is a fact which is recognized by no less a
makers of political constitutions must take account of
which, I am sure, cannot be controverted. That the
in the sense of recognition of society is a thesis
cannot with implicitly take precedence over social reform
is meant the reform of the family. That political reform
is a view which may stand only when by social reform
view that social reform need not precede political reform
obtained over the social reform party and that the
limited was the victory which the political reform party
lost the battle. It also helps us to understand how
value it not more. It explains why social reformers
over social reform. But the argument has this much
fact that political reform did in fact gain precedence
I am aware that this argument cannot alter the
Party lost.

That is the reason why the Social Reform

class system. It was never put in issue by the reform.
By the attitude of Ulster to Home Rule, it is nothing new that he has taken the attitude which Ulster took a hundred years ago towards the majority of the君民. It is true that the majority of the君民 has not been able to bring Ulster to return to Home Rule, in order to bring Ulster into the United Kingdom. Mr. Redmond, the representative of Ulster, has made a statement that the United Kingdom is not the place for Ulster. Home Rule is a better solution. It is well-known that in the course of Irish Home Rule the view is current, and it is pleasant to believe in it.

Many, I know, will not accept this finding of the House of Commons. The constitutional case is so strong that it is impossible to accept the finding of the House of Commons. The constitutional case is so strong that it is impossible to accept the finding of the House of Commons. The constitutional case is so strong that it is impossible to accept the finding of the House of Commons. The constitutional case is so strong that it is impossible to accept the finding of the House of Commons.

In my view, the significance lies in this that political differences are defined as proportions to diverse classes and communities.
Repub\(\text{lican Constitution of Rome had these provisions and the other half Parti-}\)

\(\text{tions. Why is it then that the same constitution had also provided that, of the Plebeians, one was to be Parti-}
\)

\(\text{tion and the other Plebeian?) The Plebeian Constitution had provided that, of the two Consuls, the Plebeian had provided for the two Consuls over the religious authority of the King. This re-}
\(\text{quired the immediately was divided between the Consuls and the King's power of the religious authority of the King, while the latter took the
\text{Republican Constitution of Rome. When the}
\)

\(\text{Republican Constitution of Rome will know that any one who has studied the His-}
\text{tory of Rome will know that any one can say that any evil genius was at work. Any}
\(\text{one can see that any evil genius was at work. But my resources are not exhaus-}
\text{ted. That here too the hand of the Imperialists was evi-}
\(\text{dence again is sure to be challenged. It will be pre-}
\text{vented the solution of the political problem, which is only another way of saying that it was the social problem where the question had framed their answer. But that
\text{Resolution's essentially a problem of caste. That Home}
\)

\(\text{Southern Ireland-the problem between Catholics and Protestants, which
\text{is that there was a social problem between Ulster and Ulster take this attitude? The only answer I can give
\text{is why did positions were devised for them? But provided some safeguards were devised for them? And which has not shown much sense of statesmanship, that the minorities agreed to be ruled by the majority
\text{ANNIHILATION OF CASTE
\text{12}}
\)}
The political revolution led by Shi'ah was preceded by the religious revolution of Buddhism. The political revolution led by the religious and social reform brought Muhammad. Even Indian History supports the same conclusions. Religion and social revolution have always been preceded by a vigorous religious movement. Before the independence and partition of Indian history supports the same conclusion. The political revolution and partition have always been preceded by a vigorous religious movement.

The political revolution has been preceded by religious and social revolution. The proposition bears out the proposition that political revolutions have always been preceded by a vigorous religious and social movement. The proposition bears out the proposition that political revolutions have always been preceded by a vigorous religious and social movement. The proposition bears out the proposition that political revolutions have always been preceded by a vigorous religious and social movement. The proposition bears out the proposition that political revolutions have always been preceded by a vigorous religious and social movement. The proposition bears out the proposition that political revolutions have always been preceded by a vigorous religious and social movement.

The illustrations which I have taken in support of the prevailing social order of the prevailing social order cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order. They cannot ignore the problem arising out of the prevailing social order.
Illustrated by the history of India, where the priest holds
and Mecca? That religion is the source of power is
which constitutes their only wealth and go to Prepar
millions of paupers in India sell their Riving An
in India, why penniless Sadhu and Pilgrims do
have held over the common man. Why do millions
is made clear by the way which the Authority
by itself often becomes a source of power in and authority
society can accept? That the social status of an individual
power is the only kind of power no student of human
motive by which man is actuated. That economic
may contain that economic motive is not the only
having priority over every other kind of reform. One
which rests the Socialists' case for economic reform
One may join issue on every one of theses premises on
must have precedence over every other kind of reform
and that economic reform by equalization of property
political and social reforms are not slogan! Illusions
only source of power. They, therefore, preach that
ions are bound by economic facts, that property is the
is an economic creature, that this activity is and aspira-
History to the facts of India. They propound that man
are seeking to apply the economic interpretation of
The Socialists of India following their fellows in Europe
Is that ignore the problem arising out of the social order?
Let me now turn to the Socialists. Can the Social-

ANNIHILATION OF CASTE
cornerstone of the oracle of Delphi where all criticisms were held. The priests who were in charge of the
oracle of Delphi declared that he was acceptable to
Plebeians. This question reveals the domination which religion
in any other question. The answer to this question must be
republican constitution of Rome and the poer
Plebeians in carrying on the administration of the
Plebeian Consuls used to discriminate against the
plebeians a Consul of their own because they felt that the
Communita, which was an assembly of Plebeians. They
appointed a separate electorate constituted by the Communita,
seem the appointment of a Plebian Consul elected
supreme executive under the Roman Republic which had
this point. The Plebs had fought for a share in the
can so easily be given a religious twist. Take the case
strikes and elections, so easily takes a religious turn and
magnificent and where everything, even such things as
a sway over the common man often greater than the
PROPOSITION OF CASTE
ideal if liberty means the destruction of the dominion stage, that is the only difference, if liberty is the dominant at one stage, the other is predominant at another. One has to control the liberty of another. One is predominant because in the present stage of European Society, property as a source of power is greater than the Philippines. Rather than give up religion, able to the Philippines. Rather than give up religion, suitable to the Goddeess which in fact meant more amenity to elect another, less suitable to the descendants but more with which they had obtained. But they did not. They agreed have destroyed the fullest benefit from the political right. If the Goddeess was enough and the people was not enough. If the Philippines had charge by an official of his duties and that election by the Goddeess was a condition precedent to the taking of participations, held firmly the belief that the approval of participations permitted them - worthy of note is that the Philippines permitted them. But what is participations or communal to use the term that is was known to be a strong party man opposed to the communal who

Annihilation of Castle
Socialism is a practical solution to the various classes. It involves a complete lack of understanding of what I believe in perfect equality in the treatment of classes and groups. I think that Socialism offers the only belief in perfect equality in the treatment of various classes and suppression of one class by another. A free society in India is not possible for this is a trace of the existence of a class. I do not believe that we can build up a free society in India so long as there is a trace of this which the said, I do not believe that we have considered this Socialists of India do not seem to have considered this brought about a reform of the Social Order. The bringing about a reform of the Social Order is this: Can you have economic reform without first thinking these? However, when I like to ask the Socialists that the only real reform that I must proceed every Socialist conception that economic interpretation of the Socialists of History adapted by the Socialists of India. But I recognize that economic interpretation of History is not necessary for the validity of the Socialists of History are applied to the Socialists of Economic doctrine. One can thus attack the doctrine of Economic reform and religious reform must be accepted as the necessary sort of reform. If the source of power and domination is at any given time or in any given society social and religious then it cannot be insisted upon that economic reform must be the one kind of reform worthy of pursuit; only it which one man holds over another then avoid—
said that the poor in India recognize no such distinctions
proleteriat of India, poor as it is, recognizing no discrimi-
personal equality and fraternity. Can it be said that the
the companions towards one another in their spirit of
much deeper foundation, namely, the mental attitude of
The assurance must be the assurance proceeding from
not believe in case, I am sure, will not suffice.
range of a socialist leading the revolution that he does
will be no discrimination of caste and creed. The assu-
achieved they will be treated equally and that there
of property unless they know that after the revolution
kno that after the revolution for the equalization
feeling of equality and fraternity and above all of justice.
other men with whom he is acitive are actuated by
move one man to take such an action is the feeling that
move one man to take such an action is the only thing that will
What will move men to such an action? It seems to me
prateletarian. The first question I ask is, Will the prole-
tens of India combine to bring about this revolution?
seizure of power. That seizure of power must be by a
come about unless there is a revolution resulting in the
that are involved in the realization of socialism in order
that I believe is equally. The question for him is whether he

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The defences are many. It is defended on the SP and

It is a pity that caste even to-day has its defenders.

IV

This monster: you cannot have economic reform, unless you kill that cross your path. You cannot have political reform, that, turn in any direction you like, case is the monster before revolution. This is only another way of saying of case after revolution if he does not take account of the incontrovertible. He will be compelled to take account of his ideal, is a proposition which in my opinion is true. He will have to grapple with it if he wishes to realize that if he does acquiesce in a result of good fortune unless he does so he cannot achieve his revolution and unless he does so he cannot achieve his revolution and India is a matter with a Socialist must deal with, that to escape from it. That the social order prevalent in reform is fundamental and that for them there is no then they must recognize that the problem of social the Socialists wish to make Socialism a definite reality to be concerned with the meaning of this phrase, if not high and low, clean and unclean. If Socialists are not with which make Indian people observe the distinctions of struggle with the problems created by the prejudices of India can function for a second without having to predictors in India? I can't see how a Socialist can function in power. I will they not have to deal with the problem that by some point? Suppose for the sake of argument that by some height of fortune a revolution does take place and the farmer in its action against the rich? How can there be do, what unity of front can be expected from such a prolif-

Annihilation of Caste
his livelihood. Now the Caste System will not allow circumstances to make it impossible for him to earn a living. Such freedom to adjust himself to changing
an individual must be free to change his occupation, undergoes rapid and abrupt changes. With such changes
is positively pernicious. Industry is never static. It
looked at from another point of view, this stratification
on a basis of trained original
individuals in attempt to appoint tasks to individuals in
principle is violated in the Caste System in so far as it
petency to choose and to make his own career. This
the capacity of an individual to the point of com-
not spontaneous, it is not based on natural abilities.
view of the Caste System. This division of labour is
which is also a third point of criticism against this
there is no division of labour accompanied by this gradation of labourers.
and the division
where in which the divisions of labourers are graded
which is quite different from division of labour. It is an
Caste System is not merely a division of labourers
to water-light compartments. This unnatural
needs division of labour. But in no civilized society is
civilized society undeniably
division of labour accompanied by this.
ly is also a division of labour systems. Nothing wrong in the Caste System. Now the first
time to be urged against this view is that Caste
of every civilized society then it is argued that there
do not and it division of labour is a necessary feature that
that the Caste System is not another name for division

ANNIHILATION OF CASTE
powers and initiations to the experiences of social rules. Much as it involves the subordination of man’s natural organization. Case is therefore a harmful institution, in as not their minds are in their work? As an economic can there be in a system under which neither men’s hearts can there form them by the Hindu Religion. What efficiency those who follow them owing to the slight and stigma because of the blistering effect which they produce upon evade and escape from such occupations which arise solely are engaged in it to aversion. There is a consistent desire to regarded as debarred by the Hindu, provoke those who in Indian which on account of the fact that they are will and the desire to evade. There are many occupations will such callings consistently provoke one to aversion, which make no appeal to those who are engaged in them, involves as the fact that so many persons have callings system is not so much poverty and the suffering that it us to recognize that the greatest evil in the industrial tion. Considerations of social efficiency would complete no place in it. It is based on the dogma of predilection—choice. Individual sentiment, individual preference has about by the Case System is not a division based on the division of labour. The Case System suffers from another division of labour. The Case System, as a form of unemployment, we see in the country. As a form of occupations, case becomes a direct cause of much of the unemployment, case is assigned to his case, the reason is to be found in the is seen to start rather than take to new occupations not if they do not belong to them by heredity. If a Hindu take to occupations where they are wanted Hindu.
the Pundar is racially of the same stock as the Brahmin of Madras and the Pundar of Madras? The Brahmin of touchable of Bengal is there between the Pundar and the Brahmin of Madras? What racial affinity is there between the Brahmin of the Pundar and the Brahmin prove the prevention of races? What racial affinity is there through they were so many different cases as different cases of race and to treat different cases as different cases of race as a matter of means of maintaining purity of blood. As a matter of means of preventing the admixture of races. As a The case system cannot be said to have grown as a delusion that they are free from all foreign element. also among the Brahmins who are under the happy the warrior classes—the Kshatriyas and the Marathas—bust There is an admixture of alien blood not only among Population has stated that „there is hardly a class of in this paper on Foreign Elements in the Hindu case with the people of India. Ml. D. R. Brahmaner races in all parts of the world. Especially is this the exist nowhere and that there has been a mixture of all races. It is said that the object of Case the Case System. It is said that the object of Case
ANNIHILATION OF CASTE

of the Punjab and the Brahmin of Madras. Castes, System is the same race as the Pariah of Madras. Castes, System is a social division of people of the same race. Assuming it, it is not a case of racial divisions such as those of races and of people of different races, any idea that the different races constitute different species of men. They are only varieties of species. But even scientists who believe in purity of races do not assert that the different races constitute different species of men. They are only varieties of species. As such, they can interbreed and produce an offspring which is capable of breeding and which is not sterile. An immense lot of nonsense is talked about heredity and eugenics in defence of the Castes System. Few would object to the Caste System if it is in accord with the basic principle of Eugenics, because few can object to the improvement of the race by judicious mating. But one fails to understand how the Caste System secures judicious mating. Caste System is a negative thing. It merely prohibits persons belonging to different castes from intermarrying. It is not a positive method of selecting which two among a given caste should marry. If Caste is eugenic in origin then the origin of sub-castes must also be eugenic. But can any one seriously maintain that the origin of sub-castes is eugenic? I think it would be absurd to contend for such a proposition and for a very obvious reason. If caste means race then differences of race
should have produced if Physically speaking the Hindus yields. If case is eugenic what sort of a race of men if possess. A race should be judged by the results it forebears of present-day Hindus a knowledge of physical powers result rather from the coincidence of low any single system of transmission. It is likely that the higher mental qualities to suggest that they for- unless we have definite knowledge regarding the laws to-day Eugenics cannot become a practical possibility support by science what is grossly unscientific. Even attempts to give it an eugenic basis are trying to mean or of determination of the race. This shows that therefore cannot be the cause either of the improve- the sub-castes alike. Inter-dimension cannot infect blood and interdritch placed on inter-dimension between cases and against inter-marriage. But what is the purpose of the case is eugenic in origin one can understand the bar. Against it conclusion that case is eugenic in origin. Against it eugenic in origin there cannot be any substance in the purity of race or of blood. If sub-castes cannot be for the purpose of maintaining against inter-marriage and inter-dimension between the bar because sub-castes become as physician sub-divisions

ANNIHILATION OF CASTE
Each case has no feeling that it is affiliated to other cases. A existence. Cases do not even form a federation. A Hindu Society as such does not exist. It is only a collection of cases. Each case is conscious of its existence. Its survival is the be-all and end-all of its existence. It has no feeling that it is affiliated to other cases. Each case has no feeling that it is affiliated to other cases.

VI

Annihilation of Case.

There is a race of people. They are a C3 people. They are a race of pictures and divers...
and customs, beliefs and thoughts of one group may be
from one to another like bridges. In the same way habits
turn men into society. Things may be passed physically
customs, beliefs and thoughts is not enough to contrast
from other men. Secondly similarity in habits and
a member of this society by living so many miles away
physically. Proximity of any more than a man cease to be
a society. When do not become a society by living in
a society. Therefore, the Hindus constitute a society. To do so is
there is. But one cannot accept the condition that
Similarly in habits and customs, beliefs and thoughts
which obtains all over the continent of India,
is a similarity of habits and customs, beliefs and
which makes the life of the Hindus in as much as there
the apparent diversity there is a fundamental unity
mass of people. They have insisted that underlying
are not a nation, that they are only an amorphous
partition does not permit them to admit that Indians
or a nation. These are however many Indians whose
reason why the Hindus cannot be said to form a society
exists is the consciousness of his caste. That is the
ness of kind. In every Hindu the consciousness that
"consciousness of kind". There is no Hindu consciousness
among the Hindus of what the sociologists call
have any contact with others. There is in utter lack
must be like a real living in his own whole regime to
which so assume the customs? Indeed the ideal Hindu
styles of dress worn by the men and women of India
what other explanation can there be of the innumerable
is itself but each case prescribes its own distinctive dress.
case not only differs among itself and matters among

ANNIHILATION OF CASTE

26
common activity it has prevented the Hindus from becoming a society with a unified life and a consciousness of its own being.

VII

The Hindus often complain of the isolation and exclusiveness of a gang or a clique and blame them for anti-social spirit. But they conveniently forget that this anti-social spirit is the worst feature of their own Caste System. One caste enjoys singing a hymn of hate against another caste as much as the Germans did in singing their hymn of hate against the English during the last war. The literature of the Hindus is full of caste geneologies in which an attempt is made to give a noble origin to one caste and an ignoble origin to other castes. The *Sahyadrikhand* is a notorious instance of this class of literature. This anti-social spirit is not confined to caste alone. It has gone deeper and has poisoned the mutual relations of the sub-castes as well. In my province the Golak Brahmins, Deorukha Brahmins, Karada Brahmins, Palshe Bramins and Chitpevan Bramins, all claim to be sub-divisions of the Brahmin Caste. But the anti-social spirit that prevails between them is quite as marked and quite as virulent as the anti-social spirit that prevails between them and other Non-Brahmin castes. There is nothing strange in this. An anti-social spirit is found wherever one group has "interests of its own" which shut it out from full interaction with other groups, so that its prevailing purpose is protection of what it has got. This anti-social spirit, this spirit of protecting its own interests is as much a marked feature of the different castes in their isolation from one another as it is of
nations in their isolation. The Brahmin's primary concern is to protect "his interests" against those of the Non-Brahmins and the Non-Brahmins' primary concern is to protect their interests against those of the Brahmins. The Hindus, therefore, are not merely an assortment of castes but they are so many warring groups each living for itself and for its selfish ideal. There is another feature of Caste which is deplorable. The ancestors of the present-day English fought on one side or the other in the wars of the Roses and the Cromwellian War. But the descendents of those who fought on the one side do not bear any animosity—any grudge against the descendents of those who fought on the other side. The feud is forgotten. But the present-day Non-Brahmins cannot forgive the present-day Brahmins for the insult their ancestors gave to Shivaji. The present-day Kayasthas will not forgive the present-day Brahmins for the infamy cast upon their forefathers by the forefathers of the latter. To what is this difference due? Obviously to the Caste System. The existence of Caste and Caste Consciousness has served to keep the memory of past feuds between castes green and has prevented solidarity.

VIII

The recent discussion about the excluded and partially included areas has served to draw attention to the position of what are called the aboriginal tribes in India. They number about 13 millions if not more. Apart from the questions whether their exclusion from the new Constitution is proper or improper, the fact still remains that these aborigines have remained in their primitive uncivilized state in a land which boasts
of a civilization thousands of years old. Not only are
they not civilized but some of them follow pursuits which
has led to their being classified as criminals. Thirteen
million of people living in the midst of civilization are
still in a savage state and are leading the life of here-
ditary criminals!! But the Hindus have never felt
ashamed of it. This is a phenomenon which in my view
is quite unparalleled. What is the cause of this sham-
ful state of affairs? Why has no attempt been made to
civilize these aborigines and to lead them to take to
a more honourable way of making a living? The Hindus
will probably seek to account for this savage state of the
aborigines by attributing to them congenital stupidity.
They will probably not admit that the aborigines have
remained savages because they had made no effort to
civilize them, to give them medical aid, to reform them,
to make them good citizens. But supposing a Hindu
wished to do what the Christian missionary is doing
for these aborigines, could he have done it? I submit
not. Civilizing the aborigines means adopting them as
your own, living in their midst, and cultivating fellow-
feeling, in short loving them. How is it possible for a
Hindu to do this? His whole life is one anxious effort to
preserve his caste. Caste is his precious possession
which he must save at any cost. He cannot consent to
lose it by establishing contact with the aborigines the
remnants of the hateful Anaryas of the Vedic days.
Not that a Hindu could not be taught the sense of
duty to fallen humanity, but the trouble is that no
amount of sense of duty can enable him to overcome
his duty to preserve his caste. Caste is, therefore, the real
explanation as to why the Hindu has let the savage...
But there is a set of reformers who hold out in

\[ \Delta \]

and which demands a severely practical test.

proceed in politics which is a severely practical affair

taking all in all is the only way a statesman can

The doctrine of equality isgantry philistine, but

but because classification and assortments impossible.

is to reall all men alike, not because they are alike

and ready rule and that rough and ready rule

The statesman, therefore, must follow some rough

humanity is not capable of assortments and classification,

or reasonable in equitable treatment of men, may be,

However desirably to need of according to capacity. However desirable

the distinctions and to treat and classify alike, e. according

He has neither the time nor the knowledge to draw

statesman is concerned with vast numbers of people.

is another reason why we must accept equality. A

one reason why we cannot escape equality. But there

far as possible at the very start of the race. That is

get most out of them only by making them equal as

social body to get the most out of its members, if can

other hand it can be urged that it is so good for the

we should treat men as equally as possible. On the

men unequally demands that in the first respect we should treat

which forces that in the third respect we should treat

be the selection of the privileged. The reason therefore

standards would not be a selection of the able. It would

name, business connections and inherited wealth would
The Hindu must base on birth, and act accordingly. The Hindu, therefore, divides the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisyya, and Shudra, are names which are associated with certain notions towards men and things. It is common experience that certain notions, sentiments, and mental attitudes of the people, with these labels. All reform consists in a change in the conclusion of the question, which Arya Samajists have not cared to answer. This is a common experience that Arya Samajists have not cared to answer. This is an ideal to which I cannot reconcile myself. In the first place, it under the basis of this Chaturvarnya, it is an ideal to which I must confess that not withstanding the worth of the ideal, is not based on birth. At the same time, I take great care to point out that their Chaturvarnya's opposition to the principles of Chaturvarnya, we have in India. To make it more attractive and to four classes instead of the four thousand cases that
must first break up the caste system, in order to be
able to a lower status based on this birth. For this you
are to a man in accordance with his worth, who is occup-
you going to compel people to recognize the status due
these to their worth to vacate that status. How are
acquired a higher status based on birth without reac-
worth. How are you going to compel people who have
also fundamentally opposed. The former is based on
only are they fundamentally different but they are
different from the principle underlying varna. Not
the principle underlying caste is fundamentally
its protagonists do not seem to have taken into account,
system of Chaitanya raises several difficulties which
a miserable failure. From a practical point of view, the
is impracticable, harmful and has turned out to be
that is a system of social organization, Chaitanya
which I rely for my opposition to
solid grounds on which I do not wish to rest my objection to Chaitanya
But I do not wish to rest my objection to Chaitanya
unity repellant and my whole being rebels against it.
To me this Chaitanya with its old labels is

XI

based on birth is a mere,

Kshatriya, Vaisya, Shudra, indicative of social divisions
designed by such sticking labels of Brahmin,
little. To allow this Chaitanya, based on worth to be
unite. To continue the old name is to make the reform
names. To continue the old name is to make the reform
in the minds of people it is necessary to give them new
mind old notions. If new notions are to be implemented
be made to unlearn all this. But how can this happen

ANNIHILATION OF CASTE
- the recognition of the infinite diversity of active men, he had no
- individuality forming a class of his own. He had no
- perception of the uniqueness of every individual, but is a very superficial view of man and his powers. Plato
- in a few sharply marked-off classes. The chief criticism against Plato is that his idea of lump-
- an accurate classification of men into four distinct classes,
- capacity to grasp the universal reason underlying war and guardians of internal peace. Others showed a
- courageous disposition. He classed them as decimals in
- to him that over and above appetites, they have a
- revealed. Others revealed by nature into three classes. In some individuals, he
- a close affinity to the Platonic ideal. To Plato, men fell
- respect, the ideal of Chaturvarnya has, as you will see,
- people into four definite classes. Is this possible? In this

Chaturvarnya presupposes that you can classify

Chaturvarnya a success.

The preconceptions of Chaturvarnya must gripe with it
- the preconceptions of Chaturvarnya must gripe with, the
- difficulties which the preconceptions of the Chaturvarnya
- the four Varnas, based on birth, to reduce the four thousand cases, based on birth, to
- able to establish the Varna system. How are you going
Ramayana of Rama Kiliing Shanbhuga, Some people cannot be realized, is proved by the story in the
That, without penal sanction the ideal of Chaturvanta
own inherent goodness. It must be enforced by law.
human nature. Chaturvanta cannot subsist by its
whole system will break down, being contrary to
when will not rest to their respective classes. The
there is a penalty attached to the act of transgression.
Unless personally face the problem of the transgressor. Unless
penalty. The system of Chaturvanta must per-
sanction. The system of Chaturvanta, which could maintain it by its
success will work. One important requirement for the
was established. One important requirement for the
"to maintain the system of Chaturvanta. Support for the
means of the system of Chaturvanta. How are you going
There is a third difficulty in the way of the establishment.

thousand castes.
that the original four classes have now become your
people into your definite class is proved by the fact
other. That it is impossible to accurately classify
holes, according as he belongs to one class of the
fail, namely, that it is not possible to pigeon hole into
for the very reason for which Plato’s Republic must still
of individuals are so variable. Chaturvanta must still
with their stratification by classes, since the qualities
utilization of the qualities of individuals is incomparable with
seriously considered. Consequently, the
worthy of serious consideration. A superficial view of man not
market of classes is a superfluous view of a few sharply
demonstrably wrong. Modern science has shown that
so powers in the individual constitution. All this is
dual is capable. To him, there were types of faculties

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The principle of Chaturvarnya, namely, that the status of a person should be based upon the worth of that person, is the underpinning granite of marriage. The status of the woman is to be the course grounds. If the status of the woman is to be the course of the woman, then it is useless and then the precepts of Chaturvarnya must admit that their system does not prevent the penal sanctions of Manu-Smiti.

to reinforce the penal sanctions of Manu-Smiti, they could induce modern society in the 20th century assurance that they could successfully classify men and women. The supporters of Chaturvarnya must give an Yeda. The sentence as cutting off the tongue of any male without the sentence as cutting off the tongue of the husband of a woman does not inflict on Shambhuka a lesser punishment.

why Rama did not inflict on Shambhuka a lesser punishment? That is why Manu-Smiti prescribes such heavy punishment by Rama. He did not want to kill Shambhuka. But this is the reason why Rama killed Shambhuka. This is the reason why Rama was bound to maintain Chaturvarnya. As a King Rama had to maintain Chaturvarnya. It was his duty therefore to kill Shambhuka. The Shambhuka, who had transgressed his class and wanted to be a Brahmin, This is the reason why Rama killed Shambhuka. But to blame Rama for killing Shambhuka is to misunderstand the whole situation. Rama did not blame Rama because he was guilty and without reason killed Shambhuka.
Chaturvanya, understood in this sense, may be said to be the kshatriya to protect him? The theory of need the Shudra worry to whom himself because there the occasion for reading or writing arises? Why when there is the Brahmin to whom he can so when Why need the Shudra bother to take to education, when the three Varnas are there to support him? Why should the Shudra need trouble to acquire wealth, why of Chaturvanya give in the first meaning. They say, he must not, is an interesting question. The defenders not, or that whichever it was intended to lay down that the theory was intended to state that the Shudra need though it was a system of division of labour, whether Brahmins should cultivate knowledge, that the梵 Joe should concern that it is the most vicious system. That the assuming that Chaturvanya is practicable, I

XIII

Regeneration of the Chaturvanya, constitutional idea could hope and believe in a successful women. Given these difficulties, I think no one except a logical outcome of applying Chaturvanya to women priests and women soldiers. But that will be a bold person, who would say that it will allow women bakers and women butchers. But he would women brewers and women bakers. It may grow accustomed to Hindu society has grown accustomed to women teachers. Chaturvanya prepared to have women priests and women soldiers, if it is real, are the prepositions of application to women. It is is real, are the prepositions of
their conception of Chaturvarnya that the relationship of Chaturvarnya seem to be troubled
dependent on the questions, which the theory is absurd. These are the questions, which
the fact that his neighbour is educated and armed help
means of every man for his self-preservation. How can
ever one must have. These are the paramount require-
needs. Education everyone must have. Means of defense
person depend upon another in the matter of his vital
may sometimes become allowable. But why make one
inevitable. Even dependence of one class upon another
the person who is taking him of it is the Kshatriya
matter of that of the Brahmin and the Vaisyha when
Who is to defend the liberty of the Shudra and for the
Who is to take advantage of his ignorance is the Brahmin?
Vaisyha and Kshatriya when the person, who is trying
interests of the Shudra or for the matter of that of the
combine to keep him down. Who is to safeguard the
three classes refuse to support him on fair terms or
one another, what is to happen to the Shudra or to
their functions but their duty to the Shudra or to
Contrary-wise, suppose that they discharge
Chaturvarnya, it seems to me that the system is neither
simple, elevating and alluring theory. Assuming this
Varuna as his Guardian. Thus interpreted, it is a
look upon the Shudra as the ward and the three.

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They could not bear arms and without arms they account of this wretched system of Chinturvarnya. have been completely disabled for direct action on can give and it is the the lower classes of Hindus revolutionary in India as a question which has necessarily revolutions in other countries of the world. Why have there not been social people tolerated the social evils to which they have been subjected? Why have there not been social revolutions in other varnishes is evidenced by the Laws of Manu. There is this is how the Shudras were treated by the He was prohibited from bearing arms except he should have the means to rebel against their authority. That he should keep a steady eye regarding his interests. He was prohibited from acquiring knowledge least Varnas. He was prohibited from compromising his interests to bear down the Shudra. He was not allowed to acquire in order to be able to live upon him, but the three agreed to read the Khatriyas and both let the Vashyas live in wealth least he be independent of the three classes of Brahmins, Khatriyas and Vashyas. The three classes, Brahmins, Khatriyas, and Vashyas practiced the relation was that of master and servant, for Without the relation of guard and ward was the real understanding conception, on which ward was the real understanding conception, on which Guardian. Whether the relation of the ward from theguardians of the the interests of the ward, from the misconduct of the be admitted that it makes no provision to safeguard be the different classes is that of ward and guardian
Annihilation of Caste

The Mysore Empire was completely sundered from defeat and dishonour. But the Mysore Empire, at all other times the country of freedom, greatness and glory. That is the period of Indian history which is a period of exaggeration. History bears ample evidence. There is no Chauri Chauri. It is the system which degrades, paralyses and cripples the people from helpful activity. This is no need to the masses in India by Chauri Chauri. There can be the weak in Europe. All these weapons were, however, de...
remodeled. As a pattern, on which the Hindu Society should be can hold out Chaturvartya as an ideal to be aimed at or
varias before us. I do not understand how any one
instances of rivalry and enmity between the different
that was to annihilate the Kshatriyas. With these
Krishna had taken after for one sacred purpose and
Brahman tells us very definitely that
were praying Almighty God for relief from their
disarmed as they were under the system of Chaturvartya,
Kshatriyas had become tyrannical and the masses,
Brahmin in eyesore to the Kshatriya and the Ksh-
when the two met in the street. Not only was the
should give way first, the Brahmins or the Kshatriyas,
Kshatriyas. They even quarreled over such petty
incidents of the strife between the Brahmins and the
many times have the Kshatriyas annihilated the Brah-
many times have the Kshatriyas annihilated the seed of the Kshatriyas. How
and is it has failed. How many times have the
the past as a system of social organisation. It has been
Arva Samajis to consider its claims. Judging from the
That is one of the reasons why we are asked by the
Chaturvartya is not new. It is as old as the Vedas.

XVIII

The country.

To the damnation of the greater part of the people of
darkness is the period when Chaturvartya Annihilated
the rulers of the country. The period of defeat and
mass of the people, came into their own and became
Annihilated, when the Shudras, who constituted the

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delusion to take comfort in the mere existence of caste among Non-Hindus, without caring to know what place caste occupies in their life and whether there are other "organic filaments," which subordinate the feeling of caste to the feeling of community. The sooner the Hindus are cured of this delusion the better.

The other set denies that caste presents any problem at all for the Hindus to consider. Such Hindus seek comfort in the view that the Hindus have survived and take this as a proof of their fitness to survive. This point of view is well expressed by Prof. S. Radhakrishnan in his *Hindu View of Life*. Referring to Hinduism he says: "The civilization itself has not been a short-lived one. Its historic records date back for over four thousand years and even then it had reached a stage of civilization which has continued its unbroken, though oft times slow and static, course until the present day. It has stood the stress and strain of more than four or five millenniums of spiritual thought and experience. Though peoples of different races and cultures have been pouring into India from the dawn of history, Hinduism has been able to maintain its supremacy and even the proselytising creeds backed by political power have not been able to coerce the large majority of Hindus to their views. The Hindu culture possesses some vitality which seems to be denied to some other more forceful currents. It is no more necessary to dissect Hinduism than to open a tree to see whether the sap still runs." The name of Prof. Radhakrishnan is big enough to invest with profundity whatever he says and impress the minds of his readers. But I must not hesitate to speak out my mind. For, I fear that his statement may become the basis of a vicious argument that
the fact of survival is proof of fitness to survive. It seems to me that the question is not whether a community lives or dies; the question is on what plane does it live. There are different modes of survival. But all are not equally honourable. For an individual as well as for a society, there is a gulf between merely living and living worthily. To fight in a battle and to live in glory is one mode. To beat a retreat, to surrender and to live the life of a captive is also a mode of survival. It is useless for a Hindu to take comfort in the fact that he and his people have survived. What he must consider is what is the quality of their survival. If he does that, I am sure he will cease to take pride in the mere fact of survival. A Hindu’s life has been a life of continuous defeat and what appears to him to be life ever-lasting is not living ever-lastingly but is really a life which is perishing ever-lastingly. It is a mode of survival of which every right-minded Hindu, who is not afraid to own up the truth, will feel ashamed.

XX

There is no doubt, in my opinion, that unless you change your social order you can achieve little by way of progress: You cannot mobilize the community either for defence or for offence. You cannot build anything on the foundations of caste. You cannot build up a nation, you cannot build up a morality. Anything that you will build on the foundations of caste will crack and will never be a whole.

The only question that remains to be considered is—How to bring about the reform of the Hindu social order? How to abolish Caste? This is a
question of supreme importance. There is a view that in the reform of caste, the first step to take, is to abolish sub-castes. This view is based upon the supposition that there is a greater similarity in manners and status between sub-castes than there is between castes. I think, this is an erroneous supposition. The Brahmins of Northern and Central India are socially of lower grade, as compared with the Brahmins of the Deccan and Southern India. The former are only cooks and water-carriers while the latter occupy a high social position. On the other hand, in Northern India, the Vaishyas and Kayasthas are intellectually and socially on a par with the Brahmins of the Deccan and Southern India. Again, in the matter of food there is no similarity between the Brahmins of the Deccan and southern India, who are vegetarians, and the Brahmins of Kashmere and Bengal who are non-vegetarians. On the other hand, the Brahmins of the Deccan and Southern India have more in common so far as food is concerned with such Non-Brahmins as the Gujeratis, Marwaris, Banias and Jains. There is no doubt that from the standpoint of making the transit from one caste to another easy, the fusion of the Kayasthas of Northern India and the other Non-Brahmins of southern India with the Non-Brahmins of the Deccan and the Dravid country is more practicable than the fusion of the Brahmins of the South with the Brahmins of the North. But assuming that the fusion of Sub-Castes is possible, what guarantee is there that the abolition of sub-Castes will necessarily lead to the abolition of Castes? On the contrary, it may happen that the process may stop with the abolition of sub-Castes. In that case, the abolition of sub-Castes will
only help to strengthen the Castes and make them more powerful and therefore more mischievous. This remedy is therefore neither practicable nor effective and may easily prove to be a wrong remedy. Another plan of action for the abolition of Caste is to begin with inter-caste dinners. This also, in my opinion, is an inadequate remedy. There are many Castes which allow inter-dining. But it is a common experience that inter-dining has not succeeded in killing the spirit of Caste and the consciousness of Caste. I am convinced that the real remedy is inter-marriage. Fusion of blood can alone create the feeling of being kith and kin and unless this feeling of kinship, of being kindred, becomes paramount the separatist feeling—the feeling of being aliens—created by Caste will not vanish. Among the Hindus inter-marriage must necessarily be a factor of greater force in social life than it need be in the life of the non-Hindus. Where society is already well-knit by other ties, marriage is an ordinary incident of life. But where society is cut asunder, marriage a binding force becomes a matter of urgent necessity. The real remedy for breaking Caste is inter-marriage. Nothing else will serve as the solvent of Caste. Your Jat Pat-Todak Mandal has adopted this line of attack. It is a direct and frontal attack, and I congratulate you upon a correct diagnosis and more upon your having shown the courage to tell the Hindus what is really wrong with them. Political tyranny is nothing compared to social tyranny and a reformer, who defies society, is a much more courageous man than a politician, who defies Government. You are right in holding that Caste will cease to be an oper-
ative force only. When inter-dining and inter-marriage have become matters of common course. You have located the source of the disease. But is your prescription the right prescription for the disease? Ask yourselves this question; Why is it that a large majority of Hindus do not inter-dine and do not inter-marry? Why is it that your cause is not popular? There can be only one answer to this question and it is that inter-dining and inter-marriage are repugnant to the beliefs and dogmas which the Hindus regard as sacred. Caste is not a physical object like a wall of bricks or a line of barbed wire which prevents the Hindus from co-mingling and which has, therefore, to be pulled down. Caste is a notion, it is a state of the mind. The destruction of Caste does not therefore mean the destruction of a physical barrier. It means a notional change. Caste may be bad. Caste may lead to conduct so gross as to be called man's inhumanity to man. All the same, it must be recognized that the Hindus observe Caste not because they are inhuman or wrong headed. They observe Caste because they are deeply religious. People are not wrong in observing Caste. In my view, what is wrong is their religion, which has inculcated this notion of Caste. If this is correct, then obviously the enemy you, must grapple with, is not the people who observe Caste, but the Shastras which teach them this religion of Caste. Criticising and ridiculing people for not inter-dining or inter-marrying or occasionally holding inter-caste dinners and celebrating inter-caste marriages, is a futile method of achieving the desired end. The real remedy is to destroy the belief in the sanctity of the Shastras. How
do you expect to succeed, if you allow the Shastras to continue to mould the beliefs and opinions of the people? Not to question the authority of the Shastras, to permit the people to believe in their sanctity and their sanctions and to blame them and to criticise them for their acts as being irrational and inhuman is a most incongruous way of carrying on social reform. Reformers working for the removal of untouchability including Mahatma Gandhi, do not seem to realize that the acts of the people are merely the results of their beliefs inculcated upon their minds by the Shastras and that people will not change their conduct until they cease to believe in the sanctity of the Shastras on which their conduct is founded. No wonder that such efforts have not produced any results. You also seem to be erring in the same way as the reformers working in the cause of removing untouchability. To agitate for and to organise inter-caste dinners and inter-caste marriages is like forced feeding brought about by artificial means. Make every man and woman free from the thraldom to the Shastras, cleanse their minds of the pernicious notions founded on the Shastras, and he or she will inter-dine and inter-marry, without your telling him or her to do so.

It is no use seeking refuge in quibbles. It is no use telling people that the Shastras do not say what they are believed to say, grammatically read or logically interpreted. What matters is how the Shastras have been understood by the people. You must take the stand that Buddha took. You must take the stand which Guru Nanak took. You must not only discard the Shastras, you must deny their authority, as did
Buddha and Nanak. You must have courage to tell the Hindus, that what is wrong with them is their religion—the religion which has produced in them this notion of the sacredness of Caste. Will you show that courage?

What are your chances of success? Social reforms fall into different species. There is a species of reform, which does not relate to the religious notion of a people but is purely secular in character. There is also a species of reform, which relates to the religious notions of a people. Of such a species of reform, there are two varieties. In one, the reform accords with the principles of the religion and merely invites people, who have departed from it, to revert to them and to follow them. The second is a reform which not only touches the religious principles but is diametrically opposed to those principles and invites people to depart from and to discard their authority and to act contrary to those principles. Caste is the natural outcome of certain religious beliefs which have the sanction of the Shastras, which are believed to contain the command of divinely inspired sages who were endowed with a supernatural wisdom and, whose commands, therefore, cannot be disobeyed without committing sin. The destruction of Caste is a reform which falls under the third category. To ask people to give up Caste is to ask them to go contrary to their, fundamental religious notions. It is obvious that the first and second species of reform are easy. But the third is a stupendous task, well-nigh impossible. The Hindus hold to the sacredness of the social order. Caste has a divine basis. You must there-
fore destroy the sacredness and divinity with which Caste has become invested. In the last analysis, this means you must destroy the authority of the Shastras and the Vedas.

I have emphasized this question of the ways and means of destroying Caste, because I think that knowing the proper ways and means is more important than knowing the ideal. If you do not know the real ways and means, all your shots are sure to be misfires. If my analysis is correct then your task is herculean. You alone can say whether you are capable of achieving it.

Speaking for myself, I see the task to be well-nigh impossible. Perhaps you would like to know why I think so. Out of the many reasons, which have led me to take this view, I will mention some, which I regard much important. One of these reasons is the attitude of hostility, which the Brahmins have shown towards this question. The Brahmins form the vanguard of the movement for political reform and in some cases also of economic reform. But they are not to be found even as camp-followers in the army raised to break down the barricades of Caste. Is there any hope of the Brahmins ever taking up a lead in the future in this matter? I say no. You may ask why? You may argue that there is no reason why Brahmins should continue to shun social reform. You may argue that the Brahmins know that the bane of Hindu Society is Caste and as an enlightened class could not be expected to be indifferent to its consequences. You may argue that there are secular Brahmins and priestly Brahmins and if the latter do not take up the cudgels on behalf of those who want to break Caste, the former will. All
this of course sounds very plausible. But in all this, it is forgotten that the break-up of the Caste System is bound to affect adversely the Brahmin Caste? Having regard to this, is it reasonable to expect that the Brahmins will ever consent to lead a movement the ultimate result of which is to destroy the power and prestige of the Brahmin Caste? Is it reasonable to expect the secular Brahmins to take part in a movement directed against the priestly Brahmins? In my judgment, it is useless to make a distinction between the secular Brahmins and priestly Brahmins. Both are kith and kin. They are two arms of the same body and one is bound to fight for the existence of the other. In this connection, I am reminded of some very pregnant remarks made by Prof. Dicey in his _English Constitution_. Speaking of the actual limitation on the legislative supremacy of Parliament, Dicey says: "The actual exercise of authority by any sovereign whatever, and notably by Parliament, is bounded or controlled by two limitations. Of these the one is an external, and the other is an internal limitation. The external limit to the real power of a sovereign consists in the possibility or certainty that his subjects or a large number of them will disobey or resist his laws.....The internal limit to the exercise of sovereignty arises from the nature of the sovereign power itself. Even a despot exercises his powers in accordance with his character, which is itself moulded by the circumstance under which he lives, including under that head the moral feelings of the time and the society to which he belongs. The Sultan could not, if he would, change the religion of the Mahomedan world, but he could
do so, it is in the very highest degree improbable that the head of Mahomedanism should wish to overthrow the religion of Mahomet; the internal check on the exercise of the Sultan's power is at least as strong as the external limitation. People sometimes ask the idle question why the Pope does not introduce this or that reform? The true answer is that a revolutionist is not the kind of man who becomes a Pope and that a man who becomes a Pope has no wish to be a revolutionist."

I think, these remarks apply equally to the Brahmins of India and one can say with equal truth that if a man who becomes a Pope has no wish to become a revolutionary, a man who is born a Brahmin has much less desire to become a revolutionary. Indeed, to expect a Brahmin to be a revolutionary in matters of social reform is as idle as to expect the British Parliament, as was said by Leslie Stephen, to pass an Act requiring all blue-eyed-babies to be murdered.

Some of you will say that it is a matter of small concern whether the Brahmins come forward to lead the movement against Caste or whether they do not. To take this view is in my judgement to ignore the part played by the intellectual class in the community. Whether you accept the theory of the great man as the maker of history or whether you do not, this much you will have to concede that in every country the intellectual class is the most influential class, if not the governing class. The intellectual class is the class which can foresee, it is the class which can advise and give lead. In no country does the mass of the people live the life of intelligent thought and action. It is largely imitative and follows the intellectual class.
There is no exaggeration in saying that the entire destiny of a country depends upon its intellectual class. If the intellectual class is honest, independent and disinterested it can be trusted to take the initiative and give a proper lead when a crisis arises. It is true that intellect by itself is no virtue. It is only a means and the use of means depends upon the ends which an intellectual person pursues. An intellectual man can be a good man, but he can easily be a rogue. Similarly an intellectual class may be a band of high-souled persons, ready to help, ready to emancipate erring humanity or it may easily be a gang of crooks or a body of advocates of a narrow clique from which it draws its support. You may think it a pity that the intellectual class in India is simply another name for the Brahmin caste. You may regret that the two are one; that the existence of the intellectual class should be bound up with one single caste, that this intellectual class should share the interest and the aspirations of that Brahmin caste, which has regarded itself the custodian of the interest of that caste, rather, than of the interests of the country. All this may be very regrettable. But the fact remains, that the Brahmins form the intellectual class of the Hindus. It is not only an intellectual class but it is a class which is held in great reverence by the rest of the Hindus. The Hindus are taught that the Brahmins are Bhurdevas (Goods on earth). चर्चानाम ब्राह्मणो गुरुः. The Hindus are taught that the Brahmins alone can be their teachers. Manu says—"If it be asked how it should be with respect to points of the Dharma which have not been specially mentioned, the answer is that which Brahmins who are
Shishthas propound shall doubtless have legal force"

When such an intellectual class, which holds the rest of the community in its grip, is opposed to the reform of Caste, the chances of success in a movement for the break-up of the Caste System appear to me very, very remote.

The second reason, why I say the task is impossible, will be clear if you will bear in mind that the Caste System has two aspects. In one of its aspects, it divides men into separate communities. In its second aspect, it places these communities in a graded order one above the other in social status. Each caste takes its pride and its consolation in the fact that in the scale of castes it is above some other caste. As an outward mark of this-gradation, there is also a gradation of social and religious rights technically spoken of an Ashtadhikaras and Sanskaras. The higher the grade of a caste, the greater the number of these rights and the lower the grade, the lesser their number. Now this gradation, this scaling of castes, makes it impossible to organise a common front against the Caste System. If a caste claims the right to inter-dine and inter-marriage with another caste, placed above it, it is frozen, instantly it is told by mischief-mongers, and there are many Brahmins amongst such mischief-mongers, that it will have to concede inter-dining and inter-marriage with castes below it! All are slaves of the Caste System. But all the slaves are not equal in status. To excite the proletariat to bring about an economic
revolution, Karl Max told them:—“you have nothing to lose except your chains.” But the artful way in which the social and religious rights are distributed among the different caste, whereby some have more and some have less, make the slogan of Karl Marx quite useless to excite the Hindus against the Caste System. Castes form a graded system of sovereignties, high and low, which are jealous of their status and which know that if a general dissolution came, some of them stand to lose more of their prestige and power than others do. You cannot, therefore, have a general mobilization of the Hindus, to use a military expression, for an attack on the Caste System.

XXI

Can you appeal to reason and ask the Hindus to discard Caste as being contrary to reason? That raises the question: Is a Hindu free to follow his reason? Manu has laid down three sanctions to which every Hindu must conform in the matter of his behaviour.

नेत्र: समृति: सदाचार: स्तव्य: च निर्मातम: \| Here there is no place for reason to play its part. A Hindu must follow either Veda, Smriti or Sadachar. He cannot follow anything else. In the first place how are the texts of the Vedas and Smritis to be interpreted whenever any doubt arises regarding their meaning? On this important question the view of Manu is quite definite. He says:—

\| भवमन्येत ते मूढे हेतुशाख्याभयावधिः \| स साधुभिषेष्यकायो नास्तिको वेदनिन्दुः \|

According to this rule, rationalism, as a canon of interpreting the Vedas and Smritis, is absolutely condemned.
It is regarded to be as wicked as atheism and the punishment provided for it is ex-communication. Thus, where a matter is covered by the Veda or the Smriti, a Hindu cannot resort to rational thinking. Even when there is a conflict between Vedas and Smritis on matters on which they have given a positive injunction, the solution is not left to reason. When there is a conflict between two Shrutis, both are to be regarded as of equal authority. Either of them may be followed. No attempt is to be made to find out which of the two accords with reason. This is made clear by Manu.

"When there is a conflict between Shruti and Smriti, the Shruti must prevail." But here too, no attempt must be made to find out which of the two accords with reason. This is laid down by Manu in the following Shloka:

या वेदाभ्य: स्मृत्यो याष्ठ काष्ठ कुद्धः: ।
सर्वात्तं लिप्फः: प्रेत्य तमोनिष्ठा हि ता: स्मृत: ॥

Again, when there is a conflict between two Smritis, the Manu-Smriti must prevail, but no attempt is to be made to find out which of the two accords with reason. This is the ruling given by Brihaspati.

वेदाभ्यत्वोपनिवेद्यत्र प्रामाण्य हि मनो: स्मृतं
मन्वत्विपिरीता तु या स्मृतिः सा न शस्यते ।

It is therefore clear that in any matter on which the Shrutis and Smritis have given a positive direction, a Hindu is not free to use his reasoning faculty. The same rule is laid down in the Mahabharat:

पुराणे मानोऽध्य: संगो वेदिषितसिह: ।
आश्वसिद्धानि चत्वारि न हन्तन्यानि हेतुमि: ॥
He must abide by their directions. The Caste and Varna are matters, which are dealt with by the Vedas and the Smritis and consequently, appeal to reason can have no effect on a Hindu. So far as Caste and Varna are concerned, not only the Shastras do not permit the Hindu to use his reason in the decision of the question, but they have taken care to see that no occasion is left to examine in a rational way the foundations of his belief in Caste and Varna. It must be a source of silent amusement to many a Non-Hindu to find hundreds and thousands of Hindus breaking Caste on certain occasions, such as railway journey and foreign travel and yet endeavouring to maintain Caste for the rest of their lives! The explanation of this phenomenon discloses another fetter on the reasoning faculties of the Hindus. Man's life is generally habitual and unreflective. Reflective thought, in the sense of active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form or knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it tends, is quite rare and arises only in a situation which presents a dilemma—a crisis. Railway journeys and foreign travels are really occasions of crisis in the life of a Hindu and it is natural to expect a Hindu to ask himself why he should maintain Caste at all, if he cannot maintain it at all times. But he does not. He breaks Caste at one step and proceeds to observe it at the next without raising any question. The reason for this astonishing conduct is to be found in the rule of the Shastras, which directs him to maintain Caste as far as possible and to undergo prayaschitta when he cannot. By this theory of prayaschitta,
the Shastras by following a spirit of compromise have given Caste a perpetual lease of life and have smothered reflective thought which would have otherwise led to the destruction of the notion of Caste.

There have been many who have worked in the cause of the abolition of Caste and Untouchability. Of those, who can be mentioned, Ramanuja, Kabir and others stand out prominently. Can you appeal to the acts of these reformers and exhort the Hindus to follow them? It is true that Manu has included Sadachar (सदाचार) as one of the sanctions along with Shruti and Smruti. Indeed, Sadachar has been given a higher place than Shastras—

According to this, Sadachar, whether, it is धम्मे or अधम्मे, in accordance with shastras or contrary to shastras, must be followed. But what is the meaning of Sadachar? If any one were to suppose that Sadachar means right or good acts i.e. acts of good and righteous men he would find himself greatly mistaken. Sadachar does not mean good acts or acts of good men. It means ancient custom good or bad. The following verse makes this clear:—

As though to warn people against the view that Sadachar means good acts or acts of good men and fearing that people might understand it that way and follow the acts of good men, the Smritis have commanded the Hindus in unmistakable terms not to
follow even Gods in their good deeds, if they are contrary to Shruti, Smruiti and Sadachar. This may sound to be most extraordinary, most perverse, but the fact remains that न देवचरिते चरेत्र is an injunction, issued to the Hindus by their Shastras. Reason and morality are the two most powerful weapons in the armoury of a Reformer. To deprive him of the use of these weapons is to disable him for action. How are you going to break up Caste, if people are not free to consider whether it accords with reason? How are you going to break up Caste if people are not free to consider whether it accords with morality? The wall built around Caste is impregnable and the material, of which it is built, contains none of the combustible stuff of reason and morality. Add to this the fact that inside this wall stands the army of Brahmins, who form the intellectual class, Brahmins who are the natural leaders of the Hindus, Brahmins who are there not as mere mercenary soldiers but as an army fighting for its homeland and you will get an idea why I think that breaking-up of Caste amongst the Hindus is well-nigh impossible. At any rate, it would take ages before a breach is made. But whether the doing of the deed takes time or whether it can be done quickly, you must not forget that if you wish to bring about a breach in the system then you have got to apply the dynamite to the Vedas and the Shastras, which deny any part to reason, to Vedas and Shastras, which deny any part to morality. You must destroy the Religion of the Shrutis and the Smritis. Nothing else will avail. This is my considered view of the matter.
Some may not understand what I mean by destruction of Religion; some may find the idea revolting to them and some may find it revolutionary. Let me therefore explain my position. I do not know whether you draw a distinction between principles and rules. But I do. Not only I make a distinction but I say that this distinction is real and important. Rules are practical; they are habitual ways of doing things according to prescription. But principles are intellectual; they are useful methods of judging things. Rules seek to tell an agent just what course of action to pursue. Principle do not prescribe a specific course of action. Rules, like cooking recipes, do tell just what to do and how to do it. A principle, such as that of justice, supplies a main head by reference to which he is to consider the bearings of his desires and purposes, it guides him in his thinking by suggesting to him the important consideration which he should bear in mind.

This difference between rules and principles makes the acts done in pursuit of them different in quality and in content. Doing what is said to be good by virtue of a rule and doing good in the light of a principle are two different things. The principle may be wrong but the act is conscious and responsible. The rule may be right but the act is mechanical. A religious act may not be a correct act but must at least be a responsible act. To permit of this responsibility, Religion must mainly be a matter of principles only. It cannot be a matter of rules. The moment it degenerates into rules it ceases to be Religion, as it kills responsibility which is the essence of a truly religious act. What is this
Hindu Religion? Is it a set of principles or is it a code of rules? Now the Hindu Religion, as contained in the Vedas and the Smritis, is nothing but a mass of sacrificial, societal, political and sanitary rules and regulations, all mixed up. What is called Religion by the Hindus is nothing but a multitude of commands and prohibitions. Religion, in the sense of spiritual principles, truly universal, applicable to all races, to all countries, to all times, is not to be found in them and if it is, it does not form the governing part of a Hindu's life. That for a Hindu, Dharma means commands and prohibitions is clear from the way the word Dharma is used in the Vedas and the Smritis and understood by the commentators. The word Dharma as used in the Vedas in most cases means religious ordinances or rites. Even Jaimini in his Purva-Mimansa defines Dharma as "a desirable goal or result that is indicated by injunctive (Vedic) passages." To put it in plain language, what the Hindus call Religion is really Law or at best legalized class-ethics. Frankly, I refuse to call this code of ordinances as Religion. The first evil of such a code of ordinances, misrepresented to the people as Religion, is that it tends to deprive moral life of freedom and spontaneity and to reduce it (for the conscientious at any rate) to a more or less anxious and servile conformity to externally imposed rules. Under it, there is no loyalty to ideals, there is only conformity to commands. But the worst evil of this code of ordinances is that the laws it contains must be the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. They are iniquitous in that they are not the same for one class as for another. But this iniquity is made perpetual in that they are prescribed to be the
same for all generations. The objectionable part of such a scheme is not that they are made by certain persons called Prophets or Law-givers. The objectionable part is that this code has been invested with the character of finality and fixity. Happiness notoriously varies with the conditions and circumstances of a person, as well as with the conditions of different people and epochs. That being the case, how can humanity endure this code of eternal laws, without being cramped and without being crippled? I have, therefore, no hesitation in saying that such a religion must be destroyed and I say, there is nothing irreligious in working for the destruction of such a religion. Indeed, I hold that it is your bounden duty to tear the mask, to remove the misrepresentation that is caused by misnaming this Law as Religion. This is an essential step for you. Once you clear the minds of the people of this misconception and enable them to realize that what they are told as Religion is not Religion but that it is really Law, you will be in a position to urge for its amendment or abolition. So long as people look upon it as Religion they will not be ready for a change, because the idea of Religion is generally speaking not associated with the idea of change. But the idea of law is associated with the idea of change and when people come to know that what is called Religion is really Law, old and archaic, they will be ready for a change, for people know and accept that law can be changed.

XXIV

While I condemn a Religion of Rules, I must not be understood to hold the opinion that there is no necessity for a religion. On the contrary, I agree with
Burke when he says that "True religion is the foundation of society, the basis on which all true civil Government rests, and both their sanction." Consequently, when I urge that these ancient rules of life be annulled, I am anxious that its place shall be taken by a Religion of Principles, which alone can lay claim to being a true Religion. Indeed, I am so convinced of the necessity of Religion that I feel I ought to tell you in outline what I regard as necessary items in this religious reform. The following in my opinion should be the cardinal items in this reform:

1. There should be one and only one standard book of Hindu Religion, acceptable to all Hindus and recognized by all Hindus. This of course means that all other books of Hindu religion such as Vedas, Shastras and Puranas, which are treated as sacred and authoritative, must by law cease to be so and the preaching of any doctrine, religious or social contained in these books should be penalized.

2. It should be better if priesthood among Hindus was abolished. But as this seems to be impossible, the priesthood must at least cease to be hereditary. Every person who professes to be a Hindu must be eligible for being a priest. It should be provided by law that no Hindu shall be entitled to be a priest unless he has passed an examination prescribed by the State and holds a sanad from the State permitting him to practise.

3. No ceremony performed by a priest who does not hold a sanad shall be deemed to be valid in law and it should be made penal for a person who has no sanad to officiate as a priest.

4. A priest should be the servant of the State and should be subject to the disciplinary action by the State in the matter of his morals, beliefs and
worship, in addition to his being subject along with other citizens to the ordinary law of the land. (5) The number of priests should be limited by law according to the requirements of the State as is done in the case of the I. C. S. To some, this may sound radical. But to my mind there is nothing revolutionary in this. Every profession in India is regulated. Engineers must show proficiency, Doctor must show proficiency, Lawyers must show proficiency, before they are allowed to practise their professions. During the whole of their career, they must not only obey the law of the land, civil as well as criminal, but they must also obey the special code of morals prescribed by their respective professions. The priest's is the only profession where proficiency is not required. The profession of a Hindu priest is the only profession which is not subject to any code. Mentally a priest may be an idiot, physically a priest may be suffering from a foul disease, such as syphilis or gonorrhea, morally he may be a wreck. But he is fit to officiate at solemn ceremonies, to enter the sanctum sanctorum of a Hindu temple and worship the Hindu God. All this becomes possible among the Hindus because for a priest it is enough to be born in a priestly caste. The whole thing is abominable and is due to the fact that the priestly class among Hindus is subject neither to law nor to morality. It recognizes no duties. It knows only of rights and privileges. It is a pest which divinity seems to have let loose on the masses for their mental and moral degradation. The priestly class must be brought under control by some such legislation as I have outlined above. It will prevent it from doing mischief and from misleading people.
will democratise it by throwing it open to every one. It will certainly help to kill the Brahminism and will also help to kill Caste, which is nothing but Brahminism incarnate. Brahminism is the poison which has spoiled Hindism. You will succeed in saving Hinduism if you will kill Brahminism. There should be no opposition to this reform from any quarter. It should be welcomed even by the Arya Samajists, because this is merely an application of their own doctrine of *guna-karma*.

Whether you do that or you do not, you must give a new doctrinal basis to your Religion—a basis that will be in consonance with Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, in short, with Democracy. I am no authority on the subject. But I am told that for such religious principles as will be in consonance with Liberty, Equality and Fraternity it may not be necessary for you to borrow from foreign sources and that you could draw for such principles on the Upanishadas. Whether you could do so without a complete remoulding, a considerable scraping and chipping off the ore they contain, is more than I can say. This means a complete change in the fundamental notions of life. It means a complete change in the values of life. It means a complete change in outlook and in attitude towards men and things. It means conversion; but if you do not like the word, I will say, it means new life. But a new life cannot enter a body that is dead. New life can enter only in a new body. The old body must die before a new body can come into existence and a new life can enter into it. To put it simply, the old must cease to be operative before the new can begin to enliven and to pulsate. This is what I meant when I said you must discard the authority of the Shastraś and destroy the religion of the Shastraś.
XXV

I have kept you too long. It is time I brought this address to a close. This would have been a convenient point for me to have stopped. But this would probably be my last address to a Hindu audience on a subject vitally concerning the Hindus. I would therefore like, before I close, to place before the Hindus, if they will allow me, some questions which I regard as vital and invite them seriously to consider the same.

In the first place, the Hindus must consider whether it is sufficient to take the placid view of the anthropologist that there is nothing to be said about the beliefs, habits, morals and outlooks on life, which obtain among the the different peoples of the world except that they often differ; or whether it is not necessary to make an attempt to find out what kind of morality, beliefs, habits and outlook have worked best and have enabled those who possessed them to flourish, to go strong, to people the earth and to have dominion over it. As is observed by Prof. Carver: "Morality and religion, as the organised expression of moral approval and disapproval, must be regarded as factors in the struggle for existence as truly as are weapons for offence and defence, teeth and claws, horns and whoops, furs and feathers. The social group, community, tribe or nation, which develops an unworkable scheme of morality or within which those social acts which weaken it and unfit it for survival, habitually create the sentiment of approval, while those which would strengthen and unable it to be expanded habitually create the sentiment of disapproval, will eventually be eliminated. It is its habits of approval or disapproval, (these are the results of
religion and morality) that handicap it, as really as the possession of two wings on one side with none on the other will handicap the colony of flies. It would be as futile in the one case as in the other to argue, that one system is just as good as another.” Morality and religion, therefore, are not mere matters of likes and dislikes. You may dislike exceedingly a scheme of morality, which, if universally practised within a nation, would make that nation the strongest nation on the face of the earth. Yet in spite of your dislike such a nation will become strong. You may like exceedingly a scheme of morality and an ideal of justice, which if universally practised within a nation, would make it unable to hold its own in the struggle with other nations. Yet in spite of your admiration this nation will eventually disappear. The Hindus must, therefore, examine their religion and their morality in terms of their survival value.

Secondly, the Hindus must consider whether they should conserve the whole of their social heritage or select what is helpful and transmit to future generations only that much and no more. Prof. John Dewey, who was my teacher and to whom I owe so much, has said: “Every society gets encumbered with what is trivial, with dead wood from the past, and with what is positively pervers........As a society becomes more enlightened, it realizes that it is responsible not to conserve and transmit the whole of its existing achievements, but only such as make for a better future society.” Even Burke, in spite of the vehemence with which he opposed the principle of change embodied in the French Revolution, was compelled to admit that “a
be standards to measure the acts of men there must also be a readiness to revise those standards.

XXVI

I have to confess that this address has become too lengthy. Whether this fault is compensated to any extent by breadth or depth is a matter for you to judge. All I claim is to have told you candidly my views. I have little to recommend them but some study and a deep concern in your destiny. If you will allow me to say, these views are the views of a man, who has been no tool of power, no flatterer of greatness. They come from one, almost the whole of whose public exertion has been one continuous struggle for liberty for the poor and for the oppressed and whose only reward has been a continuous shower of calumny and abuse from national journals and national leaders, for no other reason except that I refuse to join with them in performing the miracle—I will not say trick—of liberating the oppressed with the gold of the tyrant and raising the poor with the cash of the rich. All this may not be enough to commend my views. I think they are not likely to alter yours. But whether they do or do not, the responsibility is entirely yours. You must make your efforts to uproot Caste, if not in my way, then in your way. I am sorry, I will not be with you. I have decided to change. This is not the place for giving reasons. But even when I am gone out of your fold, I will watch your movement with active sympathy and you will have my assistance for what it may be worth. Yours is a national cause. Caste is no doubt primarily the breath of the Hindus. But the Hindus have fouled the air all over and every body is
infected, Sikh, Muslim, and Christian. You, therefore, deserve the support of all those who are suffering from this infection, Sikh, Muslim and Christian. Yours is more difficult than the other national cause, namely Swaraj. In the fight for Swaraj you fight with the whole nation on your side. In this, you have to fight against the whole nation and that too, your own. But it is more important than Swaraj. There is no use having Swaraj, if you cannot defend it. More important than the question of defending Swaraj is the question of defending the Hindus under the Swaraj. In my opinion only when the Hindu Society becomes a casteless society that it can hope to have strength enough to defend itself. Without such internal strength, Swaraj for Hindus may turn out to be only a step towards slavery. Good bye and good wishes for your success.

Rajagraha,
Dadar, Bombay 14.
APPENDIX I

A Vindication of Caste

By

MAHATMA GANDHI.

(A Reprint of his Articles in the Harijan)

DR. AMBEDKAR'S INDICTMENT

The readers will recall the fact that Dr. Ambedkar was to have presided last May at the annual conference of the Jat-Pat-Torak Mandal of Lahore. But the conference itself was cancelled because Dr. Ambedkar's address was found by the Reception Committee to be unacceptable. How far a Reception Committee is justified in rejecting a President of its choice because of his address that may be objectionable to it is open to question. The Committee knew Dr. Ambedkar's views on caste and the Hindu scriptures. They knew also that he had in unequivocal terms decided to give up Hinduism. Nothing less than the address that Dr. Ambedkar had prepared was to be expected from him. The Committee appears to have deprived the public of an opportunity of listening to the original views of a man, who has carved out for himself a unique position in society. Whatever label he wears in future, Dr. Ambedkar is not the man to allow himself to be forgotten.

Dr. Ambedkar was not going to be beaten by the Reception Committee. He has answered their rejection
of him by publishing the address at his own expense. He has priced it at 8 annas, I would suggest a reduction to 2 annas or at least 4 annas.

No reformer can ignore the address. The orthodox will gain by reading it. This is not to say that the address is not open to objection. It has to be read if only because it is open to serious objection. Dr. Ambedkar is a challenge to Hinduism. Brought up as a Hindu, educated by a Hindu potentate, he has become so disgusted with the so-called Savarna Hindus for the treatment that he and his have received at their hands that he proposes to leave not only them but the very religion that is his and their common heritage. He has transferred to that religion his disgust against a part of its professors.

But this is not to be wondered at. After all, one can only judge a system or an institution by the conduct of its representatives. What is more, Dr. Ambedkar found that the vast majority of Savarna Hindus had-not only conducted themselves inhumanly against those of their fellow religionists, whom they classed as untouchables, but they had based their conduct on the authority of their scriptures, and when he began to search them he had found ample warrant for their belief in untouchability and all its implications. The author of the address has quoted chapter and verse in proof of his three fold indictment—inhuman conduct itself, the unabashed justification for it on the part of the perpetrators, and the subsequent discovery that the justification was warranted by their scriptures.
No Hindu who prizes his faith above life itself can afford to underrate the importance of this indictment. Dr. Ambedkar is not alone in his disgust. He is its most uncompromising exponent and one of the ablest among them. He is certainly the most irreconcilable among them. Thank God, in the front rank of the leaders, he is singularly alone and as yet but a representative of a very small minority. But what he says is voiced with more or less vehemence by many leaders belonging to the depressed classes. Only the latter, for instance Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah and Dewan Bahadur Srinivasan, not only do not threaten to give up Hinduism but find enough warmth in it to compensate for the shameful persecution to which the vast mass of Harijans are exposed.

But the fact of many leaders remaining in the Hindu fold is no warrant for disregarding what Dr. Ambedkar has to say. The Savarnas have to correct their belief and their conduct. Above all those who are by their learning and influence among the Savarnas have to give an authoritative interpretation of the scriptures. The question that Dr. Ambedkar's indictment suggests are:

1. What are the scriptures?
2. Are all the printed texts to be regarded as an integral part of them or is any part of them to be rejected as unauthorized interpolations?
3. What is the answer of such accepted and expurgated scriptures on the question of untouchability, caste, equality of status, interdining and intermarriages?
(These have been all examined by Dr. Ambedkar in his address.)

I must reserve for the next issue my own answer to these questions and a statement of the (at least some) manifest flaws in Dr. Ambedkar's thesis.

(Harijan July 11, 1936)

II

The Vedas, Upanishads, Smritis and Puranas including Ramayana and Mahabharata are the Hindu Scriptures. Nor is this a finite list. Every age or even generation has added to the list. It follows, therefore, that everything printed or even found handwritten is not scripture. The Smritis for instance contain much that can never be accepted as the word of God. Thus many of the texts that Dr. Ambedkar quotes from the Smritis cannot be accepted as authentic. The scriptures, properly so called, can only be concerned with eternal verities and must appeal to any conscience i.e. any heart whose eyes of understanding are opened. Nothing can be accepted as the word of God which cannot be tested by reason or be capable of being spiritually experienced. And even when you have an expurgated edition of the scriptures, you will need their interpretation. Who is the best interpreter? Not learned men surely. Learning there must be. But religion does not live by it. It lives in the experiences of its saints and seers in their lives and sayings. When all the most learned commentetors of the scriptures are utterly forgotten, the accumulated experience of the sages and saints will abide and be an inspiration for ages to come.
Caste has nothing to do with religion. It is a custom whose origin I do not know and do not need to know for the satisfaction of my spiritual hunger. But I do know that it is harmful both to spiritual and national growth. *Varna* and *Ashrama* are institutions which have nothing to do with castes. The law of *Varna* teaches us that we have each one of us to earn our bread by following the ancestral calling. It defines not our rights but our duties. It necessarily has reference to callings that are conducive to the welfare of humanity and to no other. It also follows that there is no calling too low and none too high. All are good, lawful, and absolutely equal in status. The callings of a Brahmin—an spiritual teacher—and a scavenger are equal, and their due performance carries equal merit before God and at one time seems to have carried identical reward before man. Both were entitled to their livelihood and no more. Indeed one traces even now in the villages the faint lines of this healthy operation of the law. Living in Segaon with its population of 600, I do not find a great disparity between the earnings of different tradesmen including Brahmins. I find too that real Brahmins are to be found even in these degenerate days who are living on alms freely given to them and are giving freely of what they have of spiritual treasures. It would be wrong and improper to judge the law of *Varna* by its caricature in the lives of men who profess to belong to a *Varna*, whilst they openly commit a breach of its only operative rule. Arrogation of a superior status by any of the *Varna* over another is a denial of the law. And there is nothing in the law of *Varna* to warrant a belief in untouchability. (The essence of Hinduism is contained
in its enunciation of one and only God as Truth and its bold acceptance of Ahimsa as the law of the human family.)

I am aware that my interpretation of Hinduism will be disputed by many besides Dr. Ambedkar. That does not affect my position. It is an interpretation by which I have lived for nearly half a century and according to which I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to regulate my life.

In my opinion the profound mistake that Dr. Ambedkar has made in his address is to pick out the texts of doubtful authenticity and value and the state of degraded Hindus who are no fit specimens of the faith they so woefully misrepresent. Judged by the standard applied by Dr. Ambedkar, every known living faith will probably fail.

In his able address, the learned Doctor has overproved his case. Can a religion that was professed by Chaitanya, Jnyanadeva, Tukaram, Tiruvalluvar, Ramkrishna Paramahamsa, Raja Ram Mohon Roy, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, Vivekanand and host of others who might be easily mentioned, so utterly devoid of merit as is made out in Dr. Ambedkar's address? A religion has to be judged not by its worst specimens but by the best it might have produced. For that and that alone can be used as the standard to aspire to, if not to improve upon.

( Harijan July 18, 1936 )
Shri Sant Ramji, of the Jat-Pat-Torak Mandal of Lahore, wants me to publish the following:

"I have read your remarks about Dr. Ambedkar and the Jat-Pat-Torak Mandal, Lahore. In that connection I beg to submit as follows:

"We did not invite Dr. Ambedkar to preside over our conference because he belonged to the Depressed Classes, for we do not distinguish between a touchable and an untouchable Hindu. On the contrary our choice fell on him simply because his diagnosis of the fatal disease of the Hindu community was the same as ours, i.e. he too was of the opinion that caste system was the root cause of the disruption and downfall of the Hindus. The subject of the Doctor’s thesis for Doctorate being caste system, he has studied the subject thoroughly. Now the object of our conference was to persuade the Hindus to annihilate castes but the advice of a non-Hindu in social and religious matters can have no effect on them. The Doctor in the supplementary portion of his address insisted on saying that that was his last speech as a Hindu, which was irrelevant as well as pernicious to the interests of the conference. So we requested him to expunge that sentence for he could easily say the same thing on any other occasion. But he refused and we saw no utility in making merely a show of our function. In spite of all this, I cannot help praising his address which is, as far as I know, the most learned thesis on the subject and worth translating into every vernacular of India."
Moreover, I want to bring to your notice that your philosophical difference between caste and varna is too subtle to be grasped by people in general, because for all practical purposes in the Hindu society caste and varna are one and the same thing, for the function of both of them is one and the same, i.e. to restrict intercaste marriages and interdining. Your theory of varnasyavastha is impracticable in this age and there is no hope of its revival in the near future. But Hindus are slaves of caste and do not want to destroy it. So when you advocate your ideal or imaginary varnasyavastha they find justification for clinging to caste. Thus you are doing a great disservice to social reform by advocating your imaginary utility of division of varnas, for it creates hindrance in our way. To try to remove untouchability without striking at the root of varnasyavastha is simply to treat the outward symptoms of a disease or to draw a line on the surface of water. As in the heart of their hearts dwijas do not want to give social equality to the so-called touchable and untouchable Shudras, so they refuse to break caste, and give liberal donations for the removal of untouchability, simply to evade the issue. To seek the help of the shastras for the removal of untouchability and caste is simply to wash mud with mud."

The last paragraph of the letter surely cancels the first. If the Mandal rejects the help of the shastras, they do exactly what Dr. Ambedkar does, i.e. cease to be Hindus. How then can they object to Dr. Ambedkar's address merely because he said that that was his last speech as a Hindu? The position appears
to be wholly untenable especially when the Mandal, for which Shri Sant Ram claims to speak, applauds the whole argument of Dr. Ambedkar's address.

But it is pertinent to ask what the Mandal believes if it rejects the shastras. How can a Muslim remain one if he rejects the Quran, or a Christian remain Christian if he rejects the Bible? If caste and varna are convertible terms and if varna is an integral part of the shastras which define Hinduism, I do not know how a person who rejects it can call himself a Hindu.

Shri Sant Ram likes the shastras to mud. Dr. Ambedkar has not, so far as I remember, given any such picturesque name to the shastras. I have certainly meant when I have said that if shastras support the existing untouchability I should cease to call myself a Hindu. Similarly, if the shastras support caste as we know it today in all its hideousness, I may not call myself or remain a Hindu since I have no scruples about interdining or intermarriage. I need not repeat my position regarding shastras and their interpretation. I venture to suggest to Shri Sant Ram that it is the only rational and correct and morally defensible position and it has ample warrant in Hindu tradition.

( Harijan, August 15, 1936 )
I appreciate greatly the honour done me by the Mahatma in taking notice in his Harijan of the speech on Caste which I had prepared for the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal. From a perusal of his review of my speech it is clear that the Mahatma completely dissents from the views I have expressed on the subject of Caste. I am not in the habit of entering into controversy with my opponents unless there are special reasons which compel me to act otherwise. Had my opponent been some mean and obscure person I would not have pursued him. But my opponent being the Mahatma himself I feel I must attempt to meet the case to the contrary which he has sought to put forth. While I appreciate the honour he has done me, I must confess to a sense of surprize on finding that of all the persons the Mahatma should accuse me of a desire to seek publicity as he seems to do when he suggests that in publishing the undelivered speech my object was to see that I was not “forgotten”. Whatever the Mahatma may choose to say my object in publishing the speech was to provoke the Hindus to think and take stock of their position. I have never hankered for publicity and if I may say so, I have more...
of it than I wish or need. But supposing it was out of the motive of gaining publicity that I printed the speech who could cast a stone at me? Surely not those, who like the Mahatma live in glass houses.

II

Motives apart, what has the Mahatma to say on the question raised by me in the speech? First of all any one who reads my speech will realize that the Mahatma has entirely missed the issues raised by me and that the issues he has raised are not the issues that arise out of what he is pleased to call my indictment of the Hindus. The principal points which I have tried to make out in my speech may be catalogued as follows:—

(1) That caste has ruined the Hindus; (2) That the reorganization of the Hindu Society on the basis of Chaturvarna is impossible because the Varna Vyavastha is like a leaky pot or like a man running at the nose. It is incapable of sustaining itself by its own virtue and has an inherent tendency to degenerate into a caste system unless there is a legal sanction behind it which can be enforced against every one transgressing his Varna; (3) That the reorganization of the Hindu Society on the basis of Chaturvarna is harmful because the effect of the Varna Vyavastha is to degrade the masses by denying them opportunity to acquire knowledge and to emasculate them by denying them the right to be armed; (4) That the Hindu Society must be re-organized on a religious basis which would recognise the principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity; (5) That in order to achieve this object the sense of religious sanctity behind Caste and Varna must be destroyed; (6)
That the sanctity of Caste and Varna can be destroyed only by discarding the divine authority of the Shastras. It will be noticed that the questions raised by the Mahatma are absolutely beside the point and show that the main argument of the speech was lost upon him.

III

Let me examine the substance of the points made by the Mahatma. The first point made by the Mahatma is that the texts cited by me are not authentic. I confess I am no authority on this matter. But I should like to state that the texts cited by me are all taken from the writings of the late Mr. Tilak who was a recognised authority on the Sanskrit Language and on the Hindu Shastras. His second point is that these Shastras should be interpreted not by the learned but by the saints and that, as the saints have understood them, the Shastras do not support Caste and Untouchability. As regards the first point what I like to ask the Mahatma is what does it avail to any one if the texts are interpolations and if they have been differently interpreted by the saints? The masses do not make any distinction between texts which are genuine and texts which are interpolations. The masses do not know what the texts are. They are too illiterate to know the contents of the Shastras. They have believed what they have been told and what they have been told is that the Shastras do enjoin as a religious duty the observeance of Caste and Untouchability.

With regard to the saints, one must admit that howsoever different and elevating their teachings may have been as compared to those of the merely learned.
they have been lamentably ineffective. They have been ineffective for two reasons. Firstly, none of the saints ever attacked the Caste System. On the contrary, they were staunch believers in the System of Castes. Most of them lived and died as members of the castes which they respectively belonged. So passionately attached was Jayandeo to his status as a Bramhin that when the Bramhins of Pairhan would not admit him to their fold he moved heaven and earth to get his status as a Bramhin recognized by the Bramhin fraternity. And even the saint Eknath who uow figures in the film “Dharmatma” as a hero for having shown courage to touch the untouchables and dine with them, did so not because he was opposed to Caste and Untouchability but because he felt that the pollution caused thereby could be washed away by a bath in the sacred waters of the river Ganges.* The saints have never according to my study carried on a campaign against Caste and Untouchability. They were not concerned with the struggle between men. They were concerned with the relation between man and God. They did not preach that all men were equal. They preached that all men were equal in the eyes of God—a very different and a very innocuous proposition which nobody can find difficult to preach or dangerous to believe in. The second reason why the teachings of the saints proved ineffective was because the masses have been taught that a saint might break Caste but the common man must not. A saint therefore never became an example to follow. He always remained a pious man to be honoured. That the masses have remained staunch believers.

* बत्यांजाता विदाल व्यासी। गंगार्थनो भुद्वत्यासी।
एकनाथी माधवन, अ. २८, भौ. १९१।
in Caste and Untouchability shows that the pious lives and noble sermons of the saints have had no effect on their life and conduct as against the teachings of the Shastras. Thus it can be a matter of no consolation that there were saints or that there is a Mahatma who understands the Shastras differently from the learned few or ignorant many. That the masses hold different view of the Shastras is a fact which should and must be reckoned with. How is that to be dealt with except by denouncing the authority of the Shastras, which continue to govern their conduct, is a question which the Mahatma has not considered. But whatever the plan the Mahatma puts forth as an effective means to free the masses from the teachings of the Shastras, he must accept that the pious life led by one good Samaritan may be very elevating to himself, but in India, with the attitude the common man has to Saints and to Mahatmas—to honour but not to follow—one cannot make much out of it.

IV

The third point made by the Mahatma is that a religion professed by Chaitanya, Jnyandeo, Tukaram, Tiruvallur, Ramkrishna Paramahansa, etc. cannot be devoid of merit as is made out by me and that a religion has to be judged not by its worst specimens but by the best it might have produced. I agree with every word of this statement. But I do not quite understand what the Mahatma wishes to prove thereby. That religion should by judged not by its worst specimens but by its best is true enough but does it dispose of the matter? I say it does not. The question still remains—why the worst:
number so many and the best so few? To my mind there are two conceivable answers to this question. (1) That the worst by reason of some original perversity of theirs are morally uneducable and are therefore incapable of making the remotest approach to the religious ideal. Or (2) that the religious ideal is a wholly wrong ideal which has given a wrong moral twist to the lives of the many and that the best have become best in spite of the wrong ideal—in fact by giving to the wrong twist a turn in the right direction. Of these two explanations I am not prepared to accept the first and I am sure that even the Mahatma will not insist upon the contrary. To my mind the second is the only logical and reasonable explanation unless the Mahatma has a third alternative to explain why the worst are so many and the best so few. If the second is the only explanation then obviously the argument of the Mahatma that a religion should be judged by its best followers carries us nowhere except to pity the lot of the many who have gone wrong because they have been made to worship wrong ideals.

V

The argument of the Mahatma that Hinduism would be tolerable if only many were to follow the example of the saints is fallacious for another reason*. By citing the names of such illustrious persons as Chaitanya, etc. what the Mahatma seems to me to suggest in its broadest and simplest form is that Hindu society can be made

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* In this connection see illuminating article on Morality And The Social Structure by Mr. H. N. Brailsford in the Aryan Path for April 1936.
tolerable and even happy without any fundamental change in its structure. If all the high caste Hindus can be persuaded to follow a high standard of morality in their dealings with the low caste Hindus, I am totally opposed to this kind of ideology. I can respect those of the caste-Hindus who try to realize a high social ideal in their life. Without such men India would be an uglier and a less happy place to live in than it is. But nonetheless anyone who relies on an attempt to turn the members of the caste-Hindus into better men by improving their personal character is in my judgment wasting his energy and hugging an illusion. Can personal character make the maker of armaments a good man, i.e. a man who will sell shells that will not burst and gas that will not poison? If it cannot, how can you except personal character to make a man loaded with the consciousness of Caste, a good man, i.e. a man who would treat his fellows as his friends and equals? To be true to himself he must deal with his fellows either as a superior or inferior according as the case may be; at any rate, differently from his own caste fellows. He can never be expected to deal with his fellows as his kinsmen and equals. As a matter of fact, a Hindu does treat all those who are not of his Caste as though they were aliens, who could be discriminated against with impunity and against whom any fraud or trick may be practised without shame. This is to say that there can be a better or a worse Hindu. But a good Hindu there cannot be. This is so not because there is anything wrong with his personal character. In fact what is wrong is the entire basis of his relationship to his fellows. The best of men cannot be moral if the basis of relationship between them
and their fellows is fundamentally a wrong relationship. To a slave his master may be better—or worse. But there cannot be a good master. A good man cannot be a master and a master cannot be a good man. The same applies to the relationship between high caste and low caste. To a low caste man a high caste man can be better or worse as compared to other high caste men. A high caste man cannot be a good man in so far as he must have a low caste man to distinguish him as high caste man. It cannot be good to a low caste man to be conscious that there is a high caste man above him. I have argued in my speech that a Society based on Varna or Caste is a society which is based on a wrong relationship. I had hoped that the Mahatma would attempt to demolish my argument. But instead of doing that he has merely reiterated his belief in Chaturvarnya without disclosing the grounds on which it is based.

\(\sqrt{VI}\)

Does the Mahatma practise what he preaches? One does not like to make personal reference in an argument which is general in its application. But when one preaches a doctrine and holds it as a dogma there is a curiosity to know how far he practises what he preaches. It may be that his failure to practise is due to the ideal being too high to be attainable; it may be that his failure to practise is due to the innate hypocrisy of the man. In any case he exposes his conduct to examination and I must not be blamed if I ask how far has the Mahatma attempted to realize his ideal in his own case. The Mahatma is a Bania by birth. His ancestors had abandoned trading in favour of ministership which is a calling of the Brahmins. In his own life, before he became a
Mahatma, when occasion came for him to choose his career he preferred law to scales. On abandoning law he became half saint and half politician. He has never touched trading which is his ancestral calling. His youngest son—I take one who is a faithful follower of his father—born a Vaishya has married a Brahmin's daughter and has chosen to serve a newspaper magnate. The Mahatma is not known to have condemned him for not following his ancestral calling. It may be wrong and uncharitable to judge an ideal by its worst specimens. But surely the Mahatma as a specimen has no better and if he even fails to realize the ideal then the ideal must be an impossible ideal quite opposed to the practical instincts of man. Students of Calyle know that he often spoke on a subject before he thought about it. I wonder whether such has not been the case with the Mahatma in regard to the subject matter of Caste. Otherwise, certain questions which occur to me would not have escaped him. When can a calling be deemed to have become an ancestral calling so as to make it binding on a man? Must man follow his ancestral calling even if it does not suit his capacities, even when it has ceased to be profitable? Must a man live by his ancestral calling even if he finds it to be immortal? If every one must pursue his ancestral calling then it must follow that a man must continue to be a pimp because his grandfather was a pimp and a woman must continue to be a prostitute because her grandmother was a prostitute. Is the Mahatma prepared to accept the logical conclusion of his doctrine? To me his ideal of following one's ancestral calling is not only an impossible and impractical ideal, but it is also morally an indefensible ideal.
The Mahatma sees great virtue in a Brahmin remaining a Brahmin all his life. Leaving aside the fact there are many Brahmins who do not like to remain Brahmins all their lives what can we say about those Brahmins who have clung to their ancestral calling of priesthood? Do they do so from any faith in the virtue of the principle of ancestral calling or do they do so from motives of filthy lucre? The Mahatma does not seem to concern himself with such queries. He is satisfied that these are “real Brahmins who are living on alms freely given to them and giving freely what they have of spiritual treasures.” This is how a hereditary Brahmin priest appears to the Mahatma—a carrier of spiritual treasures. But another portrait of the hereditary Brahmin can also be drawn. A Brahmin can be a priest to Vishnu—the God of Love. He can be a priest to Shankar—the God of Destruction. He can be a priest at Buddha Gaya worshipping Buddha—the greatest teacher of mankind who taught the noblest doctrine of Love. He also can be a priest to Kali, the Goddess Who must have a daily sacrifice of an animal to satisfy her thirst for blood! He will be a priest of the temple of Rama—the Kshatriya God! He will also be a priest of the Temple of Parshuram, the God who took Avatar to destroy the Kshatriyas! He can be a priest to Bramha, the Creator of the world. He can be a priest to a Pir whose God Allah will not brook the claim of Bramha to share his spiritual dominion over the world! No one can say that this is a picture which is not true to life. If this is a true picture one does not know what to say of this capacity to bear loyalties to Gods and
Goddesses whose attributes are so antagonistic that no honest man can be a devotee to all of them. The Hindus rely upon this extraordinary phenomenon as evidence of the greatest virtue of their religion—namely its catholicity, its spirit of toleration. As against this facile view, it can be urged that what is toleration and catholicity may be really nothing more creditable than indifference or flaccid latitudinarianism. These two attitudes are hard to distinguish in their outer seeming. But they are so vitally unlike in their real quality that no one who examines them closely can mistake one for the other. That a man is ready to render homage to many Gods and Goddesses may be cited as evidence of his tolerant spirit. But can it not also be evidence of insincerity born of a desire to serve the times? I am sure that this toleration is merely insincerity. If this view is well founded, one may ask what spiritual treasure can there be with a person who is ready to be a priest and a devotee to any diety which it serves his purpose to worship and to adore? Not only must such a person be deemed to be bankrupt of all spiritual treasures but for him to practice so elevating a profession as that of a priest simply because it is ancestral, without faith, without belief, merely as a mechanical process handed down from father to son, is not a conservation of virtue; it is really the prostitution of a noble profession which is no other than the service of religion.

VIII

Why does the Mahatma cling to the theory of every one following his or her ancestral calling? He gives his reasons nowhere. But there must be some reason
although he does not care to avow it. Years ago writing on “Caste v/s. Class” in his *Young India* he argued that Caste System was better than Class System on the ground that caste was the best possible adjustment of social stability. If that be the reason why the Mahatma clings to the theory of every one following his or her ancestral calling, then he is clinging to a false view of social life. Everybody wants social stability and some adjustment must be made in the relationship between individuals and classes in order that stability may be had. But two things, I am sure nobody wants. One thing nobody wants is a static relationship, something that is unalterable, something that is fixed for all times. Stability is wanted but not at the cost of change when change is imperative. Second thing nobody wants is mere adjustment. Adjustment is wanted but not at the sacrifice of social justice. Can it be said that the adjustment of social relationship on the basis of caste i.e. on the basis of each to his hereditary calling avoids these two evils? I am convinced that it does not. Far from being the best possible adjustment I have no doubt that it is of the worst possible kind in as much as it offends against both the canons of social adjustment—namely fluidity and equity.

**IX**

Some might think that the Mahatma has made much progress in as much as he now only believes in Varna and does not believe in Caste. It is true that there was a time when the Mahatma was a full-blooded and a blue-blooded Sanatani Hindu. He believed in the Vedas, the Upanishadas, the Puranas and all that goes
by the name of Hindu scriptures and therefore in avatars and rebirth.” He believed in Caste and defended it with the vigour of the orthodox.

He condemned the cry for inter-dining, inter-drinking and inter-marrying and argued that restraints about inter-dining to a great extent “helped the cultivation of will-power and the conservation of certain social virtue.”

It is good that he has repudiated this sanctimonious nonsense and admitted that caste “is harmful both to spiritual and national growth, ” and may be, his son’s marriage outside his caste has had something to do with this change of view. But has the Mahatma really progressed?

What is the nature of the Varna for which the Mahatma stands? Is it the Vedic conception as commonly understood and preached by Swami Dayanand Saraswati and his followers the Arya Samajists? The essence of the Vedic conception of Varna is the pursuit of a calling which is appropriate to one’s natural aptitude. The essence of the Mahatma’s conception of Varna is the pursuit of ancestral calling irrespective of natural aptitude. What is the difference between Caste and Varna as understood by the Mahatma? I find none. As defined by the Mahatma, Varna becomes merely a different name for Cast for the simple reason that it his the same essence—namely pursuit of ancestral calling. Far from making progress the Mahatma has suffered retrogression. By putting this interpretation upon the Vedic conception of Varna he has really made ridiculous what was sublime. While I reject the Vedic Varna Vayavastha for reasons given in the speech I must admit that the Vedic theory of Varna as interpreted by Swami Dayanand and some others is a sensible and an inoffensive thing. It did not ad-
mit birth as a determining factor in fixing the place of an individual in society. It only recognized worth. The Mahatma’s view of Varna not only makes nonsense of the Vedic Varna but it makes it an abominable thing. Varna and Caste are two very different concepts. Varna is based on the principle of each according to his worth while Caste is based on the principle of each according to his birth. The two are as distinct as chalk is from cheese. In fact there is an antithesis between the two. If the Mahatma believes as he does in every one following his or her ancestral calling, then most certainly he is advocating the Caste System and that calling it the Varna System he is not only guilty of terminological inexactitude, but he is causing confusion worse confused. I am sure that all this confusion is due to the fact that the Mahatma has no definite and clear conception as to what is Varna and what is Caste and his to the necessity of either for the conservation of Hinduism. He has said and one hopes that he will not find some mystic reason to change his view that caste is not of the essence of Hinduism. Does he regard Varna as the essence of Hinduism? One cannot as yet give any categorical answer. Readers of his article on “Dr. Ambedkar’s Indictment” will answer ‘No.’ In that article he does not say that the dogma of Varna is an essential part of the creed of Hinduism. Far from making Varna the essence of Hinduism he says “the essence of Hinduism is contained in its enunciation of one and only God as Truth and its bold acceptance of Ahimsa as the law of the human family.” But the readers of his article in reply to Mr. Sant Ram will say ‘Yes’ In that article he says “How can a Muslim remain one if he rejects the
Quran, or a Christian remain as Christian if he rejects the Bible? If Caste and Varna are convertible terms and if Varna is an integral part of the Shastras which define Hinduism I do not know how a person who rejects Caste, i.e. Varna can call himself a Hindu?" Why this prevarication? Why does the Mahatma hedge? Whom does he want to please? Has the saint failed to sense the truth? Or does the politician stand in the way of the Saint? The real reason why the Mahatma is suffering from this confusion is probably to be traced to two sources. The first is the temperament of the Mahatma. He has almost in every thing the simplicity of the child with the child's capacity for self-deception. Like a child he can believe in anything he wants to believe. We must therefore wait till such time as it-pleases the Mahatma to abandon his faith in Varna as it has pleased him to abandon his faith in Caste. The second source of confusion is the double role which the Mahatma wants to play—of a Mahatma and a Politician. As a Mahatma he may be trying to spiritualize Politics. Whether he has succeeded in it or not Politics have certainly commercialized him. A Politician must know that Society cannot bear the whole truth and that he must not speak the whole truth if speaking the whole truth is bad for his politics. The reason why the Mahatma is always supporting Caste and Varna is because he is afraid that if he opposed them he will lose his place in politics. Whatever may be the source of this confusion the Mahatma must be told that he is deceiving himself and also deceiving the people by preaching Caste under the name of Varna.
The Mahatma says that the standards I have applied to test Hindus and Hinduism are too severe and that judged by those standards every known living faith will probably fail. The complaint that my standards are high may be true. But the question is not whether they are high or whether they are low. The question is whether they are the right standards to apply. A People and their Religion must be judged by social standards based on social ethics. No other standard would have any meaning if religion is held to be a necessary good for the well-being of the people. Now I maintain that the standards I have applied to test Hindus and Hinduism are the most appropriate standards and that I know of none that are better. The conclusion that every known religion would fail if tested by my standards may be true. But this fact should not give the Mahatma as the champion of Hindus and Hinduism a ground for comfort any more than the existence of one madman should give comfort to another maaman or the existence of one criminal should give comfort to another criminal. I like to assure the Mahatma that it is not the mere failure of the Hindus and Hinduism which has produced in me the feelings of disgust and contempt. With which I am charged I realize that the world is a very imperfect world and any one who wants to live in it must bear with its imperfections. But while I am prepared to bear with the imperfections and shortcomings of the society in which I may be destined to labour, I feel I should not consent to live in a society which cherishes wrong ideals or a society which having right ideals will not consent to bring its social life in conformity with
those ideals. If am disgusted with Hindus and Hinduism it is because I am convinced that they cherish wrong ideals and live a wrong social life. My quarrel with Hindus and Hinduism is not over the imperfections of their social conduct. It is much more fundamental. It is over their ideals.

XI

Hindu society seems to me to stand in need of a moral regeneration which it is dangerous to postpone. And the question is who can determine and control this moral regeneration? Obviously only those who have undergone an intellectual regeneration and those who are honest enough to have the courage of their convictions born of intellectual emancipation. Judged by this standard the Hindu leaders who count are in my opinion quite unfit for the task. It is impossible to say that they have undergone the preliminary intellectual regeneration. If they had undergone an intellectual regeneration they would neither delude themselves in the simple way of the untaught multitude nor would they take advantage of the primitive ignorance of others as one sees them doing. Notwithstanding the crumbling state of Hindu Society these leaders will nevertheless unblyingly appeal to ideals of the past which have every way ceased to have any connection with the present which however suitable they might have been in the days of their origin have now become a warning rather than a guide. They still have a mystic respect for the earlier forms which make them disinclined—nay opposed to any examination of the foundations of their Society. The Hindu masses are of course incredibly heedless in the formation of their beliefs. But so are the Hindu leaders. And what is
worse is that these Hindu leaders become filled with an illicit passion for their beliefs when any one proposes to rob them of their companionship. The Mahatma is no exception. The Mahatma appears net to believe in thinking. He prefers to follow the saints. Like a conservative with his reverence for consecrated notions he is afraid that if he once starts thinking many ideals and institutions to which he clings will be doomed, One must sympathize with him. For every act of independent thinking puts some portion of apparently stable world in peril. But it is equally true that dependence on saints cannot lead us to know the truth. The saints are after all only human beings and as Lord Balfour said, "the human mind is no more a truth finding apparatus than the snout of a pig." In so far as he does think, to me he really appears to be prostituting his intelligence to find reasons for supporting this archaic social structure of the Hindus. He is the most influential apologist of it and therefore the worst enemy of the Hindus.

Unlike the Mahatma there are Hindu leaders who are not content merely to believe and follow. They dare to think, and act in accordance with the result of their thinking. But unfortunately they are either a dishonest lot or an indifferent lot when it comes to the question of giving right guidance to the mass of the people. Almost every Brahmin has transgressed the rule of Caste. The number of Brahmins who sell ehoes is far greater than those who practise priesthood. Not only have the Brahmins given up their ancestral calling of priesthood for trading but they have entered trades which are prohibited to them ba the Shastras. Yet how many Brahmins who break Caste every day will preach against
Caste and against the Shastras? For one honest Brahmin preaching against Caste and Shastras because his practical instinct and moral conscience cannot support a conviction in them, there are hundreds who break Caste and trample upon the Shastras every day but who are the most fanatic upholders of the theory of Caste and the sanctity of the Shastras. Why this duplicity? Because they feel that if the masses are emancipated from the yoke of Caste they would be a menace to the power and prestige of the Brahmins as a class. The dishonesty of this intellectual class who would deny the masses the fruits of their thinking is a most disgraceful phenomenon.

The Hindus in the words of Mathew Arnold are “wandering between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born.” What are they to do? The Mahatma to whom they appeal for guidance does not believe in thinking and can therefore give no guidance which can be said to stand the test of experience. The intellectual classes to whom the masses look for guidance are either too dishonest or too indifferent to educate them in the right direction. We are indeed witnesses to a great tragedy. In the face of this tragedy all one can do is to lament and say—such be thy. Leaders, O! Hindus.