

of mind that desires to stifle discussion and reasoning, because once you begin such a line, you don't know where it will end. The attitude has been well taken off in a character of one of George Eliot's novels; "when I was young there never was any question about right and wrong: we knew our catechism and that was enough; but now if you speak out of the prayer-book itself, you are liable to be contradicted." How feeble is such an attitude compared with that of Socrates, who said that he always followed that proposition which as the result of investigation and discussion showed itself to be the best founded. And the less courageous Kant showed the best influences of British and French Rationalism when he declared: "Our age is the age of criticism to which everything must be subjected. Religion through its sacredness, the law through its majesty both try to except themselves. But then they justly arouse suspicion against themselves and cannot claim the respect which reason pays to that which can maintain itself against free and unprejudiced examination."

The motto of Rationalism which represents an attitude and method, rather than a programme of dogmas, is *sapere aude*: dare to think for yourselves; be intelligent personalities, not the echoes of others. Do not allow yourselves to be persuaded contrary to your reason, or float idly in a stream of traditions, however popular they may be temporarily. The opponents of reason wish to place reserves and limits on thought; to make people surrender their personalities to mere authority; to persuade them that the old as such is better than the new and get them to acquiesce in things as they are; to dissuade them from a spirited exertion of their own powers. The older rationalism was undoubtedly too dogmatic and too negative, inclined to be anti-historical: these defects were due to the conditions under which it arose and had to sustain itself. Rationalists were everywhere either persecuted or subject to onerous inconveniences, and in consequence used philosophy too much as a weapon of warfare. They have now gained a freedom in a country like France which allows