

man helping him to raise himself? "The future of man," remarks Professor Julian Huxley, "if it is to be progress and not merely a stand-still or a degeneration, must be guided by a deliberate purpose." It is true that the formulation of an agreed purpose for man as a whole will not be easy, because in spite of the wave of internationalism that swept over the world at the close of the Great War, national animosities are simmering, and within each nation, the cleavage between classes has been sufficiently wide to make much needed economic and social reforms within a nation hard if not impossible. Men have been brought up on a code of conduct based on the supreme interests of the individual, and social instincts are not yet sufficiently powerful in the individual members of a community. Therefore it is of great significance that Sir Josiah should suggest that "the whole body of ethics needs to be re-worked in the light of modern corporate relations." It is interesting to recall in this connection that Mr. Keynes prophesied several years ago that there would be great changes in the code of morals because drastic economic changes would vitiate the social value of hitherto cherished virtues like thrift.

The great task before nations at the present time is to realise their interdependence and the utter futility of the belief that one community or a section of a community can prosper while the other communities or the other sections are in misery. The bounty that modern discovery enables men to obtain from nature may at last enable them to free themselves from the age-long haunting economic problem, and at last engage in the pursuit of higher values of life. Men are assisted in meeting the call upon them only in part when the technical problems of the impact of science upon society are solved. More is wanted, and that is social control of scientific discoveries for the advancement of human values and not for mutual destruction. It is therefore comforting to read that at the same session of the British Association which listened to the learned President's call for a new technique and a new outlook in the application of science to social life, Sir Richard Gregory condemned the use of scientific research and invention for inhuman ends, and advocated the conservation of social and spiritual values with scientific teaching and research while Sir Daniel Hall called upon men of science to join in the fight for freedom, condemning the entrusting of science, which meant power, to "power-mongers".

NEWS

FAILURE OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN CHERNOBYL, UKRAINE, USSR

A nuclear power plant in Chernobyl, Ukraine, USSR, failed in late April. Chernobyl is about 130 km north of Kiev and 640 km southwest of Moscow. Radioactive material, including cesium, cobalt and iodine from the 1000-MW facility has been detected in the air over Finland, Sweden and Denmark and in rain over Sweden at levels 10 to 100 times normal background. Scientists in the United States say that the Chernobyl nuclear reactors are not enclosed in thick concrete containment buildings as are reactors in the United States and most other countries. Thus if a failure occurs, there is little to

stop a plume of radioactive material from spreading over large areas. Soviet authorities say that 'those in need are being given aid'. However, numerous injuries and at least six fatalities are reported to have occurred. Soviet spokesmen maintain that the accident is the first of its kind, but rumours persist that a 1957 nuclear accident caused injuries and deaths in the southern Ural Mountains. (*Environ. Sci. Technol.*, Vol. 20, No. 6, 1986, p. 535; The American Chemical Society, 1155, 16th Street, N. W. Washington D.C. 20036, USA).