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Is the New Science Hostile to Religion?

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be illegitimate as this council decreed; the old man seeking a burial-place might be affected by its decisions. The prelate was surrounded on all sides by conciliar resolutions, and the monk could not escape its many provisions. The ruler who engaged in a war, no less than the one who sued for peace, might endanger himself by transgressing a decree of the council. The sailor and the ship-owner, the tradesman and the artisan, might conflict with the council by indiscriminate activity. The Jew might offend by his attire and might find his business ruined because of the Fourth Lateran Council. Yet the unusual jurisdiction which this council claimed was not an illogical usurpation of power. It was rather the logical deduction from the great pretensions which the Papacy had made since the days of Gregory VII, pretensions which found their fullest expression in Innocent III. The theory of universal papal jurisdiction being accepted, the far-reaching regulations of this subservient council were but the conclusions from accepted premises.

Seward, Nebr.

H. O. A. KEINATH.

NOTE.—The interested student is referred to the following works, which give the sources or offer an extended treatment: Mansi, Johannes Dominicus: *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*. Florence and Venice, 1759—1798. (Vol. XXII contains the records of the Fourth Lateran Council. The MSS. on which this edition is based are in the Vatican Library.) — Labbe, Philip: *Sacrosancta Concilia ad Regum Editionem Exacta*. Venice, 1728—1733. (Contains the records of this council, Vol. XIII.) — Potthast, Augustus: *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum inde ab a. post Chr. n. MCXCVIII ad a. MCCIV*. 2 vols. Berlin, 1874. (Contains lists of sources, but not the texts.) — Hefele, Carl, Joseph: *Konziliengeschichte*, Vol. 5. Freiburg, 1886. — Luchaire, Achille: *Innocent III. Le Concile de Latran et la Réforme de l'Eglise*. Paris, 1908. — Hurter, F. E. von: *Geschichte des Papstes Innozenz' III. und seiner Zeitgenossen*. 4 vols. Hamburg, 1841—1844. — Walch and Buddeus: *Commentatio Historico-theologica de Conciliis Lateranensibus Rei Christianae Noxiis*. Jena, 1725. — Lessius: *Discussio Decreti Magni Concilii Lateranensis*. — Widdringtonus: *Discussio Discussionis Decreti Lateranensis*. — A limited treatment of the council is found in various church histories, such as Schaff, Kurtz, Moeller, Alzog.

Is the New Science Hostile to Religion?

The question is raised in a letter which just comes to hand from Rev. H. J. S. Astrup of Zululand, South Africa, who calls himself "an unknown far-away man," but whose labors in the South Africa mission-field are not unknown to us. Rev. Astrup particularly refers to a recent book of Sir James Jeans, *The Mysterious Universe*, a book which in this reader's opinion "has upset many person's faith," particularly in its bearings on the Christian's belief in creation.

The volume here referred to indeed created a sensation on both sides of the ocean when it was published two years ago, and the views of the author are still a matter of lively dispute among scientists. *Philosophy*, Journal of the British Institute of Philosophy, in its January issue of this year, contained an article by Sir James Jeans summarizing the views presented in this now famous volume. Reply was made in the April issue by no less a scientist than Sir Oliver Lodge. Jeans is a famous astronomer and mathematician, while Lodge is one of the famous European students of physics. It is to be noted that he by no means agrees with his brother scientist in his theories about the physical nature of the universe. Let us put a pin there. Whether Jeans agrees or disagrees with Christianity, his book does not represent a consensus of modern science. However, also Sir Oliver Lodge accepts it as a possible conclusion of all modern physics "that the universe is governed by Mind." His chief disagreement with Jeans is on the nature of the ether.

But now let us turn to Jeans's volume.

It cannot be maintained that the author takes the Christian viewpoint of the physical world. He accepts the hypothesis which looks upon the earth as a particle of matter cast off by the sun some two thousand million years ago. Life originated as the earth cooled. He accounts for life through the combination of carbon with other elements and knows nothing of a "vital force." All life will come to an end when the sun loses its heat. Also the human race "is probably destined to die of cold." With all this, Bible Christians must disagree.

The Mysterious Universe deals with some of the most profound mathematical speculations of our day, the quantum theory, relativity, and others. For this reason, and also because the author does not claim to speak the last word on many questions of present-day science, some readers may be left with the impression that the book is antagonistic to the Christian doctrine of creation of the world through divine power. Neither our first reading of the book nor our second, just concluded, bears out this viewpoint.

Over against a prevalent notion of evolutionists, Sir James does not believe that there are many planetary systems; and again in opposition to evolutionism he does not believe that life could originate almost anywhere in the universe, but only in "less than a thousand-million-millionth part of the whole of space." (P. 5.) This makes life a very unique thing. Again, he believes in free will, the basis of all morality, and on this point directly opposes the science until recently in vogue. (Pp. 20. 31.)

References are found to the immense age of the universe, running to "millions of millions of years," a theory for which proof is found in the cooling rate of the sun and of other stars. But Sir

James is fair enough to see evidence of another kind, and he believes that we are living in an expanding universe, which started a limited number of years ago, pointing to a date of creation "not infinitely remote." (P. 154.) His theory in some points is a complete reversal of modern evolutionistic views. For instance, while infidel science looks upon matter as eternal, he believes that matter can be annihilated, indeed "is being annihilated on a vast scale out in the depth of space." (P. 75.) In this manner he accounts for cosmic radiation. (P. 78 f.) As against the materialistic view of the universe he asserts that modern science has dissolved all matter into "waves and nothing but waves." "These concepts reduce the whole universe to a world of light, potential or existent, so that the whole story of its creation can be told with perfect accuracy and completeness in the six words: 'God said, "Let there be light."'" (P. 83.)

Vast, indescribably majestic, and mysterious indeed does the universe appear under the aspect of the new mathematical theories. Infidels point to this fact, and they proclaim that God cannot possibly be concerned in the welfare of human beings, these brief life forms on the crust of "a small planet revolving around a third-rate sun." Jeans does not share this point of view. He says: "It is probably unnecessary to add that on this view of things the apparent vastness and emptiness of the universe and our own insignificant size therein need cause us neither bewilderment nor concern. The immensity of the universe becomes a matter of satisfaction rather than awe; we are 'citizens of no mean city.' Again, we need not puzzle over the finiteness of space; we feel no curiosity as to what lies beyond the four walls which bound our vision in a dream." (P. 153.)

Modern science as represented in this volume has definitely parted company with infidel materialism. Again, we hear scientists speak of a Creator, of an act of creation, and of Mind "as the creator and governor of the realm of matter." (P. 158.) "The universe shows evidence of a designing or controlling power that has something in common with our own individual minds." (P. 159.)

Our faith is not based upon the speculations or even on the more solid research of scientists. Whether Jeans, Eddington, Millikan, Einstein, Compton, Planck, agree or disagree with the Bible, contend against it or announce their agreement with it, bears no relation to our Christian conviction. God's Spirit has spoken to us through the Bible, speaks to us through Christian preaching, and creates that response in our hearts which we call faith. Yet it is encouraging to know that amidst the confusion of modern scientific speculation — also *The Mysterious Universe* is self-contradictory in some of its sections — voices are being heard, voices of men in the front rank of scientific research, protesting against a materialistic evolutionism with its denials of all that is fundamental in religion and morals.

If one would ask what is the greatest generalization of twentieth-century science, the answer would undoubtedly be: "I believe in a God."

Henshaw Ward said in the *Saturday Review of Literature* of April 4, 1931: "The mechanistic philosophy has always seemed to me the most incomprehensible product of the human brain. And to most scientists it has appeared to be a blind and monstrous explanation — as if a clam should aver that the universe consists of nothing but mud. There are indications that materialism was the creed of several scientists in the nineteenth century, but I have advertised in vain for any example of it written in the twentieth century by a scientist under fifty years of age. The only profession of materialism that I have ever seen is *Modern Science and Materialism*, by Hugh Elliot, an English writer on philosophical subjects, not a scientist. But even this philosopher concedes 'the whole foundation of knowledge to idealism,' and he remarks: 'I do not for a moment defend materialism in a metaphysical sense, as if I were to affirm that matter is an ultimate fact.'

"A modern scientist who preached materialism — granted that there could be such an animal — would be a laughing-stock to his colleagues. The judgment of W. C. D. Dampier-Whetham on this point represents the overwhelming majority of scientific opinion: 'At the beginning of the twentieth century the majority of men of science held unconsciously a naive materialism — the old materialism is dead.'"

Among the world's astronomers and mathematicians none stands higher than the Cambridge Professor A. S. Eddington. His domain is strictly that of physical science and of mathematics. But a few quotations from his most recent work* will demonstrate how completely materialism has been discarded as an attempt to account for the universe: —

"The modern scientific theories have broken away from the common standpoint which identifies the real with the concrete. I think we might go so far as to say that time is more typical of physical reality than matter." (P. 275.) "To put the conclusion crudely — the stuff of the world is mind-stuff." (P. 276.) "The mind-stuff of the world is of course something more general than our individual conscious minds; but we may think of its nature as not altogether foreign to the feelings in our consciousness. The realistic matter and fields of force of former physical theory are altogether irrelevant." (P. 276.) "The substratum of everything is of mental character." (P. 281.)

Especially the quantum theory has worked havoc with the ancient materialistic views of matter. This theory was developed some

* *The Nature of the Physical World.*

fifteen years ago by Prof. Max Planck. He argued that light does not consist of waves, but comes in bullets or particles, "quanta." Experiments made on X-rays by Compton of Chicago confirmed this theory. In 1927 Dr. Werner Heisenberg built on this basis the daring new theory called "The Principle of Uncertainty" or "Indeterminacy." The quantum theory as well as Heisenberg's principle is so involved with the intricacies of higher mathematics that the layman is unable to form a mental picture of these new scientific principles. As a matter of fact they can be conceived only mathematically. But they belong to the standard doctrine of physics as it is now taught in the universities. Now, the deductions made from the quantum and indeterminacy principles are such as to shake the very foundation of materialistic philosophy. Thus Dr. John C. McLennan, Professor of physics in Toronto University, said in an address delivered May 26, 1931, regarding Heisenberg's discovery: "Here divine intervention enters the picture." And again: "There, then, is room for divine intervention, for free will apart from mathematical predestination. There apparently is the point where something apart from physical laws can enter. That is a very comforting thought. There is no clash between science and religion. They are complementary. One makes provision for the other."

More and more the very concept of matter disappears and the most up-to-date scientific speculation is proceeding along lines of spiritualism, idealism, the recognition of the supernatural, of the divine. The world is not only the product of intelligence, but is receiving its inexhaustible flow of energy from a divine source. Behind all waves of cosmic energy is God.

THEODORE GRAEBNER.

Die Hauptschriften Luthers in Chronologischer Reihenfolge.

Mit Anmerkungen.

(Fortsetzung.)

1524. „Wider den neuen Abgott und alten Teufel, der zu Meissen soll erhoben werden.“ — Diese Schrift erschien spätestens Anfang Juni. Seine Absicht, diese Schrift zu verfertigen, hatte Luther schon Anfang April in einem Briefe an Spalatin angezeigt. (Vgl. XXI a, 608.) Die Schrift behandelt die Kanonisation des im Jahre 1106 oder 1107 verstorbenen Bischofs Venuo von Meissen, die im Mai 1523 stattgefunden hatte und die im Juni 1524 durch eine feierliche Erhebung seiner Gebeine öffentlich kundgegeben werden sollte. In 41 Paragraphen behandelt Luther den Unfug dieser Kanonisation, wobei er auch mit sonderlicher Ironie die Heuchelei geißelt, die bei diesen Heiligspredigungen zutage tritt. Er sagt unter anderm: „Denn von den verstorbenen Heiligen hat er [Gott] uns nichts geboten; darum gefällt ihm auch nichts, was wir daran wenden, sondern Menschen haben solche Abgötterei erfunden, darum daß Geld trägt, wie das alles andere vor mir haben genugsam getrieben.“ (St. Louiser Ausgabe XV, 2323—2340.)