

Meetings and Societies

Religion in the Age of Science

The third summer Conference on Religion in the Age of Science took place on Star Island, Isles of Shoals, about 10 miles off Portsmouth, N.H., during the week 28 July–4 Aug. About three dozen persons whose professional work is in science, three dozen in religion, and four or five dozen laymen including educators, lawyers, and philosophers, many of them accompanied by other members of the family, spent a week on this 92-acre heap of rock talking about religion in the light of science. Participants came from about 20 states and two foreign countries. Discussions for some of the conference members were fairly continuous from 9 in the morning until near midnight, although there were only two or three formal papers per day. A scholarship fund provided by the Rockefeller Foundation made possible attendance by 25 students of theology, science, and other fields at the graduate level.

The significance of this conference lies perhaps not so much in the particular formulations or reformulations of religious doctrine presented as in the fact that there has been established a rather unique concurrence on the part of professional people from a wide range of the spectra of both science and theology on a fruitful program for integrating religion and science. Reports on the previous two conferences [*Science* 120, 522 (1954) and 122, 1277 (1955)] have indicated the kind of people involved. New speakers in 1956 included Marion J. Bradshaw, professor of the philosophy of religion at Bangor Theological Seminary; Erwin R. Goodenough, professor of the history of religion at Yale; Robert Ulich, professor of education at Harvard; Philip Rieff, assistant professor of sociology at Brandeis; Robert Bellah, senior fellow of the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill; and Oscar Riddle, for many years associated with the department of experimental evolution of the Carnegie Institution of Washington at Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y.

This concurrence on a basic approach to the problem of religion in an age of science can perhaps be stated as follows. Knowledge of good and evil or of values or of man's ultimate concerns—that is,

the area of religious doctrine—is considered to be essentially one with, and inseparable from, all other knowledge and to be capable of extension and correction in the same ways. This does not mean that our acquisition of knowledge about ethics or the nature and destiny of man is limited to knowledge gained by recent scientific methods; but it does not exclude them. Science, in short, is a part of the process by means of which valid information about man's highest concerns is revealed to him. Because of the very rapid current advance of scientific knowledge and the patently growing incompatibilities of various religious doctrines, the conference members, for the most part, seem to feel the need for a restatement of religion.

At the same time, there seems to be among the members of the conference the scientist's respect for the facts of religion and religious institutions. These are looked upon as evolved structures or patterns of human culture having the same kind of validity and usefulness in supporting life as do other evolutionary structures. And there is also a scientist's hope that one can find beneath the seemingly paradoxical and irrational phenomena of religion some kind of rational conceptual scheme to account for them.

The dominant concern of the conference is admittedly not science but man, according to Harvard astronomer Harlow Shapley, chairman of the advisory board of the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science, which sponsors the conference. But science, according to Edwin P. Booth, professor of historical theology at Boston University and president of the institute, is clearly the source of new truth in terms of which religious doctrines must be revised.

Perhaps the most interesting and exciting point of the conference week was the Thursday evening session of Shapley's "Hollow Square" colloquium, when the conference members sit informally from about 10 to 12 in the evening. Booth was quizzed on his religious position. He was one of the original group of clergymen who invited the cooperation of scientists in a thoroughgoing reconsideration of Christian theology and is able himself to interpret religious experience in terms of the realities of history, and

biography, and within, rather than without, the frame of science, in a way that makes this conference the unique phenomenon that it is—a place where "hard-boiled" men of science and religious professionals of various kinds experience together an excitement that is at once religious and enlightened by scientific perspectives. If the reader can imagine a creative and mutually respectful interchange between a theologian and, for instance, the religion-whipping author of *The Unleashing of Evolutionary Thought*, Oscar Riddle [see the reviews in *Science* 123, 144 (1956), and more particularly *Sci. Monthly* 82, 317 (1956)], he can imagine the quality of this conference. In a time when many of Christendom's theologians have given up the battle with science and are turning, presumably for security and strength, to a position in which they claim the isolation and exemption of religious knowledge from any contact with scientific knowledge, this is a significant event. It is also a positive and new approach, since even in the heyday of religious liberalism during the earlier part of the present century, there seems to have been no comparable coming together of scientists at the invitation of religious professionals to reconsider religious doctrine for a new age. Theologian Booth pressed hard for a consideration of the oneness of truth or knowledge, whether the subject matter was physics or human values, and he expressed the conviction that "natural" and "revealed" knowledge could be reduced to a single system. Perhaps the religion of the future will be in the words of philosopher Robert Ulich a covenant between man and his ever-expanding universe.

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Council on Library Resources, Inc.

The formation of the Council on Library Resources, Inc., an organization whose purpose is to assist in solving the problems of libraries generally, and of research libraries in particular, was announced on 18 Sept. following its initial meeting in New York at which it elected officers and voted to accept a \$5-million grant of funds from the Ford Foundation to support its initial activities over a 5-year period. The council will assist in the solution of library problems by providing grants for the support of research and the demonstration of new techniques and methods. It will also undertake to coordinate efforts to improve the resources and services of libraries, and to improve relations between American and foreign libraries and archives.

Elected as president and executive

head of the council is Verner W. Clapp, who has resigned as chief assistant librarian of the Library of Congress to accept the post. The scientists included on the board of directors of the council are Joseph C. Morris, vice president of Tulane University, head of its department of physics, and a director of the National Science Foundation; and Warren Weaver, vice president of the Rockefeller Foundation and former president of the AAAS. The council, a wholly independent nonprofit educational research organization, has been incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia, and has its national offices in Washington, at 1025 Connecticut Ave., NW.

Meeting Notes

■ A conference on the use of drugs in treating mental patients was held in Washington, D.C., 21-22 Sept. Representatives of public and private psychiatric hospitals, the pharmaceutical industry, university departments of psychiatry, and research institutes, in addition to Government officials and interested scientists, discussed research problems encountered in evaluating the effectiveness of drugs.

Committees of psychiatrists, pharmacologists, neurophysiologists, psycholo-

gists, sociologists, and biometricians met for 2 days beforehand to lay the groundwork for the talks. Sponsors of the conference were the National Institute of Mental Health, American Psychiatric Association, and the Division of Medical Sciences of the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council.

■ More than 20 original clinical papers on the uses of Meproamate and other tranquilizing agents used in mental and emotional problems will be presented during a 2-day conference to be held under the auspices of the New York Academy of Sciences at the Barbizon Plaza Hotel, New York, 18-19, Oct. This conference will explore their uses in new areas of mental health as well as review the work that has been done during the past 2 years by clinicians and psychiatrists in testing hospitalized and ambulatory mental patients.

Reports on the use of Meproamate for Air Force personnel, and its effect on the reflexes, responses, and awareness of "normal" subjects will be presented. Other subjects will include the effect of Meproamate on conditioned reflexes and conditioned fear and behavior, and its use in treating disturbed children, senile psychoses, muscle spasm, headache, alcoholism, anxiety states, cerebral palsy, and other indications. James G.

Miller, Mental Health Research Institute, University of Michigan, and Frank M. Berger, medical director of the Wallace Laboratories, New Brunswick, N.J., are cochairmen of the conference.

Forthcoming Events

November

10. Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, fall meeting, Cambridge, Mass. (R. W. Burhoe, American Acad. of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge 36.)

11-12. American Soc. for the Study of Arteriosclerosis, annual, Chicago, Ill. (R. G. Gould, P.O. Box 1663, Los Alamos, N.M.)

11-17. Cardiology, 5th Inter-American cong. of, Havana, Cuba. (I. Chavez, Calzada de la Piedad 300, Mexico, D.F., Mexico.)

12-14. Association of Military Surgeons of the U.S., annual, Washington, D.C. (S. E. Womeldorph, AMSUS, Suite 718, 1726 Eye St., NW, Washington 6.)

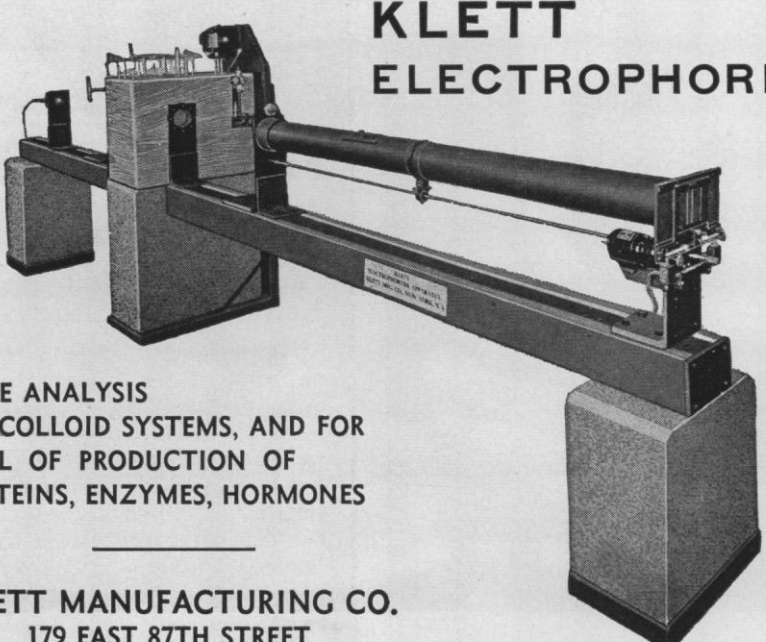
12-15. American Petroleum Inst., 36th annual, Chicago, Ill. (API, 50 W. 50 St., New York 20.)

12-16. American Public Health Assoc., 84th annual, Atlantic City, N.J. (R. M. Atwater, 1790 Broadway, New York 19.)

12-16. American Soc. of Agronomy, annual, Cincinnati, Ohio. (L. G. Monthey, 2702 Monroe St., Madison 5, Wis.)

13-15. Historical Development of Physi-

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ological Thought, symposium, Brooklyn, N.Y. (E. Goodwin, State Univ. of New York, College of Medicine, Brooklyn 3.)

14-15. Industrial Hygiene Foundation, 21st annual, Pittsburgh, Pa. (C. R. Walmer, IHF, Mellon Inst., Pittsburgh.)

14-16. Optics and Microwaves, symp., Washington, D.C. (Symp. on Optics and Microwaves, P.O. Box 355, Falls Church, Va.)

14-16. Newer Developments in the Diagnosis and Management of Cancer, symp., Duarte, Calif. (J. Love, Director, Div. of Postgraduate Medical Education, City of Hope Medical Center, Duarte.)

15. Enzymes and Feed, Assoc. of Vitamin Chemists, Chicago, Ill. (M. Freed, Dawe's Laboratories, Inc., 4800 S. Richmond St., Chicago 32.)

15-16. American Philosophical Soc., Philadelphia, Pa. (APA, 104 S. 5 St., Philadelphia 6.)

15-16. Operations Research Soc. of

America, 10th natl., San Francisco, Calif. (T. E. Oberbeck, U.S. Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, Calif.)

15-16. Society of Technical Writers, jointly with Assoc. of Technical Writers and Editors, New York, N.Y. (S. F. Shapiro, STW, P.O. Box 22, Newton Centre 59, Mass.)

15-17. Acoustical Soc. of America, Los Angeles, Calif. (W. Waterfall, ASA, 57 E. 55 St., New York 22.)

18-25. National Meeting of Surgeons, Mexico City, Mexico. (Intern. Acad. of Proctology, 147-41 Sanford Ave., Flushing, N.Y.)

19-20. Entomological Soc. of America, Eastern Branch, Atlantic City, N.J. (B. F. Driggers, Experiment Station, New Brunswick, N.J.)

21. Arctic Branch, Alaska Div., AAAS, College, Alaska. (Miss C. Juedes, Box 47, College.)

22-23. Calder Hall Nuclear Power Sta-

tion, conf., London, England. (Secretary, British Nuclear Energy Conference, 1-7 Great George St., London, S.W.1.)

22-23. International Cong. of Industrial Chemistry, 29th, Paris, France. (J. Gerard, Société de Chimie Industrielle, 28, rue Saint-Dominique, Paris VII^e.)

23-24. American Mathematical Soc., Evanston, Ill. (E. G. Begle, 207 Leet Oliver Memorial Hall, Yale Univ., New Haven 11, Conn.)

23-24. American Physical Soc., Chicago, Ill. (K. K. Darrow, APS, Columbia Univ., N.Y. 27.)

23-24. American Soc. of Animal Production, annual, Chicago, Ill. (W. M. Beeson, Dept. of Animal Husbandry, Purdue Univ., W. Lafayette, Ind.)

24. American Ethnological Soc., New York, N.Y. (A. G. James, Hunter College, Bronx 68, N.Y.)

25-30. American Rocket Soc., annual, New York, N.Y. (J. J. Harford, ARS, 29 W. 39 St., New York 18.)

25-30. American Soc. of Mechanical Engineers, annual, New York, N.Y. (C. E. Davies, ASME, 29 W. 39 St., New York 18.)

26-28. American Soc. of Refrigerating Engineers, Boston, Mass. (R. C. Cross, ASRE, 234 Fifth Ave., New York 1.)

26-30. Automation Exposition, 3rd intern., New York, N.Y. (TIAE, Richard Rimbach Associates, Inc., 845-A Ridge Ave., Pittsburgh 12, Pa.)

27-30. American Medical Assoc., clinical, Seattle, Wash. (G. F. Lull, AMA, 535 N. Dearborn St., Chicago 10, Ill.)

27-30. National Chemical Exposition, 9th, Cleveland, Ohio. (American Chemical Soc., 1155 16 St., NW, Washington 6, D.C.)

28-30. American College of Cardiology, 5th interim, Pittsburgh, Pa. (P. Reichert, ACC, Empire State Bldg., New York, N.Y.)

28-30. International Conf. on Ozone, 1st, Chicago, Ill. (C. E. Thorp, Armour Research Foundation, 35 W. 33 St., Chicago 16.)

29-30. Veterinary Symposium on "Meti-Steroids," New York, N.Y. (J. C. Siegrist, Schering Corp., Bloomfield, N.J.)

30. American Rheumatism Assoc., Bethesda, Md. (E.F. Hartung, 580 Park Ave., New York, N.Y.)

30-1. Oklahoma Acad. of Science, Stillwater. (D. E. Howell, Entomology Dept., Oklahoma A. & M. College, Stillwater, Okla.)

30-1. Tennessee Acad. of Science, Murfreesboro. (D. Caplenor, Dept. of Biology, Peabody College, Nashville 4, Tenn.)

December

2. American Acad. of Dental Medicine, 11th mid-annual, New York, N.Y. (A. Reiner, 114-01 201 St., St. Albans 12, N.Y.)

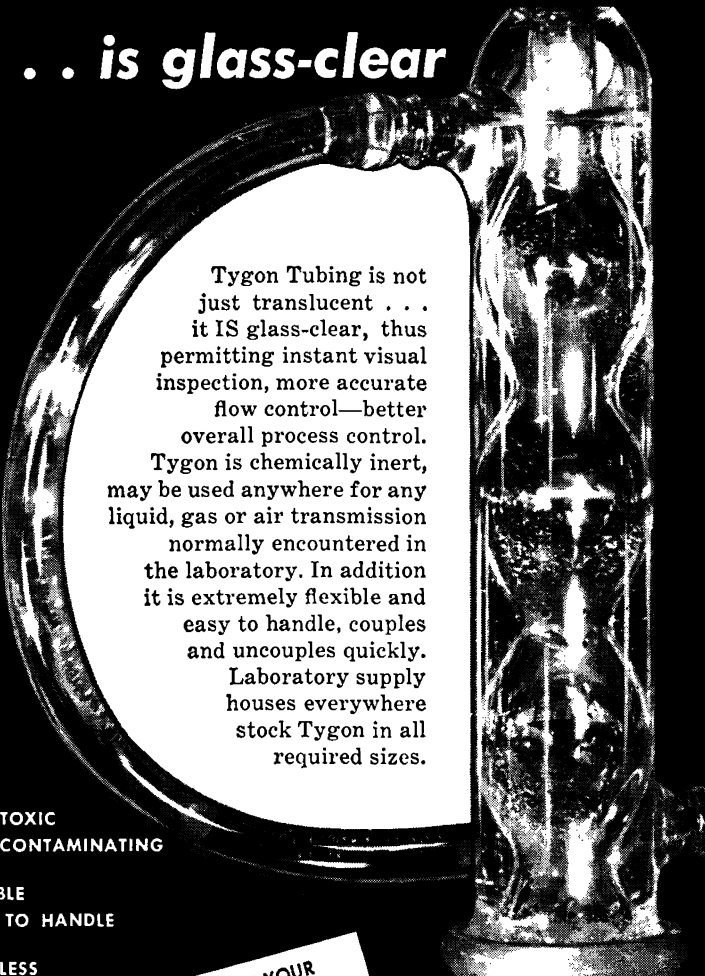
2-7. Radiological Soc. of North America, Inc., annual, Chicago, Ill. (D. S. Childs, 713 E. Genesee St., Syracuse 2, N.Y.)

5-7. Instrumentation Conf., 2nd, Inst. of Radio Engineers, Atlanta, Ga. (M. D. Prince, Engineering Experiment Station, Georgia Inst. of Technology, Atlanta.)

(See issue of 21 September for comprehensive list)

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