



Figure 17. A grate is pressed by a lever to immerse candelilla stems into the boiling acid solution.



Figure 18. The clean wax seen here undergoes further purification before it is employed in the manufacture of dozens of very useful products worldwide.

## THE THREAT FROM THEISTIC EVOLUTION\*

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### Abstract

*The so-called position of theistic evolution\*\*\* destroys sound Biblical interpretation and renders a Christian unable to objectively evaluate the evidences against the theory of evolution.*

### Introduction

It is no secret that a significant number of individuals who profess the Christian faith has declared the entire creation vs. evolution debate to be pointless. The question of origins is indeed one where scientific theory and Biblical interpretation are tangent. In seeking to avoid any possible conflict between science and theology, some individuals support what is known as "theistic evolution." "Theistic" is a term derived from the Greek word "theos" which means "god." Thus theistic evolution is God-directed evolution. In a book entitled *The Genesis Connection* (Wiester, 1983, p. 96) the author seeks to resolve the conflict between the concepts of evolution and of creation. Wiester takes the position that the Christian person can accept virtually the entire theory of evolution. The only reservation he must make is that the Christian cannot accept the presupposition that the process happened spontaneously, i.e. by random chance or fortuitous accident. In other words Wiester believes that one may solve the entire problem by simply saying that God is behind the entire process. Thus it would seem the theistic evolutionist would have the best of both worlds.

The Creation Research Society is a scientific society fully committed to the proposition that scientific evidence by itself has demonstrated fatal flaws in the

theory of evolution. However, the Society does have a statement of belief which includes the inspiration of the Bible, acceptance of the doctrine of creation, the world flood of Noah, and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ our Savior. These theological truths are

\*\*\*Editor's Note: The topic of theistic evolution has been explored from various aspects in *CRSQ* articles. A selected bibliography may be of interest to readers who wish to explore creationist reactions to the philosophy.

Armstrong, H. L. 1968. Evolution: theory or myth? *CRSQ* 5:114-15, 119; 1968. Not theistic evolutionists. *CRSQ* 5:118-19; 1969. Theistic evolution and stories. *CRSQ* 7:242-43; 1972. Faith and evolution. *CRSQ* 9:139; 1973. Augustine, Aquinas and origins. *CRSQ* 10:120, 122; 1974. Book review of *God's Method in Creation*. *CRSQ* 11:170; 1976. An examination of theistic evolution. *CRSQ* 13:108-10; Barnes, T. G. 1987. The dilemma of a theistic evolutionist: an answer to Howard Van Till. *CRSQ* 23:167-71; Braze, M. W. 1983. Theories of origins: do they persist despite contrary evidence? M. S. Thesis. ICR Graduate School. El Cajon, CA; Clark, H. W. 1971. Was Augustine an evolutionist? *CRSQ* 7:242-43; Haigh, P. 1979. Outline of Thomistic principles on creation that prove the impossibility of theistic evolution. *CRSQ* 15:210-11; Hedke, R. R. 1980. Asa Gray and theistic evolution. *CRSQ* 17:181-85; 1981. Asa Gray vindicated. *CRSQ* 18:74-75; Ingram, T. R. 1970. Augustine not an evolutionist. *CRSQ* 7:185-86; Jones, A. J. 1971. The nature of evolutionary thought. *CRSQ* 8:44-49; Klotz, J. W. 1964. The importance of creationist study. *CRSQ* 1 (Annual): 6-9; Morris, H. M. 1972. Theistic evolution. *CRSQ* 8:269-72; Niessen, R. 1980. Several significant discrepancies between theistic evolution and the Biblical account. *CRSQ* 16:220-21, 203, 232; Rushdoony, R. J. 1965. The premises of evolutionary thought. *CRSQ* 2 (2): 15-18; Tinkle, W. J. 1975. Theistic evolution. *CRSQ* 12:126; 1981. Intelligence rather than struggle. *CRSQ* 18:163, 167

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among the presuppositions we accept as religious truths. Thus it does not seem inappropriate to examine briefly the threat posed by theistic evolution.

It is helpful to ask why it is that some Christians believe that they may embrace theistic evolution. I am convinced that the principal reason lies in capitulation to the claims of the proponents of evolution. Theologians, who usually are unable to understand the scientific evidence, are overly impressed by the claims of evolutionists. Since it is promoted in the name of science, they assume it must be correct. Therefore they feel they must accommodate their interpretation of the Bible to evolution. They feel that it is naïve and behind the times to insist on a creationistic interpretation of the Bible.

#### **Theologians, Evolution and Inspiration**

In my opinion this willingness to surrender has its roots in a departure from a solid view of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. The Bible is regarded as a human book, written by men who were limited by the crude science of their time. Such theologians believe that God indeed has placed spiritual truths in the Bible, but these truths are mixed with old and faulty views concerning nature. For example, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian who was executed under Hitler's reign, wrote an essay on creation. In this essay he says,

To the extent that his word is the word of man, the Biblical author was limited by his time and knowledge; and we dispute this as little as the fact that through this word only God is speaking to us of His creation (Bonhoeffer, 1959, p. 28).

When Bonhoeffer (1959, p. 49) discusses the Garden of Eden he writes, "How should we speak of the young earth except in the language of fairy tales?"

Another famous German theologian, Gerhard Von Rad (1961, p. 82), writes, "The notion that God 'built' woman from man's rib gives an answer to the question of why ribs surround only the upper half of the human body rather than the entire body." More recently, Conrad Hyers, an American Lutheran theologian, defended the position that one must treat the book of Genesis as "symbolic" in its nature. He writes, "The crucial question in the creation account of Genesis 1 is polytheism versus monotheism" (Hyers, 1984, p. 43). Hyers does admit that there is some vestige of historical truth in Genesis. For example, he writes, "The Garden of Eden story . . . contains a postulation, if not an ancient remembrance of a food gathering stage which preceded sheep herding" (Hyers, 1984, p. 101). Thus it is evident that the theistic evolutionist usually regards the literary nature of the Genesis account as myth, epic, poem, parable, or saga. In any event the historic approach of the creationist is derided as being "hyper-literalism" (Olson, 1982, p. 30).

The consequences of adhering to theistic evolution are far reaching. Instead of presenting a solution to the conflict, theistic evolution wins approval neither from Christian theology nor from science.

Consider the following sample reactions to the proposal that evolution may be considered as being directed by an almighty Deity. Kirtly Mather states,

When a theologian accepts evolution as a process used by the Creator he must be able to go all the way with it. Not only is it an orderly process, it is a continuing one. The golden age for men—if any—is in the future and not in the past (Shapley, 1960, pp. 37-38).

What Mather means is that you can forget the theological concept taught by Genesis that Adam and Eve, the first humans, were created perfect and sinless. Instead you must accept the evolutionary philosophy that man arose from the beast with all that that implies. As a consequence, The Apostle Paul's description of the cause of original sin in Chapter five of his letter to the Romans must be rejected. For Paul speaks of the first man Adam who sinned and thus plunged all mankind into rebellion against God. Likewise there would then be difficulty with Paul's doctrine that Christ, the second Adam, redeemed all men by His atoning death on the cross.

Moreover, one finds that scientists who promote evolution are not the totally objective, philosophically pure individuals that some believe them to be. Instead of being willing to concede that one may indeed hold that there is a God who created matter and energy and who directs evolution, many evolutionists insist that such "mysticism" must be rejected. It has to be mechanistic and materialistic in their view. George G. Simpson has judged that,

The attempt to build an evolutionary theory mingling mysticism and science has only tended to vitiate the science. I strongly suspect that it has been equally damaging on the religious side, but here I am less qualified to judge (Simpson, 1964, p. 232).

Nonetheless it is quite clear that evolutionists have a faith of their own, namely a faith in a totally materialistic process.

Theologians who accept theistic evolution soon display that in most instances their entire theology suffers. For instance Derek Kidner wrote a small commentary on Genesis. His book has much commendable material. Yet Kidner (1967, p. 94) writes,

If as the text of Genesis would by no means disallow, God initially shaped man by the process of evolution, it would follow that a considerable stock of near-humans preceded first man, and it would be arbitrary to picture them as mindless brutes.

Kidner is also led to deny the universality of the Flood at the time of Noah. He writes, "It seems to follow that the destruction of life was, like inundation of the earth, complete in the relative sense and not the absolute sense" (Kidner, 1967, p. 94).

Messianic prophecy also is placed in jeopardy by the use of methods of interpretation which regard the Bible as a human product written by men who were scientifically the children of their day. For example the Christian Church has long held that Genesis 3:15 is the Proto-Gospel. It speaks of the seed of the woman which will crush the head of the serpent. But Von Rad (1961, p. 82) who does not view Genesis as of historic value, states "The exegesis of the early church which found a messianic prophecy here, a reference to the final victory of the woman's seed, does not agree with the sense of this passage."

Indeed, Hyers (1984, p. 97), an advocate of the symbolic interpretation of Genesis admits, "Symbolic interpretation can easily be abused. On the pretext of extracting their inner secrets, sacred writings can be made to say and mean almost anything."

The theological problem does not stop with the Book of Genesis. When the historical-grammatical method of interpreting Scripture is abandoned, the Biblical miracles are also apt to be denied. This is done on the premise that science does not accept the possibility that God will set aside the laws of nature. I once heard a Christian theistic evolutionist say that the only miracle he could now accept was that of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. When pressed to say why he accepted that one last miracle, he could not reply.

### Conclusions

From all this one may conclude that theistic evolution carries a baggage of severe problems. This is not to say that a person cannot believe that evolution was God's way of creating and at the same time affirm Jesus Christ as God-man and Savior. But it is obvious that such a position endangers the fundamentals of the Christian faith. Indeed I am also convinced that theistic evolution is not good science. It closes one's eyes to the

many-faceted evidence that stands against the theory of evolution. While propagandists for the theory still trumpet the wonders of Darwinism, knowledgeable people are aware that each year brings increasing evidence of the fallacies of evolutionary theory. It is only by a vigorous pursuit of the implications of this evidence that science will be truly served. Likewise, Christians remember the words of the book of Hebrews 11:3, "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible." And that Christian faith is created, informed, and sustained by the Holy Scriptures, God's inerrant word.

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## PANORAMA OF SCIENCE

### Reprinted CRSQ Volume 2

#### Introduction

The *Creation Research Society Quarterly* has been published since 1964 (26 complete volumes). Many of the early Quarterlies are out-of-print, yet these past issues contain articles of continuing interest and value. In an effort to make these volumes available, the Board of Directors has incurred considerable expense to reprint them. In order that those interested in good scientific creationist articles, sound criticisms of the evolutionary hypothesis, along with the needed literature citations accompanying the treatises will have a general idea of the contents of each volume, brief synopses will be written to appear in this and future Quarterlies. See Williams, 1990, pp. 57,58 for a synopsis of volume 1.

#### Six Days or a Compromise

One of the best refutations of the ruin-reconstruction theory (gap theory) I have ever read appeared as the lead article in the May 1965 Quarterly. John C. Whitcomb, Jr. (1965, pp. 3-6) defended the six-day creation concept as he demolished the so-called proofs of a theory that allows creationists to accept the geologic timetable without question. In a companion article Arthur F. Williams (1965, pp. 7-13) explained that the Genesis account of creation must be taken literally. A major portion of the treatise discussed the Hebrew word *yom* (day); the conclusion was reached that it is a literal day. Both of these presentations were unequivocal in their defense of the scriptural account of origins.

#### Botany

George F. Howe (1965, pp. 14-19) discussed convergent evolution and explained that the parallelisms

found in nature can better be explained by a Creator using a repeated pattern rather than a common ancestor. Some topics discussed were:

- Parallelisms in bacteria
- Parallelisms in fungi
- Parallel life cycle patterns
- Parallelisms in vascular plants
- Parallelisms in guard cells
- Parallelism between beefwood and horsetail plants
- Anatomical parallelisms

Walter E. Lammerts, founder of the Society and an internationally famous rose breeder, conducted experiments on induced variation in roses by neutron radiation (1965, pp. 39-43). Some of his conclusions in this careful study were:

In terms of the pre-patterning theory, it would seem that mutations can only alter various phases of its expression but the *pattern itself cannot be changed*. In terms of this theory, Queen Elizabeth [a rose variety] is the expression of a definite pre-pattern. The expression of this pattern depends on the interaction of the environment and the DNA genetic code. Changes in the environment or mutations in the code can alter the expression of the Queen Elizabeth pattern but cannot basically change it.

It is understood that this concept reduces the role of mutations to a relatively minor one . . . Rather we see clear evidence for creative design . . . (pp. 42, 43)

This excellent article, as well as many others found in CRSQ, exposes the blatant lie of some evolutionists that creationists do not do laboratory research or field studies.

In a brief presentation on intelligent design in plant and insect relationships, Harold W. Clark (1965, pp.3, 4) first discussed the yucca and the pronuba moth. Then several examples of pollination methods in plants were noted with the conclusion that such systems could only have been planned and created.

#### Adaptation and Limbs

There are two articles in this volume by E. V. Shute (1965a, pp. 22-26; 1965b, pp. 11-14) where the author rapid-fires the reader with remarkable adaptations of creatures that "fill every environmental and ecological niche in sea, on land or in the air" (1965a, p. 22). One after another, the reader is deluged with instances of organisms that have characteristics that enable them to survive in so-called hostile locations. One's credulity is stretched to believe that brute natural processes could have engineered such adaptations. These articles are "gold mines" of instances where intelligent design is the reasonable answer.

The various theories for the origin of the tetrapod limb were presented (Davis, 1965, pp. 27-31) along with the inadequacy of each concept. The difficulty of such a proposed evolutionary sequential change to achieve the end result was outlined. Creation was offered as the obvious solution.

#### Geology and Paleontology

Rita Rhodes Ward (1965, pp. 32-38) opened her article with these remarks

Because of the great importance attached by evolutionists to the English *Micraster* as an example of fossil evidence of change of species, it was decided to make a study of the major research papers dealing with this genus and relate the material of creationists' concepts (p. 32).

The author then studied her own specimens [pictures of which are given on pp. 37, 38] and stated that macroevolution did not occur. The organisms may have changed slightly, but they started out and ended up as *Micrasters*- after their kind.

Historical geology was the subject of a discussion by Henry M. Morris (1965, pp. 19-28). He noted the instances of what is science and what is scientism in that discipline. The principles of thermodynamics were employed to illustrate the truly observable in science when compared with the molecules-to-man evolutionary myth. Basic inconsistencies in uniformitarianism were explored and a brief discussion of the Creation-Flood model was given.

#### Philosophy and History

Richard Korthals, a Fellow of the Society, offered a comparison (1965, pp. 6-14) of the two conflicting models of science, creationism and evolutionism. The philosophical base of each model was presented by Rushdoony (1965, pp. 15-18). Thomas G. Barnes, the very productive creationist physicist, developed a creation model (1966, pp. 5-8) based on the three laws of thermodynamics.

Harold Armstrong, a classical scholar and editor of the Quarterly for 10 years, believed that Aristotle was not an evolutionist by modern definition (1965, pp. 9,

10). A well-documented study on the effect of the evolutionary hypothesis, particularly Neo-Darwinism, on western civilization was published (Moore, 1966, pp. 13-23). The author concluded that the theory "has been fostered by highly spurious science" (p. 21) to indoctrinate the leaders of western civilization causing disastrous consequences.

#### Carbon-14

The use of carbon-14 in relation to the antiquity of man was presented (Wood, 1966, pp. 24-27) and Armstrong (1966, pp. 28-30) devised graphs to correct for the effects of the Flood in determining dates by radioactive carbon. The reliability of carbon-14 dating was discussed also (Anon., 1966, pp. 31, 32). Several problems with the method were noted.

#### Summary

As the reader can realize, many scientific, historical and philosophical topics were explored from a creationist viewpoint in this volume. The Quarterly is one of the few scientific journals devoted to this objective. It has always provided an outlet for creationist scientific opinion.

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#### Evolutionist: Friend or Foe?

Many contend that evolution is a system of false religious philosophy at odds with Christianity by design. The accusation has been denied by one prominent evolutionist for reasons that may be either naive or dishonest:

I am both angry and amused by the creationists; but mostly I am deeply sad. Sad for many reasons. Sad because so many people who respond to creationist appeals are troubled for the right reason, but venting their anger at the wrong target.

I can understand that requiring that evolution be taught in the schools might be seen as one more insult. But the culprit is not, and cannot be, evolution or any other fact of the natural world. Identify and fight your legitimate enemies by all means, but we are not among them (Gould, 1981, p. 37).

Such an impassioned plea may soothe sensibilities for those who have been labeled "theistic evolutionists." Yet, German biblical critic David F. Strauss is quoted in a rare instance of evolutionist honesty:

Vainly did we philosophers and critical theologians over and over again decree the extermination of miracles; our ineffectual sentence died away, because we could neither dispense with miraculous agency, nor point to any natural force able to supply it where it had hitherto seemed most indispensable. Darwin has demonstrated this force, this process of Nature (sic); he has opened the door by which a happier coming race will cast out miracles, never to return. Everyone who knows what miracles imply will praise him, in consequence, as one of the greatest benefactors Of the human race (Himmelfarb, 1968, p. 388).

Whatever Darwin may have demonstrated, the "process" of evolution cannot be thus accredited. Furthermore, not everyone cognizant of miraculous implication praises Darwin for his highly questionable contribution to the social welfare. Yet, the Strauss diatribe could well rank among the statements of relative diplomacy when compared with testimony offered by Darwin's bulldog:

Let every man . . . if he be so inclined, amuse himself with such scientific implements as authority tells him are safe and will not cut his fingers; but let him not imagine he is, or can be, both a true son of the Church and a loyal soldier of science (Huxley, 1896, p. 149).

Our active participation in the creation/evolutionism debate covers a decade. During that period we have encountered, mostly through correspondence, a number of professed Catholics, clergy as well as laity, who believe they have reconciled Catholic Faith with evolutionism. I personally believe such people have only accommodated evolution. This point has been made most emphatically by the testimony of a Brown University biology professor:

. . . Dr. [Duane T.] Gish's suggestion that evolution and creation are mutually exclusive ideas is insulting to me personally (I am a Roman Catholic) as well as to the great majority of scientists of Christian, Jewish, Moslem, Hindu, Buddhist and other faiths who understand quite well that biological evolution is a scientifically supported fact (Miller, 1982, p. 3).

Gish may very well have offended other Christians, Jews, Moslems, Hindus and Buddhists. Darwin's most

avid supporter definitively pointed up the naivete of Catholic evolutionists:

If Suarez has rightly stated Catholic doctrine, then is evolution utter heresy. And such I believe it to be. In addition to the truth of the doctrine of evolution, indeed, one of its greatest merits in my eyes, is the fact that it occupies a position of complete and irreconcilable antagonism to that vigorous and consistent enemy of the highest intellectual, moral, and social life of mankind—the Catholic Church (Huxley, 1896, p. 147).

That viewpoint was expounded nearly a century ago. Yet, we still find apologists on each side of the issue who will try to reconcile evolutionism with some sort of quasi-Christianity. The typical evolutionist position has only a slightly more pathetic tone than that of the accommodationist: "There is nothing inherent in an evolutionary framework which denies theism. . . . The scientific method does not weed out God" (Varisco, 1982, p. 20).

Perhaps it is typical of anthropologists that they operate outside the realm of mainstream evolutionist thinking. Yet, whether such testimony is intellectually dishonest or just naive, the result is the same. The view just quoted is not shared by all evolutionists:

There is no common middle ground between supernatural religion and science; to suggest that there is is deceptive. Science and religion are two entirely different and separate spheres of thought. The human mind, being the wonderfully complex organ that it is, is certainly capable of believing in supernatural religion and science simultaneously, and numerous respectable individuals do just that and feel that they have found common ground. (It is debatable whether they have in fact or whether they are simply holding contradictory views simultaneously.) (Schafersman, 1987, p. 6).

Nor is naivete (or dishonesty, whatever the case may be) limited to anthropologists. A physiologist at UCLA medical school was also accomplished in the art of self-deception:

Clearly, evolution didn't suddenly pop up as a theory put forth by cynical atheists seeking to undermine the Bible. On the contrary, it evolved from a literal belief in Genesis, as devout creationists tried to grapple with disturbing new evidence. By the time Darwin died, in 1883, his views had become sufficiently palatable to orthodox Christians that his body was honored by burial in Westminster Abbey (Diamond, 1985, p. 89).

Clearly, the previous quotes have demonstrated the wrong-headedness of such claims. "Cynical atheists" may very well not have initiated the thrust of evolutionism. They may not have even been particularly influential in promoting the original concept. However, there is no question that evolution has been most enthusiastically embraced by atheists.

Still, many who would call themselves Christian accommodate to a system of thought that has the unflinching support of the most ardent enemies of Christianity. Moreover, they do so, seemingly, without the

slightest hint of suspicion. Refreshingly, there are yet some evolutionists who view honesty, if not a virtue, at least as an art form worthy of practice: "In a real sense Darwin produced a theory of proximal cause, evolution by natural selection, designed to exorcise the specter of supernatural design" (Brooks and Wiley, 1988, p. xii).

In a real sense, from the limited exposure of personal experience, we see Darwin's only accomplishment as that of exorcising ". . . the specter of supernatural design." Anyone who believes Darwin made a significant contribution to science, is encouraged to consult a good dictionary and learn how he assumed, imagined and speculated his way through the *Origin of Species*. Additionally, one will search that literature in vain for the slightest hint of explanation for the origin of any species.

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#### Rapid Erosion

The creationist model for canyon formation, as well as certain other features of the earth, depend upon very rapid erosion of soft and semi-hard material during and after the Flood. One example of rapid erosion in modern times was noted by Williams (1986) previously. The following quotation from Cleland (1925, p. 96) cites two other examples.

The Duna, a river of eastern Prussia, blocked by an ice jam in 1901, was forced to take a new course. In thirty-four hours it was able to cut a gorge one meter to three and a half meters deep and four meters to eight meters wide, representing an excavation of 2250 cubic meters of material. The bottom of the Sill tunnel in Austria was provided with a pavement of granite slabs more than a yard thick. Great quantities of debris were swept over this pavement at a high velocity, and so rapid was the abrasion that it was found necessary to renew the granite slabs after a single year.

Even hard materials such as granite can be worn rapidly by moving water containing abrasive solids. Possibly cavitation (Holroyd, 1990, a, b) was responsible for some of the damage in the Sill tunnel?

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## MINUTES OF 1990 CREATION RESEARCH SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

On Thursday, 19 April 1990, a meeting of the Executive Committee was held at the Wolverine Best Western Motel, Ann Arbor, Michigan, from 2000 to 2200 hours to plan agendas for the committee meetings on Friday. On Friday, 20 April 1990, between the hours of 0800 and 1700, the Constitution/Bylaws, Financial, Publications, Quarterly Editorial, Research and Temporary Meeting Committees each met for approximately two hours. The Chairmen of the Committees recorded the business in preparation for the Saturday business meeting.

The official annual meeting of the Society was opened at 1900 hours by President Frair in Room 102 of the Science Building at Concordia College, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Present: D. Boylan, E. Chaffin, D. DeYoung, W. Frair, D. Gish, G. Howe, D. Kaufmann, J. Klotz, J. Meyer, D. Rodabaugh, W. Rusch, E. Williams, G. Wolfrom. Absent by prior arrangement: P. Zimmerman. Also present were 105 visitors. The President welcomed everyone to this meeting of the 27th year of the Creation Research Society. This was followed by silent prayer.

Dr. David Schmiel, President of Concordia College, welcomed CRS members and guests to the College.

President Frair expressed gratitude of the CRS to Mr. David Golisch, President of the Southeastern Michigan Creation Science Association, for providing refreshments. Mr. Golisch spoke briefly expressing his appreciation for the work of the CRS.

Meyer reported that the Research Committee was sponsoring the following studies: computer simulated models of cavitation of water on soil, rapid erosion of canyons, geological overthrusts of strata in Virginia and chromosomal variations in mammals. Frair gave a report of creation in the news, including the ICR accreditation case in the federal courts and of the latest books published on creation science.

Rodabaugh introduced the speakers of the mini-symposium. Klotz spoke on the agreement of creation theology and the proper use of the environment. Chaffin gave a presentation on the speed of light. DeYoung gave a report on black holes in space. Rusch read Zimmerman's paper on the threat of theistic evolution to Biblical creationism. Howe gave a mini-lecture on wax-producing desert plants. Kaufmann gave a presentation on functional proteins—witness to creation. Gish gave a slide presentation on the place of dinosaurs in creation history. The meeting was adjourned at 2130 for refreshments.