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Theology and Science

Less than a generation ago most people noted in science only its immediate anthropological implication. They argued whether man was descended from simian stock or, regardless of his ancestry, whether he was the inevitable outcome of predetermining causes. In either case the concept of God was next to irrelevant, and Christian theology seemed on its way out.

But since the beginning of the "atomic-hydrogen age" man seems less concerned about his origin and about predetermining causes of his being than about his destiny. He lives in anxious fear of what would happen not only to him but to life in general if the product of modern science, the hydrogen bomb, were suddenly unleashed on strategic population centers.

In the wake of the new science many conferences on religion and science have been held both in our country and abroad. Theologians have been compelled to consider seriously the meaning of the First Article of the Creed as well as the concept of Christ as the κύριος, the παντοκράτωρ, and the ὁ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν πληρούμενος. Scientists have been compelled to concede that in spite of their new knowledge the universe has become more and more mysterious. A fixed determinism has given way, if not to contingency, at least to laws of probability and to an insistence on a clear awareness of basic assumptions. The question is even asked whether the mysterious energy surrounding man might not be God's veil and mask.

This issue of the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY submits two articles dealing with the Christian approach to modern science. The one by Professor Walle surveys historically the relation of Christian thought to science since the early Christian centuries. The other article by R. C. Whittemore subjects the views of the distinguished Lutheran theologian Karl Heim (1874—1958), who

in his own way dared to face up to the new science, to a searching philosophic critique. We agree with Professor Walle's concluding observation: "We need to keep at the task of striving toward an evangelical philosophy of science," though a prerequisite to such a philosophy would seem to be a fresh but thorough and comprehensive theological statement of the Scriptural view of nature and the universe.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

PAUL M. BRETSCHER, professor, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

MARTIN H. SCHARLEMANN, professor, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

OSCAR T. WALLE, professor of Natural Science, Concordia Senior College,
Fort Wayne, Ind.

ROBERT C. WHITTEMORE, associate professor of Philosophy, Tulane University,
New Orleans, La.