

A Kentucky Yankee in the Middle Ages

THE State of Kentucky, besides being famous for the production of family feuds, negro folk-songs, rye whisky, race horses and labor troubles has added to its list a now famous bill, introduced in the Legislature to bar the teaching of evolution in any tax-supporting educational institution of that State. The bill failed of passage by one vote.

This has attracted wide attention and has evoked considerable controversy centred mainly upon Darwinism, which Mr. Bryan (himself a product of Kentucky), regards as a worthless atheistic guess.

Mr. Bryan is the gentleman known to most of us as the long winded-runner up for the office of President. Perhaps, had he "made it," it would have proved (as was suggested when Maj.-Gen. Leonard Wood was mentioned as a nominee) the truth of the popular American superstition that "anybody can be president." Anyway, free silver and grape-juice having lost their popular glamour, Mr. Bryan appoints himself defender of the faith, with appropriate denominational impartiality. Thus:

"We stamp upon our coins 'In God We Trust'; we administer to witnesses an oath in which God's name appears; our President takes his oath of office upon the Bible. Is it fanatical to suggest that public taxes should not be employed for the purpose of undermining the nation's God? When we defend the Mosaic account of man's creation and contend that man has no brute blood in him, but was made in God's image by separate act and placed on earth to carry out a divine decree, we are defending the God of the Jews as well as the God of the Gentiles; the God of the Catholics as well as the God of the Protestants. We believe that faith in a Supreme Being is essential to civilization as well as to religion and that abandonment of God means ruin to the world and chaos to society.

"Let those believers in 'the tree man' come down out of the trees and meet the issue. Let them defend the teaching of agnosticism or atheism if they dare. If they deny that the natural tendency of Darwinism is to lead many to a denial of God, let them frankly point out the portions of the Bible which they regard as consistent with Darwinism, or evolution applied to man. They weaken faith in God, discourage prayer, raise doubt as to a future life, reduce Christ to the stature of a man, and make the Bible a 'scrap of paper.' As religion is the only basis of morals, it is time for Christians to protect religion from its most insidious enemy."

Mr. Bryan toured the State in support of the bill already mentioned and in opposition to what he supposes to be "Darwinism." Even at that, the trouble is not exactly Darwinism, but rather that it leads to a disbelief in God and the bankruptcy of religion. This is on a level with the mentality of Mr. Voliva, head of the Christian Apostolic Church, to whom the stars are "points of light, that is all. They are not worlds, they are not suns. So-called science is a lot of silly rot, and so is so-called medical science and all the rest of their so-called sciences." According to this Christian romancer the sky is a solid dome with edges resting "on the wall of ice which surrounds the flat world."

The believers in "the tree man" have "dared" to come down and meet the issue. Mr. Bryan has been writing in the New York "Times" in opposition to any teaching in the public schools that leads to irreligion; but irreligion or not, along comes Prof. H. F. Osborne (lately Director, Museum Natural His-

tory, N. Y.) who, writing in "Science," New York, says:

"The mode of origin of species was practically discovered by a little-known German paleontologist by the name of Waagen in 1869, but, like the great discovery of Mendel in heredity, this truth has been long in making its way, even among biologists. Waagen's observations that species do not originate by chance or by accident, as Darwin at one time supposed, but through a continuous and well-ordered process, has since been confirmed by an overwhelming volume of testimony, so that we are now able to assemble and place in order line after line of animals in their true evolutionary succession, extending, in the case of what I have called the edition de luxe of the horses, over millions of years. These facts are so well known and make up such an army of evidence, that they form the chief foundation of the statement that evolution has long since passed out of the domain of hypothesis and theory, to which Mr. Bryan refers, into the domain of natural law.

"Evolution takes its place with the gravitation law of Newton. It should be taught in our schools simply as Nature speaks to us about it, and entirely separated from the opinions, materialistic or theistic, which have clustered about it.

It would not be true to say that the evolution of man rests upon evidence as complete as that of the horse, for example, because we have only traced man's ancestors back for a period of 400,000 years, as geologic time was conservatively estimated in 1893 by Secretary Walcott of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington; whereas, we have traced the horse back for a period of 3,000,000 years, according to similar estimates of geologic time.

The very recent discovery of Tertiary man, living long before the Ice Age, certainly capable of walking in an erect position, having a hand and a foot fashioned like our own, also a brain of sufficient intelligence to fashion many different kinds of implements, to make a fire, to make flint tools which may have been used for the dress of hides as clothing, constitutes the most convincing answer to Mr. Bryan's call for more evidence. This Foxhall man, found near Ipswich, England, tends to remove man still further from the great lines which led to the man apes, the chimpanzee, the orang, the gorilla and the gibbon. This is not guess-work, this is fact. In this instance again truth is stranger than hypothesis or speculation.

Nearer to us in the Piltdown man, found not far from 75 miles to the southwest of Ipswich, England; still nearer in geologic time is the Heidelberg man, found on the Neckar River; still nearer is the Neanderthal man, whom we know all about—his frame, his head form, his industries, his ceremonial burial of the dead, also evidence of his belief in a future existence; nearer still is the Cromagnon man, who lived about 30,000 years ago, our equal if not superior in intelligence. This chain of human ancestors was totally unknown to Darwin. He could not have even dreamed of such a flood of proof and truth. It is a dramatic circumstance that Darwin had within his reach the head of the Neanderthal man without realizing that it constituted the "missing link" between man and the lower order. All this evidence is today within reach of every schoolboy. It is all at the service of Mr. Bryan. It will, we are convinced, satisfactorily answer in the negative his question: "Is it not more rational to believe in the creation of man by separate act of God than to believe in evolution without a particle of evidence?"

Prof. Conklin, dealing with the idea that the teachings of science must again suffer "an inquisition . . . at the bar of theology," says:

Scientific investigators and productive scholars in almost every field have long since accepted evolution in the broadest sense as an established fact. Science now deals with the evolution of the elements, of the stars and solar system, of the earth, of life upon the earth, of various types and species of plants and animals, of the body, mind and society of man, of science, art, government, education and religion. In the light of this great generalization all

sciences, and especially those which have to do with living things, have made more progress in the last half century than in all the previous centuries of human history.

In the face of all these facts, Mr. Bryan and his kind hurl their medieval theology. It would be amusing if it were not so pathetic and disheartening to see these modern defenders of the faith beating their gongs and firing their giant firecrackers against the ramparts of science.

This writer says: "no intelligent person now believes that the earth was made just 5,246 years ago and in six literal days." But Mr. Bryan evidently believes that, or pretends to believe it. He must have a hard opinion of Lord Rayleigh, who, at a session of the British Association for the advancement of Science, held recently in Edinburgh, declared his opinion that the oldest of the earth's rocks were 925 million years of age and the earth's crust probably 6,000 million years.

Mr. Bryan will need something more than grape juice to keep up his spirits if he intends to maintain the effort to fool the American youth of citizenship age. We guess that to be the trouble anyway. Bryan works at "being a politician" and he has to keep on making audiences for himself. It's not "the truth of the matter" that counts, really, but what it leads to.

In this particular matter it leads to disbelief in God and that will never do, for "Religion is the opium of the People." Which means to say that the master class, through their puppets and intellectual strap-hangers of Bryan's stripe use religion and all its influences to stifle working class understanding.

THE TERMS.

REPORTS from Genoa already indicate that Russia occupies the centre of the stage, with Germany next in order. Great Britain appears to be the most interested party. Chicherin has called for political recognition of the Soviet Republic which, of course, he knew would not be immediately forthcoming, but it brings the conditions of the Allies on recognition at once to the front. Some of these are reported as:

Article 1 declares that the soviet government should accept the financial obligations of its predecessors, namely the imperial Russian government and the provisional government. This includes obligations to foreign powers and their nationals.

Article 2 provides for recognition by the soviet of the financial engagements of all Russian authorities, provincial or local, and also all public utility enterprises contracted with other powers or peoples.

Article 3 declares that the soviet should assume responsibility for all damages suffered by foreigners in consequence of the acts or negligence of the soviet or its predecessors.

Article 4 says that the responsibilities mentioned in the preceding articles will be fixed by the commission on the Russian debt, and by mixed arbitration tribunals to be created.

Article 5 declares that all debts, responsibilities and obligations between foreign governments and the Russian government since August 1, 1914, shall be considered as entirely effaced by the payment of sums to be fixed in a future accord.

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