

informative on the subject of science education and of the efforts of creationists to influence public education. Some of the articles and letters in it are written with reserve, but others are outspokenly antagonistic against the Bible and against the influence of Christianity in our society.

6. Some Opportunities We Have Lost

In concluding this "Part I," I suggest that we face the searching question, "Was the belief in a very young earth really worth sacrificing the opportunities which are now out of our reach?" Most of the Bible-believing, conservative scholars who have opposed evolution during the past 100 years, and who founded most of the theologically conservative Bible colleges and seminaries of the U. S. and Canada, have not regarded belief in a young earth to be a necessary part of Christian doctrine. Therefore we can not say that Christians have an obligation to defend this view; it is only a matter of personal preference. So, asking the question, "Was it worth sacrificing the opportunities?" is appropriate. It seems very apparent that the young-earth part of creationism's teaching gave precisely the advantage which the anti-creationists needed for launching their program. (I have explained the reasons for this earlier in this paper.)

One of the opportunities which we have now permanently lost is that of presenting the really strong evidences against abiogenesis and macroevolution to the educational and scientific worlds--this coupled with a demonstration of genuine scientific integrity. Neither educators nor scientists are going to listen to scientific evidences from people who have not demonstrated the latter quality; and since the more vocal creationists have failed miserably in this, the educational and scientific communities are now usually very suspicious of all kinds of creationists. When we speak here of "scientific integrity," we refer to the quality of faithfully and objectively using the scientific method of research, and being unwilling to adopt any hypothesis which is not consistently supported by large amounts of carefully collected data. (However, this does not mean that we are to try to solve metaphysical problems with the scientific method of research; these must be solved by theological, biblical, and philosophic investigations.)

Another important opportunity which we have now lost--apparently at least for this century--is that of teachers having the privilege of presenting at least moderate statements on the Christian view of origins in public schools. Teachers are now under much greater pressure to remain completely silent on this subject than they were before young-earth creationism "went public."

7. Possibilities of Recovery?

Is there any way for us to mend or recover these great losses? This is a question which none of us can definitely answer; certainly the prospects look very dim. However, one valuable part of the Judaic-Christian religion is the belief that we should not completely give up on a project which we feel is good in God's sight. This means that, in this case, we should begin long-range plans for the future. Obviously, one of the first requirements for anticipating success in the future is that creationists begin to develop true scientific integrity in the various branches of science which are related to creation doctrine. Doing this will of course entail bringing an end to the isolation which exists between creationist leaders and the professions of geology, astronomy, oceanography, paleontology, and some other branches of science. Creationists will have to become familiar with a good number of the current and past research projects which are being carried out in these fields, and must themselves enter into some of this research.