

TOPICS OF THE DAY

“AMERICA”: EVOLUTION FALSIFIED: CLAIMS OF SCIENCE:
“IMMODERATIONISTS”: *Via Media*: UNITED STATES
ELECTIONS: FRENCH ELECTIONS.

FROM time to time, persons more zealous than well-informed arise to protest against the application of the title “Americans” to the people of the United States. Usually certain sections of the press take up the plaint. An attempt is made to persuade Canadians that they are being wronged, in some undefined way; and that the people of the United States are to blame for arrogating to themselves an appellation which belongs of right to all inhabitants of this continent. A little fuller knowledge of history, or a little more rational thought, might serve to dissipate this imaginary grievance.

The people of the United States are far from being at fault. They did not initiate the usage. It originated shortly after the founding of the earlier English colonies on this continent. The colonists certainly had no desire to be called Americans. They thought and spoke of themselves as the British in America. It was the Home Government and the Home people who began to think and speak of them as “Americans”. Very vague ideas of the Americas, North or South, were then abroad in the motherland. “America” stood for either or both. South America was almost unknown to most Old Countrymen. When they used the term America or Americans, they had reference usually to North America or to the British colonies therein.

By the time of the revolt of the thirteen colonies, the use of the terms “America” and “American” had become fixed and definitive in England. They were constantly used in State papers and Acts of Parliament, as well as in popular and parliamentary speech. “If I were an American, as I am an Englishman”—declaimed Pitt, more than a century and a half ago. The British people at home to-day have inherited this habit of speech, and it is not to be changed. The “Americans” have merely adopted it. They have been almost forced to do so. Some of them have even protested, once in a while. They still, occasionally, protest. But they are so handicapped by the official title of their country and by the lack of any satisfactory available substitute or alternative

for it, that they have been practically compelled to abide by what has been thrust upon them.

It is not to be disputed, of course, that the United States are not "the whole of North America", much less of the two continents. Their people have never set up any such absurd claim, and make no such pretensions. It may be true that they, in the beginning, were not properly called Americans, and that they have no justifiable or exclusive claim upon that title now, except by prescription. They undoubtedly do hold it by compulsory prescription. Probably the only people properly entitled to call themselves or be called Americans are the native "Indian" races. But what special honour or distinction is there in the title? A continental appellation is not usually coveted by peoples. The natives of Asia do not rejoice at being spoken of as Asiatics. Many of the inhabitants of Africa would bitterly resent being called Africans. To speak of Europeans, without national limitations, would be regarded as a joke. Then why protest against the people of the United States calling themselves and being called Americans?

Is it not exceptionally silly for Canadians to utter such protests? Do they wish to be known as Americans? They never have been so called, for the principal reason that none of the Canadian provinces, with the exception of Nova Scotia—and it to a very limited extent—were colonized at the time when it became customary to speak and think of the inhabitants of the thirteen older colonies as Americans. Are we or are we not satisfied with our own appellation—Canadians—which springs naturally from the official title of our country—*Dominion of Canada*? If we are, why not leave in peace to our continental neighbours all the enjoyment they can secure from the only national designation which can possibly be extracted from their constitutional title—*United States of America*? They could hardly be expected to designate themselves "United Statesers" or "United Statesmen" or "United Statesese." There remains for their use only the word "American", to which they are, or should be, heartily welcome. It derives from the name of one who mistakenly, if not falsely, claimed to have discovered this continent. Cabot—who sailed from Bristol, England, under British colours, in 1497—first set foot on the mainland of what is wrongfully named "America"; and that in Canada, to wit, Nova Scotia.

WHAT a pity it is that religion, which is fundamentally dependent on Figurativism, should be so prone to Realism! The complaint of the Modernists against present-day Fundamental-

ists in theology is that they mistake metaphor for reality. And yet the leaders of the Modernists in the recent religious eruption in England are falling into the very error with regard to evolution of which they accuse the Fundamentalists with reference to revelation. Bishop Barnes and Dean Inge insist on reading into evolution a wholly foreign content, for their own purposes. It is difficult to see, much more to comprehend, what their purpose or aim can be, other than to shock their opponents by separating themselves as widely as possible from the solid bases of faith. Each of them has declared publicly and most dogmatically that "man is descended from the lower animals"; is of close kin with them; and merely on a level higher than theirs in the animal scale.

Is there anything in the scientific theory of evolution to justify such an assertion? Certain individual scientists may have so contended and may so contend. But evolution, at most, is only an unestablished theory, however probable it may be. It is not a substantiated doctrine. There have always been nearly as many different conceptions of it as there are practical scientists working on the theory. Much of Darwin's work has been surpassed, and some of his ideas discarded through later research. Even Darwin never asserted that man was descended from any existing animal form. He frankly announced a "missing link." To contend, on the evidence of fragmentary organic remains, of doubtful interpretation, found in unconvincing situations and conditions, that "the missing link" has been forthcoming, is wholly unjustifiable. Very varied opinions concerning those supposed structural fragments have been formed and expressed by scientists. No sufficient ground has been prepared for dogmatic dicta with regard to any of them. What the future may reveal, is another matter.

Even should undeniably human remains be discovered, which is quite possible, to prove conclusively that man was formerly on a much lower plane of mental and structural development than he is now, there would still be an indefinite distance to go before it could be demonstrated that he is descended from or is really akin to any existing animal type. That, on one side of his nature, man is an animal, is not disputed. The derivation of the word "animal" shows that it is as applicable in its original sense to man as to other forms of sentient life. But being an animal, in this sense, is by no means the same thing as being descended from another animal form. Man is too widely separated from and too far above the creatures of the field, the sea, or the air to be properly classified with any species or genus of them. He is markedly and beyond rational doubt *sui generis*, even if not, in the theological sense,

a "special creation." Surely it is hardly necessary for scientists, much less for theological Modernists, to go through, once more, the gestures of slaying the long-slain "special creation" story of *Genesis* by means of unsupported and unsupportable amendments to the theory of evolution, for that purpose. There is in existence no scientific or other evidence, much less convincing proof, that man is "descended" —or ascended— from any of the existing lower animal forms. No true scientist can or will contradict this assertion.

WHAT evolutionists do assert and maintain is that there has been a gradual and more or less continuous upward tendency of life, through rudimentary to superior forms and functions, from the beginning of the world's habitability until now. They can produce abundant evidence in support of their position from the records of geology. Broadly speaking, they are able to deduce the whole history of the earth from its structure and physical conditions. They are authorized by geological records to declare that there was a time when life upon our planet was impossible. When life first became possible and was introduced, and how or by what means, they do not know, and they have no means of determining. They are able to trace, from a certain stage in the earth's cooling, the unmistakable presence and increasing development of rudimentary forms of life. In succeeding geologic ages they can note and verify the presence of higher and more complicated types of life. They are not able to demonstrate, although they can present strong presumptive evidence in some cases, that the lower type has ever been the direct parent of the higher. All that they can assert positively, is that there has been an apparent, steady rise in the scale of existence. But there are wide and quite unbridged chasms of life between these advances. The progress indicated by geology is one of leaps and bounds rather than of steady and uninterrupted succession. When they come to the animals of the present era, scientists are constrained to admit that they have no convincing evidence of any lower type connecting directly with another and higher. The horse is the animal on which Darwinians base their most definite claims. They are able to show that horse-like animals, in various stages of development, appear in successive geological strata, before the final advent of the present-day horse. But they have no proof that the, in some respects, horse-like creatures of geology were not merely a remotely kindred but extinct species of animals. There is an undisputed likeness in the framework or bony structure of men and apes; but there is no more suggestive

evidence in that fact that man is ascended from the ape than there is that the ape is descended from man. Superficial resemblance proves nothing. Science means simply knowledge of nature. Not even relative knowledge of nature is to be advanced by adopting arbitrary conclusions far removed from those of which exact science merely ventures to assume the possibility.

PROBABLY very few thoughtful Fundamentalists now go so far as to accept literally the *Genesis* story of Creation. All but the most simple-minded and uninstructed of them must know that the earlier *Genesis* account, so-called, is a poem. It is one of the most sublime and deep-seeing poems, in many respects, that have ever been written. No one knows its origin. Our second "account", which almost immediately follows it, serves as a perfect foil, with its childish, primitive barbarity. The writer of the first chapter of *Genesis* was a far-advanced scientist of his time, and a philosopher as well as a seer. His poetic imagination enabled him to conjecture approximately the order of creation as well as to perceive clearly its supreme Author. He felt rather than recognized some great and incomprehensible Power beyond this earth, responsible for its shaping and peopling. That Power he named "the Spirit of God." From what he had observed or conjectured, he proceeded to sing the works of the creating Power.

Have we got far beyond his intellectual stage even yet? His statement of origins has been more or less justified by modern science. Not even the most arrogant of our scientists ventures to question the ancient poet's postulated, ultimate, divine Power. That Power being acknowledged, or its possibility, if not probability, admitted, whether personal intelligence and will be included in the admission or not, all things become possible in creation which we know now to have been an indefinitely long and slow as well as an infinitely extensive process. If the germs of all the future were implanted in the original matter of the earth's structure they must, naturally, have developed in due and regular order. The result would be none the less "the work of an Almighty hand" by reason of that. If the Almighty hand could do so much, it could surely do more, and direct unceasingly the forces which produced or tended to produce variations or new species of animal form and life.

There is nothing in science to indicate that ordinary animal forms, developing by so-called natural process, should not have had superimposed upon or among them, in form resembling somewhat the highest of them, another and supreme form of earthly

life, with God-like faculties, and fitted for still higher ends. This might have been either by special provision in the original mass, or by later, direct introduction. There can be no logical mental reservation concerning the potency of the Supreme Power. It appears certain, that whatever is, is due to that Power. It matters little by what name the Power is called. How we shall regard It or Him, or what attributes we shall assign thereto, would seem to be of small consequence to real belief.

Faith is something entirely apart from science, and not to be influenced by its findings or fancyings. Supreme Power, by most called God, still confronts the ape-descended Modernist as well as the archaic Fundamentalist. Hope in that Power's beneficence is their common heritage. But why should either venture to dogmatize? What can they know, apart from "the faith that is in them"? Why should they quarrel over terms and theories? Why should one side try to drag the world back to its untutored infancy? Why should the other strive to exaggerate the unconfirmed guesses of theorists, and attempt to link man with lower forms of animal life, because certain of those forms more or less resemble ours in physical structure without any suggestion of spiritual or mental likeness? Would anyone argue that the elephant must of necessity be descended from the house-fly, or *vice versa*, because each of them happens to be equipped with a proboscis?

ALTHOUGH modern science and archaic theology are definitely "at outs", there is no necessary conflict between reasonable religious belief and the real theory of evolution. Science can never touch, much less invade, those realms of faith which afford evidence of things not seen and the substance of things hoped for. Science has to do only with the fields of knowledge within its own purview, that is to say, with the earth and the visible universe. Religion is strictly confined to the supernatural, to the unseen and, except to the eye of faith, the unseeable. Religion can no more contradict or dispute with science on its own ground than science can justifiably antagonize religion in its natural sphere. The scientist, as such, neither can nor does deny the existence of God. The religionist is quite as unable to deny that the operations of nature, as revealed by science, may be the ordinary workings of God.

In so far as science has undermined, as it has undermined, the foundations of primitive theology, which were based on mere nescience and superstition, it has rendered what should, in this age of the world, be regarded as the highest service to true religion.

It has revealed God as He was not, and could not be, known or conceived in the primitive world. It has swept aside the cobwebs of ignorance which beclouded or concealed Him from human minds. It has enthroned Him as the ruler of the universe instead of as a mere earthly or tribal deity. What greater service could have been rendered to rational faith? Science has not touched with profane or reckless hand so much as the hem of the garments of Christ as the great and special messenger and interpreter of God to man. What matters to wholesome faith, so long as these great and only really important *fundamentals* remain unshaken, anything that human science or ignorance may say as to the work, or order, of earthly creation? So long as God is supreme in "His Heaven"—the human soul—what can go amiss with His world?

In supplying men with more and clearer light on the infinitude of God, science has magnified the wisdom and goodness of Christ, and confounded the enemies of rational belief. It is told of a mythical Scotsman that he indignantly denied that he was a Christian. He was, he said, a Presbyterian. Those who accept the truths of science—not the vain imaginings of too enthusiastic evolutionists—will henceforth be able, while denying that they are disciples of archaic theology, to proclaim proudly and gladly, because freely, that they are believers in God and pupils of Christ, and that the work of creation, through the operation of "the spirit of God", does not appear to them a less but an infinitely more magnificent and inspiring process than, as formerly believed, through the mechanical and summary personal manipulation of earthly matter by the physical hands of an archaic deity. What can it possibly matter to us, since none can decide, whether the potentialities of all that has developed in the world were in it from the beginning, by divine inspiration, or whether there have been periodical interventions since then for purposes of "special creation?"

Of one thing at least we may rest reasonably assured, that man has never descended, but ever ascended. He was never other than potential man. He was never actual or potential ape; nor was ape ever potential man. From protoplasm to *imago*, man has been constantly man, as he still is, in the womb, from conception to birth.

THE advance guards of the American political hosts, which are to do battle during the coming summer and autumn, are already in the field, in light skirmishing order, striving for position. Canadians will be interested spectators of the contest, from their

close point of vantage. Even the preliminary movements are being keenly observed.

Who are to be the candidates of the two main parties, which are the only ones of real importance, is the increasingly interesting question. Time was when such a question seemed of little outside moment. Until of recent years the United States were as nearly self-contained in politics as in business and industry. But those days are past, and the personality of the man who is to be American President for a space of four years has become a matter of grave import to the nations. Much may and is always likely to depend on his character and individuality. As between the two parties, one or other of which is certain to elect its presidential candidate in 1928, there is little to choose. Indeed, it is difficult for an outsider to distinguish between them otherwise than by their respective names, neither of which has any real significance, at home or abroad. Whatever alleged or supposed or real principles of government or policy either of them may profess, would appear to be readily, and without difficulty or disturbance of conscience, interchangeable. In short, Republicans and Democrats seem to be as much alike as modern Conservatives and Liberals in Canada or Great Britain. Whatever actual differences there may be between them appear to be of the heart rather than of the mind, and therefore not decipherable by the ordinary onlooker.

But the question of presidential candidates is of double importance by reason of this, because the man selected may mean the success or failure of his party, and the success or failure of a party may signify the elevation to presidential power of a man who may be either a potent influence for good or a constant source of danger in world affairs. The truth, and the danger, of this have been illustrated more than once in recent history. So it is that a large part of civilization will be on tiptoe of interest until final selections of their respective candidates have been made by the rival parties. The men in either party among whom the choice will in all probability lie are already pretty well known, always admitting the possibility of party disagreements in convention and the consequent advent of a "dark horse" of uncertain character and possibilities.

For the Republicans there is, of course, first of all, Mr. Coolidge, the present President, in spite of his last summer's declaration, and his recent reiteration of it in the same good, plain New Englandese, that he does not "choose to run"; that is, being interpreted, that he will not be a candidate for re-election in the approaching contest. From the foreign point of view there would be little objection to Mr. Coolidge. He has not interfered unduly or

offensively in outside affairs, barring his one little splurge in connection with the late Geneva disarmament conference. That was so obviously for home political purposes, before he had decided that he did not "choose to run" again, that it is excusable. But there is a great and momentous thing against him at home, in addition to the fact that he has not made a brilliant record in either of the two terms of office, one of them quite short, which he has already enjoyed. It is that the American people have heretofore shown themselves unconquerably averse from third-term propositions. Mr. Coolidge is also very much suspected of being a man after the very own hearts of certain "classes" which have groomed and coached and advertised him in their special interests. But he possesses one supreme qualification in the opinion of his party. He is a Republican of the first water, at all times. That may even yet thrust a nomination upon him whether he does or does not "choose" to be a candidate.

In addition to the continuing Coolidge possibility, the Republicans are not lacking in available candidates. There is Mr. Frank O. Lowden, who once came near to nomination at a time when it would have meant election for him. He is a former Governor of Illinois, an influential Middle-West State, who, with an eye to nomination, has been sedulously cultivating not a farm but the farmers of the prairies. Those farmers are in no grateful mood to the Coolidge Administration on account of its utter failure to afford relief to agriculture during a period of unprecedented depression, and because of its supposed subservience to Big Business.

Mr. C. E. Hughes, whom early returns led to believe that he had been elected in 1916, is still probably the ablest and most statesmanlike politician available for Republican nomination—if he is available. He is a man of much greater ability and far higher standing at home and abroad than Mr. Coolidge. But he has announced himself as "too old" at 65, and has publicly declared that he will not be a candidate. It is not impossible that he also, in certain contingencies, might be induced to review his opinion and decision on that and other points. There are, further among Republican possibilities, Mr. Herbert Hoover, the much advertised; Mr. Vice-President Hawes, who modestly declares that he is not a candidate; and Mr. Nicholas Longworth, Speaker of the House of Representatives, who has great prestige Congressionally, and personally, because of his family connections.

On the Democratic side there is really but one outstanding name, that of Alfred E. Smith, Governor of New York State. "Al." Smith, as he is familiarly known, has made a name to conjure

with, for himself, in the civic and state politics of New York. His opponent for nomination in 1924, Mr. W. G. McAdoo, has formally withdrawn from further Democratic candidacy. Mr. Smith, in consequence, will have a practically clear field in the coming Democratic Convention. His party will be more than anxious to avoid another wrangle such as that which wrecked their chances in the last election. They have come, it is said, to the wise conclusion that the first requirement for their party's success is the nomination of its strongest man, which Mr. Smith, so far as can be seen at present, unquestionably is. He himself is said to hesitate about acceptance, although his growing strength is freely admitted. He is a Roman Catholic, and his candidature would inevitably raise a religious issue and a sectarian outcry. He naturally dislikes the idea of that. There has never been a Roman Catholic President of the United States, and it is impossible to foresee how the people would respond to the proposition to elect one in 1928.

Mr. Smith is reputed to have one novel and rather peculiar element of strength. A recent English observer puts it this way: "Governor Smith is an American. But to the vast multitude of Americans over the continent, he is, first of all, a New Yorker of the East side; a citizen of the metropolis which, as they all say, is not America; the representative and the admired favourite of a great section of the American people, looked upon by the older stock as alien and inferior, and in a variety of ways suspect." This, if true, would seem to point to a new cleavage in American politics, the results of which it would be impossible to predict. It might be the forerunner of influences at the White House of a none too desirable sort. If upon it were to be superimposed the "Dry-Wet" issue, the possible outcome of the next Presidential election would seem to promise unlimited opportunities for conjecture.

THE year 1928 is to be prolific in important electoral contests. France too is to hold her general elections this year, in May, some six months before those of the United States, which take place in November. If the outcome of the American election is an uncertainty, that of the French elections is a mystery. Almost every possible new political feature will distract the attention of the electors of France and of their leaders. The politicians of France are so subdivided into partisan groups that there would seem to be no possibility of further sub-divisions. Will there be reunions, or as they are more accurately named in French, *rapprochements*, among kindred groups, is the suggestive question.

A new, or rather a restored feature in the coming elections will be the choice of representatives individually for one-man constituencies. This is called *scrutin d'arrondissement*, or voting by restricted sections, as opposed to the *scrutin de liste* system, which was abolished by special legislation introduced and passed by the radical Left, in its own supposed political interests, when that wing of the legislature was recently in control under M. Heriot as premier for a short time. The radicals are naturally hopeful of much gain from it in the elections.

The distinction between *scrutin de liste* and *scrutin d'arrondissement* is that, under the former, France was divided, for electoral purposes, into extensive districts, with a number of deputies at large assigned to each, to be voted for individually by the electors, while *scrutin d'arrondissement* provides one-man constituencies. Under the former, a list, or *liste*, of all the candidates nominated by each and all of the parties or groups making appeal to the people, was placed in the hands of each elector at the polls. Out of it he selected the names of his choice for which he was authorized to vote. He might distribute his ballots at will among the parties represented, or he might vote only for those nominated by the party of his choice. Under the restored *scrutin d'arrondissement* system there is to be but one representative elected for each constituency. But a candidate may be nominated by each party or group. It is on this arrangement that the groups of the Left base their hopes and expectations. It will afford wide scope for jockeying, for exchanging support, for maintaining or withdrawing candidates, and for switching votes.

The main dividing line in French politics is between Left and Right, that is, between those who choose to sit to left or right of the Speaker or President of the Assembly. At the extreme Left is the Communist group. Next to it come the Socialists; and then the Radical group, as a sort of Left-Centre. On the other side of the dividing line come the Moderates as a Right-Centre. Beyond them is the Extreme Right, made up of Conservatives and Royalists. There are thus five or possibly six partisan groups in French politics, each one of which may and most of which probably will nominate a candidate of its own in every constituency, not necessarily in the expectation of his winning, but with the intention of bargaining for support with other groups in the hope of thus at least approximating their own special desires and ends. Generally speaking, the groups of the Left co-operate. Those of the Right do the same. The Centre groups aim at holding the balance of influence and power. The Socialists, although exceedingly hostile to the Com-

munists, act with them occasionally. So a Moderate to the Right, however little sympathy he may have with a Royalist, will readily join hands with him against either or both of the Socialist and Communist parties.

When it comes to actual voting at the polls, no candidate can be declared elected unless more than half of all the votes cast are in his favour. Barring that, a second ballot becomes necessary. When three or more candidates take the field in any one constituency, a second ballot is probable. In practice, the system may work out somewhat as follows. If, in the first ballot, say a Moderate is in the lead, followed next by a Socialist, with a Radical third, a Communist fourth, a Conservative fifth and a Royalist sixth, and in the second ballot the Radical retires in favour of the Socialist, the latter will probably be elected. A Socialist might similarly secure the election of a Radical. It is not inconceivable that even a Communist might retire to elect a Socialist or a Radical, for the cry is likely to be "No enemies on the Left" in the working of the Left's own legislation. The *Bloc des Gauches* has too often succeeded by co-operation to risk uncompromising antagonism at any time.

One feature of French politics which Britishers and Americans find it difficult to comprehend is that, while there is such a plethora of parties in France, both Right and Left groups prefer non-partisan leaders. Of this peculiarity Mr. Sisley Huddleston writes in the *Contemporary Review*: "Nothing amuses me more than the efforts of British correspondents to put M. Briand and M. Poincaré in political opposition. Personally they differ immensely, but politically they resemble each other like two brothers. If M. Briand could have his way, the next parliament would be nicely balanced. It is precisely when there is no real majority that M. Briand is sure to be called to one of the highest posts in the government. As for M. Poincaré, he is bitterly reproached because he will not favour any party, and washes his hands of electoral preparations. . . He is neither a man of the Right nor a man of the Left. He stands above parties on the platform of national unity. Below, the deputies can fight each other if they please, provided they do his bidding on the essential issues. If he is allowed, he will carry on until the elections, and will in no way try to influence them." Most Canadians would find it hard to imagine their Prime Minister in such an attitude towards the electors of the Dominion.

The interests at stake in the May elections far transcend those of mere party or group politics. If M. Poincaré is not personally concerned in the outcome, France is; and most profoundly. So

is the rest of Europe, and even the whole world, for if M. Poincaré is not the issue, his financial policy is. He saved the franc from the fate of the German mark, and his country from bankruptcy. He alone can continue to protect and ultimately re-establish the franc, and with it his country's credit. But that will involve increasing taxation, and the *Bloc des Gauches* loathes taxation almost as profoundly as does the individual French peasant. The fate of France and the welfare of world economics will therefore be largely at stake in the coming elections.

A new element of uncertainty has developed of late through the amazing attitude suddenly assumed by Rome with regard to *L'Action Francaise*, a French Royalist and Conservative organization, and its journalistic organ of the same name. This attitude, and the rulings of the Papal See alleged to have been suggested by German influence, seem likely to mix economics dangerously with religion in France. They certainly contribute an additional and far from satisfactory complication to an already sufficiently muddled and unsafe, if not actually threatening, political situation.

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