

1881-84-85-88-90-09-

EXCERPTS OF INTEREST TO SCIENCE AND RELIGION
from the
PERSONAL JOURNALS OF JAMES EDWARD TALMAGE

1922, 23, 25,
29, 33

Feb. 7, 1881: Went to Salt Lake City to attend a series of two lectures to be delivered by Prof. R. A. Proctor. Attended his first lecture the same evening; ... ? etc; "Birth and growth of Worlds." Have formed a decided opinion regarding Proctor's views, though that opinion of mine is certainly immature, and therefore I will refrain from expressing it, for I may change it. I will say, however, that, though Prof. Proctor's theory is logical and fascinating, I am able clearly to see how he lacks that firmness, which one who has just claim by his Priesthood on the spirit of God will possess. Proctor says that the theory of the winding up scene being at hand, is without foundation: that it is the "Cracked-brain project of the nineteenth century," as every century has been characterized by some such alarm. Prof. Proctor with us, all will find out. (1:45-46)

Feb. 8, 1881: Attended the second lecture of Professor Proctor in the evening. His theory is indeed beautiful but I modify his views to suit my own convictions (1:46)

Dec. 12, 1881:

Dec. 12, 1881: I want to do good among the young--probably lecture amongst the Improvement Associations, and encourage the study of nature. I have thought to give a first lecture on the subject of harmony between Geology and the Bible--a subject upon which so many of our people have mistaken ideas. We sent off at once for a set of views costing thirty (30) dollars for this lecture. (1:112)

March 16, 1884: In course of my studies I have naturally been brought face to face with the alleged atheistic tendency of scientific thought and the conflict usually said to exist between Science and Religion. Now, I have felt in a dilemma--and begin now to fancy I see a way out. I have been unable to see the point of conflict myself--my belief in a loving God perfectly accords with my reverence for science, and I can see no reason why the evolution of animal bodies cannot be true--and indeed the facts of observation make it difficult to deny--and still the soul of man is of divine origin. The dilemma which has troubled me is this--being unable to perceive the great difficulty of which Scientists, and Theologians, and Scientific-theologians refer--I have feared that my investigation of the subject was highly superficial, for when such great men as most of the writers upon this subject are--find a puzzle, "it would be high egotism for me to say I find no puzzle. And the fancied exit which I see has appeared from my reading some of John Stuart Mill's writings and I feel--that if I had none other idea of a Deity than those men have, viz. that of an unknown being, whose acts as Mill says "contrary to the highest human morality"--I too would hail atheism with delight. I could never believe in such a God as theirs, not though one should rise from the grave to declare Him to me. And just as certainly do I perceive that there can be no antagonism between the true science as revealed and made easy by the Priesthood, and the God whose attributes and passions of love and mercy are also declared by that same Priesthood. (2:23-24)

May 4, 1884: Have just returned tonight from service at the Westminster Presbyterian Church. The minister spoke against belief in Darwinism and like most ministers whose remarks I have heard or read upon this subject--showed his ignorance. He spoke much as an ordinary person would--"Darwin." Oh yes--says we come from monkeys--then condemns. I certainly think 'tis the ministers themselves who have bred the disgust with which most scientific people regard them--because they will dabble with matters from which their ignorance should keep them at a safe distance. The speaker tonight brought out many noble principles, but in spite of his emmence as a preacher--self contradiction and inconsistency were apparent.

Really, I do not wonder that any scientific man refuses to belong to a church where he is told nothing but, "Only believe & you'll be saved"--"The blood of the Lamb is all powerful"--"take up the cross of Christ" etc. The preachers always talk in metaphors--you can't bring them down to fact; and anything which will not bear scrutiny when stripped of fine language is to the scientific mind nonsense. Again, Darwin wrote for those who can understand him: some of whom will agree with & others oppose him: but he did not write for ministers who never read beyond other's opinions of the man, anymore than Plato or _____? wrote for babes and sucklings. (2:38-39)

June 8, 1885: Went to Salt Lake City by evening train to attend the lecture by Monseignor Capel on Science and Religion. I am glad to have heard the gentleman--but his arguments were in no respect stronger than I have heard brought out by students. I believe I could name three or four of my own students who could argue stronger than did he. He took a decidedly Catholic stance. (2:82)

June 27, 1888: In the evening according to previous appointment, I went to Springville to lecture there under the auspices of the Improvement Associations, on the subject of "Nature and Nature's God." I have been requested by the Springville people, since before the time of the accident to my eye, that I should speak in that place on "Evolution," as a partial offset to the tendency of certain atheistical doctrine _____? there through the teachings of a certain Dr. York. The subject was treated tonight according to my poor ability under the title first above named. I trust it did some good. (3:78-79)

Jan 21, 1890: According to previous appointment, I tonight delivered a lecture on "The Theory of Evolution" at the University of Deseret under the auspices of the Delta Phi Society. The subject and the nature of the audience caused me to depart from my usual course in lectures,--I wrote and read the address; mainly that there may be no uncertainty to my expressions. While speaking extemporaneously, a person is liable by a slip to say the opposite of what he means. It is easy to omit a "not" or a "no" and cause a misunderstanding. (3:218-219)

March 8, 1890: According to an appointment of long standing, I this day went to Provo and there delivered a lecture on the "Theory of Evolution" before the County Teacher's Convention. The convention, after listening to the lecture, asked permission to publish it. Because of the importance of the subject and the ease with which misunderstandings arise as to a speaker's intentions, I read the lecture from notes. (3:228)

ENCERIES OF INTEREST TO SCIENCE AND RELIGION
from the

PERSONAL JOURNALS OF JAMES EDWARD TALLAGE

From year 1909 (= vol. 12)

Sept. 27: Special committee meeting at the President's office, to
consider a proposed article by the First Presidency on "The Origin of Man". (12:91)

Sept. 30: Committee meeting for further consideration of the article
on "The Origin of Man". Meeting was held at my office. (12:92)

March 12, 1922: While we were in Pittsburgh, President McCune informed me of an invitation extended by the "Free Thought Forum" of this city to address the body at 4:30 today. A meeting was held in the room we had occupied during the earlier part of the day. According to report there were over 300 present. I spoke on the "Origin and Destiny of Man", giving attention to the distinction between the body only and the man, and dealing with the subjects of ante-mortal existence, life beyond the grave, and the resurrection. I was listened to with every outward mark of close attention during the 50 minutes allotted to me. Then, according to the order, discussion was invited. The scene that followed is memorable and saddening. Sometimes several people were on their feet at once asking recognition of the chairman. None of them discussed the subject I had treated; but as I had quoted from the Bible, each directed his remarks to a denunciation of Holy Scriptures and some of them were blatant in proclaiming their atheism. There were three or four women who took part in the discussion, and these were even more extreme than the men. Such an exhibition of godlessness I have seldom seen; and the effect was not lost upon our missionaries and other members of the church who remained throughout the session. (25:11)

June 22, 1922: The American Association for the Advancement of Science, specifically the Pacific division, opened its annual session at the University of Utah today at 9 a.m. Elders John A. Widtsoe and Richard R. Lyman and I are fellows of the Association, and of course it is expected that we do our share of the work incident to the carrying out of the program. At the luncheon hour Dr. John A. Widtsoe gave an excellent address on "Research Problems of the Great Basin." In the afternoon I attended the meeting of the section known as The Western Society of Naturalists. The general topic for discussion was "Heredity and Evolution." Dr. David Starr Jordan spoke by way of reply to a recent statement by the President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, who said that we know little about the origin of species. Dr. Jordan holds that we know much about it.

I was profoundly impressed in listening to the several papers bearing upon this subject, that the evolutionists are much disturbed. Their chief aim at the present time seems to be to counteract the general impression that evolutionists do not agree among themselves; nevertheless, that they do not agree is a well attested fact. (25:30)

May 19, 1923: At 6 p.m. I attended a social in the open air at the home of President and Sister Maud Bentley, and I gave an informal talk in answer to questions relating to the subject of evolution. (25:123)

April 20, 1925 (While Mission President of the European Mission): This marks the beginning of a three days conference of the Royal Microscopical Society. I had received special and urgent invitation to be present; and in accordance with the expressed wishes of the First Presidency--that I attend as many of the scientific meetings as I can, I had accepted the invitation. (26:12)

Oct. 3, 1920: I attended a meeting of the Council of the Twelve, beginning at 9:00 o'clock, and then the regular weekly meeting of the First Presidency and the Twelve beginning at 10:00 o'clock. The members of the First Council of the Seventy sat with us for special inquiry into the probable effect of a recent address delivered in the Tabernacle by Elder W. H. Roberts. (22:49)

Jan. 31, 1933: Announcement is made today of the discovery of "microscopic living organisms in the fragments of meteorites." If this alleged discovery is confirmed it will be regarded as one of great importance. (30:4)

Evolution

SCIENCE AND RELIGION James E. Talmage

Mss 229

Box 22 #8 "Scientific Methods and Motives" an address delivered in the Logan Utah Temple on Feb. 5, 1898. (fragment) by James E. Talmage.

It is possible that a question may arise in the minds of some as to the propriety of choosing such a subject for treatment within these sacred precincts. Such a thought is dependent upon the very prevalent idea that science is a man-made fabric, of earthy, earthy, and that its pursuit is attended with possible if not certain dangers to the faith which man should foster within..."

Millennial Star

Dec. 2, 1926 "In Worthy Remembrance," a memorial address delivered by James E. Talmage at the unveiling and dedication of the Karl G. Maeser Tablet in Meissen, Germany, on Nov. 19, 1926.

"To him (Karl G. Maeser) science and religion were the handmaidens of God, engaged in harmonious and reciprocal service, nurturing and leading the soul toward the state of perfection planned by the Divine Father. Who shall venture to challenge or deny such philosophy of life?"

