

presentation of a record or series of records of the state to which the selected topics had arrived up to and to a limited extent beyond the outbreak of war. In this it is successful in exact proportion to the degree in which the personal interests and work of each writer is or is not closely linked with his topic. Where sidelines have been introduced for the sake of an imaginary completeness the treatment may be so fragmentary that it were better omitted. A case in point is the discussion of the uses of polarized light on pp. 29, 30. Without any mention of important modern monographs, such as those of Schmidt (1937) and Frey-Wyssling (1935, 1938), or of the greatest work of an older generation, that of Naegeli (by which the micellar theory and the existence of crystalline properties in organic materials was first deduced), such a summary is almost worse than useless. On the other hand, the same writer on a later page has produced a highly interesting account of the nature of the cell surface as he sees it, which is valuable to the reader chiefly because the point of view (though not of course all the facts) is the writer's own and based on personal experience.

The fact that quite a large part of this book could be described in the latter terms is the best tribute which can be paid to it and one which sufficiently explains its publication in spite of difficulties. Deferment would not have improved it since the effects of cessation of international intercourse will be felt more and more as long as the War lasts and the difficulties of collating literature will not grow less. As a serious contribution to cytological literature this book deserves a place in every scientific library.

One word of kindly advice may, however, be offered to the cytological civilian who may have to face a new *Blitzkrieg* in 1942-43. Let him take this book with him into his dugout by all means, but let him also take two other volumes, namely, Gray's "Textbook of Experimental Cytology" (1931) and the Cold Spring Harbor Symposium on Nuclear Biology (1941). These will provide relaxation from the more solemn tasks of A.R.P. and remind him of the happier days when Rome was not on fire.

I. MANTON.

## NEW LIGHT ON THE APOCALYPSE OF ST. JOHN

### The Book of Revelation is History

By H. S. Bellamy. Pp. 204. (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1942.) 8s. 6d. net.

MR. BELLAMY'S interpretation of the Apocalypse is entirely cosmological, being based upon the theory of the Austrian, Hoerbiger, concerning the attraction and ultimate destruction of satellites. Mr. Bellamy discovers in the Book of Revelation three cycles of myths, all concerned with a most appalling cataclysm which occurred thousands of centuries ago—the attraction and disintegration by the earth's gravitation of the satellite which was the predecessor of our present moon. He discovers further mythological material which he traces to a subsequent cataclysm which occurred when the planet Luna was captured by the earth's gravitation about fifteen thousand years ago, causing the sudden submergence of the continent of Atlantis.

The editor of the Apocalypse, says Mr. Bellamy, must have derived his knowledge from some esoteric source, either on the isle of Patmos where he went "for the word of God", or from some other source

which the name is used to conceal. The first myth (Rev. i, 1-20) is a general survey of the scene before the disintegration began. The satellite would at this time appear to be very near the earth and brilliantly lighted. Thus a group of brilliantly lit craterlets might well seem to be a group of stars, and the face of the satellite would almost certainly be covered with grotesque shapes. The second myth (iv, 1-8) is a series of observations of these, in which the imaginative eye sees them as the four-and-twenty seats, the elders, and the beasts "who rest not day or night". The "sea of glass like unto crystal" indicates the glaciopause of the satellite. When the disruptive pull of terrestrial gravitation began to outweigh the internal cohesion of the satellite, this glaciopause would crack and split into slabs. These slabs would crowd towards the apex so that new forms, for example a 'lamb', a 'book', a 'throne', might appear. The actual beginning of the disintegration is seen as the 'opening of the seals'; then follows the account of the disintegration proper under the symbol of the sending forth of the four horses. The white horse signifies the white, or icy, stage, the red horse the ensuing stage in which the glaciopause is entirely stripped away revealing the red soil beneath, the black horse the bare metallic core of the satellite, which under disintegration would shine livid in the light—the pale horse. The rain of blood is the fall of the red soil, and the star which fell from heaven opening the bottomless pit (ix, 1,2) a huge meteorite which pierced the terrestrial crust of the earth and penetrated to the magmatic strata beneath. Mr. Bellamy traces other references to this breakdown cataclysm in appendixes on Ezekiel, Ezra, Enoch and others.

Mr. Bellamy identifies "mystery Babylon" with Atlantis. "The great *polis* was found no more, because this angel had thrown into the sea a huge white round object, like unto a mill-stone" (Rev. xviii, 21). Again quoting from the book of Ezekiel, "How art thou destroyed that wast inhabited by seafaring men, the renowned city that was strong in the sea. . . . Now shall the isles tremble in the day of thy fall; yea the isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure" (xxvi, 17-18). Space does not allow more than a reference to these survivals of Atlantis myths which the author traces.

Supposing this explanation to be scientifically probable, why should the editor of the Apocalypse have attached such religious importance to so purely cosmological a chronicle? The author makes the interesting observation that he lived at a time of great crisis when established codes of behaviour were losing hold of the masses, as at the present day. His work may therefore have been an attempt to show the relationship between religion and science, so as to disentangle religion from crumbling conventionalism. He may have been trying to use the history of these cataclysms to reveal the hidden relationship between the inner lives of individuals and the lives of nations and of the world, so as to dissolve the dividing wall which current ethics would set between the scientific and religious points of view. Such a book, then, while justly claiming absolute truth, would admit of different interpretations according to the religious development of the reader; for the fact that heaven and hell may be cosmologically interpreted does not preclude other interpretations on different levels of consciousness. The dead are still burying their own dead, and the living are still being led unscathed through the ten circles of hell.

B. M. B.