
Pro Rege

Volume 1 | Number 3

Article 6

March 1973

My Friend Publishes

James Koldenhoven
Dordt College

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege

Recommended Citation

Koldenhoven, James (1973) "My Friend Publishes," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 1: No. 3, 22 - 23.
Available at: http://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege/vol1/iss3/6

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the College Publications at Digital Collections @ Dordt. It has been accepted for inclusion in Pro Rege by an authorized administrator of Digital Collections @ Dordt. For more information, please contact ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu.



A quarterly faculty publication of
Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa

sumption of monotheism. If there is one God only, then there should be a reflection of divine order (in spite of the distortions of sin) in the creation. The true scientific enterprise has been to discern what we can of that divine order. Although we only know in part (I Cor. 13:12), God in His kindness has been pleased to reveal much to the patient and persevering investigator and observer, both believer and unbeliever.

Another statement in the article particularly disturbs me. It is said, "Catastrophists were once ridiculed for suggesting that large celestial bodies interacted with the earth somewhere in the past, but new measurements on the moon's recession from the earth suggest that it must have been dangerously close to the earth in the fossil period." (p. 11)

While I am not sure what is meant by the vague phrase "the fossil period", the impression is given that catastrophists have been martyred by ridicule for suggesting that large celestial bodies "interacted" with the Earth. I think this martyrdom has largely taken place in the heads of the catastrophists. I am not sure what kind of "interaction" is here in view, but since ancient times men have generally acknowledged some form of interaction between the

Sun, Moon, and Earth. Consider tides and gravitation. That the Moon is slowly receding from the Earth due to tidal action and the conservation of angular momentum--far from being a recent discovery--has been known for many decades. In the 1890's in fact, George Darwin (son of Charles) used this datum to argue that the Moon originated from the Earth. (This Darwinian theory has been generally discarded by the scientific community).

There are a number of other points in the article which perhaps deserve comment, including the use of Biblical quotations which are arrayed against the caricature of uniformitarianism which is presented in the article. By persistently insisting that uniformitarians extrapolate in an unlimited manner (see footnote 11 on p. 16 for example) when in fact they all acknowledge that the Earth had a definite beginning--which most certainly must serve as a cut-off point to extrapolation--Mr. Parker misses reality, and his argument becomes an empty exercise.

by Richard Hodgson
Instructor in Astronomy

MY FRIEND PUBLISHES

My friend and colleague in the English Department, Mr. Merle Meeter, has written a book, Literature and the Gospel (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1972--paperback, \$3.50). Meeter has previously published two small volumes of poetry, Canticles to the Lion-Lamb and Prince of God.

Subtitled "Biblical Norms for Literature," Meeter's latest book is designed to show "That the most important literary principles or norms, for structure as well as content, are... either definitively enunciated or peerlessly illustrated in the Bible" (from the Preface). From this thesis the author does not waver. The Bible

is used either to gather literary norm proofs from texts themselves or to show that the literary form of the Bible is itself a model for writing and evaluating literature.

This 168-page volume contains thirty short chapters whose titles all begin with the words, "The Norm of . . .," completed with such literary norms as Unity, Variety, Conflict, Holiness, and Peace.

It is the pattern of the book to establish first the Scriptural references to the norm in question and then to balance the application with a brief evaluation of literature that is disobedient to that norm and literature that is obedient. For example, "The Norm of Obedience" is established with such texts as, "Wives, be subject to your husbands in all things." The author then shows how this involves love, before he applies this norm to an evaluation of The Heart of the Matter, a novel by Graham Greene. Meeter shows that Father Rank's retort to Mrs. Scobie, after her husband's dismal death, is in contradiction to the norm of love and obedience. Father Rank says, "...don't imagine you--or I--know a thing about God's mercy." Meeter writes: "But the Bible does tell us much, and that explicitly, about God's mercy--as well as about damnation" (p. 82). For an obedient Biblical

response the author turns to a less-known work, He Is Not Gone by Bernard Brunsting. Letting a rather lengthy quotation from the novel speak for itself, Meeter generalizes: "A strong and tender spirit of Christlike submission pervades this book and illustrates the norm of obedience for all those who are eager to learn the true principles of writing" (p. 83).

It is not my purpose here to evaluate either my colleague's interpretation of literature or to show our differences in critical technique. However, his sustained insistence that Christian writers have made and are making contributions to the imaginative writing field is to Meeter's credit. In his Literature and the Gospel, in bibliographies, and in other pieces he writes, Meeter insists on the place and validity of such writers as C. S. Lewis, Ruby Wiebe, Elisabeth Elliot, Bernard Palmer, Grace Irwin, Luci Shaw, Thomas John Carlisle, Fred Tamm, Sherwood Wirt, James Hefley, Clyde Kilby, John Pollock, and many more. Though they might not appreciate being lumped together, they have their place in Christian literary history, and Meeter is concerned about giving them a place more respectable than they are normally given.

Such effort, in my opinion, needs recognition.

THE EDITOR EXPLAINS

The Dordt campus is the scene of many and varied activities. Some activities are widely publicized; some are made known only on the campus. Still other activities are seldom referred to in public. One such activity is the inter-faculty discussion. This discussion is an ongoing thing. At times it reaches a near feverish point; then again, it recedes to the

proportion of a summer stream in Iowa, a week after the last good rain.

In this issue of Pro Rege we are introducing you to some of this discussion. Or, possibly I should say, we are inviting you to listen to faculty discussions.

Such discussions take place, for example, in our science building. You may recall that