

CREATIONISM

Backing the Bible

ONE group in Britain that has been watching the activities of the California and Michigan State Education Boards' activities with more than average interest recently is the Evolution Protest Movement. The move by the two education boards to include the religious theory of creation (albeit in a very cursory form) in school textbooks has met with the cautious approval of the movement, which, since 1932, has been dedicated to the thankless task of getting British scientists and laymen to listen to its views.

The movement, which has 800 subscribing members, has three chief aims—to demonstrate that the theory of organic evolution is not in accordance with scientific fact, to show that evolutionary teaching causes a decline in true Christianity and to supply information supporting the Bible statements on creation as opposed to the widely accepted views of evolution. Their chief weapons are the book and the pamphlet, although members of the movement are always willing to lecture and debate anywhere.

Since 1932, when the movement was founded by Captain Ackworth, RN, a submarine commander who is reputed to have won a libel action against Churchill, more than 200 pamphlets and several books have been published by the movement, the lodestar of their work being Professor W. R. Thompson's introduction to the 1956 Everyman edition of *The Origin of the Species*. Certainly better argued and less discursive than most of the movement's work, Thompson's critique forms part of the scientific backbone of what is essentially a lay organization. Past presidents include Douglas Dewar, a one time auditor general of India, Sir Ambrose Fleming, the British physicist who first devised the electron tube, and Captain Ackworth, although the current president, Sir Cecil Wakeley, past president of the Royal College of Surgeons, is a man highly distinguished in a biological field.

Dr C. E. A. Turner, the movement's chairman, a retired chemistry schoolmaster with an interest in biochemistry and a doctorate in the history of scientific education, says that the movement's chief concern is to see "the other side" of the Darwinian coin put across. The movement imposes no set beliefs on its members, simply a generalized opposition to Darwinism, and Dr Turner is at pains to point out that he does not want to see the creationist theory imposed on schoolchildren. "We want to see that people are aware of the alternatives; the problem at present is that one side is pushed to the exclusion of the other." Dr Turner

also complains that "it is very hard to get anything into the press. If you write as a member of the movement people think you are cranky—classed with the flat-earthers or something—and as there are a number of competent scientists in the movement this is not fair".

EPM has links with the Creation Research Society in the United States, a body of research scientists in a number of disciplines who attack Darwinism on more strictly scientific grounds, although they are "committed to a full belief in the Biblical record of creation and early history".

EPM is a much more modest organization, producing its half yearly journal with pamphlet supplements, and holding its annual meeting each September. But membership has gradually increased and the present wave of controversy in California and Michigan, not to mention the correspondence columns of *Nature*, could give it the chance to make its views better known, although it has at present no plans to seize the day.

SOVIET SCIENCE

Luna-21 Lands

from our Soviet Correspondent

THE landing of Luna-21 and roll-out of Lunokhod-2 into the Mare Serenitatis area, at a site some 180 km almost due north of the Apollo-17 site, is already being hailed by the Soviet press as a precursor of cooperation in space between the United States and the USSR.

This international theme of Lunokhod-2 is also stressed by the presence of a directional laser reflector supplied by France which extends the joint Franco-Soviet research on measuring accurately the distance from Earth to Moon begun by Lunokhod-1 (*Nature*, 228, 795; 1970).

Although a full list of experiments has not been announced, the programme of Lunokhod-2 seems a repetition of that of its predecessor, including a spectrometer to determine the chemical composition of the surface of the Moon, a twin-channel directional photometer to analyse radiation from stars in the visible and near ultraviolet region (similar to those carried by Kosmos 51 and 213), a magnetometer experiment, instruments to test the mechanical properties of the surface of the Moon including a conical rotary penetrometer with cruciform blades and sensors attached to the chassis of the vehicle to measure the angle of inclination.

There are also panoramic television cameras with angles of vision $180 \times 30^\circ$ in the lateral and $360 \times 30^\circ$ in the vertical direction. The fact that Lunokhod-2 on its roving mission has covered more

than 1,100 m in the first 4 days, compared to Lunokhod-1 which moved a mere 125 m in the same time, indicates the emphasis placed on gathering as many photographs as possible from this transitional sea-to-highland area. And, once again, as in Lunokhod-1, the ambient conditions of the instrument chamber (temperature 20°C , pressure 80 cm Hg) suggesting a life support system, may be some indication that the instruments on board have been designed for use in manned missions.

IMPERIAL COLLEGE

Unemployed Scientists

IMPERIAL COLLEGE still retains its attraction for undergraduates in the sciences and engineering. In the college's annual report published recently, it is reported that 4,994 students applied for a total of 952 places at the college for the academic year 1971-72. But this figure is 12.1 per cent fewer than applied the previous year.

True to tradition, Imperial College still boasts one of the largest post-graduate bodies in Britain with 37 per cent of the students during 1971-72 involved in either research or doing advanced courses.

But in spite of the reputation of the college its graduates still found difficulty finding jobs. A survey shows that in December 1971, 5 per cent of that year's Imperial College graduates were unemployed and that the whereabouts of 7.3 per cent were unknown. In September 1972 the University Grants Committee published equivalent figures for the country as a whole (*Nature*, 240, 175) and it reported that 7.9 per cent of all 1971 graduates were unemployed in December 1971—with 6.7 per cent of applied science graduates still without a job.

In common with science graduates of other colleges and universities, Imperial College students had to diversify to find employment. The report says that some scientists and engineers now find employment in accountancy, banking, the actuarial profession and the Stock Exchange and that in 1971 13.1 per cent of the college's first degree students took up employment in legal, commercial and related areas compared with 3.1 per cent in 1965. Even 10.9 per cent of the college's higher degree graduates now find their way into these fields compared with 0.8 per cent in 1965.

But Imperial College has made efforts to improve the situation and during the past year the college's appointments board has set up contacts with companies in Europe and has increased contact with British companies by the simple expedient of arranging for members of the academic staff to hold consultancies in industry.