

Denying science a risky bet for biblical literalists

By WILLIAM LOWELL PUTNAM

Considering the immense number of supposedly educated persons, mostly in the United States of America, who deny the findings of science, at least insofar as they appear to disagree with the

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literal words of the King James (Approved) version of the Holy Bible, it is remarkable that such folk are able to thrive, move about in, and have considerable influence in today's society.

Not one present-day biblical literalist or preacher could even turn on the lights of his church without making use of the scientific findings of non-religious people like Alessandro Volta, André-Marie Ampère and Thomas Alva Edison.

Not one televangelist or politician could preach his ignorance — or denial — of science without making use of the findings and applications of science variously attributed to

Rudolph Hertz, James Clerk Maxwell, Guglielmo Marconi, even David Sarnoff or NASA.

Hardly a clergyman (or politician) of any sort could get around in today's world without making use of the various applications of science attributed to Karl Friedrich Benz, the Duryea Brothers, Rudolph Christian Diesel, the Wright Brothers, or perhaps (if they have a greater taste for the comforts of Mammon) those originally made for Mèrcèdes Jellinek.

Or, if troubled with the physical ailments that afflict mankind, would any of those folk prefer to be bled, and/or deny themselves the benefits deriving from the painstaking scientific studies attributed to Louis Pasteur, Marie Sklodowska, Sir Joseph Lister or Jonas Edward Salk?

In fact, precious few members of any modern or Christian society would even be able to eat without making use of the equally painstaking

ing scientific improvements brought about in agriculture and animal husbandry by the studies of Fr. Gregor Johann Mendell, Charles Darwin and, finally, Luther Burbank.

And in the end, none of those folk named (or implied) above would ever be on time for anything without using the astronomical and geographic conclusions spread among humanity by the scientific applications of Charles Dowd, Cleveland Abbe and Sir Sandford Fleming.

In the end, even if we still have doubts, we can always safely rely on the advice given by that great, contemporary philosopher of the practical, Lawrence Peter Berra, who spent a long and successful career in absorbing the pitches aimed in his direction from both left and right, and then stated: "You can observe an awful lot by just watching."

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