

Editorial

A central question in various religions is: What is the nature of the largely invisible system of reality in which we live and move and have our being, and what does that nature imply for our destiny—meaning, hopes, and duties in the scheme of things? Central to the mission of *Zygon* is to show that the sciences essentially confirm that the traditional religions were valid in discerning that this system of reality is not ourselves, does not necessarily countenance whatever we may happen to want, and yet is on the whole a gracious determiner of the destiny of what is most sacred or of ultimate concern to us. To clarify the thesis that science is the most able friend rather than the most devastating foe of traditional theology and religion is the aim of this issue of *Zygon*. It is the response I promised in my editorial on page 3 of this volume, where I introduced our publication of five essays representing reasons for widespread disbelief on the part of both scientists and theologians in our claim that today to be relevant we must have scientific theology and indeed we can.

First in this issue is a reprinting of a classic paper by F. S. C. Northrop of our editorial advisory board, who more than thirty years ago expressed more cogently than most of us can today our basic theses that the first requirement for the restoration of the integrity of Western religion is the revival of confidence in religion's alleged but unseen realities and that for this "no department of Western knowledge is more effective than natural science."

The second paper, by H. J. Hamilton, presents an extension of the physical-science pictures developed in earlier issues of *Zygon*, which without intending to be theology nevertheless present an account of an unseen reality which creates, sustains, and guides all levels of phenomena, including our lives. Would-be interpreters of man's place in the scheme of things should grasp this paper's message even if they have to accept on faith the meaning of some mathematical symbols.

The third paper is my response in some detail to the five denials of my claims for the possibility of a scientific theology, claims that the scientific pictures of the hidden realities of nature in the heavens and in the heart of man also declare the glory of God.

We also present W. Richard Comstock's review essay on the significant theological efforts of the physicist Harold K. Schilling.

R. W. B.