

DAGON

#685, APA-Q #596

April 2017

PLANNING THE PLANETS

Are there other habitable planets out there? And, if there are, can we get to any of them, and how long is it likely to take?

The answers to those questions have changed as our knowledge develops about how planets are formed, how they develop, and how fast we'll be able to travel through space. When I first began to read popularized books about astronomy, many of their authors seemed to think that planets were formed when two stars approached each other very closely, exerting such a strong gravitational attraction on each other that they pulled material out of each other, and that this hot, gaseous material then solidified and formed solid particles that orbited them. Since stars only rarely approach each other that closely, such events would be very rare, and therefore planetary systems should be very rare.

This concept foundered when a Russian astronomer proved that the very hot, gaseous material, that would be pulled out of stars in such a manner, would not solidify, but would just dissipate in space. It is now considered by astronomers that, as stars are formed by condensation out of interstellar matter by its mutual gravitational attraction, some particles rotate so fast around this proto-star that they do not become part of the star, but condense into much smaller, solid bodies. So much matter becomes part of the star (or, in many cases, stars) that pressures and temperatures at its core increase to the point where light atoms fuse into heavier atoms, thus making the star shine. But the smaller bodies in orbit around the proto-star do not get that hot, and instead solidify into planets.

Astronomers were then of the opinion that many planetary systems could exist, but that they could not be seen from Earth because the stars they orbited were so bright that planets could not be seen in their glare. Then evidence of planets by other means were sought. Gravitational evidence of planets could be determined by their minute influences on the motions of the much larger stars which they orbit. A slight but regular dimming of a star indicated that it was caused by a planet orbiting around that star and slightly dimming its light each time it passed in front of the star. By such means, estimations could be made of the planet's period, its size, and its distance from its star. This has led to the compilation of the Exoplanet Catalog, which now lists over 3,400 planets orbiting stars other than our Sun. (Kenneth Chang, *New York Times*, 23 February 2017)

The star nearest to our Sun is actually a triple star system, Alpha Centauri, at a distance of 4.24 light years. (This is the distance light would travel in 4.24 years. One light year is about ten trillion kilometers, or six trillion miles.) The brightest of these three stars, α Centauri A, is like our Sun a yellow star, somewhat larger and brighter than the Sun. α Centauri B is a little smaller and fainter than the Sun. α Centauri C is a much smaller and fainter red

dwarf star, usually called "Proxima Centauri" or just "Proxima", Latin for "nearest", since it is by a small amount slightly nearer to the Sun than the other two α Centauri stars. The α Centauri system, which appears to the unaided eye as a single star, is the third brightest star in Earth's night sky. It is too far south to be seen from north of about 30° N latitude. Medieval Arabian astronomers named it Rigel Kentaurus, "Foot of the Centaur", for its position in that constellation.

Proxima is known to have at least one planet, about the size of our Earth. It would have to be quite near to Proxima, a cool red dwarf star, in order to have a climate warm enough to support life, since liquid water would be necessary for life to appear there.

There has recently been discovered another star, which has at least seven planets. It is also a red dwarf, the most common sort of star in the universe. That type of star is also the easiest to search for planets, since it is small and thus more likely to be affected by their much smaller gravitational fields. This star had been given the cumbersome and uninformative name "Trappist-1", for the Chilean telescope used in its discovery. The fact that a Chilean telescope was used indicates that Trappist-1, like α Centauri, is too far south in the sky for an American telescope to be useful. And Trappist-1 is about 40 light years away, which means that even if one of its planets is home to a technological civilization, messages to it would require 40 years to get there, and another 40 years for a reply. And we have no reason at all to believe that the velocity of light can be exceeded by any means whatsoever.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY

Dagon, a monthly fanzine of commentary on science, science fiction, fantasy, mystery novels, comic art, role-playing games (RPGs), and anything else that seems like a good idea at the moment, is published by John Boardman, 12716 Ginger Wood Lane, Clarksburg, MD

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 P Great copies.

E Intervals **Dagon** also goes to others who have indicated an interest in its subject
 R This matter. Subscriptions are 10 issues for \$10 in the United States, and for \$25
 A Appears elsewhere. I also trade with other amateur publications.

T To

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I Inflammation In the last issue of **Dagon**, I cited several errors of grammar and spelling
 O Optic which I have recently seen on television. But in the afternoon of 15 February
 N Nerves I saw an error in *geography* on a news report on ABC-TV. There was a shot of a
 waterfall on a tall and massive rock called El Capitán. The caption claimed that
 this picture was taken in "Yellowstone Park, California"! El Capitán, in case you
 didn't know, is in Yosemite Park, in California. But Yellowstone Park is nowhere

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near California. Most of it is in Wyoming, with bits of it overlapping into Montana and Idaho.

So I have instead given up on correcting the huge number of errors that are broadcast on television screens. There are so many of them, that there is no point in trying to correct them all. They are now comparable to a woman I once met at an assisted living facility in Frederick. She could not be persuaded that Martin Luther and Martin Luther King Jr. were two different people, who lived four centuries apart on two different continents. Worse, she was a retired teacher! I can just imagine what her classes were like. "General MacArthur defeated the British at the Battle of Bull Run, and afterwards married Queen Marie Antoinette..."

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On 22 January there was a general increase in postal rates in this country, but it was not publicized in the media, either print or broadcast. I discovered it just before mailing out the March issues of **Dagon**, or else I might have put the wrong stamps on them.

The rate for a one-ounce first-class letter went up from 47¢ to 49¢. However, any "Forever" stamps for this class of mail for which you may have paid 47¢ each are now good for 49¢ worth of postage each. For details on this and all other new rates, ask a postal clerk for a copy of the "United States Postal Service Retail Quick Reference Sheet".

For small envelopes, first class mail is 49¢ for the first ounce and 21¢ for each additional ounce or fraction of an ounce, up to a maximum weight of 3½ ounces. For large envelopes, postage is 98¢ for the first ounce and 21¢ for each additional ounce or fraction of an ounce, up to a maximum weight of 13 ounces. Letters over 3½ ounces count as "large envelopes". Postcards cost 38¢, but to carry a picture postcard, 34¢ worth of stamps are needed.

Postage for small letters to any foreign country is \$1.15 for up to two ounces, \$1.61 for up to three ounces, and \$2.08 up to an upper limit of 3½ ounces. Large letters to any foreign country are \$1.15 for up to one ounce and 57¢ for each additional ounce or fraction of an ounce, to a maximum of 3½ ounces. Postcards are \$1.15 each. All foreign mail must be marked "VIA AIR MAIL" or "PAR AVION".

I think that the unusual weight "3½ ounces" figures so frequently among these rates because it is almost exactly equal to 100 grams (one hektogram), and the Postal Service is preparing for a time when its rates will be official in the metric system.

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This year Lunacon will be held on 7-9 April, but not where it was last year, at the Westchester Hilton (formerly the Rye Town Hilton), in Rye Town, Westchester County, New York. This year it will be at the Westchester Marriott Hotel, Tarrytown, New York. (See Mark Blackman's fanzine **Blancmange** #508, **APA-Q** #588 (August 2016), and the 2017 Lunacon registration form, on the baQover of **APA-Q** #595. The mailing address of Lunacon 2017 is P. O. Box 3137, New York, NY 10163-3137.

Deirdre and I do not intend to go to this year's Lunacon, so I do not have a precise record of its location. We do plan to attend this year's Balticon, which will be in Baltimore on Memorial Day weekend.

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Neil Gaiman's book *Norse Mythology* was reviewed by Michael Dirda in the *Washington Post* of 16 February 2017. Dirda mentions several of the better-known myths of the Norse from their pre-Christian years, but he did not take up the god Heimdall in any detail. Apparently we will not find out, from this book, why or how Heimdall was the son of *nine* virgins. Let Christians try to match *that* story!

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A calendar for 2017 will inform you that, this year, Easter will fall on Sunday 16 April. But how was this date determined? In the earliest years of Christianity, Christians celebrated Easter when local Jews celebrated Pesach (Passover). However, they were clearly unwilling to link Christianity so closely to another religion. So Easter became the first Sunday after the first full Moon which followed the beginning of spring. But eventually a new determination of Easter was made, and linked to the Julian Calendar, then Rome's official calendar, which became the official calendar of Christianity.

But by the 16th century it became obvious that marking a leap year every fourth year gave the Julian Calendar too many leap years, and that if it continued, Christmas would gradually slip into spring, and Easter into early summer. So, in 1582, Pope Gregory XIII (r. 1572-1586) hired the German astronomer Christoph Schlüssel to design a new and more accurate calendar. (In those days, scholars often translated their names into Latin or Greek, and since "Schlüssel" is German, and "clavius" is Latin, for "key", you might probably find his name listed as "Christopherus Clavius". Fortunately, Francis Scott Key did not do the same thing when he wrote our national anthem.)

Upon the pope's proclamation, all Catholic countries immediately adopted the new Gregorian Calendar, declaring that the day after 4 October 1582 would become 15 October 1582. So did the Netherlands, since it is useful to use the same calendar as your customers, and trade is the real state religion of the Netherlands. The sensible Swedes simply did not have a "29 February" in *any* year until their calendar was "in sync" with the Gregorian calendar. It took 42 years to do this, but nobody got upset about feeling that the government was cutting ten or eleven days out of their lives. (In Great Britain, some people actually rioted about this when that country adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1752, but in the British colony of Virginia, George Washington merely added eleven days to his birthday, which had originally been 11 February.) For a few centuries, Russia retained the Julian calendar, which meant that by the beginning of the nineteenth century their calendar was twelve days behind most of the rest of Europe. This had an effect on the efforts of the Austrian and Russian Empires, who were engaged in staff talks about the logistics of bringing a huge Russian army into central Europe to resist the eastward advance of Napoleon's troops. One of the participants in these talks was a certain Karl Schulmeister - I think I have his name right. Schulmeister noted that when the Austrians named a date for provisioning the Russians during their advance, they were not referring to the same day that the Russians were thinking of. He drew up a memorandum

(continued on p. 10)

GETTING CAUGHT UP

APA-Q baQover #594 (Blackman): “Year of the *Rooster*”! - This famous euphemism has obviously expelled the traditional name of this rural “Herald of the Dawn” from the English language, which originally obtained it from the French word *coq*. Nor are they heralds of merely the dawn. On a farm plentifully supplied with chickens, any males of the species who are present will sound off at any time of day, particularly if other such males are often present. Roosters crow for the same reason that male songbirds sing - to advertise their masculinity to any nearby females, and to challenge other males and give them notice to quit the vicinity.

Blancmange #514 (Blackman): From time to time, the Southern Poverty Law Center or other anti-terrorist organizations point out that most of the violent terrorist groups operating in this country are American in origin, and mainly agitated about situations in this country. Arabian and other Muslim terrorist organizations run a distant second to things like the Ku Klux Klan. Alt-Right. and other racist gangs. As for further investigation of alleged Russian or Arabian influence in the 2016 elections, no terrorists (Arabian or otherwise) have accomplished anything at all to those elections. They may have *wanted* to affect the elections, but I have not heard any claims that they actually did. Nobody diddled a voting machine to turn Clinton votes into Trump votes, or put explosives into the Easter eggs that will be rolled down the White House lawn on Easter Monday. (On previous Easter Monday egg rolls, the figure wearing the bunny costume at those events has been Sean Spicer, now the president’s press secretary and an official White House spokesbunny - er - spokesman. Or is he really supposed to be a terrorist agent from Sodding Arabia?)

Thanks for the brief review of *Doonesbury Deluxe*. I had been wondering what the current *Doonesbury* strips in the *Washington Post* were getting at.

You observe that “In the *Village Voice*, a CUNY Classics professor compared 2016 to the last days of the Roman Republic and Trump to rich and powerful men like Clodius...who tried to pass themselves off to the common people as an outsider just like them.” Meanwhile, as I noted in **Dagon #684** in **APA-Q #595** (March 2017), the Public Theater in Central Park will be presenting this summer Shakespeare’s tragedy *Julius Caesar* with reference to Trump’s election and regime.

I thought I had read, or at least heard of, all of L. Sprague de Camp’s fiction, but the title *Rogue Queen* does not strike a light. Neither did *Turn Left at Africa*, even as an alternative title to his *The Dragon of the Ishtar Gate*. Deirdre has checked *Turn Left at Africa* on the on-line catalog of the local public library, but found no reference to it. “*Rogue Queen*” is probably a misprint that found its way through the book’s production process.

Eventually the thoroughly justified criticisms of Trump will be reduced to one over-simplified but largely accurate sentence: “*Everything* Trump says, is a lie.” We can then neglect elaborate refutations, and go with that one judgment.

I was very much gratified by the news that the “election” of Donald Trump has brought about huge press runs and sales of Sinclair Lewis’s *It Can’t Happen Here* and George Orwell’s

1984. These could be the only lasting effects of Trump's "election".

You're right about the origin of our ludicrously complicated process for electing a president. The original rules in the Constitution proved so obviously unworkable in the 1800 election that Amendment XII of the Constitution was hastily written and passed before the 1804 election. Not that it was any more workable.

Thanks for the additional titles in Jecks's Knights Templar Mysteries. I will comment on them further in the next **Dagon**.

I had not been aware of female superheroes of comic books preceding Wonder Woman. I did recognize a few of the names you give, but don't recall when they were first published

APA-Qover #595 (Blackman): At the time it took place, the purchase of Alaska through the efforts of Secretary of State Seward was widely known as "Seward's folly". However, the acquisition of a territory rich in ores, furs, timber, fish, and other natural resources was a stroke of genius (and of Russian penury). Maybe we ought to try to offer a bid on the *west* side of the Bering Strait.

Blancmange #515 (Blackman): I can indeed sympathize with your medical problems, as some days I am kept on the trek to and from the bathroom owing to diabetes. Though my health is not involved in my publishing schedule, I am also beginning to wonder if I can get this issue of **Dagon** printed and posted to you in time for the April Distribution of **APA-Q**. However, your announcement that you will collate that Distribution of **APA-Q** on 8 April rather than 1 April ensues that I can mail you this issue on time. Best wishes for the state of your health!

Fletcher Knebel is not the only political observer who has called the mental health of a real or fictional president into question. His maanderings about being wire-tapped during his predecessor's administration seem to be developing beyond the fantasies of Nixon or McCarthy, and his insistence on huge military expenditures leaves me wondering just what he really has on his little mind.

Newton's Cannon sounds as if it could be interesting reading, though I have other interesting reads on hand already. Deirdre has got me a copy of Barry Tighe's continuation of the late George MacDonald Fraser's picaresque novels about the wild adventures, military and otherwise, of Harry Flashman. However, possibly because of copyright protection of the name of Fraser's hero, Tighe's book has been hastily re-titled *Sir Thomas 'British Tommy' Armstrong and the War between the States*. Deirdre has also got me a murder mystery set during that conflict, which I feel should be more accurately called "The Slaveholders' Rebellion". It is the first of (thus far) four murder mysteries set at that time by Jack Martin. All have been given the titles of tunes then popular: *John Brown's Body*, *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, and *Marching through Georgia*. Much to my disappointment, the "John Brown" of the first book's title is not the Abolitionist hero and martyr, but the victim of a murder which Martin's hero, an officer in the federal army, must solve.

I am also of the opinion that the term "Native Americans" is used incorrectly. "Native American" actually means anyone of any ethnic background who was born here. I prefer to use

the term "Original Americans" for people who were indeed the original Americans.

The term "alternate facts", coined by Trump's spokeswoman Kellyanne Conway to describe his lies, is rapidly becoming a synonym for "lie" in the minds of both his supporters and his adversaries. After his impeachment and conviction, or whatever process removes him from the office he is abusing, it will be applied (sparingly, I hope) to any playing that a successor might do with the truth. And that will be the only lasting impact of his presidency.

Christians do not distort the Jewish scriptures so much as they distort its translation into Greek. That translation was done a couple of centuries before the beginning of the present era, and its errors, though few, introduce distortions into the text. Perhaps the best-known of these is a statement by Isaiah, possibly referring to his own family. In the original he prophesied that "a young woman will bear a child" - a thing not particularly exceptional. But the Hebrew word that means "young woman" was incorrectly translated by a Greek word which can mean "virgin", and this usage is continued in the Greek original of the Christian scriptures ("New Testament") as predicting a "virgin birth". (*Asimov's Guide to the Bible* takes up this matter in considerable detail.) I would go into more details here, but because much of my gear is in storage I do not have available a bible in any language, nor does my computer now have its former ability to write Hebrew characters. So I dissimulate by "explaining" that the story of the "virgin birth" merely shows that two thousand years ago they did not have sex education in the middle schools.

(Once in one of my physics lab classes we got on the topic of languages and translations, and a young woman of Greek ancestry complained that biblical Greek was very difficult to read - which, considering its age, is not unusual. I told her that at least she was able to read its original text, while all the rest of Christendom had to use translations.)

Modern German, to raise another point from **Blancmange** #515, is largely based on the Saxon or High German ("*Hochdeutsch*") into which Martin Luther translated the bible during the Reformation. As you observe, its colloquial form may owe something to Yiddish; the word "*meshuggeh*" is a well-understood term in colloquial German. Another slang term is "*pleite*", "bald", but I don't know whether this is from Yiddish. Low German ("*Plattdeutsch*") is spoken in the northern lowlands, and is rather more similar to English. This should not surprise us, since that is where the Anglo-Saxons departed for Britannia in the 5th century after Roman forces were withdrawn. "Saxon" means "swordsmen", while "Angles" refers to the right angle which the northwest German coast makes with the North Sea. I have no doubt that some of my ancestors made the crossing with the chieftains Hengist and Horsa, names which are probably nicknames for "stallion" and "mare". (Why these names were used is anybody's guess.) But grabbing other people's lands is an ancient and popular English sport, as any Irishman, Mohawk, Zulu, or Hindu could tell you.

The name "Budweiser" comes from the town of Budweis, the German name for the Czech town of Budějovice.

(Many places in eastern Europe have several names, from the various nationalities that inhabit them, rule them, or once ruled them. For example, a city in western Ukraine is called

Lviv in Ukrainian, Lvov in Russian, Lwow in Polish, and Lemberg in German. The first two names are transliterations from the Kirillic alphabet.)

To answer your question about star names, as far as I am aware, the International Astronomical Union does not have a "preferred name" for the star system nearest to our Sun. By the Bayer system, each optically visible star in a constellation has a Greek letter as long as they hold out, and thereafter numbers. Bayer's original intent seems to have been that the stars are lettered or numbered in order of their brightness, but there are numerous exceptions. For example, the seven stars of the "Big Dipper" (or, in Great Britain, the "Plough") are lettered from west to east, so that the star that forms the lip of the Dipper is α Ursae Majoris, while the star at the end of the handle is η Ursae Majoris. (The genitive case of the constellation's Latin name is used,) Thus, α Centauri is the brightest star in the constellation Centaurus. If you have a telescope good enough to see all of a multiple star system's stars, they become " α Centauri A", " α Centauri B", and " α Centauri C" in order of brightness.

Some of the brightest stars have individual Latin, Greek, or Arabic names that long antedate Bayer. They usually describe the appearance of the star, or its position in its constellation. Examples are Sirius ("sparkling"), Polaris (the star almost exactly above the Earth's North Pole), and Antares ("opposite to Mars", since it is a bright red star that looks a little like the planet Mars). Many of the Arabic names describe the star's position in its constellation. Rigel (β Orionis) means "foot", Deneb (α Cygni, in the tail of the Swan) means "tail", and Fomalhaut (α Piscis Australis, in the mouth of the Southern Fish) means "mouth of the fish".

Dagon #684 (me): Four Republicans are currently competing for their party's 2017 nomination for Governor of Virginia. One of them, Corey Stewart, has already made himself malodorous by insisting that a statue of Robert E. Lee should remain in a park in Charlottesville, VA, despite attempts by the city council to remove it, and instead permanently bury it in (or under?) a museum, where this relic of slavery and treason properly belongs.

And, a few days after I committed to print the statement that General Flynn would be appointed by President Trump to be Secretary of Homeland Security, he was forced by poorly reported circumstances to decline that appointment. Apparently someone's suggestion that he might be a Russian "agent" made that appointment less attractive than it had seemed. And apparently the accusation of being a supposed "Russian spy" is just as poisonous as it was sixty years ago. This supports my claim that anti-Communism was publicized by Harry Truman mainly to justify support for his policies, just as Adolf Hitler used anti-Semitism to justify his policies. The similarity is huge. Anything a politician wanted to get rid of was blamed on a sinister conspiracy, which the politician would then oppose and set out to save the nation from. Other politicians would note his success, and also find and oppose other alleged effects of this alleged conspiracy, as Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-WI) imitated Truman. Eventually we got claims about a white couple in Kentucky, who sold their home to a black couple. Some local politicians claimed that Communism was somehow involved in this horrendous deal.

For that matter, early in 1957, when I was a graduate student at Florida State University,

I was summoned before a legislative committee in Florida about my work in attempting to desegregate the university and Tallahassee's public transportation system. One of the legislators actually had the colossal impudence to ask me whether I was a member of the Communist Party! All this did was convince me that Communism was the same sort of mythical conspiracy as Judaism had been regarded in Germany under the Hitler regime, although this question left me too astonished to say so, and my only reply was "No."

Actually, Communism was not very impressive as a sinister conspiracy. In 1990 it developed that Communism couldn't even control Russia. The Russian people got rid of Communism in a process so fast, easy, and bloodless that it couldn't even be called a "revolution". Yet allegations of Russian influence are still enough to cast aspersions, often successfully, on American politicians who aspire to higher and more influential positions.

Despite the rise and fall of the "Great Red Menace", the foreign policy objectives of the present Russian state seem to be unchanged from Tsarist times, leading me to wonder how effective the Russian Revolution really was. Before the Soviet Union came, during its tenure, and after it went, the smaller eastern European nations had to worry about Russia, Russia had to worry about German ambitions, and the possession of Crimea was in dispute.

With great publicity, the panda Bao Bao, which had been born about 3½ years ago in the National Zoo and was a great favorite with Washington's residents and tourists, was sent off to China as part of an agreement with that country, that all pandas born here should be shipped off to China before they were four years old, to take part in a breeding program on the home grounds of their endangered species. She left by plane for Chengdu, in panda country, accompanied by a zoo-keeper, a veterinarian, and a huge quantity of bamboo, her favorite food. After a month in quarantine to check whether she had any diseases, she was introduced to male pandas. American residents are sure to be informed by the media if she is helping to make her species less endangered.

Meanwhile, another rare species is making itself less endangered right here in Washington. This is a most appropriate place for bald eagles to nest, as they are our national emblem. Three pairs of bald eagles are nesting within the Washington city limits, and one of them, named by the public "Justice" and "Freedom", have produced two eggs in their nest, which is 110 feet (33½ meters) high in an oak tree at the city's Metropolitan Police Training Academy. Another pair, named "Mr. President" and "The First Lady", have laid two eggs in their nest in a tree at the National Arboretum. The gestation period for eagle eggs is about 35 days, compared to 21 days for chickens.

The Founding Fathers probably chose the eagle as our national emblem (despite Benjamin Franklin's preference for the turkey) because republics were rare at that time, and history's most famous and successful republic had been the Roman Republic, whose emblem was the eagle. But the Romans probably had in mind the golden eagle, a bird of the hills and forests. The bald eagle is essentially a water bird, and its prey are usually fish. But unlike the Roman Republic, the United States is primarily a naval power, for which a sea eagle is a more appropriate symbol. And Washington is a good place for a fish-eater to seek prey, since the

Anacostia River flows into the Potomac within its boundaries, and Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean are within an eagle's reach.

Paul Cardwell has informed me that the numbers of Przewalski's horse are not decreasing, as I had written in **Dagon #684**, but increasing. Apparently efforts are now being made to increase the numbers of this rare close relative of the domestic horse.

In describing the presidential custom of being sworn into office on a bible, I tried a rather obscure joke about President Kennedy using a Douay Bible. In the 17th century, following the success of the still popular King James Bible, a translation by Protestants, some English Catholics met in the French town of Douay and made a translation of their own. Since John F. Kennedy was the only Catholic ever elected to the presidency, I made a rather heavy-handed joke about him being sworn into office on a Douay Bible. I have no idea whether he actually used this or maybe another Catholic translation.

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At last, this issue finally brings me up to date in my comments on previous **APA-Qs** I hope I can continue to do this.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 4)

about the possible consequences of this misunderstanding - and sent it off to Napoleon, whose agent he was. As a result, Napoleon won a decisive victory at Austerlitz, and Schulmeister got a castle in Alsace.

The Russians, however, took more than a century to learn their lesson in calendar reform. They did not bring their calendar into line with most of the rest of the world until after the Russian Revolution. And to this day the Russian, Greek, and other eastern Orthodox churches use the Julian calendar for their religious observances. (That's why I was always careful to wish my dentist in Brooklyn, a man of Greek ancestry, a "Merry Christmas!" on the day that was, to me, 7 January.)

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 you may find something of
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