

# EDITORIAL

## BUT IS IT AS MUCH FUN?

It is to be expected that where there is a diversity of opinion between groups, a misunderstanding of the other's position will inevitably result. Because of limits in resources and time it is natural to concentrate one's efforts in areas which one believes to be correct and gain only glimpses of what the other side believes to be true. The discourses between proponents of creationistic and evolutionary thought provide a good example. With their minority position and a certain defensiveness, a case could be made, however, for a claim that creationists better understand the basis from which evolutionary thought arises, than the converse. If one uses information taken from recent publications, as well as from letters to editors in journals such as *Nature* and *Science*, one is impressed at how poorly the creationist stance is understood by those of an evolutionary mind.

The presumption that the presence of God in a scientific discipline somehow makes science unpredictable, unusable and not even much fun is a recurring and very troubling theme. If the basis of science rests on reproducibility, experimentation and model testing, the entrance and action of God into this scheme is considered to mess things up because one does not then know whether the results one sees are from natural events or the finger of God.

Man is a creature who looks for cause and effect and is driven to place the Universe in some intellectual order. With this order comes assurance that life can be lived with only a limited number of surprises. An existence where nothing is the same from moment to moment would be most troubling. Some psychiatrists suspect that certain emotional disturbances are rooted in one's inability to see form and pattern in one's surroundings, thus leading one so affected to withdraw into some inner space, or to become wildly erratic. Thus the evolutionists' charge that the entrance of God into the natural world destroys the rational mind's ability to cope is indeed important and needs to be considered seriously.

Let us therefore see if the charge has any validity. If one examines the number of supernatural events attributed to God or His human associates, one quickly realizes how very infrequently God has indeed put His finger unpredictably into the world about us. Using a time span of thousands of years from creation to the present, the number of observed events considered by more than a few individuals to be miraculous departures from generally observed laws of nature would probably not average more than one or two per century. This is a number far less than the numerous unique events thought by scientists to have occurred for which no solid explanation exists but which are inferred from fragmentary data.

Even with those infrequent events of Divine origin there is a significant difference. With the exception of the creation account, the majority, if not all, of God's entrances into the human sphere have been preceded by a statement of what was going to take place. It is almost as if God realizes the importance for humankind to recognize order in his surroundings, and thus protects him from falling into a confused state by saying that He will enter the human domain and will do the following acts. Rather than providing surprises, God notifies humankind of an event so that the process can be watched and understood.

This last consideration brings me to a final thought. Only sometimes stated but often implied is the idea that science in the presence of God is just not much fun. Part of this feeling may arise from the fact that science, in its race into the unknown, rewards the first one there with such honors as fame, position, and research grants. The Ph.D. system of education demands that the student discover something new. If it is learned that the research had been done already by another, the subsequent work is not considered sufficient to fulfill the requirements. Thus to say that what I am learning is already known by God (even though He may keep it a secret) can put a damper on the excitement of discovering the new. But this attitude should be viewed as an emotional and maturation problem rather than a scientific one.

I should like to propose that rather than taking away from the pleasure of doing science, a knowledge of the actions of God could increase its pleasure. Subtle hints of forces and conditions in areas about which our knowledge is very limited are given when God is described as entering our world. Why could not these be used as a basis for thought and experiment?

If science is the pursuit of knowledge, would it not be wise to use all sources of information available as a starting point? Would not the rate at which new knowledge is acquired increase, rather than decrease, as is often thought? It seems to me that instead of inhibiting the cause of science, the entry of God into the human realm could be a way to make more new and exciting discoveries of the world around us. One could only wish He did it more often.

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