SCIENTISTS EVALUATE THE EXCEPTION

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Science, by its very nature, must be centered on the type—the universal, as the philosophers say. But the fact that scientists study individuals should never be forgotten. Every individual, while typical, is also exceptional in some respect. Thus the exception should never be ignored or denied. Herein lies the error of uniformitarianists who are bound by a dogma and deny exceptions, although there is clear evidence to show that exceptions have happened and have been important.

Scientists, although doing valuable work, tend to downgrade the individual, especially the exception.

This tendency is often evident in teaching survey courses in botany and zoology. If all individual specimens were dissected, drawn, and described just as they were observed there would not be time to learn about many kinds of living things. Or perhaps there would be only a glance at each animal or plant and the whole study would be superficial.

The accepted method is to take a species which is chosen as a type, make a thorough study of it, and then note how some other species of that class are somewhat different in minor respects. Thus an ameba, an earthworm, grasshopper, clam, frog, and cat are chosen and studied as types.

Louis Agassiz, who influenced early biological instruction in the United States more than anybody else, said, "Facts are stupid things until they are brought in line with underlying principles."[1] In other words, how an animal breathes, digests food, or escapes enemies should be detectable from the parts of the animal. By such study researchers should be able to draw conclusions as to how animals live, and how even human life is carried on successfully.

Conclusions in science are established by repetition. If one animal is unusually small, has a scar, or otherwise is different from all like animals, then the scientist says that this difference is contingent; that it merely happens to be as it is, and this difference is not typical nor significant, for it might just as well have been different.

When specimens have a high degree of likeness, when experiments are performed by different persons and give the same result, then scientists conclude that they have discovered scientific principles and are not dealing in contingencies.

A Significant Problem

Yet a significant problem must be faced when scientists realize that some occurrences cannot be repeated! Such important occurrences are: the creation of the world and the advent of living things. Some persons have tried to make life but have succeeded only in making amino acids which occur in living things. To see creation repeated, scientists would have to see living things appear *without the help of man.* This was attempted during many years and finally scientists agreed in the late nineteenth century that life does not start of itself but comes only from pre-existent life.[2]

The scientific method is a good tool to use in establishing truth of some kinds but is not the only criterion, and often this method is not applied fully. An investigator is supposed to have in mind some way in which events occur naturally, which has not been proved. He gathers data which are relevant to his problem and which are chosen without prejudice; two requirements which are so high, which demand so much judgment and honesty, that they run counter to human nature.

If the findings of an investigator fit his world view, the tendency is to accept them without confirmation by repetition. If the findings do not fit that view they are rejected.

Every investigator must exercise judgment as to which data are significant and which are only contingent. It has been said that no two blades of grass are alike, but the difference may be only an accident or only due to the environment. Seeds from the grass plants which bore the different blades might not reproduce the observed differences.

Such lack of reproduction was proved by Wilhelm Johannsen (1857-1927) in his pure lines of beans.[3] Although the beans he planted had descended from a single plant, some plants were bigger than others. When seeds of the different plants were planted, however, they bore beans of the same average size. This showed that the difference in size of the seed beans was contingent. Such careful work has shown that much of the older data which was accepted as proof of evolution was poorly founded.

Fifteen years ago, when grants for research were easy to obtain and publication of articles was easy, scientists seemed to act on the assumption that every datum had value; that if any investigation were careful enough and long enough it was bound to help solve the problems of mankind. The result was many pages of useless data. Scientists need to cultivate the insight to look ahead and choose titles of significance.

Importance of the Exception

And scientists should learn that often it is the exception which rules the outcome. Most often scientists look for some individual, usually the mean or median, which will represent the group. But there are individuals which are significant *in themselves.* It is not the average but the unusual person who makes history. The range of a plant species is not determined by the usual season but by the early frost or cold January.

Jesus Christ was the greatest exception who ever appeared. The Son of God came to the world in the person of a carpenter of Galilee. His influence was so great that history is divided into two periods: Before Christ and the Years of Our Lord (Anno Domini). The lives of many men have been turned around entirely by meeting or learning of the Christ.

And the miracles of Jesus and other Biblical characters are exceptions to the ordinary acts of God. To

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persons in our day they are either problems or signs of authority. If one assumes that only average occurrences are real, a miracle is a problem; if he believes God rules the world it is a confirmation of his belief in God.

The scientific method is a high ideal, in fact too high for many persons to follow consistently. But since it casts doubt upon single occurrences and insists upon repetition for proof, although this often is impossible, we must recognize values other than science. When a teacher starts a course in science he sometimes states that the course will not involve study of the whole, but only a part, of reality.[4]

The available facts, when observed without prejudice, fit the world view of administration by a personal God rather than the working of cold and immutable laws.

Yet persons who believe in "general evolution" from molecules to man hold their article of faith above any other world view. This preconceived idea, that living things *had to arise and develop gradually,* is the chief reason people believe in evolution. If certain observed facts do not fit this belief they are held to be accidental and contingent. But if scientists observe facts carefully and without prejudice, then the preferable world view of creation followed by diversity and degeneration may be comprehended.

References

[1]Cooper, Lane. Louis Agassiz as a teacher. Comstock Publishing Co., Ithaca, N. Y., p. 48.
[2]This consensus was reached following the exhaustive experiments of Louis Pasteur of France. Many others, however, had made similar proof. Now there are evolutionists who try to prove the opposite but have not done so.
[3]Snyder, L.M., and P. R. David 1957. Principles of heredity. Heath, p. 223 f.
[4]The present author has made such a statement.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST SYMMETRY AND DESIGN FROM CHANCE EVENTS

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The theory of evolution, whether in Darwin's original form or in the modern form since the introduction of mutations, amounts, in the final analysis, to saying that the forms of all of the living creatures in the world have come about by chance. The obvious objection is that, in cases in which scientists can follow what is happening, intricate designs do not come about by chance. The author emphasizes this point by reference to the sand paintings made by some tribes of Indians. It might be claimed that, if sand of different colors were mixed and scattered at random, a painting might result. But nobody in his right mind would wait for such a thing to happen. Since living creatures are more intricate than any sand painting, how much less could they have come about by chance?

Introduction

The lesson of the ages is that lasting institutions must be based upon truth; to state the matter negatively, human institutions cannot be based upon lies, misconceptions, ignorance, or superstitions, nor upon only fragments of truth. But the discovery of truth is most difficult: man's senses are limited, memories are weak and deceptive, intellectual powers are frail, the world is vast and enormously complex, and lives are short. Men are often mistaken.

The child has much to learn and little time for learning before he becomes an adult. From a few hasty observations, he makes vast generalizations, which, though they often contain serious errors, yet become habits of thought. He may not find the errors during his lifetime, but still he communicates his generalizations to the generations of the future.

As a result traditional knowledge is a mixture of truth and error, and often it is most difficult to distinguish between the two. Often error is mistaken for truth with disastrous consequences. And while men search for past errors, they sometimes add more errors for the generations of the future to correct.

The present generation has inherited from the past the Darwinian theory of evolution, which appears very convincing when judged superficially, but which may be shown to be hopelessly contradictory in the light of well-established facts and principles.

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In this article, I develop an argument based upon sand paintings which shows that designs cannot be produced by chance.

The Origin of Darwinism

Let us consider a bit of history: when he was a young man, Charles Darwin, being greatly impressed by changes in plants and animals which breeders had produced by selection, tried to extend the principle of selection, conceived as a purely mechanical process, as an adequate explanation for the origin of species in natural environments. He had no adequate explanation for the causes of variations in organisms.

Darwin failed to realize that the superior organism must somehow be produced before it can be obtained by selection, whether natural or artificial. His followers recognized this defect in his thinking, and after their discovery of sudden variations, which they called mutations, they claimed that such changes were caused by chance. It did not occur to them that the odds against producing designs by changes at random are so exceedingly great, that evolution, if it exists, cannot be explained in this way.

Why did Darwin try to develop a mechanical theory? Sir Isaac Newton had discovered laws of mechanics; and his followers tried with great success to extend his basic ideas of quantitative descriptions to other things. Reckless generalization gave the idea that the universe is a mechanism, and Darwin, like many others, accepted this.

A scientific theory, of course, should be judged critically, and not according to the education of the