

For some time I have wanted to say something about *True Christian Religion* no. 109, especially the following lines:

After the Lord came into the world the representations vanished [which had been among the ancients]; the interior reason of which was, that the Lord in the world put on also the Divine Natural, and from this He enlightens not only the internal spiritual man but also the external natural; and unless the two are enlightened at the same time, the man is as in shade; but while both are enlightened at the same time, he is as in daylight (TCR 109:2).

The point before us, therefore, is that both our internal spiritual man and our external natural man can be enlightened simultaneously, and this in the same light, namely, that which goes forth from the Lord's Divine Natural.

In order to perceive the power of this teaching, and see its extraordinary promise for the future, we need to stay a little with each individual aspect of it. We need to reflect on the difference between, on the one hand, living in representations and thinking from them, and on the other hand, living and thinking without them; we need to ask just what is the Divine Natural, also just how it enlightens; and we need to draw a clear distinction between the internal spiritual and the external natural man. Having done this we can look a little at the challenge involved to the Church in today's world of rapidly expanding science.

What our generation is facing, is on the one hand a Divine invitation to enter intellectually into the secrets of faith, and on the other, I am sure, an equally Divine invitation to enter intellectually into the secrets of nature. This spells out a very clear need for theologians and scientists to work

*An address delivered to the General Faculty of New Church schools at the Academy of the New Church, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, on February 9, 1989.

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closely together, and in thought to visit each other's domain. But, even more importantly, it calls for individuals, each in his own way, to open their minds to truths on both levels, yet bearing in mind that alertness should not be just for the sake of alertness, or looking for the sake of looking; for the richer, and especially the deeper, is our knowledge and perception, the fuller and the more penetrating can be our use to our neighbor. After all, the neighbor is mind even more than body. And now let us take a brief look at each of the above aspects.

Representations

Representations are either harmonious or not harmonious. I call them that so as to fit the following teaching: "When the things of the internal man are effigied in the external man, then the things that appear in the external man are representative of the internal man; and the things that agree [*concordant*] are correspondences" (AC 2989). So with man. Similarly with regard to the spiritual and natural worlds on the larger scale: "The things that flow in from the spiritual world and are presented in the natural world, are in general representations; and in so far as they agree [*conveniunt*] they are correspondences" (AC 2990). They agree, or they do not agree; therefore are harmonious or not harmonious. And we note that harmonious representations are at the same time correspondences.

Harmonious representations have never been abrogated, nor will they ever be. A friendly smile produced by a genuine affection is a true and harmonious representation, and is also a correspondence; while an affected smile that is put on by a cold or adverse affection, is also a representation, but not a harmonious one (it represents a good affection generally, but not that person's affection), nor is such a smile a correspondence. In a similar way, bending the knees at church may be a harmonious or not harmonious representation.

In the Most Ancient and Ancient Churches representations were, generally speaking, harmonious, for there was genuine love to the Lord and charity there. Even so, some such representations were somewhat remote, like worshipping on a high place or in groves. But the dispensation that followed, namely, the Jewish Church, did not know Jehovah and lost sight of charity; therefore the harmony between the external and

the internal vanished, and that Church could be no more than a representative of a Church. (A.C. 7043 *et seq.*) Its animal sacrifices, ceremonial washings, etc., were not harmonious representations. It was such representations that came to an end through the Lord's work and word while in the world. What began in His time is to continue and be fulfilled through His second advent. At His first advent, however, He could scarcely open more than the middle natural degree in people, bordering on the internal rational, but not truly within it. A giant step was nevertheless taken when Christians—those of the new dispensation—could know that hatred was the essence of murder and illicit lust the essence of adultery; also that bent knees and folded hands were not acceptable representations, if at the same time an offended brother was waiting for an act or word to make good the offense (Matt. 5:22, 24, 28). The Lord abrogated external representations that were not harmonious, and these only.

But all this is to come to its real fulfillment in the New Church; for in this Church "there will be no external separate from the internal (AR 918). The mind of man is to be undivided, and the Lord in His Divine Human will be there. He will be worshipped thus. There will be temples of stone as well; but no temples in which the forms of worship are not harmonious representatives. "And I saw no temple in the [Holy Jerusalem, that great city], for the temple of it is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb" (Rev. 21: 22).

This in regard to the human mind. But what of the whole natural world and all the secrets it holds? There too there are representations that are totally harmonious with an inner plane, the spiritual world. Isn't there to be real fulfillment in that area as well? To repeat: "The things that flow in from the spiritual world and are presented in the natural world, are in general representations" (AC 2990).

But more than the world: the whole universe also! Does not the whole sky, all of nature, beckon the New Church—and first the New Church scientist—to assemble the secrets of nature, what is known of them, and with them as an aid to the eye look for and discover the presence of the Divine Natural out there and everywhere: the omnipresence of God-Man? I think we find this challenge in the Writings themselves, couched in these words: "The universe with all its constellations, atmospheres, and three kingdoms, is nothing else than a kind of theater representative of

the Lord's glory in the heavens" (AC 3000). So when the Writings say that representations vanished by the coming of the Lord, they have reference to those of the representative churches only, and especially to those of the most recent of the pre-advent Churches, which was not even a real Church at all (see AC 7043). They do not in that context speak of the genuine and harmonious representations which are inherent in all creation, and which one and all are nothing but living correspondences. In another context, therefore, they declare that the whole universe is representative of the glory of the Lord: it is "a kind of theater" that re-presents it. "The heavens are telling the glory of God. . . ."

So to sum up: We are to think apart from representations that are not harmonious, but not apart from those that are.

And now we ask: What is the Lord's Divine Natural, and how is there enlightenment out of it?

The Divine Natural

With regard to this subject we have the following statement in an earlier part of our number (TCR 109): "The Lord before His coming into the world was indeed present with the men of the church, but mediately through angels who represented Him; but since His coming He is present with the men of the church immediately; for in the world He put on also the Divine Natural, in which He is present with men. The glorification of the Lord is the glorification of the Human which He assumed in the world, and the glorified Human of the Lord is the Divine Natural." Our first point, therefore, is that the Lord is present immediately by means of His Divine Natural.

There are terms other than the "Divine Natural" that apply to the Lord, namely, the terms the "Divine Celestial" and the "Divine Spiritual."

The following teachings will introduce us to the underlying concepts here.

The Divine Celestial and the Divine Spiritual are such in respect to those who receive the Divine of the Lord, for the Lord appears to everyone according to the nature of him who receives (AC 3235:2).

Consequently the Divine in the one heaven is called the "Divine Celestial," and the Divine in the other heaven the "Divine Spiritual" (AC 8827).

There are in the Lord, and therefore from the Lord, the Divine Celestial, the Divine Spiritual, and the Divine Natural. . . . Since these three are in the Lord, therefore they are also in the angelic heaven. The third or supreme heaven is in the Divine Celestial; the second or middle heaven in the Divine Spiritual; and the first or ultimate heaven in the Divine Natural (AR 49).

From the Lord proceed the Divine Celestial, the Divine Spiritual, and the Divine Natural, one after another. That is called the Divine Celestial which proceeds from His Divine love, and all this is good; that is called the Divine Spiritual which proceeds from His Divine wisdom, and all this is truth. The Divine Natural is from both, and is their complex in the ultimate. (TCR 195)

In addition to the point already stated (that the Lord is immediately present by means of His Divine Natural) it now becomes further clear (1) that the immediate presence of the Lord by means of His Divine Natural is in reference to men in the world ("... in the world He put on also the Divine Natural, in which He is present with men"), and (2) that the attributes ascribed to the Lord take on their names from the human planes where He is received. It is a case of Divine accommodation. The Lord is ever the same; He does not change. But in mercy He adapts His presence with angels and men according to the ability of each to receive and comprehend.

It is obvious to every thinking person that the Lord can never be seen or comprehended such as He is in Himself. The finite cannot rise to the level of the infinite, any more than an animal can rise to the level of the human mind. Therefore the Lord can reveal Himself only through finite means. Yet it is important to realize that the Divine never proceeds *from* anything finite, but only *by means* of it. What shines forth is not the finite, but the Divine tempered and adapted by means of it. We can, so to speak, visualize this whole principle by holding in mind how the Lord presents Himself to view in angelic societies as a Person (which, we are told, He does "often" HH 121). And we read: "When the Lord appears in any society, He appears there as an Angel, but He is distinguished from others by the Divine which shines through" (HH 55; see the whole number).

It is so with all Divine revelation: He reveals by means of what is finite, but it is His Divine that shines through.

For a further understanding of this concept, let us listen to the following: [Referring to societies where they "believe that if they look to the Infinite, and worship a hidden God, they can be in love to Him"] "when yet they are not so, unless by some idea they make that Infinite finite, or present the hidden God as visible within themselves by finite intellectual ideas" (AC 4075:3).

It is the same in the case of the Word, in all its three forms. The language there, though very different in one form from another, is obviously finite, while the Divine truth that shines forth to the humble in heart, is not. Again it is the same as with the body the Lord took on by means of Mary, the mother. The words that He spoke over the lips of that body were Aramaic, but the truths conveyed through those words were Divine truths, adapted to the comprehension of the remnant from the Jewish Church who became the firstborn of the Christian Church. In fact, His very face may help us understand the case. There were many who looked into that face, and did not at all see God. The muscles, the skin, the hair on His head, were from the mother; but what shone forth through His eyes was from the Divine within Him. After Peter's denial "the Lord turned, and looked upon him," and that look pierced Peter's soul (Luke 22:61).

What then is the Divine Natural? It is the Divine shining forth by means of natural things. And we may ask: What natural things? Well, we may see the Divine of the Lord in the same way that we see the mind of our fellow man: through words and deeds. The Lord's words are those He spoke in the world, and those He caused to be written prior to His advent, and then twice after it. And His deeds? In general, His deeds are His works of creating. He creates new minds, regenerate minds, and He creates human bodies; but also He creates the whole world and the whole universe. His creation of minds is what is called "the Divine Providence," and this we can see to some extent in retrospect. So we may say that we see the Lord's Divine Natural through His Word and through His spiritual and natural creation. And it is the Divine that shines through that gives us the light.

The Distinction Between the Internal Spiritual and the External Natural Man.

These two degrees of the mind are the degrees that can now be

enlightened simultaneously and by the same light. This is possible because of the Writings. It is not possible without them. True, there was a beginning of an opening up of the rational through the Lord's first advent. He asked His disciples: "Have ye understood all these things?" And they answered, "Yea, Lord" (Matt. 13:51). But darkness soon enveloped the newborn church; and even so, the light there was, was only like light as through a mist. He had, as He said, many more things to say, "but ye cannot bear them now" (John 16:12). Our number, at the very beginning, notes this limitation in a striking statement: "But after the coming of the Lord into the world, a church was instituted by Him which saw, *or rather was able to see*, Divine truths in light" (TCR 109). It is therefore for the New Church to see.

But we must bear in mind that reading and remembering is not the same as seeing. The light is not *from* the words, but *through* them. Take this warning: "When the things of heaven are made to serve the natural mind as means to its own ends, then those means, though they seem to be heavenly, are made natural; for the end qualifies them, and they become like the scientifics of the natural man, in which interiorly there is nothing of life" (DLW 261).

There is, therefore, a natural light apart from the spiritual. That is not sufficient for enlightenment. In a merely natural light we may know—in fact, amass—a whole world of knowledge, yet without understanding. No one can understand in the light of the natural sun alone. There are two suns. The light from the natural sun shows us natural objects, including statements of Divine Revelation. That light we have in common with animals (except that animals cannot read). But spiritual light is peculiar to man. A regenerate person and an angel has it permanently; but happily even an unregenerate person can have it temporarily, for in certain states his understanding can be raised above his will. This intellectual elevation, if any, is into the fifth degree of the descent of truth Divine from the Lord, out of the sun of heaven, and on its way down to men on earth. That fifth degree is light such as it is in the first or outmost heaven; and we read: "This degree can be perceived temporarily [*aliquantisper*] by man, provided he is enlightened" (AC 8443).

Real understanding requires *ratio*—the rational. In the early days of his spiritual development a person becomes aware of waters above the expanse, and also waters below it—values, truths, that belong to heaven

and the spiritual man (called "cognitions of faith" in *Arcana Coelestia* 8), and, underneath these, values that relate to the body and the world. There is your ratio. How will we sort out the priorities? If we prefer the waters below, then we shall never have more than knowledge, however much and however learned we may seem in the eyes of an earthbound world.

There are three primary questions that bear upon the true intellect of man. They are Why? How? and What? These relate as celestial-spiritual-natural; or end-cause-effect; or, to put the terms a little closer to us, purpose-mode-result.

"What?" is the most elementary and the easiest to deal with; but at the same time it is the most important, because it embraces in itself the whole trilogy. Yet if allowed to stand divorced from the two superior questions, it also and thereby allows itself to be divorced from the essential human in man—that which distinguishes him from animals. The "how?" question was at one time not important, and to some minds, as in the so-called "third world," it may not be very important in our day; for if there is a perception of the "why?"—the Divine purpose—then there can still be a humble worship of a Supreme Being. In the Most Ancient Church there would have been no awareness of the mode by which things happened, nor any interest in it. Its people were of a celestial genius. It was enough to know that the Maker of all things, the Father of all, was there to care and provide. This implies that one of the superior questions is in itself more weighty than the other, and that the celestial—love to God—can make common cause with the natural—the plane of action—without a deliberate attention being paid to the spiritual intermediary.

This, however, is not to deny some groping in past ages towards an understanding of the "how?" of creation. Perhaps the question was timidly introduced with the beginning of the Ancient Church, that is, when the Lord provided the spiritual genius by which to reach His children. This was after the Fall. Be that as it may, a new era began when the Maker of all came into the world and began to make Himself visible to the natural mind of man. Yet the real thirst for understanding the "how?" came at the time of the Enlightenment, and it was then that the Lord Himself issued His invitation to all to "enter intellectually into the arcana of faith," that is, to see the glory of His Divine Natural.

For this to happen all three questions must come together. It is true that you can labor diligently and up to a point successfully with the mode

by which things happen, without the "why?"—the "purpose" question. But in that case the "how?" ceases to be a spiritual question. It is like looking for a gem in the rocks for the sake of its commercial value, and not for the sake of its beauty. You can delve into the "how?"—and believe that nature does it.

If so, you do not really *understand* anything. If someone receives the gift of a chocolate box, and is pleased with it, but pays no attention to the love of the giver, can he really be said to understand the gift? We should distinguish between observing and understanding.

The Divine Natural, God visible, introduces us into the whole area of all the three questions. His Natural—if we allow this to happen—enlightens the whole natural mind, and that includes the rational. If this rational receives heavenly influx into itself, then it becomes that "internal spiritual mind" which allows the Divine Natural to operate both within it and within the "external natural mind" below it. That creates the state in which the whole man can be said to be enlightened. He is joyously grateful for the one pervading purpose in all things created—a heaven built up from mankind; he marvels over the mode by which purpose takes form; and he is awestruck when he catches on to the idea that all of it is a gift to him: that he is invited not only to "replenish the earth," but also to "subdue it!" So hearing the "why," he says: "I know"; and contemplating the "how," he stammers: "It is wonderful"; and when the "what" comes to his mind, he thinks: "Is it really possible that I am made responsible for all of that?"

The Challenge by and to Modern Science

The arcana of nature are now being opened up in a way never imagined even a generation ago.

Recently I came across a five-part series of articles in *The Christian Science Monitor*, written by staff correspondent Rushworth M. Kidder and entitled "The Quantum Leap."¹ It discussed the sub-nuclear and sub-electronic activities [particles?] now being explored by physicists. The articles are challenging and humiliating. But then, when you reflect on how little you really know about the phenomena that produce the reality around us, you are comforted that even the explorers themselves

¹ Quotations from this series are from reprints of the articles, provided by the

board the same boat. Says John Bell of the European Laboratory for Particle Physics (CERN) in Geneva: "Somehow we have come to the end of the human capacity to form sharp pictures of what is going on, and more and more we will have to rely on recipes we don't understand" (Kidder, Pt. 5, p. 18). And Samuel Schweber, historian of science at the Brandeis University, adds: "[Quantum mechanics is bringing about] a deep revolution. It is so deep that—in some sense, in having affected so many different areas of thought and of intellectual life—we really have not assessed as yet the full impact of it." (Kidder, *ibid.*)

After "activities" in the above paragraph I put in brackets "particles?." That is because scientists are not sure whether the forces inside matter are mere forms of energy or are also particles. The old Berkeleyan philosophy of idealism pops up again, but at least John Ellis of CERN asserts that "nobody's saying there's not a world out there" (Kidder, *ibid.*). But certainly a question to ponder is: What is matter? Or specifically: How is matter produced by non-matter?

It is fascinating. And not less so, when you observe that the reality you are looking at changes because you look at it. So, welcome to an "observer's world." The idea is the same as that you can never measure the exact temperature of a liquid (or any substance), because as soon as you stick a thermometer into it, its temperature changes.

So, are the fundamental particles more like waves than particles? "The tricky thing is that they're fundamental building blocks, but you can't isolate them," complains cosmologist Kolb. If these "building blocks" are waves, how can you hold a wave in your hand? Is all that we call "matter" really just fields? A "field," explains Kidder, is "technically defined as the region or space through which a wave pattern operates." So one can understand why one of the men "in the field," theoretical physicist Freeman Dyson of Princeton, New Jersey, says: "When I think of matter, I like to think mostly of fields." Are we therefore walking around on fields rather than on particles? Dyson goes even one step further: "We *are* fields rather than particles" (Kidder, Pt. 5, p. 3).

Many many more things stir up and titillate the mind. Apparently three major concepts have emerged that draw special attention to themselves: randomness, thinglessness, and interconnectedness.

Can subatomic particles—or waves—be said to act in a predictable way? In old, classical physics everything functioned according to strict laws, and outcomes could be predicted. But now? Enter "randomness." Kidder puts these questions to the reader: "Why does a particle suddenly break loose from an atom in radioactive decay? Why does an electron suddenly show up on the other side of an impenetrable energy barrier in a semiconductor?" (Kidder, Pt. 3) Fascinating. And what would a New Churchman say? Perhaps that the Maker may reserve the right for Himself to operate His universe according to laws not yet discovered—laws that cover areas far apart from each other in space, but which nevertheless interact within His harmony of order. Einstein lived to meet the new concept, but he still believed the "Old One" was in command. We applaud his comment that he would rather be "an employee in a gambling casino" (*ibid.*, p. 12) than a physicist, if causation were simply a matter of chance. And he went on to say: "The theory accomplishes a lot, but it does not bring us closer to the secrets of the Old One. In any case, I am convinced that He does not play dice." (*Ibid.*)

The idea of thinglessness touches on the problem I referred to earlier, the problem as to whether in the subatomic world we are concerned with particles or "waves" ("fields"). The idea is not new of course; we have met the concept of energy prior to matter before. But now ideas like this are thrown at us: "What is new is the acceptance of the creation and annihilation of particles—the idea that collisions between particles produce entirely new particles, which then almost instantly disappear." (Kidder summarizing Samuel Schweber of Brandeis University.) And certainly, matter is not self-originating. Certainly, spiritual atmospheres, in the descending order of creation, are prior to matter—and the Divine itself, the Infinite Esse, prior to them and prior to the "radiant belts" that surround the Sun of Heaven which proceeds from the Lord our Maker (see AC 7270, 8443).

But what perhaps fascinated me the most in the above trilogy of concepts, is the idea of interconnectedness, namely, the interconnectedness of things without regard to any space that may claim existence between them. Writes Kidder: "What quantum mechanics points to is a principle of 'non-locality.' It's as though there were no local boundaries at

all. It's as though simultaneous action could communicate itself instantaneously across entire universes, without regard to what many physicists regard as the speed limit of the universe—the speed of light." (*Ibid.*, p. 12) Instantaneously, across any space, without regard to the speed of light! And John Bell, the CERN physicist who gave his name to the theorem of interconnectedness, gives us this: "Non-locality means that we *cannot discuss the different parts of space independently*. Yet we cannot get hold of whatever connection there is between the two different regions of space." (*Ibid.*; italics mine)

What does this mean to the New Church? Perhaps this: that modern searchers into the micro-world (macro too), without saying so, are beginning to illustrate to us that the Infinite—or, better, the One who is infinite—is omnipresent in the universe, and that He adapts His influx, i.e. His operation, in one part of His creation—nay, in many parts, in all parts!—to His operation in any and all other parts, so that there is everywhere an interconnectedness. Have we not read that "the Divine, apart from space [that is, without itself being spacial], fills all spaces of the universe"? and that "the Divine is in all time, apart from time"? (DL W 69, 73). This we have known, but the knowledge is deepened and strengthened if we can begin to form ideas of creation's inner structure into which the Divine flows and through which it operates.

And so the New Church smiles gratefully at science and says, "Welcome, friend!" The Church and science have things in common.

What a challenge is before us! The Lord came again. A Last Judgment was enacted in the world of spirits. The heavy clouds were cleared away, so that the rays of heaven's sun could pierce through. The Age of Enlightenment was ushered in. And on earth the Word was opened up. All were invited "to enter in with the understanding." Did the Lord have in mind that this would apply to the opening up of nature too? Oh yes, because it is His pleasure "to enlighten not only the internal spiritual man but also the external natural." After all, the laws of nature, equally with the laws of the spirit, are His. So when we piously speak of the "omnipresence of God," we might perhaps begin to understand a little better what we are talking about. The Divine Natural has been revealed, and is there: it is in nature, in creation, as well as in His written threefold revelation.

Omnipresent, and through omnipresence omniscient, and through omnipresence and omniscience, omnipotent.

We deplore the state of the Christian world. We know it is "the night itself in which the former churches have come to an end" (TCR 760 ff). But wait; there is something positive too happening in this night. The Lord knew it long ago. Out of Seir He called: "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" And the watchman said, "The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come!" (Is. 21:11,12) The night will linger, but the daybreak is near.

The Divine Natural is the Lord visible, our God visible. And if He can be seen, reflected *everywhere*, then He can also be worshipped in a new way, followed, obeyed, in a new way. He is calling people "friends," or rather, people are being called to become "friends." "All things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:15).

Get in there, into the secrets of both worlds, and then cooperate. That is how the New Church will truly "worship one visible God, in Whom is the invisible God as the soul is in the body." And that is how it may become—will gradually grow into—"the crown of all the Churches that have hitherto been on the earth" (TCR 787).

Two suns, not just one. Let men and women, whatever their station, look in the light of the one, and understand *both worlds* in the light of the other. In other words: Gather the secrets of nature and those of faith, and, reflected in these, see the glory of the Lord "in His Divine Natural, in which He is present with men" (TCR 109).■