

Scripture, Gen. ii, 4—where it is said: "These are the generations of the heaven and the earth, when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the heaven and the earth, and every plant of the field, *before it sprung up* in the earth, and every herb of the ground *before it grew.*"

"From this passage," continues the Angelic Doctor, "two things are elicited: First, that all the works of the six days were created in the day that God made the heaven and earth and every plant of the field; and, accordingly, that plants, which are said to have been created on the third day, were produced at the same time that God created the heaven and the earth. Secondly, that plants were then produced, not in act, but according to causal virtues only; in that the power of producing them was given the earth—*fuere productæ non in actu, sed secundum rationes causales tantum, quia data fuit virtus terræ producendi illas.* This is meant, when it is said that it produced every plant of the field *before it actually sprang up in the earth* by the work of administration, and every herb of the earth *before it actually grew.* Prior, therefore, to their actually rising over the earth, they were made causally in the earth—*Ante ergo quam actu orirentur super terram, facta sunt causaliter in terra.* This view is likewise confirmed by reason. For in those first days God created the creature either in its cause or in its origin, or in act, in the work from which He afterwards rested. Nevertheless, He subsequently, until now, works according to the administration of created things by the work of propagation. But to

produce plants in act out of the earth, belongs to the work of propagation; because it suffices for their production that they have the power of the heavenly bodies, as it were, for their father, and the efficacy of the earth in place of a mother. Therefore, plants were not actually produced on the third day, but only causally.¹ After the six days, however, they were actually produced according to their proper species, and in their proper nature by the work of administration." "In like manner fishes, birds and animals were produced in those six days causally and not actually—*Similiter pisces, aves et animalia in illis sex diebus causaliter, et non actualiter producta sunt.*"²

Such, then, is the teaching of the illustrious bishop of Hippo and of the Angel of the Schools, respecting creation and the genesis of the material universe. To the striking passages just quoted, I can do nothing better than add Father Harper's beautiful and eloquent commentary as found in his splendid work, "The Metaphysics of the School."

"In the creation," declares the learned Jesuit, "represented by Moses in the manner best suited to the intellectual calibre of the chosen people, under the figure of six days—as St. Thomas, quoting from St. Augustine, remarks—the elements alone, among earthly things, were actually produced by the creative act; but simultaneously, in the primordial mat-

¹It will be noted that a portion of this extract from "De Potentia," is verbally identical with a part of what is found in the preceding quotation from the "Summa."

²"Pot." q. iv, a 2, 28 m.

ter thus actuated by the elemental forms, a virtue was implanted, dispositive towards all the material forms conditionally necessary to the perfection of the earthly universe. But it was an ordered potentiality; so that in the after Evolution of the substantial forms, the lower should precede the higher; and that these latter should presuppose and virtually absorb the former. Thus were the figurative six days completed with the sowing of the seed of the future cosmos. There ensued thereupon a Sabbath of rest. The fresh, elemental world was sown with the germs of future beauty in diverse forms of life, in diversity of species, and possibly, varieties under the same species. But these, as yet, lay hidden in the womb of nature. No earthly substance existed in act save the simple bodies; primordial matter under its first and lowest forms. Such was the earthly creation when the first Sabbath closed in upon it. After this Sabbath followed the order of Divine administration, wherein, as it continues to the present hour, the Divine Wisdom and Omnipotence superintended the natural Evolution of visible things, according to a constant order of His own appointing, amid ceaseless cycles of alternate corruptions and generations.

"Compound inanimate substances were first evolved by means of the seminal forces bestowed on nature. Then, from the bosom of these compounds sprang into being the green life of herb, plant and tree, gradually unfolding into higher and more complex forms of loveliness as the ages rolled on, according to the virtual order imprinted at first upon the

obedient matter. Thence onward marched the grand procession of life, marking epochs as it went along, till it culminated in man, the paragon of God's visible universe."

The Divine Administration.

But what, it may be inquired, does St. Thomas mean by the work of Divine administration? This phrase has been frequently employed, and it is of sufficient importance to demand an explanation.

No creature, as theology teaches, is competent to elicit a single act, even the smallest and most insignificant, without the coöperation of God. We cannot raise a foot, or move a finger, without Divine assistance. This is included in Divine administration, but it is far from being all that is so included. Over and above this the Divine administration embraces the order, or laws, by which the world is governed. It embraces, too, the Evolution of living

¹"The Metaphysics of the School," vol. II, p. 741.

For one who wishes to master the doctrines and methods of Scholasticism, there is no work in English—if, indeed, there is in any language—that can be studied with more profit than this thorough and exhaustive treatise of Father Harper's. No one should attempt to discuss the teachings of the Schoolmen respecting derivative creation, who has not mastered Appendix A, in vol. II, on The Teaching of St. Thomas Touching the Genesis of the Material Universe, and the appendix in vol. III, part I, on The Teaching of the Angelic Doctor Touching the Efficient Causes of the Generation of Living Bodies in Its Bearings on Modern Physical Discoveries. Both these appendices are veritable magazines of fact and argumentation that cannot be duplicated elsewhere. I am indebted to the distinguished author, not only for the translation of many of the preceding quotations from the Angelic Doctor, but also for many valuable suggestions regarding the manner of treatment of theistic Evolution from the standpoint of patristic and scholastic philosophy.

things, without parentage, out of the potentiality of matter, or, what amounts to the same thing, it includes the proximate disposition of matter for the Evolution of organic from inorganic matter, and the higher from the lower forms of life. God, consequently, "must have been the sole efficient Cause of the organization requisite, and, therefore, in the strictest sense, He is said to have *formed* such living things, and, in particular, the human body, out of pre-existent matter."

In the teachings of St. Augustine and St. Thomas respecting the creation and Evolution of the sum of all things, there is nothing uncertain, equivocal or vacillating. True to the declaration of the Inspired Record, and true to the faith of the Church from the earliest ages of her history, they teach that in the beginning God created all things, visible and invisible, and that He still continues to protect and govern by His Providence all things which He hath made, "reaching from end to end mightily, and ordering all things sweetly."¹ They tell us, not only that the Creator is "Lord of Heaven and earth, Almighty, Eternal, Immense, Incomprehensible, Infinite in intelligence, in will and in all perfections," not only that He is "absolutely simple and immutable spiritual substance, really and essentially distinct from the world," but also that he is omnipresent, omniscient; that for Him there is no past nor future; that all is present, and that "all things are bare and open to His eyes."²

¹ Wisdom, viii, 1.

² Heb. iv, 13.

According to the Fathers and the Schoolmen, therefore, as well as according to Catholic Dogma, God is the First Cause; finite beings are but secondary causes. God is the Primary Cause—*Causa Causarum*; while all finite causes are merely instrumental. God is preëminently the integral and efficient Cause of all things, for He, preëminently, is the Cause "whence," to use the words of Aristotle, "is the first beginning of change or of rest."

In the language of the Scholastics, He is the Form of forms; Absolute Form because Absolute Act. He is the Principiant of principiants, the first Beginning—*Ἀρχή*, *Principium*—of all that exists or can exist.

Efficient Causality of Creatures.

But God, although the true, efficient Cause of all things, has willed, in order to manifest more clearly His wisdom and power and love, to receive the coöperation of His creatures, and to confer on them, as St. Thomas puts it, "the dignity of causality—*dignitatem causandi conferre voluit*." It is not, however, as the Angelic Doctor declares, "from any indigence in God that He wants other causes for the act of production." He does not require the coöperation of secondary causes because He is unable to dispense with their aid. He is none the less omnipotent because He has chosen to act in conjunction with works of His own hand, for it is manifest that He who has created the causes, is able to produce the effects which proceed from such causes.

I have said that the efficient causality of creatures serves to disclose the wisdom and power and love of the Creator. It is true, but here again I shall quote from the eloquent and profound Father Harper, who so beautifully sums up all that may be said on the subject, that I need make no apology for quoting him in full.

The efficient causality of the creature serves to manifest God's wisdom, "for there is greater elaboration of design. To plan out a universe of finite entities, differing in essence and in grades of perfection, is doubtless a work of superhuman wisdom; but to include in the design the further idea, of conferring on these entities a complex variety of forces, qualities, active and passive, faculties by virtue of which nature should ever grow out of itself and develop from lower to higher forms of existence, and should multiply along definite lines of being; to conceive a world whose constituents should ceaselessly energize on one another, yet without confusion and in an admirable order; to allow to the creature its own proper causality, and yet, even spite of the manifold action of free will in a countless multiplicity of immortal intelligences, to elaborate a perfect unity; surely this is an incalculably higher manifestation of wisdom. It serves to manifest the power of the Creator; for every cause is proportioned to the effect. But the completion of a design such as has been described, is a more noble effect than if every production of natural operation were the result of immediate creation. The manufacture of a watch is a noble work of art; but if a watch should be made capable of

constructing other watches in succession, and of winding up, regulating, cleaning, repairing its offspring, there is no one who would not be free to admit, that the inventor would possess a virtue of operation incomparably superior to his fellow-men. It serves to manifest the love and goodness of the Creator; since the Divine communication is more complete. Love shows itself in the desire of communicating its own perfection to the object of love; it is essentially self-diffusive. By bestowing on the creature existence which is a likeness to His own existence, the Creator communicates of His own, so to say, to the object of His charity; but by bestowing likewise an intrinsic activity proportioned in each case to the exigencies of the particular nature, he completes the similitude. By this consummation of the creature He causes it to partake, in its own proper measure, of the diffusiveness of His goodness. There is nothing of solitariness in nature. By the very constitution of things, being is impelled to impart to being of its own perfection. Not only does the substantial form bestow upon the matter a specific determination, and the matter sustain the form in being; not only does accident give its complement of perfection to substance, and substance give and preserve the being of accident; not only does part conspire with part towards the completeness of the whole, and the whole delight in the welfare of each part; but substance generates substance, accident, in its way, accident, and the whole visible universe is knit together in the solidarity of a common need and of mutual support. Passing upwards, the orders of

spiritual being, both those that are included in the visible creation and those which are pure intelligences, bear in the activity of their will, which acts upon all that is around it, a yet nearer resemblance to the charity of the Creator. Assuredly, then, the causal activity of finite being is not superfluous; even though God can, by His sole omnipotence, do all that is effected by His creature."¹

Such then, is the theistic conception of Evolution; such the Catholic idea as developed and taught by the Church's most eminent saints and Doctors. It were easy to add the testimony of other philosophers and theologians; but this is not necessary. It is not my purpose to write a treatise on the subject, but merely to indicate by the declarations of a few accredited witnesses, to show from the teachings of those "whose praise is in all the churches," that there is nothing in Evolution, properly understood, which is antagonistic either to revelation or Dogma; that, on the contrary, far from being opposed to faith, Evolution, as taught by St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, is the most reasonable view, and the one most in harmony with the explicit declarations of the Genesiac narrative of creation. This the Angelic Doctor admits in so many words. God could, indeed, have created all things directly; He could have dispensed with the coöperation of secondary causes; He could have remained in all things the sole immediate efficient Cause, but in His infinite wisdom He chose to order otherwise.

¹ "Metaphysics of the School," vol. III, part I, pp. 26 and 28.

Occasionalism.

The Evolution, however, of Augustine and Aquinas, I must here remark, excludes the Occasionalism of Geulincx and Malebranche as much as it does the specific creation of the older philosophers. In the opinion of the Cartesians, just mentioned, there are no second causes; God is the sole Cause in the universe. The operations of nature, far from being the result of second causes, as the Angelic Doctor teaches, are due "exclusively to the action of God, who takes occasion of the due presence of what we should call secondary causes, with the subjects of operation, to produce, Himself, all natural effects;" Who, for instance, "takes an act of the will as the occasion of producing a corresponding movement of the body, and a state of the body as the occasion of producing a corresponding mental state." According to the doctrine of occasional causes, "body and mind are like two clocks which act together, because at each instant they are adjusted by God." Not only is God the cause of the concomitance of bodily and mental facts; He is the cause of their existence, their sequence and their coëxistence as well. The efficient causality is eliminated entirely from the scheme of creation and development, and God acts directly and immediately, not indirectly and mediately, in all the phenomena, and in all the countless and inconceivable minutiae of the universe.¹ The refutation of this opinion

¹ A view similar to, if not identical with Occasionalism, is held by Mr. John Fiske. The doctrine of secondary causes, as above explained, he calls "the lower, or Augustinian Theism,"

has been anticipated in the presentation of the views of St. Thomas and St. Augustine, and their consideration, therefore, need make no further claim on our attention.

Anthropomorphism.

But not only does the theistic Evolution of St. Augustine and the Angelic Doctor exclude special creations and Occasionalism, it dispels as completely all anthropomorphic views of the Deity, and is at the same time thoroughly opposed to the doctrine of constant Divine interference in the operations of nature.

St. Augustine shows how distasteful Anthropomorphism is to him when, among other things, he declares: "To suppose that God formed man from the dust with bodily hands is very childish. . . . God neither formed man with bodily hands nor did He breathe upon him with throat and lips."

We know, indeed, that God created all things from nothing, but we cannot imagine, nay, we cannot conceive, *how* He created. We know that the universe came into existence in virtue of a

as contradistinguished from what he designates "the higher, or Athanasian Theism," which, he will have it, knows nothing of secondary causes in a world where every event flows directly from the eternal First Cause, in a world where God is ever immanent and eternally creative. If Mr. Fiske will take the trouble to study more carefully the teachings of Sts. Athanasius and Augustine, anent the Divine administration of the world, he will find that, however much these two great Doctors may have differed in the expression of their views, they were, nevertheless, at one as to the doctrine of derivative creation, or creation through the agency of secondary causes. For Fiske's opinion on this topic, see his "Idea of God," chap. VII, and Cosmic Theism, in part III of "Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy."

simple Divine fiat, but no human intellect is able to conceive *how* matter and spirit were educed from nothingness into actuality. The very feebleness and limitations of human language and human thought compel us, when speaking of God and His operations, to employ terms that often but faintly adumbrate the magnificent realities of which we can never form an adequate conception. We speak of God as Creator, as giving ear to the prayers of His creatures, as being holy, just, powerful, omniscient, omnipresent, but we do not thereby think of Him as some sort of magnified man, as skeptics are often wont to assert. When we speak of the attributes and perfections of the Deity, we must needs use the same terms as when we speak of corresponding attributes and perfections in man. This, however, does not necessarily imply an anthropomorphic conception of God, and still less does it, as is so often assumed, imply the alternative of a blank and hopeless skepticism.

"God," as a scholarly writer truthfully observes, "contains in Himself all human perfections, but not in the same manner as they exist in man. In man they are limited, dependent, conditioned, imperfect, finite nature. In God they are unlimited, independent, absolute, perfect, infinite nature. In man they can be separated one from the other; in God they are all one and the same, and we can distinguish the Divine attributes after our human fashion, only because their perfect and absolute unity contains virtually in itself an infinite multiplicity. In man they are essentially human; in God they are all

Divine. In man they belong to the lower and created order; in God, to a higher and uncreated order. In man any moral perfection may be present or absent without the essential nature of man being thereby affected; in God, the absence of any perfection would thereby rob Him *ipso facto* of His Deity. Whatever the human attribute can perform, the Divine attribute can do in a far more perfect way, and the most exalted exhibition of human perfection is but a faint shadow of the Divine perfection that gave it birth. The most unbounded charity, mercy, gentleness, compassion, in man, is feeble indeed, and miserable, compared with the charity, mercy, gentleness, compassion of God. The Divine perfection is the ideal of human perfection, its model, its pattern, its origin, its efficient Cause, the source from which it came, the end for which it was created."¹

Divine Interference.

Theistic Evolution, in the sense in which it is advocated by St. Augustine and St. Thomas, excludes also Divine interference, or constant unnecessary interventions on the part of the Deity, as effectually as it does a low and narrow Anthropomorphism. Both these illustrious Doctors declare explicitly, that "in the institution of nature we do not look for miracles, but for the laws of nature."²

¹ *The Month*, Sept., 1882, p. 20.

² Cf. "Gen. ad Lit.," lib. II, cap. I, of St. Augustine and "Sum." I, LXVII, 4 ad 3^m of St. Thomas. The Angelic Doctor's words are: "In prima autem institutione naturæ non quæritur miraculum, sed quid natura rerum habeat." Suarez expresses

Only the crudest conception of derivative creation would demand that the theist should necessarily, if consistent, have recourse to continued creative fiat to explain the multifold phenomena connected with inorganic or organic Evolution. For, as already explained, derivation or secondary creation is not, properly speaking, a supernatural act. It is merely the indirect action of Deity by and through natural causes. The action of God in the order of nature is concurrent and overruling, indeed, but is not miraculous in the sense in which the word "miraculous" is ordinarily understood. He operates by and through the laws which He instituted in the beginning, and which are still maintained by His Providence. Neither the doctrine of the Angel of the Schools nor that of the Bishop of Hippo, requires the perpetual manifestation of miraculous powers, interventions or catastrophes. They do not necessitate the interference with, or the dispensation from, the laws of nature, but admit and defend their existence and their continuous and regular and natural action. Only a misunderstanding of terms, only a gross misapprehension of the meaning of the word "creation," only, in fine, the "unconscious Anthropomorphisms" of the Agnostic and the Monist, would lead one to find anything irreconcilable between the legitimate inductions of science and the certain and explicit declarations of Dogma.

himself to the same effect when he tells us, in his tractate, "De Angelis," lib. I, no. 8, that we must not have recourse to the First Cause when the effects observed can be explained by the operations of secondary causes. "Non est ad Primam Causam recurrendam cum possunt effectus ad causas secundas reduci."