

Darwinism through a Catholic lens

In the end, what, on concrete scrutiny, does a theory of evolution of the organic world, say as Saint Augustine may have imagined it, amount to as compared to what modern evolutionism teaches us: God casting at an opportune time life in the world, along with powers to evolve; and the first organisms multiplying and developing according to the most varied patterns, through a succession of slow transformation during a succession of countless centuries in the midst of ever changing circumstances to which they successfully adapted? At times, what with circumstances becoming unfavourable, some promising lineage will come to an end. But these losses will soon be compensated; and bygone live forms be replaced, in nature's economy by myriads of new beings, often more perfect and better endowed than those that had preceded them. And this not through the intervention of the Divine Artist pressed by the need to mend his masterwork but because there is always enough resource left in the treasure of seminal powers seeded in the world through Divine Wisdom's unique intervention to enable an artistic nature to mend its wreckage by itself.

From all this I suggest we may infer that the more science advances, the louder nature's voice proclaims its Creator's glory. And at the forefront of the the heralds nature has used to make itself heard to the ends of the world, I think it meet to place Charles Darwin, alongside that other Cambridge luminary, Isaac Newton.

But what do we know as compared to what we do not know? Do not scientific advances serve above all to make us feel more keenly how great still is our ignorance and how far we still are from knowing, in their depth and variety the secrets of Divine artistry? And even though we knew all the secrets of nature, even though we had fathomed the wonders of divine wisdom manifested therein, there would always remain between the wisdom revealed through God's works and Divine Wisdom itself the distance that separates what is finite from what is infinite. For God Alone can fathom the depth of his own Wisdom, as indeed God alone is able to pronounce his own name. [...]

Henry de Dorlodot, *Darwinism and Catholic Thought*, Bruxelles, Paris, Vromant & Co., 1921- Vol.1 p152-155 (Translation by the translator of the course)