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**Northwest Review.**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21.

**CURRENT COMMENT.**

**Monsignor  
Ritchot.**

It was a gracious deed and a signal proof of the far-seeing thoughtfulness of our kindly Archbishop to obtain from the Holy Father, on the occasion of His Grace's first visit 'ad limina,' the title of Monsignor for the venerable Father Ritchot, the senior priest of the secular clergy and one who has endeared himself to all Northwestern Catholics by his prudence, firmness and patient charity. Some account of the circumstances under which the dignity of prothonotary apostolic was conferred upon the revered pastor of St. Norbert will be found in another column; but no words can adequately express either the pleasure which this nomination has given to all Monsignor Ritchot's friends or the edifying humility with which he accepted an honor of which he alone deemed himself unworthy.

**Development,  
Not  
Evolution.**

The Rev. Doctor Alexander McDonald, of St. Francis Xavier's College, Antigonish, contributes to the October Catholic World an article entitled "Development, not Evolution," in which he takes Dr. St. George Mivart to task for his recent leader in the Tablet—noticed at the time in the REVIEW. It will be remembered that the great English biologist thought there was something needed to bring home to the popular mind the idea of the development of the Church so beautifully portrayed in the twelfth and thirteenth chapters of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, and so masterfully expounded by Cardinal Newman in his work on 'The Development of Christian Doctrine'; that something, Dr. Mivart was persuaded, is the theory of evolution. "The assumption," says Dr. McDonald, "which underlies the words of the distinguished scientist is, that before the doctrine of evolution became known and widely diffused, it was hard to bring home to the minds of men that the religious society which was cradled in Jerusalem and nurtured in the concealment of the catacombs, is really and essentially the same with that which to-day spreads itself all over the earth, challenging the admiration of the world by reason of the perfectness of its organization, the majesty of its ritual, and the loftiness and consistency of its teachings. But surely this assumption is without warrant. Our Lord himself likens the Church which he established to a grain of mustard-seed, but which, when sown in the ground, grows up and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and dwell in the branches thereof. There is nothing which is borne in with greater force on the minds of even the rudest men than that process of growth and development which is ever going

on within themselves and in all the world around them. And the identity of the living organism throughout all these changes, is it not a thing plain to the senses, and in the case of man attested by his own consciousness? What more apposite illustration, then, of the identity of the Church in all the stages of its development can be found than that which our Lord himself pointed out to us in the ever-present phenomena of the organic world?"

**Evolution  
Not a  
Matter  
Of  
Observation.**

"Shall we be told that an apter means of impressing this great historic fact upon the popular mind is now at hand in the evolutionary hypothesis, that brilliant conjecture of modern science? But the evolutionary process, if such a process there was, went on in the silence of geological epochs, remote from all possibility of man's observation; whereas the process of organic development, along definite lines and within certain fixed limits, is going on daily around us, before the eyes alike of the man of science in his laboratory and the peasant in the field or forest that surrounds his humble home. Who would delve among fossils, or grope in the dim and shadowy domain of the prehistoric past, when there lies open here and now unto all a broad highway to the desired goal, so that even the fool shall not err therein?" Dr. McDonald is quite right and might even have emphasized this point much more vigorously. Not one of the fashionable modern theories is less certain than that 'brilliant conjecture' about evolution. Not only can it never be matter for human observation, but it cannot even be proved by any kind of demonstration. Its only basis is the difficulty of explaining certain rudimentary organs; but a difficulty, occurring as a mere isolated phenomenon amid thousands of explainable phenomena, is no rational foundation for even the flimsiest of systems. Were it not that the common run of contemporary scientists are utterly lacking in philosophical training, such a theory could never have had the vogue this one has secured. One thing only has it proved, that some classes of animals or plants which were formerly considered distinct species are probably mere varieties of one species. But it has not furnished a tittle of satisfactory evidence that many kinds of plants, birds, reptiles, fishes and quadrupeds were not created at the beginning.

**Growth,  
Not  
Transformation.**

"The Church of God," Dr. McDonald observes, "is a living organism; hence the only form of evolution in which a parallel for its development might be sought, with at least a show of reason, is that which is known as organic evolution. This implies, as Dr. Mivart himself explains in his work On Truth, 'that new species—new kinds of animals and plants—have from time to time arisen from antecedent kinds, which were different, by a process of natural generation.' It will be apparent at a glance how ill-suited such a conception would be to bring home to the minds of men the fact that the Church—to quote once more the words of Mr. Mivart—"in spite of apparent external differences, is essentially unchanged since the day of Pentecost." Essential unchangeableness is the note of the Church; the very opposite is the characteristic of the species in the evolutionary hypothesis. The Church grows and expands without losing its identity, 'like a tree planted by the rivers of water'; the species, according to the evolutionist, merges its identity in that which comes after it, and is annihilated by its offspring. The identity of the Church throughout the manifold phases of its growth has its parallel, not in a hypothetical evolution of species, but in the development of every living organism within the limits of its

kind. And this is, after all, if not the only form of organic development, at least the only form of it that we can know aught of with certainty; the only form of it that ever has come within the reach of human observation since men began to people the earth." This paper of Dr. McDonald's is the most remarkable in an unusually good number of the Catholic World, and as it is, we understand from the Casket, his first effort in magazine writing, it augurs well for the future.

**A  
Conclusive  
Dilemma.**

On this very question of evolution, The Owl for September brings us, from the learned halls of Ottawa University, an uncommonly good article by Mr. J. A. M. Gillis, a graduate of '94. Beginning with a fair and honest statement of the Darwinian theory, the writer concludes by rejecting it as unphilosophical. His final argument takes the form of an unanswerable dilemma. "The inductive sciences, being founded on the assumption that nature is constant, must be invalidated by the theory of Darwin; otherwise nature would have to be constant and variable at the same time, which is an absurdity. It is here that evolution receives its death-blow. The theory is based on the [supposed] fact that everything in the universe is incessantly changing and tending to a higher state of perfection, and this is shown only by observation and experiment, which is nothing else than an induction, or reasoning from the known proclivities of certain individuals of a class to conclusions relative to the class in general. But, as we have said, induction is based upon permanency; for no one can form a general conclusion from the characteristics of perpetually changing entities. If such be the case, upon what authority does the Darwinian lay down his theory? Either nature is constant and then there is no evolution; or it is a change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous by spontaneous variations which are necessarily accidental, and then we cannot come to any conclusion." Evolutionists will find themselves inevitably impaled on one of the horns of this dilemma; and yet the majority of them, being sadly deficient in logic, will go on drawing a gigantic conclusion from the most slender and uncertain premises.

**Cardinal  
Taschereau.**

Mr. Wm. Ellison writes an interesting sketch of our Canadian Cardinal in Donahoe's Magazine for this month. He says His Eminence, whose end is near, will be mourned most keenly by the Irish Catholic race in the Dominion, whose love and gratitude he earned by devoting himself, in the freshness of his priestly springtime, to the spiritual and temporal care of the plague-stricken Irish emigrants of '47-'48. It appears that Archbishop Taschereau, though the first Canadian-born Cardinal, is not the first holder of an ecclesiastical appointment in Canada to receive the red hat. Mgr. Weld, at the time of his elevation to the cardinalate in 1830, had already been named Coadjutor to the Right Reverend Dr. Macdonnell, first Bishop of Upper Canada, though the English prelate never exercised his functions in Canada. Mr. Ellison shows us, in Elzear Alexandre Taschereau, the pious and painstaking student, the zealous priest, the learned Rector of Laval University, the perfect model of exactness and punctuality, the reserved, laborious, gentle, just and firm archbishop, the dignified and gracious Prince of the Church.

**October  
Devotions.**

An excellent feature of Donahoe's is the "Catholic Question Box." Not only are the questions transparently genuine, but the answers are sometimes startlingly terse (as when to a subscriber asking "if there was ever a Hebrew Pope," the re-

ply is "St. Peter was,") and generally full of point and fitness. An "anxious believer" writes that he is weary of October Devotions every year and "thinks they might well be dropped, since the Holy Father must know that God is not pleased to grant what they implore, the restoration of the temporal power." To this the editor of this department answers: "Our Divine Lord did not grow weary of repeating the same prayer on His last night" before his death, "though the chosen apostles grew so weary as to fall asleep while their Master prayed. And in striking contrast to the friends of Jesus, the false one, Judas, was awake and leading the enemies of the Christ to the Garden of Olives. Our correspondent forgets that a few years more or less are quite insignificant in the hands of God to whom eternity belongs." Consequently the Church "cannot lose heart because her prayers are not answered at once nor in the way of her petition. Then, too, she gives her children the example of perseverance, the most necessary quality in prayer, and so highly commended by Christ in his teachings. And after all her prayer is not only for the restoration of the temporal power, but also for the conversion of sinners, and for the free action of the Church among all her worldwide children." These are deeply suggestive thoughts quite in keeping with the October intention of the Apostleship of Prayer, viz., a renewal of fervor in the daily recitation of the Rosary. "The persevering prayer of Mother Church to the Mother of God should inspire us with hope, with constancy, and with fidelity. We should never grow weary in the doing of good."

**Senator  
Bernier.**

In the excitement of a short and stirring session too little attention has been paid to the manly and vigorous speech delivered in the Senate on the last day of August by our distinguished and singularly able senator, the Hon. T. A. Bernier. This week we can afford space only for the beginning of it, but we hope to complete the reproduction of it next week. Every word of it is worth reading and remembering. It is a brave protest against any possible attempt at juggling with our rights. The Honorable Senator's noble scorn of half-measures represents the general feeling of the Catholic minority, a feeling which will find vent in a storm of indignation, should the rumored settlement of the school question prove to be a mockery.

**"A FOREMOST EDUCATIONIST."**

Max O'Rell, the French humorist, tells us that "the population of America (United States) is sixty millions—mostly colons." If anything was wanting to prove to the small balance of mankind the vast superiority of "America," it has surely been supplied by that clever Frenchman. That, no doubt, accounts for the visit of Mrs. "Col." Parker to our city, on the invitation of Public school teachers of Winnipeg. Were it not for the enterprise of our evening contemporary, the Winnipeg Tribune, our citizens would never have had the intellectual treat of an introduction to this interesting lady and her views on the mighty problem of "teaching the young idea how to shoot." In a two-column interview, the Tribune not only tells us who this distinguished lady is and what constitutes her claim to distinction; but gives us her views on things educational. We are told that "Mrs. Parker is the wife of Col. Parker, head of the Cook County Normal School." If that does not establish her right to be designated "a foremost educationist," then Max O'Rell cannot be held in very high esteem by Winnipegers. But to appreciate this lady's undoubted claim to be considered "a foremost educationist," all that is necessary is to read carefully her gracious interview with the Tribune.

After expatiating on the thought-provoking tendencies of the "American" public school system and its national up-building, she gracefully glided on to other equally interesting information,

such as the qualifications and fitness of the lady teachers of the Chicago schools. "As an instance of this," she said, "a large portion of a class of lady teachers in training had never seen an apple tree in blossom. Other classes again, on being taken into a garden, asked the most astonishing questions, as for instance, if the tassels on the corn were the seeds, and what kind of seed was sown for potatoes." We are quite sure that the Tribune scribe must have thought himself an intellectual giant in the science of botany after hearing this statement regarding these Chicago teachers. If the pleasing sight of an apple tree in blossom be a requisite to a normal school training, then "what in thunder," to use the classic language of the Tribune's editor, is the use of Normal Schools in this country? Better send our young pedagogic aspirants to the "Cook County Normal School," where they will have all the advantages of Mrs. Col. Parker's apple tree. But the apple tree is not the only difficulty the teachers of Chicago have to contend against. "There is also the matter of the great foreign element, ignorant of the duties and responsibilities of free citizenship." What with the ignorant foreign element on the one side and the ignorant lady teachers, who never saw an apple tree in blossom and who know nothing about corn or potato seed, on the other, the great republic to the south of us would be in imminent peril, were it not for Mrs. Parker, the Colonel and the "Cook County Normal School."

She says of the Parochial Schools: "They have been made to-day as near the standard of the public schools as possible, but the genius of the American people is such that parochial schools are not and will never be a circumstance or factor in considering the education problem." This delightfully whimsical lady tells us in one sentence that the parochial schools are as near the standard of the public schools as possible, and in the next that they are no factor in considering the education problem. She does not tell us why, but we suppose that two reasons may account for it, (1) the fact that its teachers are not trained in the "Cook County Normal School" and have not the advantage of seeing that apple tree in blossom, (2) the further fact that the genius of the American people can see nothing wrong in robbing the supporters of these parochial schools of taxes which should go to their support. This kind of American genius is a development of its public school system. Mrs. Parker naively admits this when she says: "Personally in keeping with the spirit of American institutions, I do not believe in class education of any kind and therefore oppose any attempt to re-introduce religious exercises in the public school. To do so would be to let in the thin edge of the wedge which would cleave the institution asunder." \* \* \* "She has not the slightest doubt that ethics can be taught without bringing in the Bible as a text book, which at its very first entrance signifies class education." Again: "There is a common basis of truth, but looking at Christianity itself, that basis is found in conduct, not in any creed or body of teaching, even the simple reading of the Bible, the use of prayers, etc.

Ethical science without God is only to be found in such institutions as the American public school. Mrs. Parker should exercise her American genius to coin some other word to express her Godness ideas of right conduct. It would be interesting to know to what creed, if any, this lady belongs. Her idea of Christianity has, to say the least, not a very elevating tendency. God help the country that has, for its "foremost educationists," men and women of the Parker stamp.

Ripans Tabules: gentle cathartic.

Ripans Tabules cure dizziness.