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The Will of Man

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THE WILL OF MAN

By

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A Thesis Submitted To Fulfill The Requirements For The

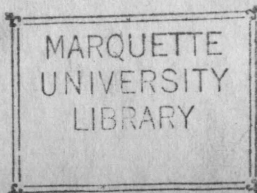
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Approved

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Date May 1, 1926

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THE WILL OF MAN

I

In the popular philosophy of today, namely Materialistic Evolution, attempts have been made to explain everything as the result of the forces of "matter and motion". In rejecting all that the sages of old have offered towards the explanation of phenomena, there are certain problems which are stumbling blocks to this form of philosophy. Many and various theories have been offered but none has been found that will satisfy. Realizing their inability to explain these problems, one of their number has summed them up and termed them seven riddles for which science has no answer, and which will always remain insoluble.

It is true that if their presumption is a fact, namely that nothing exists except matter and motion, these seven problems will always remain riddles. But when the existence of a world that transcends the range of materialism is so evident, it makes the supposition ridiculous. For these seven riddles(1), after a little consideration are nothing more than seven plain facts

(1) The riddles are: 1, the nature of matter and force; 2, the origin of motion; 3, the origin of life; 4, the apparently designed order of nature; 5, the origin of sensation and consciousness; 6, the origin of rational thought; 7, free will.

and are in their simplicity, within the reach of every ⁽²⁾ thinking man.

Of these seven World-Riddles, we are concerned with that which has been proclaimed the greatest of them all, the free will. And in order to proceed logically we will first consider the meaning of the word freedom.

In its broadest sence, to be free means to be exempt from something. This something may be either a perfection or an imperfection and therefore, freedom may be either a perfection or an imperfection. To exemplify this statement, suppose you are before a caged lion in a zoo. The restriction of the animals freedom is a perfection to you but an imperfection to the lion. If he were out conditions would be reversed.

But when applied to the activity of an agent, freedom denotes the immunity of this agent from some restraining influence. This freedom is of three kinds, first, the freedom from external coaction; secondly, freedom from necessity; and thirdly, freedom from obligation. These three kinds of freedom are known also under the following heads, respectively as: (1) freedom of Spontaneous Action, (2) freedom of Choice, (3) freedom of Independence.

In the first case, freedom of Spontaneous Action, is understood the freedom of movement from opposing physical agencies. If the previously mentioned lion wase allowed to roam through the jungles, he would be enjoying

this type of freedom but in a cage he is largely deprived of it.

Freedom of Independence is the immunity of an agent from the moral obligations imposed by a lawful authority. This type of freedom is found, in the strictest sense, only in God. In a wider sense however, we all enjoy it to a certain extent. Actions that are neither commanded nor forbidden by human or divine law are free in this sense.

Next comes freedom of Choice and with this kind is the real subject of our discussion. Freedom of choice is freedom in the strictest sense of the term. It implies the absence of that necessity which governs the actions of all material beings. Of course, since freedom of choice involves the immunity of an agent from all necessity or determination, the free will has become a veritable enigma to materialistic philosophy, which recognizes only that ^arealm of nature known as matter, and but one mode of action, that of matter. To admit that the will is free would imply the existence of another realm of nature, namely the immaterial or spiritual, but that is repugnant to their doctrine and the free will remains a stumbling block in the path of their philosophy. There is but one limitation upon the activity of man's will, that it can strive after only what is good, or at least apprehended as good. Man cannot strive for a thing without motives, and must of necessity strive after some object that has the appearance of good. The

range of man's rational striving is of course, as broad as his concept of good.

In spite of this broad range, free choice might be impeded by the moral forces affecting man's rational appetite. Some particular good might influence the will so strongly so as to overpower it, but then the will would not be free. The act would be merely an impulsive volition, the result of the forces playing upon it. Such action destroys the conditions for actual freedom, which will be treated later.

According to the definition given in Scholastic philosophy, freedom of choice is "that endowment in virtue of which an agent, when all conditions requisite for the performance of an action are given, can either perform or abstain from it, can perform this action or that". This definition is a statement of a fact that the conscience of every man is aware of many times a day. That he is master over his own line of action; can choose one course or another.

There is but one human faculty for which freedom of choice is claimed, man's rational appetite or will. When conditions are favorable the eyes must see, the ears must hear, but that controlling factor that can change the conditions so that the ears will not hear, or the eyes will not see, for that we claim liberty. The sensitive appetite, the imagination, memory, intellect, the passions of man, are all necessitated in

their action, but the will alone can choose between two motives. Only through our rational appetite can we perform or abstain from an action.

That there is in man two appetites, a rational and a sensitive, is demonstrated by the struggle we experience at times when we reject the promptings of our lower animal nature and choose the moral good. Some actions are often denominated free, for instance, I freely move my arm or bend my back. But is it the back or arm that moves itself or the will choosing to move the back or to bend the arm? Only the will is endowed with freedom, is intrinsically denominated free.

In claiming this freedom it does not mean that every act is free. Actions of the will must be distinguished between deliberate and indeliberate acts; between human acts and acts of man. Two requisite conditions are necessary for every free act, namely (1) a state of consciousness and attention, and (2) intellectual deliberation.

Since there are different degrees of consciousness and attention so also there are different degrees of free choice. A person half asleep is only half free to choose between motives. One fully asleep or unconscious is of course not free at all. In the same manner, one deeply engrossed in thought is not absolutely free.

The second condition is even more important, the weighing of the motives intellectually apprehended. Every free choice must be preceded by a judgement on

the comparative goodness of the objects of the choice. The judgement is called an objectively indifferent judgement, and means the proposal of the reasons for and against a definite line of action, or really two judgements, one proposing motives for striving after, the other motives for rejecting the apprehended object. Every finite good is at least virtually and implicitly, dual in character, expressing motives for and against its choice. As an example, let us consider the arguments for and against the purchase of an automobile. The possession of a car will enable us to enjoy much pleasure otherwise impossible. But then, the parting with the purchasing price entails the loss of desirable possessions. Suppose the car was a gift. There still would be the undesirable aspect of the expenses of its upkeep. Again, if even these undesirabilities were eliminated, if there were no material implications to detract from its desirability, the fact that it is not necessary for my happiness is a sufficient reason against its choice.

Every finite good has its undesirable qualities, a walk is good but it requires exertion; virtue is desirable but it involves a checking of our passions. At the same time we perceive the desirability of what is either pleasurable, intellectually alluring, or morally good, we also see the evils contained in it. This is what we mean when we say that every judgement referring to a finite

good is objectively indifferent, at least implicitly and equivalently. Even the perception of God Himself is objectively indifferent because of our imperfect knowledge of Him, and the difficulty connected with the checking of our lower nature.

The deepest root of freedom is touched at this point namely, our intellectual nature with its capacity for abstraction. All finite things are limited by their very nature. Regardless of how fascinating they may be, there is contained somewhere a defect, and with our intellect, capable of abstraction, we are equally able to neglect these imperfections as we are to dwell upon them.

We shall consider now, the power of choice itself, or as Scholastic philosophy terms it, the active indifference of the will. This term at first sounds abstruse but after a little consideration it will be found to contain exactly what is meant by the power of choice. Indifference is opposed to determination, active is opposed to passive. Indifference when predicated to the will may denote that disposition which we call apathy. Power of choice is compatible with the greatest of habitual likes or dislikes, with the greatest actual propensity towards as well as aversion to, a certain object of choice. As long as those entities which produce propensities or aversion do not nullify the two conditions of freedom, they do not destroy the power of choice. Attention must be brought to bear here, to notice that these forces may

influence, but not destroy free choice.

We arrive then at the meaning of indifference. In general, it means that property in virtue of which a faculty is not determined to one line of action. Applied to the will, it is that endowment by which it is not restricted to strive after a certain object in particular. Indifference defined in that way, though necessary, is only a part of the definition of free will, and this part of the definition is also applicable to other faculties that are not endowed with freedom. The freedom peculiar to the will is further qualified by the term "active". The will is actively indifferent while all other faculties are but passively indifferent. The various senses, though indifferent in themselves are determined to a particular line of action by an outside cause. In order that the eye may see there must be light, and similarly for the ear to hear there must be sound. But free will determines itself. When the various motives solicit our will in various directions, the will by its own power can determine its action towards the motives intellectually apprehended. This power of determination then, to a particular course of action, originates in the will and therefore its indifference is called active.

Haeckel, finding the phenomena of free will troublesome to account for, avoided it altogether by saying it was "not an object for critical scientific inquiry" and

designated it as "pure dogma, based on an illusion, and has no real existence".(1) However, the free will remains a fact though undesirable to certain people at times and to treat it in such a manner is a confession.

Others have distorted the doctrine of free will then proceeded to disprove it. The author of the article on free will in the Encyclopedia Americana resorted to this method. That writer not only misrepresents the problem but describes the free will as "a power of willing without motive", and a free volition as "an uncaused first act". From the previous explanations it is clear that we maintain no such absurdity as "willing without motive". In fact we insisted that free will was a choice between motives. And then, he represents a deliberate volition as an uncaused act. A deliberate act has a cause both efficient and final; the efficient cause being the faculty endowed with freedom, and the final cause, the motive which the will allows to prevail. Self-determinism does not imply that the mind caused itself and therefore must have anteceded itself. There is no trace of such an absurdity in the Scholastic doctrine.

Others who have used this method are Dr. Bain, who describes free will as "a power that comes from nothing, has no beginning, follows no rule, respects no time and occasion". Also Professor Stout, to whom the free will

(1) Riddle of the Universe, p 64.

is a sort of a jack-in-the-box.(1) Of course such views can be disproved because they are false. However it has nothing to do with the real will.

Now after considering these views let us formulate the exact question to be answered, i.e., is man's rational appetency or will endowed with the power of choice among various lines of action, apprehended by our intellect as good? Or from another angle: has man's will the power to determine which of the various motives intellectually proposed is to prevail and thereby actively determining it's own course of action? If the answer be negative then the will of man is not free, but if affirmative, then it is. Determinists deny it; the Scholastics affirm it, and in order to substantiate their position they have adduced three lines of argument, called the experimental, moral, and metaphysical or teleological proofs.

Before proceeding into the various proofs for the freedom of the will it may be well to illustrate the the difference of procedure in these arguments.

There are three ways in which we are able to prove the existence of a thing, first by bringing the thing in question before you so that by your own experience you will perceive it's existence; secondly, by showing you something which is an effect of the thing in question, an effect which could be caused only by this particular thing. In that way we can arrive at the fact

(1) cf. Maher, Psychology p416.

that the thing must have existed. Thirdly, we can conclude the existence of a being or object by observing the cause, the root or source of the object in question, something which necessarily produces or calls for the the object. These methods of proof are respectively, the experimental, moral, and metaphysical. Happily, we are able to adopt all three methods to prove the existence of free will, and in doing so we can claim not only probability for the doctrine, but are able to assert it as a truth beyond doubt. To proceed to the first proof we shall take the testimony of consciousness, the experimental evidence for free will.

II

Oftimes during the day I realize by the unmistakable testimony of consciousness, that it is in my power to choose among various actions which I have motives to perform. To demonstrate this statement let us take any act, one to which we attach little importance. Suppose I am writing a paper for my history assignment, and after working at it for a period of time I think it desirable to interrupt my work and enjoy a cigarette. The interruption will serve to freshen my mind and enable it to be better disposed for the work after a moments rest. Then, on the other hand, I can see that the interruption is not necessary, at least not at this particular moment, and I can easily put it off for a while longer. Furthermore, I realize that even though the change may be desirable in one way, it may not be in another, for instance, I am apt to forget the particular points I have in mind at this time. After considering the different motives I arrive at the conclusion that it is preferable not to interrupt my work at this moment.

Thus we have an objectively indifferent judgement, a judgement which the comparative desirability of two courses of action is proposed, which is the principal condition of free choice. I am fully aware of the comparative desirability of both of the actions and pay explicit attention to them, which is the other condition for free choice.

Neither you nor I can fortell with certainty which

of the two actions I shall select I realize by the clear and unmistakable testimony of consciousness that my action depends upon an uncalculable element, namely free choice. It is solely within my power to select either of the two courses of action and furthermore, after I have allowed one to prevail, I am conscious of the fact that if I had so desired, I could have chosen the other. Experiences such as this are common to everyone. Of course every action performed during the day is not performed in that free manner. In fact, most of them perhaps are not thought about at all, but we are aware of the fact that some of them are performed thus freely, whenever the conditions for free choice are given, i.e., attention and consideration of the motives prompting the action.

There are some that maintain that we predetermine our future actions and predict what line of action we are going to take in certain circumstances. Perhaps so, it may be often done, but this does not militate against free will, rather on the other hand, it is in favor of it. For when we predict the course of action we shall follow, we realize that the future is not fixed. We know the action depends upon our free choice. It is often our experience that at the last moment we change our minds and many resolutions previously made have in that manner, failed. Such predictions of our future actions are not only compatible with freedom, but meaningless unless in the supposition that we are free and conscious of it at the time of prediction. The fact that at times we feel

remorse for an action done shows us that if it was not our action, done by our own choice, it would not incur blame upon us. If it is not our fault, why should we blame ourselves for doing it ?

Now determinists and particularly materialists deny emphatically that any of our actions are a matter of our choice. When they enter into the metaphysical speculations as to the possibility of freedom, they are guilty of the first principal of positive and exact sciences, that very charge which they urge against the Scholastics, the consideration of the "that" and let the "why and wherefore" alone. Of course in this particular case the "that" is peculiarly troublesome, the "why and wherefore" being more convenient to deal with. True to their policy of fitting facts to fit the theory, they avoid the problem by denying the existence of freedom.

The materialists do not deny the perception of freedom, but claim it to be a mere illusion. If our intellect can be deceived in the perception of evident facts of consciousness, if it be subject to illusion, then how can we be certain of any human knowledge ? If our intellect is unable to discern truth from falsehood, what criterion remains ? If we are apt to err in the acquisition of truth through consciousness, how do we know but what the other sources might err also ? Certainly if consciousness might deceive us then it is equally possible that the other sources of knowledge are unreliable. This leads to another consideration

that makes the denial of the facts derived from self-consciousness all the more destructive to human knowledge gathered from any other source. For example, hearing is no source of knowledge unless I am conscious of it; similarly with sight, reasoning, and many others. Hence we see that by the denial of freedom which consciousness clearly attests, we arrive at the absurdity of absolute skepticism.

In the examples given, we see that consciousness attests in every detail what we have claimed after the precise formulation of the question. Certain conditions for freedom have been insisted upon. After analyzing our mental attitude towards the motives apprehended, we see that consciousness attests an internal act of the will by which we actively determine which of the motives is to prevail. This is free choice.

The late Professor James of Harvard, in his *Principals of Psychology*, says that the evidence of consciousness is "too crude", Viewing the question scientifically, he argues that the evidence is in favor of the determinists because free will is irreconcilable with "the great scientific postulate, that the world must be one unbroken fact, and that prediction of all things without exception must be ideally, if not actually, possible". Viewed morally, the evidence is in favor of freedom, for " it is a moral postulate..... that what ought to be, can be, and that bad acts can-

not be fated, but that good ones must be possible in their place". (1).

And as he goes on, "When scientific and moral postulates war thus with each other and objective proof is not to be had, the only course is voluntary choice, for skepticism itself, if systematic, is also voluntary choice..... Freedom's first deed should be to affirm itself". (2) Therefore we see that James admits freedom on ethical grounds but denies it on the others. Let us consider the charge he makes about introspection being too crude.

We ask him why the evidence of introspection is too crude? It is absolutely the only means we have of acquiring knowledge of present internal facts. If too much is expected from this evidence, then of course it is too crude, but the same is true of the evidence of all the rest of the senses. All we can expect from these two sources (internal and external experience) is no more and no less than the knowledge of present facts, internal or external respectively. If we expect more than this, then all experimental evidence is too crude.

As an example let us suppose that I touch a very hot object. Before I have time to reflect I withdraw my hand. Or perhaps I see a baby, who touching snow quickly withdraws its little fingers. Am I not able to testify to those bare facts just as I have seen or felt them on the evidence of internal or external ex-

perence ? If this be denied then all experimental science must be rejected as being too crude. Such instances as mentioned above are merely examples of reflex motion, where an external stimulus has been transmitted to the periphery by afferent nerves to the nerve center in the spinal column and thence reflected by the efferent nerves to the muscle, which contracts. If this knowledge is expected from the evidence of the senses in the simple observation, mentioned before why then most assuredly it is too crude. In order to arrive at that knowledge an elaborate and detailed research must be made in the nature of the nervous system. And even in the research, it is the evidence of the senses that must again be relied upon. If the evidence in the first simple observation was too crude, it is not less so in the latter observations. Hence if further research is to be at all possible, we must beware of calling any experimental evidence too crude.

In the same manner that I perceive, when I withdrew my hand, I acted without deliberation, thus also I am able to perceive that in certain acts of will I act with deliberation. Such evidence of introspection must not be expected to furnish evidence that is clearly the result of further speculation. With this understanding then that the evidence of introspection is too crude, we emphatically deny. Or if it be crude, it is not thereby of less value. The proof of free will from the evidence of introspection, stands in spite of the efforts made to

belittle its value. Especial stress has been laid upon the experimental evidence, because in this era of positive sciences, nothing appeals more to men than experimental evidence, and because it is this very consideration of the stubborn fact of free will, that has made materialists call it the greatest of the world riddles.

Will is defined as freedom, in the sense, that it is the power of the mind to choose between two or more courses of action.

If man is responsible for any of his actions, it is because he is free to choose between two or more courses of action. If he is not free to choose, he is not responsible. The right of free will is the right of the mind to choose between two or more courses of action. It is the right of the mind to choose between two or more courses of action. It is the right of the mind to choose between two or more courses of action.

... If we are to be free, we must be free to choose between two or more courses of action. If we are not free to choose, we are not free. The right of free will is the right of the mind to choose between two or more courses of action. It is the right of the mind to choose between two or more courses of action. It is the right of the mind to choose between two or more courses of action.

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III

The discussion of the two following proofs show that the doctrine of free will branches into the other departments of philosophy. In the department of Ethics, such factors as law, justice, obligation, right and wrong, etc. acquire different meanings as the doctrine of free will is accepted or rejected. To the serious, contemplative mind these proofs will be of especial interest.

If man is responsible for any of his actions, if certain actions are worthy of merit, others of blame, then the will of man must be capable of choosing one course of action or another. The dignity of man compared with the animals, plants, etc., around him, consists in his moral nature and a supposition which cuts the root of this nature is absurd. But to deny freedom is cutting off the root of mans moral nature, hence this denial is absurd.

"Right conduct is not merely a beautiful ideal which attracts me. It commands me with an absolute authority. It obliges me unconditionally". (1) Regardless of my own personal feelings I am bound to do good and avoid wrong. Yet, it is a patent fact that the moral law is not at all times observed. But if the moral law obliges me at all times, it must be within my power to comply with its demands or if not, how can I disobey it? To suppose that a law binds me in which it is an absolute impossibility to comply, is irrational and absurd.

Suppose that man was not free, what would be the

(1) Maher, Psychology p 399.

difference between morally good and bad acts ? A hero would deserve no merit nor a criminal blame if he did only what he was forced to do. There could be absolutely no distinction between right and wrong. Only freedom discriminates between a saint and a sinner in the moral world.

That school of thinkers known as Moral Positivists have done away with all true morality, obligation, right and wrong. According to Hobbes, there is no intrinsic difference between morally good and bad deeds. He attributes the distinction to positive human legislation. Others of this school trace it to custom, education or to some other difference. Some go even further, for instance, Haeckel says, "The moral order exists no more in nature than in the lives of men, no more in natural history than in the history of culture. The cruel and unceasing struggle for existence is the true spring of the blind history of the world" (1)

Of course that is all you can expect from an Evolutionist and Materialist. Nietzsche also follows the same line of thought. He is looked up to by some as a sort of demigod, and every statement of his regarded as an utterance from an infallible source. He thinks quite a bit of Nietzsche, since he considers himself an "over man" to whom "the whole moral science is a courageous and continued falsehood".

(1) Fr. Cathrein, Moral Phil. Vol. I p.141

(2) Ibid. p.143

In order to show the strength of the moral argument it is necessary to insist more on the reality of moral notions than on the necessary connections between these notions and free will. We must then, first consider whether there are any actions which are morally good or bad prior to any human or divine law. Whether some actions are by their intrinsic nature good and others bad. Of course we do not deny that some actions are in themselves indifferent, and are bad only because they are forbidden, but there are others also that are forbidden because they are bad, rather it is because they are bad that the law forbids them. And they were bad prior to the law, or any other positive fact, such as education and custom.

Now if it is only the forbidding law that makes acts morally bad and the prescribing law that makes them good, then it follows that there cannot be a bad law. A law can only be bad if it prescribes what is bad. But this is impossible from the supposition of Moral Positivists, that no action is bad prior to any law. Furthermore, if a law prescribes murder or lying, then such actions are good. But the common consent of all mankind attests that these actions could not be made morally good by any law, which disproves their theory.

To sum up the moral argument in a few words; since there is an intrinsic difference morally good and bad acts, and this difference is null and void if man will

be not free, then we must admit the freedom of the will.

Jonathan Edwards proposes an axiom, attempted previously by Buridan, that the will always follows the greater seeming good. That it frequently does, we admit, but always, is in diametric opposition to our experience. To admit this statement would be to place man in the same situation as Buridan's ass. The unfortunate ass was placed equidistant from two identical stacks of hay, and since each was equally inviting the ass could not decide which of the two to eat and thus starved to death between them. Such an example may have been applied to asinine liberty but certainly not to that of man. Again suppose after wandering into unfamiliar territory you suddenly become desirous of returning quickly to your dwelling and come upon a road that separates into two branches, both leading into the direction you wish to go. You do not know which is the shortest route. Are you forced to stay at the fork of the road until you are advised which is the shortest? If the will is bound without exception to follow the greater seeming good, as advocated by Jonathan Edwards, you are. But practical experience distinctly disagrees with the doctrine and as a result the objection does not touch the moral argument for freedom.

Then there are others who claim that men are the result of their environment. To a large extent this frequently is the case, but to establish it as an un-

varying rule, is preposterous. If that were so, then a good man could never sin, a bad one never repent. Yet this, as we see everyday, is not unusual. So the argument, as far as a denial of the wills freedom, falls to the ground.

The determinists have what they consider an all-powerful weapon in the argument from Moral Statistics. Buckle, who according to Fr. Maher (Psych. p. 421) "used to be the classical author on this line of attack", claims that the actions of man "vary in obedience to the changes in the surrounding society". This, of course is simply another way of stating the previous objection. He claims that suicide is the "necessary consequence of preceding circumstances". (quoted from Fr. Maher, Psych. p. 421)

In the first place, statistics record only external actions. These actions in some individuals may be the result of a long series of temptation, while in others they are a reaction of quick, though free determination. Again it may be but the outcome of a sudden impulse, or mental derangement. All moral statistics can do is to add all such external actions together indiscriminately. But in discussing free will we are concerned mainly with internal acts of the will. and these actions by their very nature, remain unrecorded in Moral Statistics. The records of such acts are found only in the testimony of our own consciousness and the

consent of mankind which distinguishes clearly between those acts which are deliberate and those that are not.

There is another class of adversaries who deny what is generally conceded, that the free will is the necessary basis of morality. They say that the moral argument is therefore based upon the false assumption that the denial of freedom cuts the root of morality. To quote, from the writer of the article on Free Will in the Encyclopedia Americana, "So far from determinism making moral law impossible, free will makes it impossible. If volition can perpetually nullify the action of motive, there is a fatal breach in the continuity of cause and effect; there can be no calculable sequence of action and therefore no moral law".

From this and other such arguments we see that the writer of this article has not directed his attack against the real doctrine of free will. He first distorts the doctrine with such phrases as "nullifying the action of motive", "causeless acts", "willing without motive", and then finds it simple enough to confute it from this viewpoint.

In concluding the moral argument, one last word might be said about determinism, and this shall be the conclusion reached by Professor William James when he said, "Determinism...virtually defines the universe as a place in which what ought to be is impossible", (1)

(1) Maher, Psych. p. 401)

The last proof for the freedom of the will is that called the metaphysical or teleological proof. It is indeed of small use for the purpose of converting one who has not been convinced by the two previous arguments. The advantage, however is in the fact that it shows the cause of our freedom, and the natural continuity of that freedom, as long as reason remains within us.

The type of argument used in this proof is a priori. We argue from the intellectual nature of man, as experience reveals him to us and claim that this intellectual nature calls for freedom in the exercise of his will. His nature would be incomplete if he had intellect (understanding) and no will. Of what use would it be to a man to be able to grasp intellectually what is good for him if he had no appetitive faculty (1) to strive after this apprehended good. Therefore we may say that mans intelekct postulates will.

To formulate this argument we might do it in the following manner: Because of mans rational nature, he is able to form objectively indifferent judgements. But unless mans rational appetency is actively indifferent, these objectively indifferent judgements are to no purpose. Therefore, the will must be free.

The major proposition needs no proof, it having been explained before that man is capable of forming objectively indifferent judgements. But to consider the minor, suppose that the will is not free. Imagine man

(1) See St. Thomas Aquinas, Sum. Theol. Q. LXXXIII. A3.

being able to apprehend good, know what is best for him, know what he ought to do, and yet be painfully aware of the fact that he is not free. If that were true, man would be without a doubt, the most miserable of creatures.

But on the other hand, suppose that there exists an all-wise and all-merciful, as well as all-loving God. And if there is a God, He must be infinite, and by His nature, He cannot create an intellectual being made to His image and likeness without that endowment which is necessary to complete his intellectual nature. God could not distort His own image and create rational man without a free will.

Determinists ostracise this argument completely. To them science consists merely in recording and accumulating facts, but to get at the real meaning of the word, is it that, or does it inquire into causes? For this reason the a priori demonstration occupies the highest place among the three proofs.

Although all three proofs establish the doctrine of free will beyond all doubt, each proof has a peculiar value. The first emphasizes free will as an experimental fact, the second as an indispensable basis of morality, the third as the necessary complement of man's rational nature.

Free will, according to some adversaries, seems to be irreconcilable with God's foreknowledge. To them the fact

the fact that God knows all of our future acts, limits mans activity to certain actions. If God knows what we will do then we can do that and nothing else. If we will keep in mind that God forsees our future actions because we perform them and not vice versa, the difficulty clarifies itself. We do not perform certain actions because God forsees them, rather it is because we are going to perform them that God knows them. In the performance of any act, whether free or otherwise, while we are performing the act we cannot at the same time be not performing it. Thus we see a kind of necessity in every act of ours, but this necessity follows and supposes the act, therefore in a free action, it follows and supposes free choice.

This necessity does not in any way affect free choice in fact the only necessity that can is that which preceeds the act. From the infallible testimony of our consciousness we know that we are not governed in the act of our will, i.e., not all of them, but rather we are the masters of our actions. Now the necessity which follows and supposes through choice is found in all our actions, free or otherwise; hence supposing a free action is, has been, or will be performed, it is in virtue of that supposition necessary and can be the object of certain and infallible knowledge. Therefore God's foreknowledge of our future free actions, and the infallibility of this foreknowledge does not in any way affect human liberty.

It becomes even more evident if we consider that God's knowledge of our future free action is strictly speaking, not for knowledge. Since the knowledge of God is eternal and does not pass from foreknowledge into knowledge of the present and from there into memory of the past. The past, present and future are equally open to God's vision. If therefore we keep in mind this eternity and unchangeableness of God's vision, and the difference in the kinds of necessity, there will be no difficulty in reconciling man's freedom with the infallible knowledge of God.

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