

THE ANTINOMY OF FREEDOM AND NECESSITY AND THE PROBLEM OF MORAL RESPONSIBILITY.¹

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AS is well known to students of philosophy, the free-will problem, or Kant's third antinomy, consists in the following: The law of causation is, so far as our experience goes, so universal that it is utterly unreasonable to exempt human activity from its control. On the other hand, there are several arguments which, it is claimed, prove or favor the doctrine that within certain limitations a freeman is free of the inexorability of this law. While this subject has been discussed by numerous writers, I am not familiar with any book or paper where all the arguments of the libertarians are successfully answered. Most probably none exists, as otherwise modern erudite writers, e. g., the author of the article on free will in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th ed., Vol. XXVIII, p. 654, and the author of the article on the same subject in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VI, pp. 124-127, would not defend the doctrine of libertarianism. I shall therefore answer the arguments of the libertarians in what I consider a perfectly convincing manner, and show that the doctrine of determinism is in accord with facts, while that of libertarianism is not, unless the latter defines freedom of the will or freedom of choice so as to agree with facts, when it becomes identical with determinism. I shall further show that determinism allows the freeman acting within the range of his possibilities all the freedom of action and choice he can possibly wish to possess, and that this amount of freedom is, within this range, so great that it is perfectly inconceivable how it could be greater.

Let us first state the arguments of the libertarians.

¹ The material of this article will be incorporated in a book on Science, Truth, Religion and Ethics which I am preparing for publication.

1. The freeman is capable of doing the reverse of what he is imputed to be compelled to do. This may be illustrated by the following example: Suppose that a libertarian starts to travel east in order to get some particular thing. He will, of course, claim that nothing compels him to go in that direction. Now, let a determinist remind him of the fact that his going east is not free of causation because the attraction of the thing he is after actually compels him to go there. The traveler can prove his independence by turning on his heels, and go west. As a freeman, he certainly can do that. Since there can be no better proof by which a freeman may prove his freedom from compulsion than doing the opposite of what he is claimed to be compelled to do, the traveler's ability to reverse his decision ought, it is claimed, to be accepted as conclusive for proving that his acts are free of the restraints of causality.

2. In his voluntary activity, man, it is asserted, is perfectly unconscious of any force compelling him to act in a particular manner. If causality regulated his actions he certainly ought to be conscious of its power.

3. The doctrine of determinism is said to be degrading and depressing, converting even a freeman into a slave of an inexorable law, since he must do what the latter compels him to do. It is further claimed that, if determinism be true, man cannot have the slightest influence on the course of events, every event being predetermined by immutable antecedent causes.

4. If determinism were true, moral responsibility, it is claimed, would lose its significance, since no one could feel remorse for the committal of a wrong if he admitted that, owing to causality, he could not have acted otherwise. The libertarian further asserts that the State would have no justification for punishing criminals, and that the improvement of man's moral character would be impossible if all human acts were predetermined by immutable causes.

Before answering these arguments, let us examine the nature of the acts that are involved in the controversy between the libertarians and the determinists. It is self-evident that acts which are beyond the ability of the actor to perform and acts which are committed unconsciously must be ruled out of our discussion: the former he, of course, never commits, and in committing the latter he cannot be said freely to choose his actions. Another category of acts that must be excluded are those which are involuntary, defining by this term acts which are imposed on one by an irresistible power and are condemned by the judgment of the actor, such as the unwillingly performed acts of a slave. Still another category

of acts that are not involved in the controversy are those which, like the preceding, are condemned by one's own judgment, and which are therefore never committed by an intelligent person unless he is under the influence of intoxicants, or in a fit of overwhelming passion when his mind is in a state of almost complete aberration, or when he acts under the influence of irresistible cravings or habits from which he would like to but has no will-power to break away. The acts of this category, too, are involuntary and obviously not causeless, the impulses to commit them being certain peculiarities in the nervous system of the actor. Hence even the libertarian must admit that they are not the results of free choices, but the inexorable consequence of forces over which the actor has little or no control.

The only acts that are involved in the controversy under discussion are therefore those which are voluntary, defining by this term acts which are not forced on the actor by an external master or an irresistible craving, passion, or habit, and are approved or at least not condemned by his own judgment. It is these that the libertarian claims are free of the restraints of causation.

The next step is to state clearly the claim of the determinist, and to show that it is in accord with facts. The claim consists in that voluntary acts are caused by desires, and that the choices between different voluntary acts are caused by the most approved and strongest of the desires, though the latter are not intense enough to be such irresistible cravings as to make the acts involuntary. The desires involved may be for the acts themselves or for their direct or indirect results, but desires there must be, and, when choice is exercised, they must be stronger and more approved than the desires for any other acts or their results that are appropriate to the occasion. In accord with this claim, when in respect to a given act a freeman says, I hate to but will none the less commit it, what he means is that he hates the act but likes its results, and likes them more than he likes any other suitable act or its results.

The correctness of this claim is proved by the most reliable method we have at our disposal, and that is, by interrogating the actor committing a voluntary act. Our traveler, for instance, will admit that, in accord with the claim of the determinist, he goes east because he desires a certain thing which he cannot get at home, that when he reverses his action he does so because the argument of the determinist created in him a new desire—the desire to confute his opponent—and that this desire is stronger and more approved than that for the thing he started out to get. In fact, should

the thing in the east happen to be to him of exceptional value, he will admit that he would brush aside his adversary and continue his journey eastward, telling the determinist that his desire for the thing there, while not an irresistible craving, is nevertheless so strong that he would not stop to bother about philosophical antinomies at that moment, and that he would discuss the matter with him at some more opportune time. Similarly, the voluntary act of a patient taking bitter and ill-smelling medicine is caused by his desire to improve his health, and this desire obviously is stronger and more approved than that for taking something pleasant that might either harm him or do him no good. In the same way, the average volunteer who is willing to sacrifice his life in defense of his fatherland will tell you that his desire to do his duty to his country is stronger and more approved than that for staying at home while his native land is being attacked by a foe, that he prefers the moral exaltation and the short life of a hero to the despicable and universally reprobated though longer life of a slacker.

So much for the causality of the voluntary acts themselves. As to desires and the choices between them, they, too, are not causeless, their causes being in most cases perfectly well known. Thus, his desire for going east the traveler will doubtless ascribe to the fact that the thing there will satisfy certain of his wants, and when he goes back on his original decision, he will admit that his desire to refute the claim of the determinist is caused by a feeling of pride in the correctness of his views on the free-will problem, as well as by a feeling of contrariness, or combativeness, and that the combined effect of these feelings is stronger than the feeling creating in him the desire for the thing in the east. The desire of the patient for improving his health obviously is due to his sense of self-preservation which under ordinary conditions creates exceptionally strong and approved desires for taking and doing things promoting our well-being, even when they are in themselves disagreeable. Finally, the desire of the volunteer to do his duty is the result of his moral sense which in the moral man creates powerful and highly approved desires to be moral.

If desires be pursued still further backward, it will be found that even the causes of their causes are, at least in some cases, well known. Thus, the causal series involved in the act of going to dinner is as follows: act of going—desire for food—feeling of hunger—certain changes in certain sensory nerves— withholding nourishment from the cells of our bodies. That is about as far as we need go, since the terms of the series lying beyond the

withholding of nourishment vary from case to case, and are of no importance in our discussion. But even when we cannot go as far as in this case, there is no reason for assuming that the series comes to a stop where we are compelled to stop, because a similar state of affairs is met with in the examination of every natural phenomenon without exception. Proceeding backward along the series of successive causes of any observed occurrence, we necessarily arrive at a term whose antecedents are unknown, but that does not prove that no antecedents exist. The fact that diligent research frequently discovers hitherto unknown causes justifies the assumption that the chain of causality is infinite. The only legitimate alternatives to this assumption are that the chain ends in a property that is as inherent in the last term as it is inherent in human intelligence that two and two must equal four, or else that it ends in a *causa finalis*, according to whichever assumption one prefers. Thus, the moral sense may be as inherent in the moral man as are his feelings of shame, sympathy, regret, and love of music, or may be due to some antecedent causes. When the free-will problem reaches this point, the determinist has already proved his thesis, because all he claims is that human activity is as subject to causality as the rest of the world with which we are familiar.

Why our consciousness or mind or ego or soul or whatever be the name of the human *vis vitæ* interprets changes in our nervous system as feelings, and why these create desires, are perfectly idle questions. Operations of this sort are essential attributes of conscious life; in their absence one is dead or at least unconscious. Why feelings and desires have certain particular forms, i. e., why they are so and so, and not otherwise, is also an idle question, because since they must have some form, one form is, in the absence of further light on the subject, as reasonable as another. As to their general uniformity for a given person, this is obviously due to his general make-up which is to a large extent constant throughout his life, and in so far as it is not constant, his feelings and desires really vary with his conditions and advancing age. Still more idle is the question why our reasoning faculty operates in such a manner as to approve or condemn certain desires. It must operate according to definite fixed rules of human logic, and must make use of the memory of past events and of the probability that, owing to the inexorability of causation, certain pleasant or unpleasant, moral or immoral, consequences are more liable to be the results of certain actions than certain other consequences. It must therefore work in a more or less definite manner, and its working in a certain particu-

lar manner is due to the structure of one's brain and to the numerous factors constituting one's personality.

That human activity is subject to causality is further proved by the fact that, as indicated above, one's acts vary in a more or less definite manner with one's age, sex, nationality, inherited characteristics, education, surroundings, etc. A complete knowledge of all of the numerous and complex factors influencing the desires of a given person would doubtless enable a psychologist to read his mind and foretell his actions under given conditions. To a considerable extent this ability is really possessed by many people having had much worldly experience and thus gained a good "knowledge of men." This would be perfectly impossible if desires, choices, and acts were causeless and therefore unpredictable.

Another proof is that when one of the terms in the series of successive causes of an act is inhibited, all the subsequent terms drop out. When the feeling of hunger is destroyed by a sudden shock of fright or bad news the desire for food vanishes, and the act of going to dinner is stopped. When a moral person who is on the point of committing an act approved or not condemned by his judgment, hears or reads arguments which prove that under the given conditions the act would be immoral, his desire for committing it is overcome by a more approved and stronger desire to be moral, and the act is not committed. When a nerve-center is seriously injured, all the feelings, desires, and actions controlled by it disappear.

Having shown that all human activity is controlled by causality, so that the first argument of the libertarians is untenable, it is easy to show that the second argument also is untenable. In his voluntary activity man is unconscious of any external authority and of irresistible condemned cravings driving him to action because such authority and such cravings are by definition absent from such activity, but he is fully conscious of the force of his strongest desires and of the logicity of the strongest arguments approving them, or of the absence of arguments condemning them. When hungry we are conscious of a powerful desire for food and of the cogent argument that if we want to live we must eat, and that under ordinary conditions we have a moral right to eat. And when our sound judgment tells us that, owing to our corpulency, it would be better for us to omit a meal, or that for moral reasons it would be preferable to give it to a starving person, there immediately arises in our consciousness a strong and approved desire to follow the counsel of our reason, and we are again fully conscious of the

new desire and of the soundness of our judgment. In our daily conscious life we are frequently confronted with several conflicting desires, moral, immoral, and amoral, and with reasoning arguments advising different choices. Particularly when the voluntary actions involved are of special importance do we feel that we are thrown upon our own resources; we hesitate, compare, sift, and argue with ourselves before making up our minds how to act. During this interval of time, which sometimes is of considerable duration, we are fully conscious of an inner struggle for supremacy between different desires and different processes of argumentation. Until we reach a decision we are particularly impressed with our freedom of choice between different desires because we are in the midst of a confusion which we may bring to order any way we like, and because we do not yet know which of our desires and judgments will come out victorious. The inexorable necessity of following the strongest desire and worthiest motive is thus hidden because we do not yet know which is the strongest and worthiest. When, however, we reach a conclusion and finally decide upon a definite mode of action, we are perfectly conscious of the fact that our action corresponds with that desire for it which during the inner fight has become stronger than the rest and has received the support of the best arguments. At that moment we become extremely conscious of the necessity of causality because in committing a voluntary act under these conditions we know full well why we are doing it as well as what we are doing. It is only in performing routine work that a man is not fully conscious of the fact that his acts are compelled by his desires and judgments, but this is so because such work meets with no resistance from within or without. Nobody interferes with it, and the actor feels no strong desires for refraining from doing it. It is performed in a mechanical way requiring little attention. The moment, however, some remark, thought or external phenomenon causes him to conceive a desire for doing something else, he feels the necessity of making a choice, and when he makes it he feels that his choice is the inexorable result of his strongest desire and strongest argument. Hence the second argument of the libertarian is, like the first, contrary to facts.

In order to answer the third argument, let us examine the nature of the compulsion causality imposes on the freeman. Since this compulsion amounts to nothing more than that in performing a voluntary act he must follow his own most approved and strongest desire which he loves to satisfy anyway, the law of causation is in this case entirely deprived of its sting of tyranny. It is perfectly

clear that when a person has a strong and approved or at least not condemned desire to commit an act he would commit it with no greater zeal even if the desire for it dropped into his heart out of the blue sky without any cause whatsoever, or if he manufactured it himself *ex nihilo*. If a man be asked what sort of freedom of action he would like to have as far as his possibilities go, he would certainly want no other variety than freedom to satisfy his strongest, approved, or at least uncondemned desires without the interference of irresistible undesirable forces. This degree of freedom determinism allows the voluntarily acting freeman; this degree of freedom is all he wants for his voluntary acts, and this degree of freedom is so great that, within the limits of what the freeman can do, it is inconceivable how it could be greater. Our traveler, for instance, goes east when he himself likes the thing there more than to confute his opponent, and he can and does reverse his original decision when the claim of his adversary rouses in him a stronger liking for maintaining the doctrine of his independence. He cannot do both things simultaneously; he must and, as a rule, likes to do either one or the other thing, and he actually acts as he likes to act. As far as the act of going in some particular direction is concerned, there can be no greater freedom of choice than is possessed by the freeman. Hence the doctrine of determinism bestows upon the freeman so much freedom that, barring impossibilities, there is nothing left for the libertarian to give him.

To claim, as the libertarian in his third argument does, that in his voluntary activity man must feel depressed by the necessity of following his own strongest desires is as absurd as to claim that a man who is hungry and freezing, and who does not want to let himself starve or freeze to death, but longs for a good meal and a warm bed, would feel depressed if his friend picked him up on the street and forcibly placed him in a well-provisioned palatial residence where he may eat and drink and do anything he likes and can. Furthermore, since even the strongest desires for voluntary acts are not so irresistible as to become overpowering cravings, the fact that such acts are forced by causality is less burdensome than the act of the man forcibly placing his starving and freezing friend in the house of plenty. Thus, in going east our traveler is not driven by an irresistible craving, since in that case his act would not be voluntary. Some particular occurrence or some cogent argument might create in him a stronger and more approved desire to go in some other direction, or stay where he is, and determinism permits him to do that. Similarly, the volunteer, who is making

preparations for going to the front in order to do his duty to his country, usually is not driven by the whip of an irresistible craving, because in that case his act would not be voluntary and would therefore not be moral at all, for an act committed under the influence of an irresistible force of any kind is no more moral than one committed per order of the chief of police. The democratic volunteer may, for instance, all at once become convinced, rightly or wrongly, that his country has become an autocratic tyranny that does not deserve to be defended. He would then change his action and stay at home.

If man has some reason to be dissatisfied it is not because his voluntary activity is forced on him by the necessity of following his own desires and judgments which have their immutable causes, but because the range of this sort of activity is not as wide as he would like it to be, i. e., because his possibilities are limited, since he is often the slave of his own passions or of somebody else's will, while in some cases his freedom of choice is limited to choosing the lesser of two evils. In other words, it is only in respect to acts that even the libertarian admits to be compulsory that man may feel depressed. The question whether it is prudent and justifiable for the man of our enlightened age to shed tears over what he cannot do instead of enjoying what he can do and has already done, I shall discuss on another occasion. Here it may suffice to point out that man's ability to perform voluntary acts should be to him a source of great satisfaction, since such acts imply the possession of a reasoning faculty which is far superior to that of every known creature, and to which he owes his civilization. A being devoid of this faculty is incapable of voluntary activity, all his acts being committed without deliberation, as direct results of his immediate impulses. The educated freeman should therefore not feel depressed and degraded but delighted by, and proud of, his ability and necessity to hesitate and deliberate and approve before acting. Our feelings, like our children, frequently bring us sorrow as well as joy; our reasoning faculty is our best friend and most reliable guardian. It is not the causality of our voluntary activity, but that of the physical phenomena and our own carelessness that sometimes bring us in trouble and may therefore cause a depression of our spirits. When a man gets hurt by falling out of a window, he may feel dissatisfied with his carelessness and the law of gravity, but when he voluntarily constructs a chute and slides down in order to escape from fire, he is mighty glad that this same law enables him to save his life by carrying out his voluntary

act, that his approved desire prompts him to carry it out, and that his reasoning faculty enables him to construct such an appliance.

As to influencing the course of events, it is a fact that man does have strong desires to improve himself and the conditions of life on his little planet, and that nature does not interfere in his activity as long as he obeys her laws. She even allows him to pit them against each other any way he likes, thus letting herself be subdued to his needs. In the course of his evolution, man's desires have multiplied, and just because he is compelled to find ways and means for satisfying them he has changed and is constantly changing the face of the earth and the institutions of society. This is an undeniable fact, and whether one believes in libertarianism or determinism, it is a cheerful fact.

It is true that the law of causation makes all future events, including those in which man takes part, predetermined by the past and the present, so that a being knowing all the causes which have operated and are operating in the world could foretell the course of all events to come. But such a being would also know that the human race is an integral part of the world, and that in following our desires and judgments we are influencing the course of events in accord with the law of causation. This again is a fact, a part of the scheme of the constantly changing world. What difference would it make to us if some being knew beforehand what sorts of desires we and our successors were going to have, what kinds of acts we and they will be compelled by causality to perform, and what part our activity will play in shaping historical events? A mother usually knows what her child will want on opening its eyes in the morning, but that does not prevent the child from actually shaping her actions by demanding and getting what it wants, and from enjoying the feeling that it is the pet and lord of the household. I know that my neighbor, who is very fond of music, is going to attend the opera next season. Does my knowledge encroach upon his freedom of action? Moreover, even if man himself had a complete knowledge of the future he would not lose his freedom of action and choice because he would then have strong desires to mould his activity accordingly. That this is so is proved by the fact that we feel and enjoy our freedom and deliberately follow our approved desires even when we have known to a certainty what they were going to be. We plan our theater parties days or weeks ahead, the details of our vacations months ahead, and the careers of our children years ahead, and at the time of realizing our plans we enjoy them in perfect freedom and with

as much delight as if they were created on the spur of the moment. In fact, we like nothing better than that our plans should not, on account of some outside interference, miscarry, though we know that they have been determined long ago.

It follows from our discussion that there is not the slightest contradiction between freedom and necessity. Freedom means freedom from external powers and disapproved irresistible cravings, which characterizes voluntary acts and gives the freeman the opportunity to act according to his own wishes and judgments. In this respect the freeman has freedom of choice. Necessity, on the other hand, means that voluntary acts are the immutable results of the most approved and strongest desires. In this respect man is compelled to choose. The inexorability of this necessity consists in that it is perfectly inconceivable why a freeman should not realize his voluntary acts. He loves to commit such acts, it is within his power to commit them, and his best friend and guardian—his own reason—approves or at least does not condemn their committal. Why, in the name of common sense, should he not commit them? Kant's third antinomy is therefore a pure fiction without foundation in reality.

Before answering the fourth argument of the libertarians, let us inquire into the meaning of their claims. If the doctrine of libertarianism claims for the freeman nothing more than freedom to act according to his own desires and judgments which, as shown above, are subject to causality, it is identical with determinism. If this doctrine claims that voluntary acts are free of the restraints of causality, it is contrary to facts. Moreover, this sort of freedom most probably does not exist anywhere in the world as we know it, and even assuming that it does exist in respect to some particular phenomenon, it obviously is not this sort that is involved in voluntary activity. A body moving about unconsciously and without any cause whatsoever, constantly or every once in a while changing the direction and rate of its motion for no reason and to no purpose, and having nothing to say about anything pertaining to its migrations, would exhibit an example of a causeless phenomenon. A freeman does not resemble such a stupid errant body, he would hate the purposeless freedom it possesses, and his voluntary acts, being conscious, desired, examined by his own judgment, and directed toward definite aims, are entirely different from its aimless peregrinations.

If the libertarian means that in advising particular choices man's reasoning faculty is not guided by causal necessities, but is

merely telling the freeman that he must act thus and so without pointing out to him the inexorable consequences which, owing to causality, will probably or certainly follow his actions, the claim is self-contradictory, because an agency acting in this manner would not be a reasoning entity. By its very definition the reasoning faculty must make use of logical arguments whose very essence consists in that certain acts will serve as inexorable causes of certain pleasant or unpleasant, moral or immoral, consequences, thus creating strong desires for obtaining or avoiding the latter.

If libertarianism means that man possesses an entity called will, or what Bergson calls *élan vital*, which produces impulses that have no causes or have causes incomprehensible to our intellect, and delivers categorical imperatives without regard to our reasoning faculty, the claim is again contrary to facts, since, as was shown above, the causes of our desires or impulses usually are well known and are subjected to the judgment of our reason before they are allowed to serve as motives for voluntary acts. Moreover, such an entity, even if it were guided by some mysterious causes, would have to be placed at the beginning of causal series as a *causa finalis*. But it was already pointed out that the assumption of the existence of final causes does not violate the doctrine of determinism. Finally, if man possessed such an irrational entity, only the insane, the stupid, and little children would obey its despotic and unexplained commands; the sane and educated freeman, who loves his independence and prides himself on the possession of much intelligence, would certainly consult and obey his reasoning faculty before committing a voluntary act. The voice of the irrational entity would therefore be a cry in the wilderness without any influence on the voluntary activity of the intelligent freeman. Hence libertarianism is either identical with determinism, merely applying to that phase of voluntary activity which makes it possible for the freeman to follow his own strongest desires and best arguments, or is a false theory that should be discarded.

We shall now attack the problem of moral responsibility. In addition to implying soundness of mind, the term moral responsibility is usually given two meanings: (1) that of accountability for harm one has already done, and (2) that of obligation to do no harm in the future. From a practical point of view, the second is much more important than the first, since it is much more important to prevent future harm than merely to find out why harm was done. The libertarian holds sane people responsible for their acts in both of the above senses, while the determinist holds them responsible

only in the second meaning of the term. The former assumes that they could have acted otherwise than they did, while the latter asserts that the fact that they have acted in a particular manner proves, that, taking into consideration all the factors which have influenced their past conduct, such as heredity, conditions, personal idiosyncrasies, etc., they could not have acted otherwise. In the light of the arguments of this paper, the view of the libertarian is untenable. But even assuming, for the sake of argument, that a criminal could have acted differently, his treatment by the State would be the same. When the harm of one's past act is rectifiable, it will be rectified even if it was committed against or without one's volition. Stolen goods will be returned to their owners even when one was compelled by somebody else to steal, or when they were stolen by a somnambulist. When the harm is irremediable, no amount of punishment will remedy it. Revenge as justification for punishment is nowadays considered unworthy of a moral and civilized State.

As to future acts, it is clear that when a past act is not followed by consequences disagreeable to the actor he and others will most probably repeat it when circumstances are propitious, but when it brings dire results they will create in him and others new and strong desires that may overcome their desire for repeating it or doing anything like it. This is one of the two justifications the community has for punishing crimes committed by people in a state of perfect sanity, the other being the sense of self-protection, since crimes are detrimental to the welfare of the community. Since the knowledge of the certainty of punishment for misbehavior exercises a salubrious influence on prospective criminals, creating in them strong desires for staying on the path of righteousness, punishment for crimes must be inflicted in order to prove this certainty, though we know that a past act could not have been avoided. The claim that the doctrine of determinism deprives the State of all justification of punishing criminals is therefore erroneous.

Equally erroneous are the other claims of the fourth argument. The claim that determinism deprives moral obligation of its significance is without foundation because the moral person feels the necessity of satisfying the demands of his moral sense, and he also feels his ability to decide in most cases which acts are moral and which immoral. Admitting this, he thereby admits his responsibility for whatever he intends to do, and actually tries to be moral. This is all we can expect him to do, and this is all we want by holding him responsible, and as long as he does try to be moral,

he feels himself and others consider him responsible for his present and future conduct. When, however, an act has past out of his control by having been carried away into the past by the irreversible flow of time, no one can claim that he could have acted otherwise, though, as said above, he must be punished for having acted immorally. Responsibility and punishment are therefore perfectly compatible with the doctrine of determinism.

Remorse for the committal of wrong acts is felt only by the moral libertarian, and even he soon comes to see the utter uselessness of crying over spilt milk. With the moral determinist remorse is a feeling of sincere regret for a deplorable though unavoidable past occurrence, and with him, too, the feeling is the deeper the greater the harm resulting from the act. Since the attention of most people is concentrated chiefly on the present and the future, since they feel the freedom of acting according to their own desires and judgments, and since they are not philosophers analyzing the forces underlying and determining their activity, the doctrine of determinism is either unknown or does not appeal to them. Believing that they could have changed their actions, they readily fall prey to the feeling of remorse. In so far as influencing future conduct is concerned, the regret of the determinist is as efficacious as the remorse of the libertarian.

As to the improvement of man's moral character, the State has the ability of instructing the young citizen in the principles of ethics, thus developing and strengthening his moral sense, in addition to frequently drawing his attention to the fact that, even from a purely practical point of view, moral conduct is preferable to immoral, because, as a rule, wrong doing brings woe, ostracism, and punishment to the wrong-doer. The State has therefore the power to mould the character of the citizen to a considerable extent. to create in him strong desires for moral behavior, thus contributing to making a moral man of a young person who, left to himself, might grow up to be a scoundrel. The doctrine of determinism does not prevent the State from doing so, since the acts are yet to be performed, and can therefore be influenced. Determinism merely claims that when the State does so it is forced by a sense of duty to its citizens. Sound moral education, punishment for, and public disapproval of, immorality have in the past contributed to the evolution of moral man from the amoral savage, and the application of these factors in the future will contribute to the further progress of our race along ethical lines.