

APPENDIX IV

ST. THOMAS AND NEOMOLINISM

A SYNTHESIS OF THE DOCTRINE OF ST. THOMAS ON THESE QUESTIONS APROPOS OF A NEW PRESENTATION OF THE SCIENTIA MEDIA

It is very difficult to treat of the question of divine causality and foreknowledge, to set forth completely St. Thomas' solution and to answer the main objections raised against it, without provoking a controversy.

The criticism of Molinism contained in the first edition of the present work was examined at length by Father d'Alès, S.J., professor of dogmatic theology at the Catholic Institute of Paris, in an article written by him concerning the "*Divine Knowledge and Decrees*,"¹ which we cannot leave unanswered.² This exchange of ideas is not altogether fruitless.

Father d'Alès is quite ready to approve the first part of our work almost without reserve, and it gives us pleasure to see what he has written on this subject at the beginning of his investigation. We also thank the *Civiltà Cattolica* for its flattering article which examines especially the first part of our work.³

But we should appear to ignore the answers and objections made by Father d'Alès, and by Father Monaco, S.J.,⁴ who writes almost in the same strain, if we took no notice of them.

In treating of divine foreknowledge and motion, we had expounded

¹ *Recherches de science religieuse*, January–March, 1917, pp. 1–35.

² This answer has already appeared in pamphlet form under the same title as above: *S. Thomas et le Neomolinisme*, and some of it appeared in the *Recherches de science religieuse*, October–December, 1917, prompting another reply from Father d'Alès, which we shall speak about at the end.

³ *La Civiltà cattolica*, July 5, 1919, *Intorno a Dio. Nuove pubblicazioni*, pp. 51–59.

⁴ *Praelectiones metaphysicae specialis*, Part III. *Theologia naturalis*, pp. 275, 284, 393, 419, 434–439. The answers given in this work are those in vogue among the Molinists. We shall examine them again in this article.

St. Thomas' teaching as it is found in the *Theological Summa* and as it has been understood by the Dominican commentators. Our criticism of Molinism was merely a summary of that given by theologians of the Thomist School. It may be stated briefly as follows: The *scientia media* conceived by Molina, according to which *God knows infallibly, before any determining divine decree on His part, the conditional free acts of the future*,⁵ (1) leads to the admission of an exception to the principle of causality and to the *universal causality* of the primary agent; being or the determination of these free acts of the future would not then come from God the first being; (2) it leads to the conclusion that the *divine knowledge is passive* with regard to these conditional free acts of the future, which determine this knowledge instead of being determined by it. The *scientia media*, thus positing a passivity in the pure Act, cannot be a pure perfection; it is a notion which attributes a human imperfection to God; (3) lastly, this theory, conceived to safeguard human liberty, must logically end in *determinism of the circumstances*; previous to any divine decree, God can infallibly foresee what would be Peter's choice if placed in certain circumstances, only if these circumstances determine the choice.⁶

Father d'Alès charges us with not knowing the Molinist doctrine we are criticizing: "The prosecution that we have just read rests solely on a complete *ignoratio elenchi* (ignoring of the point at issue)." ⁷

If this be true, then for more than three centuries all the Thomists whose views we have summarized failed to understand anything of the doctrine of Molina. May it not be rather that the Molinists have distorted the doctrine of St. Thomas?

Father d'Alès concedes that "the theory of the *scientia media* has often been proposed in a form by which the adversaries triumph" and which leads to fatalism. The third part of our criticism would then be decisive against many Molinists; but these disciples would have clumsily distorted the doctrine of their master. Father d'Alès

⁵ Molina, *Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52.

⁶ This criticism of the *scientia media* has been expounded at length by all the commentators of the Thomist school who have written about the Ia, q. 14 of St. Thomas, since the appearance of Molinism. See *John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, Gonet*, and others. *Billuart* has given us a summary of this criticism in his *De Deo*, diss. VI, a. 6, sec. 5, and in more succinct form in the *De gratia*, diss. V, a. 6.

⁷ *Recherches*, p. 20.

proposes a new conception of the *scientia media* and invites us to a frank exchange of views, in the hope of effecting a reconciliation between the Molinists and their adversaries. A better understanding of St. Thomas would permit of this reconciliation. Let us examine then: the charges made against us; the proposed new theory; the relations between this theory and the solution of St. Thomas.

CHAPTER I

DOES THE JUDGMENT PASSED BY THE THOMISTS UPON THE SCIENTIA MEDIA REST UPON A COMPLETE IGNORATIO ELENCHI?

Have the Thomists for three centuries been ignorant of the true point at issue? Like the inexpert Molinists just mentioned, have they distorted the doctrine of Molina? Have they themselves ceased to be Thomists, and become *Bannesians*, as Father d'Alès keeps on saying, after the manner of many of his confrères? Has the Thomist tradition been lost by the Dominicans, and preserved by the Jesuit theologians, as Father Schneemann¹ and his friends declare? Father del Prado, O.P., like many others before him, has made a thorough study of this question in his recent work *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, the third volume of which is occupied with the examination of the doctrine of Molina. Has he, then, been so blinded by Scholastic prejudices as not to recognize the essence of Molinism and the fundamental doctrine of St. Thomas on divine motion?²

If the Dominican theologians for three centuries have ceased to be the true disciples of St. Thomas, and have become disciples of

¹ Father G. S. Schneemann, S.J., *Controv. divin. gratiae* (1881 ed., p. 217), writes: "The followers of St. Thomas, toward the end of the sixteenth century, were divided into two camps. Bannez, to use his own words, deviated from the common opinion held by the theologians of that time, and almost at once after the appearance of his doctrine it was attacked as something *new* and *unheard of*, both by his own colleagues and others. But the theologians of the Society of Jesus, holding to and constantly explaining the *common and, I may say, ancient doctrine that has been handed down to us*, and which they learnt in the very schools of the Order of Preachers, have earnestly striven for this, if possible, that the most certain efficacy of grace, would be reconciled with liberty of action, and with the interpretation of science."

² Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, 1917, Vol. III.

Bannez,⁸ how could Pope Benedict XV write, as so many of his predecessors had done, saying of the Order of St. Dominic that: "this Order must be praised not so much for having reared the Angelic Doctor, but for *never afterwards departing in the least from his teaching*"? ⁴ If an illuminating grace is needed that one may properly understand St. Thomas, is it not above all to the religious family of the great Doctor that the Lord deigns to grant and preserve so precious a gift, although He grants it also to all those who ask it from the depth of their hearts?

What have we misunderstood in the essence of Molinism? We have repeatedly and attentively read Father d'Alès' view on this question. The texts of Molina to which he draws our attention, were known to us; they are commonly quoted by such Thomists as John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, Gonet, and others. We have again studied these texts with their context; there is always the same radical and manifest opposition, not only between Bannez and Molina—Bannez makes no innovations and glories in this fact ⁵—but between Molina and St. Thomas. As proof of this we need here only consult the very declarations of the author of the *Concordia*. He diligently sought, by a multiplicity of distinctions,⁶ to make his theory agree with the doctrine of the Angelic Doctor, but he had to confess that he separated from him at least on three essential points: the divine motion, the foreknowledge of conditional free acts of the future, and predestination. We know that Suarez is hardly more faithful to the holy Doctor on these and several other questions.⁷ The very texts of Molina will

⁸ Cf. Del Prado, *De gratia*, Vol. III, ch. xi. Dummermuth, O.P., *S. Thomas et doctrina praemotionis physicae, seu Responsio ad R. P. Schneemann*, 1886; *Responsio ad R. P. Frins, S.J.*, 1895.

⁴ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 1916, p. 397. The words of the Sovereign Pontiff, that we have marked in italics, are the same which Bannez used to express that he never deviated in the least from the teaching of St. Thomas. Cf. Bannez, on *IIa IIae*, q. 24, a. 6.

⁵ Cf. Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, Vol. III, ch. xi, *Utrum Bannezianismus sit vera comoedia a Molinistis inventa?*

⁶ The one, for instance, as we shall see, by which he changes the meaning of St. Thomas' conclusion, that "*the knowledge of God is the cause of things.*"

⁷ *La Ciencia Tomista*, May–June 1917, p. 385, notes that: "*El centenario de Suarez* published, alongside the list of twenty-four propositions which, according to the Sacred Congregation of Studies, express the fundamental theses of the philosophy of St. Thomas, twenty-four propositions of Suarez on the same questions; of

enable us to prove that the criticisms made by the Thomists do not rest upon an *ignoratio elenchi*.

ARTICLE I

MOLINISM RESTRICTS GOD'S UNIVERSAL CAUSALITY AND EVEN THE
UNIVERSALITY OF THE PRINCIPLE OF CAUSALITY

With regard to what St. Thomas teaches (Ia, q. 105, a. 5) about the divine motion, Molina writes: "I am confronted by two difficulties: (1) I do not see what is this application, in secondary causes, by which God moves and applies these causes to act. . . . And I candidly confess that I have difficulty in understanding this motion and application which St. Thomas requires in secondary causes. . . . (2) According to this doctrine, God does not concur immediately (*immediatione suppositi*) in the action and effect of secondary causes, but only through the intervention of these causes."¹ According to Molina, as he himself explains in the same chapter, the divine concurrence and the action of creatures are *two partial and co-ordinated causes*, "as when two men are pulling a boat";² according to St. Thomas they

these latter, twenty-three are formally in opposition to the doctrine of the Angelic Doctor.

¹ *Concordia*, on Ia, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 26, Paris edition, 1876, pp. 152–153. (All our citations of the *Concordia* are from this edition.) "*Duo autem sunt quae mihi difficultatem pariunt circa doctrinam hanc D. Thomae Ia, q. 105, a. 5. Primum est, quod non videam quidnam sit motus ille et applicatio in causis secundis, qua Deus illas ad agendum moveat et applicet. . . . Quare ingenue fateor, mihi valde difficilem esse ad intelligendum motionem et applicationem hanc, quam D. Thomas in causis secundis exigit. . . . Secundum quod mihi difficultatem parit est quia, juxta hanc D. Thomae doctrinam, Deus non concurrat immediate immediatione suppositi ad actiones et effectus causarum secundarum, sed solum mediate, mediis scilicet causis secundis.*"

² *Concordia, ibid.*, p. 158: "When we say that neither God by His universal concurrence nor secondary causes are total but partial causes of the effects, this must be understood of the partialness of the cause, as they call it, but not of the effect; the total effect, indeed, comes both from God and from the secondary causes; but it comes neither from God nor from secondary causes, as total but as partial cause, which at the same time demands the concurrence and influx of the other cause, *just as when two men are pulling a boat. . . .* Moreover, from what has been said it is clear that, *when causes are subordinated to one another, so that some are more, some less universal, others are particular, it is not necessary that the higher in that order always move the lower, even if they are essentially sub-*

are *two total and subordinated causes*, such that the primary cause moves the secondary to act, which means that it applies the latter to its operation. There is, then, only a material likeness between Molina's texts (quoted by Father d'Alès) on the divine concurrence, and the texts of St. Thomas.³

Thus our first criticism is verified; Molinism restricts God's universal causality and even the universality of the principle of causality. According to this view, the transition to act of the secondary cause does not come from God; and as potency cannot, of itself alone, pass into act, this transition is without a cause. If this be so, with Molina and Suarez we must reject the validity of the Thomistic proof for God's existence based on the principle that *whatever is in motion is set in motion* by another.⁴

To escape from the difficulty, Father d'Alès and some Molinists admit a *divine indifferent premotion* which is the cause of our free act *as to the entity of it*, but which does not grant that the *mode* of the act should obtain its initiative therefrom, so that the free determination depends solely on us and not on God.⁵ If such be the case, this premotion, given to free creatures, in certain determinate circumstances when a certain duty has to be performed, will incline them neither to a good consent nor to a dissent; it will be the cause neither of the good act nor of the physical act of sin; it will depend solely on us and not on God whether there is volition rather than nolition, acceptance, or refusal. And then, as Gonet says, "according to this way of explaining the divine concurrence, the betrayal by Judas is the work of God no less than is the conversion of St. Paul,"⁶ or

ordinated to one another and are mutually dependent on one another in producing some effect; but it suffices if they *immediately exert an influence on the effect.*" This means, according to the example just quoted by Molina: as when two men are pulling a boat. In truth, they are not then the *total and essentially subordinated, but partial and co-ordinated causes*, as the expression used by Molina denotes: *a simultaneous and non-previous cause.*

³ For a comparison of these texts, cf. Del Prado, *De gratia*, III, 13-16, 36-40.

⁴ Cf. Molina, on Ia, q. 2, a. 3, quoted by Del Prado, *De gratia*, III, 165; Suarez, *Disp. met.*, 20, secs. 2, 3; 22, sec. 2, n. 51.

⁵ D'Alès, *art. cit.*, pp. 9, 22.

⁶ Gonet, on Ia, disp. 6, *de scientia media*, sec. 10. Also John of St. Thomas, on Ia, q. 14, disp. 20, a. 4, n. 31. Billuart, *eod. loco* and *De gratia*, diss. 5, a. 6, says the same about Congruism in the eighth *Sequitur*, writing against the system of Congruent grace, that: "God in that case is no more the author of good than of bad acts, because in so far in that system God is said to be the author of good

the conversion of St. Paul is no more the work of God than is the betrayal by Judas. God is the cause only of the being of these two acts, inasmuch as it is being. Consequently what is greater in the created order, the good consent, will as such be exclusively our work and not the work of God; because, apart from this indifferent motion, all that God would do is to urge us to do good by the good inspirations which He gives also to the wicked, "and with *absolutely equal divine helps*, one man would obey the good inspiration and another would resist it." ⁷ God would thus remain a stranger to the determination of the free will in which the work of salvation is completed.⁸

Is this an exaggeration on the part of Thomists anxious to deduce all the consequences of Molinism? Not at all. Molina himself wrote: "*Certainly, that we perform our acts well or badly, which we can do by the faculty alone of our free will and God's general concurrence, must be referred not to God, but to ourselves as to a particular and free cause. . . . God is not, therefore, the cause of virtue and vice in us, but it is proposed and willed by us.*" ⁹

Molina takes this phrase from the *Quaestiones et responsiones ad Christianos*, erroneously attributed to St. Justin Martyr.¹⁰ The preface to the Migne edition rightly says of these *Quaestiones* that they are "notoriously tainted with Pelagianism."¹¹ We are, indeed, far from

acts inasmuch as He places man in those circumstances in which He foresees that He will make good use of grace and co-operate with him to perform the good act. Likewise, He places him who does what is evil in those circumstances in which He foresees that he will not make use of the grace offered and co-operates with him to do what is evil."

⁷ That is plainly what Molina affirms in the *Concordia*, q. 25, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. 2, p. 526.

⁸ We have given a long exposition of this consequence of Molinism. Cf. *supra*, pp. 156-157; 387-392.

⁹ *Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 23, p. 196. On these texts of Molina, cf. Del Prado, *De gratia*, III, 71, 162: "What is to be thought of an indifferent premotion."

¹⁰ We know that the *Quaestiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos* were falsely attributed to St. Justin. Harnack assigns them to Diodorus of Tarsus (fourth century) and Funk prefers to ascribe them to Theodoret of Cyr (fifth century).

¹¹ We read in Migne, *Patr. graec.*, VI, 21, in the preface: "There follow two works which are unworthy of being attributed to St. Justin Martyr because of the poison of error; yet they are apt enough in themselves to arouse one's curiosity to read and investigate them. These are the *Expositio rectae confessionis*, which is filled with the spirit of the Nestorian heresy; and the *Quaestiones ac responsiones ad orthodoxos*, which is notoriously tainted with Pelagianism. The other, *Quaestiones Christianae ad Graecos* and the *Quaestiones Graecae ad Christianos* and the

the doctrine of canon 22 of the Council of Orange, which says: "No one has of his own anything but lying and sin," and of canon 20, which states: "God works many good things in man that man does not work, but man works no good deeds that God does not give him the strength to do" (Denzinger, nn. 195, 193).

From the fact that God cannot be the cause of sin, how can anyone dare conclude that He is not the cause of our virtue, but only the indifferent cause of the being of the good or bad act in so far as it is being? If our virtue comes solely from us, why did our Lord say: "Without me you can do nothing"? Why did He condemn the prayer of the Pharisee? We ought not to give thanks to Him for what is paramount in the work of salvation, "for the determination to good which is from us and not from God."

Certainly God cannot be the cause of sin; this as such is but a deficiency and requires merely a deficient cause, consequent upon a purely permissive decree of God. The divine motion thus concurs only in the physical act of sin.¹²

On the contrary, by His efficacious grace God positively and infallibly moves us to good, according to St. Thomas, though without doing any violence to our liberty or imposing any necessity on it. St. Thomas, in fact, says not only that God moves us to universal good, but that He is the cause of the being of our free act in so far as it is being. He repeatedly says: "God moves us to know or will or do something; He moves us to meritorious good."¹³ It is not a question here merely of good inspirations and sentiments that precede our free act and that are the result of operating grace; it is a question of a free act (under the influence of co-operating grace), for the performance of which the will is both *moved* and *moves itself*:¹⁴ "even the good movement of the free will, whereby anyone is prepared for receiving the gift of grace, is an act of the free will moved by God."¹⁵ "Man needs the help of grace in order to be moved by God to act

Confutatio Aristotelis dogmatum, by their marvelous similarity of style betray the same authorship as the *Quaestiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos*. Cf. Migne, *ibid.*, col. 1243, on the Pelagian origin of the answers to questions 8 and 9 quoted by Molina.

¹² St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1, 2. We have dwelt at length on this point in the present work. See pp. 365-397.

¹³ See Ia IIae, q. 110, a. 2; q. 111, a. 2.

¹⁴ See Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2.

¹⁵ See Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 2.

righteously.”¹⁶ Furthermore, according to the Angelic Doctor, manifestly *this grace is efficacious of itself* and not because of the previous consent of the free creature. Only in this way does he think it possible to retain the true meaning of the texts of St. Paul, who says: “It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish. So, then, it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy”; “What hast thou that thou hast not received?”¹⁷ This efficacious grace is so far from being indifferent that St. Thomas wrote: “As the will *can change its act for another*, much more can God do so with the will.”¹⁸ “Only God can *transfer* the inclination, which He gave the will, from one *thing to another*.”¹⁹ Yet the infallible efficacy of this grace, far from destroying liberty in us, produces *in us and with us* the determination of the choice, and this even to the free mode of this act. “God, indeed, *immutably moves the will on account of the efficacy of the power that moves it*,²⁰ which cannot fail; but on account of the nature of our will, which is indifferently disposed toward various things, it is not necessitated but remains free.”²¹ *God certainly does not impose upon our liberty a determination for some particular thing which would not come from us*; in the performance of the good act, He moves us to determine ourselves freely (by deliberation) in one way rather than in another, and this motion is infallible on account of the efficacy of the power that moves us.²² As for sin, He permits the defect and concurs in the physical act of sin. We shall quote the principal texts of St. Thomas on this agreement between the divine motion and the human freedom in the third chapter of this appendix.

Molina, who refuses to admit this divine motion, sought to distinguish in our free act that which comes from God (the being as such of the act), and that which comes solely from us (its good or

¹⁶ See Ia IIae, q. 109, a. 9.

¹⁷ St. Thomas, on Phil. 2: 13; Rom. 9: 16; I Cor. 4: 7.

¹⁸ *De veritate*, q. 22, a. 8.

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, q. 22, a. 9.

²⁰ But not because of the foreseen consent.

²¹ *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1 ad 3um.

²² See *supra* (p. 359), how this doctrine agrees with the canon of the Council of Trent, Sess. VI, ch. iv, which states: “If anyone saith that man’s free will, moved and excited by God, *no wise co-operates; . . . that it cannot refuse its consent* if it would, but that, *as something inanimate, it does nothing whatever and is merely passive: let him be anathema.*”

bad determination). The followers of indifferent motion side with him on this point. Contrary to this, St. Thomas writes as follows in one of his famous articles on Predestination, which is absolutely irreconcilable with Molinism: "There is no distinction between what is the result of free will and what is of Predestination; as there is no distinction between what is the result of a secondary cause and of a first cause."²³

Evidently Molina restricts God's universal causality, for he affirms that apart from it are realized the transition to act of the secondary cause and the determination of the free cause, so that our good consent depends solely upon us and not upon God. The Author of salvation is not the cause of that which is most important in the order of salvation. "God is not the cause of virtue and vice in us." On the contrary, we read in the Scripture: "Destruction is thy own, O Israel; thy help is only in me" (Osee 13: 9).

St. Thomas has summed up his teaching on this point by saying: "Because the first cause exerts more influence on the effect than the secondary cause, therefore *whatever of perfection there is in the effect is to be attributed principally to the first cause*; but what there is of defect is to be attributed to the secondary cause, which does not operate so efficaciously as the first cause" (*De pot.*, q. 3, a. 7 ad 15).

ARTICLE II

DOES THE SCIENTIA MEDIA POSIT A PASSIVITY IN THE PURE ACT?

On the subject of God's foreknowledge, Molina declares not only that his theory of the scientia media¹ is new, but that it appears to him to be contrary to the teaching of St. Thomas. After proposing it, imbued with the spirit of Origen, he adds: "Although, to tell the truth, St. Thomas seems to suggest the contrary in Ia, q. 14, a. 8 ad 1um, when he explains and attempts to interpret in the opposite sense the passage of Origen to which we shall immediately refer, in which he is clearly of the same opinion as we are."² The passage of Origen quoted by Molina states that: "A thing will happen not be-

²³ See Ia, q. 23, a. 5.

¹ Molina, *Concordia*, q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, p. 550: "This idea of ours of reconciling free will with divine predestination, to my knowledge has not been presented so far by anyone."

² *Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, p. 325.

cause God knows it as future; but, because it is future, it is on that account known by God, before it exists." ³ This text St. Thomas regards as an objection to his doctrine; Molina makes it the foundation of his own.⁴

For St. Thomas what is present was from all eternity future, only because an eternal cause had to produce it, and only the first cause is eternal.⁵ Now, the first cause produces nothing external to itself by a necessity of nature but only "according to the determination of His will and intellect."⁶ Thus the thesis of St. Thomas is applied to future events: "*The knowledge of God is the cause of things, in so far as His will is joined to it. Hence the knowledge of God as the cause of things is usually called the knowledge of approbation.*"⁷

Molina strives of course to maintain the conclusion of St. Thomas, that "God's knowledge is the cause of things"; but instead of understanding it, as the text of the Angelic Doctor demands, of the knowledge of approbation (called also that of vision), he understands it of the knowledge of simple intelligence (or of possibles), which directs the divine liberty that is the cause of things.⁸ Then, between the knowledge of simple intelligence and the divine decree, he introduces the *scientia media* or knowledge of conditional free acts of the future. Now God, according to his view, is not at all the cause of the determination of these free conditionate futures (*futuribilia*). And so it is his contention that the divine knowledge is the cause of all things without exception, without being the cause, however, of the free determination of creatures. The link which connects article 8 with 13 of this question of St. Thomas is thus severed, as we have shown (*supra*, pp. 71-74).

It is clear, indeed, that in the system devised by Molina, God is the *cause*, neither by His knowledge nor by His liberty, of our free determination. By the *scientia media* God has simply *foreseen* that if Peter

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Cf. Del Prado, *De gratia*, III, 49.

⁵ St. Thomas, Ia, q. 16, a. 7 ad 3um.

⁶ See Ia, q. 19, a. 4.

⁷ See Ia, q. 14, a. 8.

⁸ *Concordia*, q. 14, a. 8, p. 2. This text of Molina which Father d'Alès points out to us on p. 18 of his pamphlet, is well known to Thomists. The majority of them refute this Molinist interpretation of the eighth article of this question of St. Thomas. Cf. Gonet, on Ia, q. 14, disp. 3, a. 2, nn. 31, 35, 41. Salmanticenses, on Ia, q. 14, a. 8, dub. 2, n. 11.

were placed in these circumstances he would choose freely such and such a thing; and the divine liberty has *de facto* placed Peter in these circumstances concurring *indifferently* with him, or, in other words, giving him a grace that *he alone* will cause to be either efficacious or sterile.

The *scientia media* is so far from being the cause of things that Molina wrote: "*It was not in God's power to know by this knowledge anything else than He actually knew.*"⁹ Does this mean that this necessity depends on the divine essence which is the foundation of possible things? No, for Molina at once adds: "*If the created free will were to do the opposite of what it did as it truly can do, God would have known this very act by the same knowledge, by which He really knows it, but not that He actually knows it.*"¹⁰ Thus then the *scientia media* depends entirely on the creature. God, according to Molina, can only *explore* and *ascertain* what decision a certain man would make in certain circumstances. He is *powerless* to preserve Peter from every fall into sin during the night of the Passion. He foresees only that Peter placed in these circumstances would deny his Master, and that afterwards in other circumstances he would retrieve himself, and would *render efficacious* by his consent the sufficient grace which would be offered him. If it is so, says Del Prado, "*this kind of knowledge on God's part is dependent, as at its very source, upon creatures themselves. Hence God begs this scientia media from the determination itself of the created will.*"¹¹ Thus our second criticism is verified. "The *scientia media* is *passive* with regard to free conditional future acts, which determine it instead of being determined by it. The *scientia media*, positing a *passivity in the pure Act*, could not be a pure perfection; it is a notion which attributes a human imperfection to God." This disadvantage is the necessary outcome of the first. If we restricted God's universal causality and the passivity of the creature, we are obliged to put a passivity in God. This explains why Molina, after the exposition of his theory, had to write: "Although, to tell the truth, St. Thomas seems to suggest the contrary in Ia, q. 14, a. 8 ad rum." We fail to understand how Molinists of our times, however desirous to call themselves Thomists, can claim that the *scientia media* does not impair the thesis of St. Thomas that

⁹ *Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, p. 318.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Del Prado, III, 137.

“God’s knowledge is the cause of things,” and all that he has written on the intrinsic efficacy of grace.¹²

We discard the texts in which Molina affirms that he considers his opinion on predestination must be maintained, not only against St. Thomas, but against both St. Augustine and St. Thomas together. We are thus led to infer that his opinion was contrary to theirs.¹³ If he had thought he could clearly reconcile his point of view with that of the Angelic Doctor, he would have had no need to write as follows: “Although the authority of St. Thomas is of very great weight, yet on this account there must be no receding from our decision which has been corroborated by so many most convincing arguments.”¹⁴ Evidently the disciples of Molina would completely abandon their master and would cease to be called Molinists, if they truly followed the doctrine of the Angelic Doctor on predestination as set forth in Ia, q. 23, especially in article 5, and if they understood the axiom that “to anyone who does what he can, God does not deny grace,” as explained in Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 3.

We maintain, too, that many Molinists separate from St. Thomas in defending the proposition that “God not only knows creatures in Himself, but He also knows them *immediately in themselves*.”¹⁵ This proposition is taught, for instance, by the Wiceburgenses,¹⁶ who vainly

¹² A compilation of the texts of St. Thomas on the intrinsic efficacy of grace has been made by Del Prado in his *De gratia*, II, 92–140. We shall quote the principal ones in the third chapter of this appendix.

¹³ *Concordia*, q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. 6, Paris edition, 1876, p. 468; passages quoted by Del Prado in the *De gratia*, III, 53–57, are according to the Lisbon edition, 1858, p. 431.

¹⁴ *Concordia*, q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. 12, 1876 ed., p. 537.

¹⁵ It is a question here of the *medium* of divine knowledge and not of its *terminus*; for all theologians admit that God knows created things exactly as they are outside of Himself.

¹⁶ Wiceburgenses, *De Deo*, disp. 3, a. 3, n. 117: “God knows distinctly all possible creatures”; n. 118: “God knows them *in Himself*; and indeed, on as many grounds as He is *essentially* connected with them”; n. 119: “God knows even *immediately* possible things *in themselves*.” Likewise n. 122, art. 4, n. 125, we read: “God does not see absolutely future contingent things in decrees previously determined for one end”; n. 127: “God sees futures of this kind *immediately in themselves, i. e.*, in their objective truth and actual existence in succession of time”; art. 5, n. 135: “God does not know conditionally future contingent things in subjectively absolute and objectively conditional decrees”; n. 137: “God knows these futures *immediately in themselves*, before and independently of any actual decree.” These theses of the Wiceburgenses find an echo, without a doubt, among many Molinists.

strive to reconcile it with this other proposition of St. Thomas, that "God sees things other than Himself, *not in themselves* but in Himself" (Ia, q. 14, a. 5). And it is not without reason that, following Gonet, we have quoted Suarez¹⁷ as favorable to this opinion, for he declares it to be probable although St. Thomas saw an impossibility in it.¹⁸ For the Angelic Doctor the *medium* of God's knowledge of creatures can be only His essence and power or His causality. On this point we have referred to Thomist commentators, not that it is sufficient to study the Molinist doctrine from their works, but because they point out clearly what it is that separates this doctrine from that of St. Thomas. Their judgment does not rest upon a *complete ignoratio elenchi*, but is pronounced upon the real point at issue, and has never been refuted.

Let us come to our third criticism.

ARTICLE III

DOES THE SCIENTIA MEDIA LEAD TO DETERMINATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES?

On this point, Father d'Alès (p. 30) makes the following admission: "The theory of the *scientia media* has often been proposed in a form by which its opponents are victorious. It has been said that God knows a priori all the possible determinations of the rational creature, so much so that on such grounds He sees distinctly and without any possible alternative which of two opposites the rational creature would choose when placed in a certain combination of circumstances. To this assertion the opponents reply that the rational creature, con-

¹⁷ Cf. *supra*, p. 68.

¹⁸ Suarez, *De Deo*, Bk. III, *De attributis Dei positivis*, ch. ii, n. 16: "Thus explained, this opinion is not improbable nor has it any disadvantages; wherefore we ought to fight strenuously with its authors for it. Nevertheless St. Thomas in all his writings, not only teaches the prior mode of knowing (in Himself) to be the true one, but he even excludes this second way (in creatures themselves), and especially in Book I of the *Contra Gentes*, ch. xlviii, where he *ex professo* proves that there cannot be in God this twofold knowledge of creatures, but the first only." Suarez also says, when explaining the *scientia media*: "We must say, therefore, that God knows these conditionally future things . . . by penetrating *immediately* the truth which is or can be conceived *in them*; nor is there need of any *other medium* for Him to know them. And this manner of expressing it is in agreement with those authors who say that God knows future contingent things by the immediate intuition of their truth." *De scientia Dei futurorum contingentium absolutorum*, Bk. II, ch. vii, n. 15.

fronted by two opposites, both of which appeal to the will, can choose the one just as well as the other, that in such an emergency indetermination is of the very essence of liberty, that the reality of the determination is the *sine qua non* condition of the knowledge that God can have of them, and therefore that it is metaphysically repugnant for God to see the creature determining itself one way or the other, if, in the actual state of affairs, it must not determine itself.¹ We candidly confess that this answer seems to us to be conclusive and that we cannot defend the theory of the *scientia media*, proposed in these terms, as being a premature and universal judgment about that which must not be judged."

This manner of presenting the *scientia media* is found not only among the more or less inexperienced disciples, but among such masters as Suarez.² It is rejected by Molina as implying Determinism,³ in a text quoted by Father d'Alès (p. 30) and well known to Thomists.⁴

In truth, Molina proposes the *scientia media* in a slightly different way. According to him, God, before any divine determining decree, is able to know the conditionally free acts of the future by reason of *supercomprehension of the causes*. He says: "God has a very profound and unfathomable comprehension of each free will. He sees clearly what each free cause would do of its own accord in such and such circumstances, and even in an infinity of possible circumstances. We call this vision on God's part, *scientia media*."⁵ It is not a

¹ We say precisely against this theory that: "it is metaphysically repugnant for God, before any divine decree, to see in the free creature a determination which is not there and which is contrary to the essence of liberty. Neither can He see it in the circumstances, if the circumstances are insufficient for determining our choice, as all the theologians teach against Determinism."

² Suarez, *opusc.* II, *De scientia futurorum contingentium*, Bk. II, ch. vii, n. 15 (1617 ed., p. 238; Vives ed., XI, 370-375). "God knows these conditionally future things . . . by penetrating *immediately* the truth which is or can be conceived *in them*; nor is there need of any *other medium* for Him to know them."

³ Molina, *Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, p. 322: "*Future contingent things . . . by their very nature are indifferent*, so that any one of them may or may not be. . . . Wherefore their foundation for this certainly breaks down," of those, namely, who say that: "in future contingent things always one of them is determinately true from all eternity before it happens to take place, and the other is determinately false."

⁴ Del Prado, *De gratia*, III, 146.

⁵ Molina, *Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, p. 317: "From a most profound and inscrutable comprehension of every free will in His essence, He has intued

question here of conjecture, but a question of *infallible* foreknowledge.

The difficulty still remains; fatalism is not evaded. The supercomprehension of a free undetermined cause cannot cause one to see in it a determination which is not there. If anyone answers that this determination is known from the circumstances in which the created liberty would be placed, he ends in determinism of circumstances. *This objection* is raised against the theory of Molina, *not only by the Thomists, but also by Suarez and Mazzella.*⁶ *Suarez declares, in fact, that the theory of the supercomprehension of free causes is contrary to the teaching of St. Thomas and that it destroys liberty.*⁷ *Molina and Suarez—though they do so anonymously*⁸*—thus indulge in mutual reproaches, in that their conception of the scientia media implies fatalism. Were they themselves ignorant of the real point at issue? If so, then no one has ever understood the problem as stated, which is, nevertheless, one of the clearest. It may be stated as follows: Between Thomists and Molinists it is not at all a question of knowing whether God infallibly knows conditional free acts of the future. The whole purpose of the controversy is to know the medium in which God sees that a certain free cause placed in certain circumstances would choose one particular thing and not a certain other. The Thom-* what each, according to its innate liberty, would do if placed in this or that condition, or even in infinite conditions of things, although it could, however, if it wished, do exactly the opposite.”

⁶ Mazzella, *De gratia*, disp. 3, a. 7.

⁷ Suarez, *op. II, De scientia Dei futurorum contingentium*, Bk. II, ch. vii, nn. 3-6, p. 236: “And so the first opinion affirms that God knows these future things in their proximate causes, and *by the perfect comprehension of our free will* and having present to Him all those things which can determine or prevent it from being free. . . . But St. Thomas refutes that opinion in Ia, q. 14, a. 13; q. 57, a. 3; q. 86, a. 4; IIa IIae, q. 171, a. 6 ad 1um and 2um; *Contra Gentes*, Bk. I, ch. lxvi, lxvii.” Suarez adds that either this super-comprehension of created liberty gives one only a conjectural knowledge of the future, or else our liberty is destroyed. “It destroys liberty . . . it takes away the use of liberty . . . it is repugnant to liberty.”

Molina's theory implies even the *denial of divine liberty*, for God, possessing the super-comprehension of His own liberty, could know infallibly therefore from all eternity, *before any decree*, whether or not there will be a creation; hence creation would no longer be a free act. Cf. Del Prado, *D gratia*, III, 143, 146.

⁸ We make no inquiry here as to whether Molina knew that Suarez was defending this view of the *scientia media*; we are only establishing the fact of the criticism he addresses to theologians who admit this view of it; and one of them was Suarez.

ists say that God has seen it in his positive decrees (or merely permissive, if it is a question of a foreseen sin); for instance, He decided, for reasons of which He is judge, to permit Peter to fall into sin during the Passion of Jesus, and afterwards to give him an intrinsically efficacious grace in order *sweetly and firmly* to cause him to repent. According to our view, it is in this sense that this decree is determining.⁹

No, reply the Molinists, God has not seen in his decrees these conditional free acts of the future, because God cannot give Peter an *intrinsically* efficacious grace which would cause him to retrieve himself freely and infallibly. It depends *solely* on Peter to will or not to use the sufficient grace which would be (or will be) given to him.

But, again the Thomists ask, what is the *medium* in which God has seen what Peter would do if placed in a certain combination of circumstances? Suarez' answer leads to fatalism, according to Molina; Molina's answer leads to fatalism, according to Suarez. The defenders of the *scientia media* fall from Charybdis into Scylla. Is there an avenue of escape?

Let us examine the new conception of the *scientia media* presented by Father d'Alès.

CHAPTER II

THE SCIENTIA MEDIA PRESENTED UNDER A NEW ASPECT

Father d'Alès gets his inspiration from Father de Régnon. To the Thomists' question: "*In what medium* does God see the conditional free acts of the future?" Father de Régnon replies: "It is a mystery, an unfathomable mystery. . . . Of all explanations that have been offered, *not one* is completely satisfactory. . . . We must *give up* explaining the *how* of this divine knowledge that we call the knowledge of conditional things. . . . To explain this knowledge is the work of philosophical *dilletantism*."¹ One cannot avoid contradicting oneself with greater grace. But Father de Régnon maintained that

⁹ God does not decide to impose upon us a *determination which would not come from us*, but to move us efficaciously to determine ourselves to act (by deliberation) in one particular way rather than in a certain other. This means that He decides to incline us to give our good consent, unless He permits a defect which comes only from a defective cause.

¹ Father de Régnon, *Bannez et Molina*, pp. 113, 114, 115.

God knows the conditional free acts of the future before any determining decree, and that in virtue of the principle of the *virtual priority of truth over goodness*. "The purest metaphysics," he said, "leads us to recognize in God Himself a virtual priority which sets in order Being, Truth, and Goodness. Hence it follows that, according to our way of forming our concepts, the divine intellect, having truth for its object, must be conceived in act *before the will and independently of the will*. Now, an infinite intellect cannot be conceived in act, without our conceiving, at the same time, its including all objects to which it can attain. Therefore the divine intellect extends of itself to *all truth* by a comprehension that is immediate and derived solely from itself. Hence I conclude that metaphysics avoids having recourse to the divine will to explain the divine knowledge and teaches us to rely on the essential relation between intellect and truth."²

Father d'Alès (p. 23) says the same thing: "Order is the proper work of the intellect; therefore the intellect must here intervene to prepare the way for the operations of the will, to prevent it from encountering limits beyond which neither the will nor the intellect can go, those that involve the absurd. In other words, the divine knowledge must represent, *previous* to the conclusion of the divine decree, what the essential order allows one to demand of the rational creature and what it does not allow one to demand of it. If the divine will always acts according to design, this is because it is always, *first of all*, regulated by knowledge. Knowledge which intervenes after the formation of the decree, is no longer an operative knowledge." Father d'Alès says further (p. 31): "We defend the *scientia media* as a province apart in the knowledge of simple intelligence and we claim as the signs of it merely the stability proper to this knowledge, the *stability pertaining to the order of possible things*, and it has its foundation in the very essence of God. It needs no more than this, and nothing less, to authorize the divine decree to call forth *such* a series of free determinations of rational creatures in the order of realities." Again (p. 9) he says: "Because the knowledge of simple intelligence has shown to God the possibility, for such a created liberty, to orientate itself *by its own power* in *such* circumstances and under the influence of such a motion, God takes His choice of these circumstances and this motion. The order of Providence to which these circumstances and this orientation of created liberty belong, is realized

² *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

by God entirely in the concrete. Orientation remains, under the divine realization, what it was as God saw it: *the property* of created liberty. God has the initiative as to the *entity* of the act, in virtue of this transcendent causality which He cannot abdicate; but He forbids Himself the initiative as to the *mode* of the act." Again (p. 10) we read: "The divine decree has not the initiative of ideal determination; it presupposes it, and invests it only with the solidity of the divine choice. A priori the divine knowledge guarantees the act as *realizable*; a posteriori the divine decree brings about its realization; the act realized will be a free one, because every determination comes from the creature.³ It is a simple idea as well as the right one about this. I feel sure that St. Thomas never saw it otherwise. Cf. Ia, q. 14, a. 13." Father de Régnon (p. 32) writes: "The divine motion of which St. Thomas speaks and which he declares to be infallible, is a motion that is infallible a posteriori, and it presupposes the positive intimation of the divine knowledge of simple intelligence, as to the *possibility* of the created will to be moved freely in this way. To this conception of the divine decree we have no objection from the standpoint of liberty. What do the Bannesians think of it?"

It is our turn to say in reply to this, that it is a *totalis ignoratio elenchi*. In all the preceding exposé, the only thing proved has been the foreknowledge of free *possible* determinations (as emphasized by us). Now the problem to be solved is concerned not with possible things, but with *conditional free acts of the future*.

Father del Prado refuted this new conception of the *scientia media* which had been proposed by Cardinal Pecci, when he said: "The *ratio futuribilis* is one thing, and the *ratio possibilis* is another. Hence, that one may have actual knowledge of the conditional free acts of the future, a knowledge of each and every possible thing is not sufficient for this; . . . this constitutes the main point of the controversy."⁴

³ We too, Thomists, say that *every determination comes from the creature*; but we add that it also *comes totally from the Creator* (at least for good acts); for God and our will are *two total and subordinated causes*. God efficaciously moves the created will to determine itself by its act of deliberation in one particular way rather than in a certain other.

⁴ Del Prado, *De gratia*, III, 476. Not without reason do we quote this work so repeatedly. It is noteworthy that in certain circles little attention has been paid to it. It is the fruit of a lifetime of meditation and labor; it is one of the best, perhaps the very best treatise on grace that has appeared since the great works of the Thomists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The author has

It is most certain for the Thomists that God by His knowledge of simple intelligence sees that Peter, if he were placed in the circumstances of the Passion, *could* remain faithful to His Master or deny Him; these are two *possible opposites*. But it is a question of the foreknowledge of a *conditioned future*: *Which of these two possibles* would Peter choose if placed in these circumstances?

Hence our answer presents no difficulty:

We say that, before any determining divine decree, God knows infallibly both the merely possible and the conditioned future. (*a*) If He knows only the *possible*, the *scientia media* admits of no infallible, even conditionally infallible, foreknowledge concerning free acts. (*b*) If He knows the *conditioned future*, then all the objections made against the *scientia media* return in full force.

a) Before any decree (positive or permissive), God can certainly know all *possible things*, even those that are free, *v. g.*, that Peter, placed in the circumstances of the Passion *could*—I do not say *would*—deny his Master. But then, if the *scientia media* goes no further than this, it adds nothing to the knowledge of simple intelligence, and does not admit of the infallible foreknowledge which is what concerns us in the present case; for, in the circumstances of the Passion, there is, indeed, a possibility of two contradictory choices for Peter: either to be faithful or not. Therefore it will certainly be possible for God to decree to place the Apostle effectively in a certain situation of circumstances and give him an indifferent premotion, which is that admitted by Father d'Alès;⁵ but it will not be possible for God thus to foresee infallibly whether Peter will be faithful or not; He will be able only to conjecture this. Also this cannot be the idea of Father d'Alès. Like every Molinist, he has to admit that God, before any decree, knows not only the two possible contradictories, but also the conditioned future, in other words, which of these two possible things would be chosen by the created liberty. What follows from this?

b) If it is maintained that before any determining divine decree

examined at length the doctrine of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, that of Molina, and the *attempts at reconciliation* which, instead of being a higher synthesis, remain mid-way between Molinism and Thomism.

⁵ The objection would hold even against Congruism, for the congruent grace in this system has not an intrinsically infallible efficacy. Cf. Del Prado, *De gratia*, Vol. III, ch. ix. *Utrum Concordia Molinae, dealbata per Congruismum Bellarmini et Suarezii mutuaverit speciem suam*; ch. x, *Utrum Sorbonicus . . . revera a Molinismo recedat*.

(positive or permissive), God foresees infallibly such a *conditional free act of the future* by reason of the virtual priority of truth over goodness, one falls back into fatalism or determinism of circumstances. For, after all, according to the hypothesis, this free act of the future is determined neither by a divine decree nor in the created will which is free or indifferent. For it to be foreseen infallibly and not merely conjecturally, it must therefore be determined by the circumstances. The interpretation proposed to us by reason of the principle of the *virtual priority of truth over goodness* necessarily leads to this conclusion.

In fact, this principle is psychologically construed as meaning that *a thing must be known before it is willed*. From this Father de Régnon deduced that "the divine intellect extends of itself to *all truth* by an immediate comprehension which depends entirely on itself . . . regardless of the divine will."⁶

It is easy to reply as Father Guillermin did,⁷ by saying: That anyone wills only what is known as *possible* or even as *apt to be chosen by preference*, I concede; that anyone wills only what is known as the *determinate object to be willed*, I deny. To maintain this would lead one to admit at least psychological determinism after the manner of Leibniz.⁸ He, too, wrote concerning the defenders of the *scientia media* as follows: "It is amusing to see how they torment themselves to get out of a labyrinth from which there is absolutely no escape. . . . They will never, therefore, get out of trouble unless they admit a predetermination in the preceding act of the free creature which inclines it to determine itself."⁹

We certainly do not deny the virtual priority of truth over goodness, of knowledge over volition; we even defend this against Scotus and Suarez in explaining deliberation and the rôle of the practico-practical final judgment;¹⁰ but it by no means follows, although Father de Régnon may say so, that the divine intellect extends to all

⁶ *Bannez et Molina*, p. 118. For quotation of the complete text, see p. 482.

⁷ Guillermin, O.P., *L'opuscule de son Eminence le Cardinal Pecci sur la promotion physique et la science moyenne*. A critical exposé appeared in the *Annales de philosophie chrétienne*, 1886, set apart, pp. 38 f.

⁸ Cf. Zigliara, *Summa phil.*, 8th ed., II, 458; Gayraud, *Thomisme et Molinisme*, p. 134.

⁹ *Theodicée*, I, sec. 48.

¹⁰ We have discussed this question at length and compared the three doctrines of St. Thomas, Suarez, and Leibniz on this point. Cf. *supra*, pp. 269-350.

truth, even before any decree of the divine will. If it were so, God, from all eternity, would know infallibly before any decree, which of these two propositions expresses what will truly happen: there will be a creation, there will not be a creation. Creation would no longer be a free act. We should have to say with Leibniz: "God would be neither good nor wise, if He had not created." We should have to admit that creation is a moral necessity in virtue of the principle that the best must be intended, understood in the sense of absolute intellectualism. *Truth, indeed, precedes goodness, but it follows being, and previous to any divine decree the conditional free acts of the future have not any determinate being; their absolute contingency is opposed to this.*¹¹ We are always confronted, therefore, with the same difficulty: the *scientia media*, devised to safeguard liberty, destroys it.

Perhaps in answer to this, some may say: We give up explaining the *how* of the *scientia media*; not one of the proposed *media* is satisfactory; but it can well be that God in the depths of His infinite wisdom has some *medium* unknown to us. The Thomists do not prove that it is impossible for God to know the conditioned future in any other *medium* than that of His determining decrees.

Excuse me, that is what we are proving; for, previous to any determining divine decree, the *conditional free act of the future is undetermined*, and cannot therefore be known: "nothing is intelligible except in so far as it is in act." To say that it is determined of itself or by the circumstances is to fall into Determinism (cf. *Perihermeneias*, Bk. I, lect. 13). The error is just the same if one claims that, before any determination on the part of the divine will, a certain free act rather than its contrary or the voluntary omission of every act, is infallibly represented in the divine essence, not only as possible but as *conditionally future*.

¹¹ St. Thomas (Ia, q. 14, a. 8: "Whether the knowledge of God is the cause of things.") says precisely this: "For since the *intelligible form* has a relation to opposite things (inasmuch as the same knowledge relates to opposites), *it would not produce a determinate effect unless it were determined to one thing by the appetite*, as the Philosopher says in VI *Metaph.*, text. 10. . . . Hence His knowledge must be the cause of things, *in so far as His will is joined to it.*" St. Thomas says the same thing in IIa IIae, q. 171, a. 3: "Certain things are completely beyond the knowledge of all men; not that they are in themselves unknowable, but because of the defect of human knowledge, such as the mystery of the Trinity. . . . Others do not come within the scope of any man's knowledge, because *in themselves they are not knowable; such are future contingent things, the truth of which is not determined.*"

Therefore our three criticisms still hold good, and the first is the *raison d'être* of the other two. The *scientia media*, in whatever manner it is presented, (1) restricts God's universal causality, since the free determination of our good consent does not come entirely from God any more than the defect of the bad consent does; (2) the *scientia media* posits as a natural consequence a passivity in the divine knowledge which is determined by the conditioned futures according to the good pleasure of free creatures; (3) it leads, finally, as the Thomists commonly teach,¹² to determinism of the circumstances, and it would avoid this only by sacrificing the infallibility of foreknowledge. All these disadvantages arise from the fact that Molina did not entertain a sufficiently exalted notion of the divine causality and its efficacy.

CHAPTER III

THE SOLUTION OF ST. THOMAS

It presents itself readily from what we have said. Here we can give only a summary of it together with the principal references. A compilation of the texts quoted in full, which we only point out here, was made by Father del Prado in his work, *De gratia*, Vol. II, ch. iii; Vol. III, ch. ii, and epilogue, to which we repeatedly refer the reader in the course of this article.

According to St. Thomas:

1) The first cause and the secondary cause are not two partial coordinated causes, "like two men pulling a boat," but they are *two total subordinated causes* such that the first *moves* the second to its action. The *whole* effect depends thus on God as its first cause, and upon the creature as its secondary cause.¹

2) The divine motion which inclines us efficaciously to good (either natural or supernatural) is not indifferent; it is not made efficacious

¹² Cf. *infra*, beginning of ch. iv, note 2.

¹ See Ia, q. 105, a. 5; *De pot.*, q. 3, a. 4 and 7 ad 7, ad 13; *Contra Gentes*, III, chs. lxvi, cxlix; *De malo*, q. 3, a. 2, ad 4. *Contra errores Graecorum*, ch. xxiii; in this chapter St. Thomas positively rejects simultaneous concurrence in these words: "As if it were said to be like *several pulling a boat*." It is the very example that Molina makes use of (*Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 26, p. 158) to express the nature, according to him, of the divine concurrence. Cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, III, 36-40.

by our foreseen consent, but *it moves us to determine ourselves to act in one particular way rather than in a certain other.*²

3) Sin happens only as the result of a *permissive decree* of God; it is formally a defect which, as such, demands only a deficient cause, *God concurs only in the physical act of sin.*³

4) No one is *deprived* of the efficacious grace necessary for salvation except through a fault which is due to our own defectibility. God is not bound to remedy this defect; in fact He often does so, but not always. That is a mystery.⁴

5) Under the influence of intrinsically efficacious grace *the will determines itself freely*, for it is moved by God as befitting to its nature; now by nature it enjoys a dominating indifference with regard to every particular good deemed good under one aspect, insufficient under another. The relation of our will to this object is contingent; moreover, our will dominates the attraction that this good has for it. This dominating indifference (potential in the faculty; actual in the choice itself) constitutes the freedom of the act. The act is free because it proceeds, under the indifference of the judgment, from a will that has a universal amplitude which extends farther than the particular good to which it is inclined. God by His efficacious motion does not change, and even cannot change this relation of our voluntary act to this object, since the act is specified by this object. Therefore it is not contradictory to say that the will remains free, although there is a mystery in this which is analogous to that of the creative act.⁵

6) That which now is, was *from all eternity future* only because an *eternal cause* had to bring it into existence, and only the first cause is eternal.⁶

7) Now, the first cause brings nothing into existence that is external to itself by a necessity of its nature; but only "according to the

² See Ia, q. 105, a. 4; Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4, c; ad 3; Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2 ad 2; q. 113, the whole question; IIa IIae, q. 24, a. 11; *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1, ad 3; *De carit.*, a. 12; Rom. 9, lect. 3, on the text: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy"; Ephes. 3, lect. 2; Heb. 12, lect. 3; 13, lect. 3; cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, II, 92-109.

³ See Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1, 2.

⁴ See Ia IIae, q. 2, a. 5 ad 1. *Contra Gentes*, III, ch. clviii. We have discussed this question at length, which is that of sufficient grace. Cf. *supra*, pp. 000-000.

⁵ See Ia IIae, q. 113, a. 3; q. 10, a. 4; *Contra Gentes*, III, ch. lxxxix; *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1 ad 3, etc. Cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, II, 259-298. We have explained this point of doctrine; cf. *supra*, pp. 76-77; 147-150; 156-159; 362-364.

⁶ See Ia, q. 16, a. 7 ad 3; *Perihermenias*, I, lect. 13.

determination of His will and intellect.”⁷ Thus the knowledge of God is the cause of things “in so far as His will is joined to it,”⁸ by a *decree*. And the decree or command, for St. Thomas, is an act of the intellect which presupposes the choice made by the will.⁹ It is not, therefore, because things will be that God knows them, but these things will be because God has decreed that they would be.¹⁰ Hence there is no infallible foreknowledge either of future free acts or of conditionally future free acts, except by a divine determining decree which is either positive or negative (a decree either objectively absolute or objectively conditional).¹¹

It follows that the doctrine of St. Thomas, in opposition to that of Molina:

1) Maintains the *universal causality of God* and His omnipotence. God is not *powerless* to keep Peter from all unfaithfulness in the very circumstances of the Passion; but He decides to permit this defect for very sublime reasons of which He is the judge. He also decides to raise Peter up again by a very strong and very mild movement of grace which will incline him infallibly and freely to repent. Peter's good consent will not be *solely* because he is free to act; he will not be able to pride himself on it. It will be caused in him by the Author of all good, by the Author of salvation, for it is He who saves us. To be saved, it is not enough to say: “Lord, Lord.” We must do the will of our Father who is in heaven. The work of salvation consists, rightly so, in the good consent. God cannot be a stranger in the production of that which is nobler in this order. We also say to Him: “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”; give us, O Lord, the grace to do Thy holy will or, as St. Augustine expresses it: “give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt.” It would be a blasphemy to claim that God is not more the author of the virtuous act than He is of sin, that He is the cause, by His indifferent concurrence, only of the entity as such of these two acts.

2) The doctrine of St. Thomas posits as a natural consequence *no*

⁷ See Ia, q. 19, a. 4.

⁸ See Ia, q. 14, a. 8.

⁹ See Ia IIae, q. 17, a. 1.

¹⁰ See Ia, q. 14, a. 8, ad 1.

¹¹ See previously quoted passages, and *De veritate*, q. 6, a. 3; Ia, q. 57, a. 2; Ia, q. 14, a. 11; IIa IIae, q. 171, a. 3: “Future contingent things the truth of which is not determined, are not in themselves knowable”; III *Contra Gentes*, ch. lvi. Cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, III, 49–52.

passivity in the divine knowledge which is truly the *cause of things* and is not *measured* by things. God is not, by His supercomprehension of causes, the *explorer* of created wills, obliged to *ascertain* how they will choose to act in certain given circumstances. God is infinitely superior to this anthropomorphic conception of Him.¹²

3) The doctrine of St. Thomas safeguards human liberty by means of *the transcendent efficacy of the divine causality* which is able to incline us *firmly and suavely* (or infallibly and freely) to determine ourselves in the choice of what is good, and also to concur in the physical act of sin, the defect of which comes only from the deficient cause, and it presupposes a purely permissive decree of God.

The force and suavity of the efficacious grace are so intimately united that, to fail to recognize the first is to fail to see the second, and so become involved in theories which, in order the better to safeguard the free will, destroy it.

OBJECTIONS

1st obj. The Molinists refuse to admit this doctrine because it is evident for them, so they say, that God cannot incline us infallibly to determine ourselves in one particular way rather than in a certain other.

Are they quite sure of having this evidence, and of knowing enough about omnipotence so as to express themselves in this manner? St. Thomas, too, with a prudence and a boldness which are the mark of genius, wrote: "Every act of the will, inasmuch as it is an act, not only is from the will as the immediate agent, but is also from God as the first agent who more vehemently stamps it with His imprint; *hence just as the will can change its act for another, much more can God.*"¹³ "Only God can transfer the will's inclination, which He gave it, from one thing to another, according as He wills."¹⁴ "God alone therefore (who alone creates the soul) can move the will as agent without violence. Hence it is said (Prov. 21: 1): *'The heart of the*

¹² John of St. Thomas, on Ia, q. 14, disp. 20, a. 4, n. 29, says of the disadvantages of this theory of the *scientia media* that "they amount to the greatest imperfection in God."

¹³ *De veritate*, q. 22, a. 8: "Whether God can force the will." Cf. Ia, q. 105, a. 4: "Whether God can move the created will."

¹⁴ *De veritate*, q. 22, a. 9: "Whether any creature can change the will." Cf. Ia, q. 111, a. 2: "Whether angels can change the will of man."

king is in the hand of the Lord: whithersoever He will He shall turn it'; and (Phil. 2: 13): '*For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will.*'¹⁵. . . Some nevertheless, unable to understand how God can cause in us the movement of the will without prejudice to liberty, have endeavored to give a false exposition to the authorities quoted. They say, in fact, that God causes in us to will and to accomplish by causing in us the power to will, and not by *causing us to will this or that*. This is the exposition of Origen (III *Periarchon*).¹⁶ . . . *But the authority of Scripture is in manifest opposition to all this*. It is said (Is. 26: 12): '*O Lord, Thou hast wrought all our works in us.*' Hence we receive from God not only the power to will, but also our very operations."¹⁷

2d obj. But Father d'Alès (p. 23) insists that God's power is limited by the absurd. And it is absurd to say that the world moves itself, if it is moved by God. St. Thomas (Ia. q. 105, a. 4, obj. 2) states this objection: "God cannot make two contradictories to be true at the same time. But this would follow if He moved the will; for to be voluntarily moved means *to be moved from within*, and *not by another*."

He replies: "To be moved voluntarily, is to be moved from within, that is, by an interior principle: yet this interior principle may be caused by an exterior principle; and so *to be moved from within is not repugnant to being moved by another*." Also, in his reply to the first objection, he says: "God, while moving the will, does not force it, because he gives the will its own natural inclination."

3d obj. We must safeguard not only spontaneity which is found, too, in the animal, but also liberty. "The determination of the secondary free cause remains something which does not belong to the first Cause";¹⁸ for it cannot be that: "one and the same act of a rational creature be both free and necessary; free as getting its determination from the creature, and *necessary* with regard to the same creature, *as getting its determination from the Creator*" (Father d'Alès, p. 20). There would no longer be either merit or demerit. This objection is found in the *Summa* in the article just quoted (Ia, q. 105, a. 4, obj. 3): "Movement is attributed to the mover rather than to the one moved;

¹⁵ *Contra Gentes*, III, ch. lxxxviii.

¹⁶ We have seen *supra* how Molina bases his theory of the *scientia media* on a statement of Origen. Cf. *Concordia*, p. 325.

¹⁷ *Contra Gentes*, III, ch. lxxxix.

¹⁸ D'Alès, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

wherefore homicide is not ascribed to the stone, but to the thrower. Therefore, if God moves the will, it follows that voluntary actions are not imputed to man for reward or blame."

St. Thomas replies: "If the will were so moved by another as in no way to be moved *from within* itself, the act of the will would not be imputed for reward or blame. But since *its being moved by another does not prevent its being moved from within itself*, as we have stated, *it does not thereby forfeit the motive for merit or demerit.*"

The determination of the choice is not imposed upon us by God as a determination which in no way would come from us. God moves us to determine ourselves in a certain way, for what is good, or He permits our defect.

In Ia IIae, q. 9, a. 6, the objection is presented in this form: "If, therefore, man's will were moved by *God alone*, it would never be moved to evil." The holy Doctor replies to this third objection as follows: "God moves man's will, as the universal mover, to the universal object of the will, which is good. And without this universal motion, man cannot will anything. But man determines himself by his reason, to will this or that, which is *true or apparent good*. Nevertheless, sometimes *God moves some specially to the willing of something determinate, which is good; as in the case of those whom He moves by grace*, as we shall state later on (q. 109, 112)."

In other words, if *God alone* moved the will, if under the influence of the divine motion the will did not move itself (as secondary cause), sin would be impossible. It does not occur in the act in which the will under the influence of operating grace is moved without moving itself. It can be found in the act in which the will is *moved and moves itself*; in that case, if God so permits, the will can be defective. St. Thomas distinguishes very clearly between these two movements when speaking of operating and co-operating grace. (Cf. Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2.) For the same reason he teaches that it was not possible for the first act of the devil to be a sin, but only the second. (Cf. Ia, q. 63, a. 5, c and ad 3.)

4th obj. In the text just quoted (Ia IIae, q. 9, a. 6, ad 3), St. Thomas only says that God moves the will to universal good, and that it determines itself to particular good.

Reply: We have already shown (p. 80, n. 35, and p. 157, n. 98) that in vain one would seek to conclude from this text that God does not move our will to determine itself in the choice. Article 4

of the following question, the purpose of which is to state precisely the way in which God moves the free will, is strictly opposed to this interpretation. "Because the will is an active principle not determinate to one thing, but having an indifferent relation to many things, God so moves it that He does not determine it of necessity to one thing, but its movement remains contingent and not necessary, except in those things to which it is moved naturally."

Moreover, as we have just said, the true interpretation of this passage (Ia IIae, q. 9, a. 6 ad 3) was given by St. Thomas in Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2, where he distinguishes between operating and co-operating grace. (See also Dummermuth *S. Thomas et doctrina praemotionis physicae*, p. 358.) For our will, the fact that it moves itself in making the choice, does not exclude the divine motion for this same act. St. Thomas says, on the contrary: "When anything *moves itself* this does not exclude its being *moved by another*, from which it has even this, that it moves itself; and so it is not repugnant to liberty that God is the cause of the act of free will," *De malo*, q. 3, a. 2 ad 4. See also *Contra Gentes*, III, ch. lxxxix, and *De veritate*, q. 24, a. 14, where he says: "The will of man is not determined to one particular operation, but is indifferently disposed for many things; and so it is somewhat *in potentia, unless moved by some active principle*: either by what is externally represented to it, as in the case of apprehended good; or *by what interiorly operates, as God Himself does.*" On these texts of St. Thomas, see Dummermuth, *S. Thomas et doctrina praemotionis physicae*, p. 358.

Instance: But the Molinists reply that St. Thomas says in his other works: "The first cause does not so act upon the will *as to determine it necessarily for one thing* as nature does; and therefore the determination of the act is left in the power of the reason and the will."¹⁹

Reply: St. Thomas in these texts and others like them, says the divine motion does *not necessitate* our will, that is to say, does not destroy our will; but he does not say that the free determination of the act is solely our work. He positively affirms the contrary. He says that this determination is the work of the will which moves itself and is moved by God, without which the Author of salvation would

¹⁹ *De pot.*, q. 3, a. 7, ad 13. Father d'Alès (p. 7, note) quotes this text and various others of a like nature in which St. Thomas affirms only that the divine motion *does not necessitate* the will or what comes to the same thing, does not destroy its liberty, and that our will cannot be moved by *any creature*.

no more be the cause of the good than of the bad consent. We cannot repeat this too often, that the first Cause certainly does not impose upon us a determination which would in no way come from us; it moves us to determine ourselves in one way rather than in a certain other, if it concerns a good act, or it permits our defect if it concerns a bad act. "The good movement of the free will, whereby anyone is prepared for receiving the gift of grace, is an act of the free will moved by God."²⁰

5th obj. The other instances formulated by the Molinists are plainly to be seen in the *Summa*, Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4. God by His efficacious grace cannot incline us infallibly to determine ourselves in a certain way, without at the same time necessitating us, for we cannot resist this divine motion. St. Thomas likewise stated this objection: "Every agent that cannot be resisted moves of necessity. But God cannot be resisted, because His power is infinite; wherefore it is written (Rom. 9: 19): 'Who resisteth His will?' Therefore God moves the will of necessity."

The holy Doctor does not reply that the divine motion is infallible because of the foreknowledge of our consent. He says: "*The divine will not only extends so far that anything be done by that which moves it; but that it also be done in the same way as befits its nature.* And therefore it would be more repugnant to the divine motion, if the will were moved of necessity, which is not befitting to its nature, than if it *were moved freely*, as befits its nature." (Cf. Ia, q. 19, a. 8.) God by His infinite power produces in us and *with us* even to the free mode of our act, when He moves us to determine in a certain way rather than in a certain other.

6th obj. St. Thomas states an objection, the very one the Molinists always put to the *Bannesians* and is as follows: "It is possible and so granted nothing impossible follows from this; but something impossible follows, if it is granted that the will does not will this to which God moves it, because according to this, God's operation would be inefficacious; it is not therefore possible for the will not to will this to which God moves it: therefore it must of necessity will it." In other words: "If man's will is first of all moved by God, it follows that man has not the free choice of his acts."

The reply found in the *Summa* is no less categorical than the replies Bannez gave later on: "*If God moves the will to anything, it*

²⁰ See Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 2; cf. q. 111, a. 2.

is impossible with this supposition, that the will be not moved thereto. But it is not impossible simply. Consequently it does not follow that the will is moved by God necessarily.”²¹ Likewise in Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 3, he says: “Man’s preparation for grace, as it is from God the mover, has a necessity—not indeed of coercion, but of infallibility—as regards what it is ordained to by God, since God’s intention cannot fail, according to the saying of Augustine that by *God’s good gifts whoever is liberated is most certainly liberated.*”

In *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1 ad 3, St. Thomas replies to the same objection, saying: “*God moves indeed the will immutably on account of the efficacy of the moving power*²² which cannot fail; but *on account of the nature of the will that is moved*, which is indifferently disposed to various things, the will is not *necessitated but it remains free*, as also in all things divine Providence *infallibly* operates; and yet from contingent causes effects proceed *contingently* inasmuch as God moves all things proportionately, each one according to its way.” See also IIa IIae, q. 24, a. 11. When the will is thus infallibly moved to do a certain act, it never does the contrary act, but it retains the *power* to do it (*remanet potentia ad oppositum*)²³ on account of the dominating actual indifference which it possesses with regard to particular good to which it is inclined. Thus *infallibly* is not *necessarily*; we say: I shall see you tomorrow infallibly, that is to say, without fail, and we go freely to the place of meeting.

7th obj. Even if our will by reason of its universal scope goes beyond particular good to which it is inclined, if God infallibly moves it to tend toward Him, the act is no longer a free one. It is not necessitated on the part of the object which is incapable of invincibly attracting it, but it is so on the part of the First Agent. St. Thomas, moreover,

²¹ See Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4 ad 3.

²² And not because of the foreseen consent.

²³ Cf. St. Thomas, *De carit.*, a. 12: “The Holy Spirit worketh (in the soul) dividing to every one according as He will as is said in I Cor. 12: 11. Therefore to whom the Holy Spirit according to His pleasure wills to give the persevering motion of divine love, sin which excludes charity cannot be in these. I say that it *cannot be* on the part of the motive power, although it *can be* on the part of the changeableness of the free will.” Molina will say on the contrary that “there can be no sin in these because of their good consent eternally foreseen.” Thomas de Lemos, *Panoplia gratiae*, I, 181, shows clearly how Calvinism differs on this point from Thomism, and this in five ways, and above all in that it denies our free co-operation with the divine action in us. See *supra*, p. 359.

states this objection in Ia, q. 83, a. 1, obj. 3: "What is free is *cause of itself*; therefore what is moved by another is not free." He replies: "Free will is the cause of its own movement, because by his free will man *moves himself* to act. *But it does not of necessity belong to liberty* that what is free *should be the first cause of itself*, as neither for one thing to be cause of another need it be the first cause. *God, therefore, is the first cause, who moves causes both natural and voluntary.* And just as by moving natural causes He does not prevent their acts being natural, so *by moving voluntary causes He does not deprive their actions of being voluntary*, BUT RATHER IS HE THE CAUSE OF THIS VERY THING IN THEM; for He operates in each thing according to its own nature." Thus only, according to St. Thomas, does one retain the meaning of St. Paul's words: "It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish" (Phil. 2: 13).

8th obj. But, the Molinists insist, it is also said in the Scripture (Eccli. 15: 14): "God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel."

To this objection St. Thomas replies in his treatise on Providence, Ia, q. 22, a. 2 ad 4, as follows: "When it is said that God left man to himself, this does not mean that man is exempt from divine providence, but merely that he has *not a prefixed operating force determined to only the one effect*; as in the case of natural things, which are only acted upon as though directed by another toward an end, and do not act of themselves, as if they directed themselves toward an end, like rational creatures, through the possession of free will, by which these are able to take counsel and make a choice. Hence it is significantly said: *In the hand of his own counsel.* But since *the very act of free will is traced to God as to a cause*, it necessarily follows that everything happening from the exercise of free will must be subject to divine providence.

It is impossible to bring out more clearly the distinction between the *free faculty* and *its act*. Our will is universal in its scope because it is specified by universal good; its attitude therefore is one of dominating indifference with regard to a particular good, and the intellect shows the *disproportion* between this and total good. This dominating indifference is not destroyed by the divine motion; on the contrary, this motion causes it to pass from the state of *potential indifference* to that of *actual dominating indifference*; for, at the very moment that it is inclined toward this good, the will dominates the

attraction that this has for it.²⁴ (Concerning the nature and the diverse characteristics of this motion, cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, chs. iii–ix.)

We have already (p. 152, note 85) mentioned the interpretation of St. Thomas given by Cardinals Pecci and Satolli, according to which the divine co-operating motion would not have priority of causality over the activity of the secondary cause. It is, as we said (*ibid.*), manifestly a contradiction of the texts of St. Thomas and just as much so those of Cajetan.²⁵ Moreover, this interpretation, as Del Prado²⁶ points out, is a return to Molinism, and is incapable of explaining the following words of St. Paul: "*Who is it that discerns thee? What hast thou which thou hast not received?*"

9th obj. But he who does not receive an intrinsically efficacious grace cannot be saved. St. Thomas states this objection when discussing faith, in IIa IIae, q. 2, a. 5, obj. 1.

He replies that it is only through one's own fault that one is deprived of this grace. The fault precedes at least by a priority of nature.²⁷ It is the result of our defectibility which God is not bound to remedy; *de facto*, He often does, but not always. (See also *Contra Gentes*, III, ch. clviii.)

No one will fail to grasp the true meaning of these texts, unless he reads St. Thomas only through the eyes of Molina and forgets the passages in which Molina declares that he disagrees with the Angelic Doctor on these questions.

10th obj. "Is it true that the means to snatch souls from vice and

²⁴ *Potential indifference* is the state of our will, as a faculty (still deprived of its act), with regard to particular goods. *Actual or active dominating indifference* is the type of the *free act* itself; for the moment that it chooses some particular good which the scope of the will infinitely surpasses, it dominates the attraction of this good for it. And instead of destroying this indifference founded on the disproportion between this object and the will, the divine motion *actualizes* it. Cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, III, 483.

²⁵ If we read from beginning to end the texts of Cajetan, on Ia, q. 14, a. 13; q. 19, a. 8, we see that the *previous motion* which he rejects is that which would have a priority of time over the action of the secondary cause, and would presuppose that this secondary cause is deprived of all power of its own. But he admits that the divine co-operating motion has a priority of causality over the activity which belongs properly to our will. On these texts of Cajetan, cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, III, 484, 501–507; and Dummermuth, *S. Thomas et doctrina praemotionalis physicae*, pp. 501 ff.

²⁶ *Op. cit.*, III, 477, 511 f.

²⁷ We have already explained this point. See *supra*, pp. 372–384.

encourage them to lead a good life and be saved consists in telling them that *it is no use willing?* The converters of souls, to whatever school they may belong, are unanimous in saying, no. The Fathers of the Church drew practical conclusions from this principle; and the spirit of their preaching, from Hermas to St. Bernard, and of their theoretical teaching, from Origen to St. John Damascene, St. Anselm, and St. Francis de Sales, has been clearly in favor of Molinism.”²⁸ In the main it is very true to say with Father de Régnon that outside the confines of the schools “the firmest Thomists, in the pulpit, in the sacred tribunal, in their oratory, are . . . with the whole Christian populace, humble Molinists.”

We have already answered this objection (p. 378, note 126), by saying: “Were St. Augustine and St. Thomas, in their hours of prayer and adoration, humble Molinists? . . . Prayer, preaching, the direction of souls, the more elevated and supernatural they become, the more they use the very terms of the two great doctors of grace. . . . There is no sin committed by another that we could not commit on account of our own frailty; if we have not fallen, if we have persevered, it is undoubtedly because we have labored and struggled; but without God we should have done nothing; and when, with and by His grace, we have acted, we must still say in all truth: *We are unprofitable servants. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name give glory.*” (Ps. 113: 1.)

The converters of souls, the saints, well know that, for their preaching to be effective, they must above all *pray* for those whom they are evangelizing, *in order that God may transform* their rebellious wills and strengthen the weak. They know that *the Lord is not impotent* to cause these wills to return to Him. If they believed in this impotence, their prayer would never have that holy boldness which we admire in it. The great converters of souls pray as the Church requires us to pray in the collects of her Missal, in which the intrinsic efficacy of grace is repeatedly affirmed in such expressions as the following: “*That God may compel our rebellious wills. That He may cause the infidels from being unwilling to be willing to believe. That He may direct our heart to good works. That He may give us a good will. That He may convert and draw us to Himself. That He may take from us our heart of stone and give us a heart of flesh, or a docile*

²⁸ D’Alès, *art. cit.*, p. 27.

one. *That He may change our wills and incline them to good.*" Quite an extensive study could be made of the Missal from this point of view.

The spirit of the preaching and the theoretical teaching of the Fathers of the Church could not be clearly in favor of Molinism which, by its doctrine of an *indifferent* divine concurrence, ends in this conclusion admitted by Molina: "*God is therefore no more the cause of our virtue than He is of our vice, but both are proposed and willed by us.*"²⁹ What deep meaning would there be in the words of our Lord, who said: "*Without me you can do nothing*"? Why could not man boast of his virtue as the Pharisee did? Why must we all pray like the publican, and ask of God *the grace which makes us will salutary good*: "*Convert me, O Lord, and I shall be converted to Thee. . . . Create a clean heart in me, O God; and renew a right spirit within my bowels (Ps. 50: 12). Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. . . . For when I am weak, then am I powerful*" (II Cor. 12: 9, 10).

The higher the degree of Christian spirituality, the more it insists on the profound meaning of these truths. One may read again, for instance, in the *Imitation of Christ*,³⁰ the chapter concerning the ef-

²⁹ *Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 23 (Paris ed., 1876, p 196).

³⁰ *Imitation of Christ*, Bk. III, ch. iv, n. 4: "Oh, how necessary for me, O Lord, is Thy grace, to begin that which is good, to go forward with it, and to accomplish it. For without it I can do nothing; but I can do all things in Thee, when grace strengtheneth me. Oh, grace, truly celestial, without which our own merits are nothing, neither are the gifts of nature to be esteemed. . . . If I be tempted and afflicted with many tribulations, I will fear no evils whilst Thy grace is with me. This alone is my strength, this alone giveth counsel and help. This is more mighty than all my enemies, and wiser than all the wise. . . . What am I without this but a withered branch and a useless trunk, meet only to be cast away?"

Bk. III, ch. iv, n. 2: "Son, never esteem thyself to be anything on account of thy good works. . . . Of thyself thou always tendest to nothing, speedily dost thou fail, speedily art thou overcome, speedily disturbed, speedily dissolved. Thou hast not anything in which thou canst glory, but many things for which thou oughtest to abase thyself; for thou art much weaker than thou canst comprehend."

Bk. III, ch. viii, n. 1: "If I reduce myself, Lord, to mere dust from which I was formed, Thy grace will be favorable to me. . . . It is there Thou showest me to myself: for I am nothing, and I knew it not. If Thou dost leave me to myself, what am I? Nothing but weakness; but if Thou suddenly look upon me, I presently become strong, and am replenished with new joy."

ficacy of divine grace and those other chapters that touch upon this subject. And let anyone read St. Bernard.⁸¹

The Thomists, within the confines of their schools, do not say: It is no use willing; they repeat the words of the Gospel: "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7: 21). *This good consent is a matter of utmost importance in the work of salvation; how then can it be exclusively our work?* Why would not the Author of salvation then be the cause only of the bad choice? "It is God who worketh in us, both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will" (Phil. 2: 13). It is not in times of sincere prayer that we forget this truth, but at times of pride and insubordination, when we believe ourselves to be self-sufficient.

A whole book could be written on the difference between the spiritual direction based on the teaching of Saint Augustine and St. Thomas and that based on Molinism. The former is more divine, more supernatural, simpler, and also, whatever it may seem to be at first sight, more exacting. It recommends far more the need of prayer, abandonment to divine Providence, and says: See that you do not resist sufficient grace and good inspirations, and *God will give you the efficacious grace* which will incline you infallibly to good, to make generous sacrifices, to a more and more perfect charity.⁸² The

Bk. III, ch. ix: "Son, thou must not ascribe any good to thyself, nor attribute virtue to any man; but give all to God, without whom man has nothing. I have given all, I will also have all again; and with great strictness do I require a return of thanks. This is that truth by which all vain glory is put to flight. And if heavenly grace and true charity come in, there shall be no envy nor narrowness of heart, nor shall self-love keep possession. For divine charity overcometh all, and enlargeth all the powers of the soul. Hope in me alone, for none is good but God alone."

⁸¹ St. Bernard, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, chs. viii and xiv; nothing will be found that is favorable to the doctrine formulated later on by Molina.

⁸² On this point, see what we said *supra*, pp. 371-373, 381-383, how we must apply here, as in the case of justification, the Aristotelian principle that "*causes mutually interact though in a different order.*"

Our defect, in the order of material causality, precedes God's refusal of actual efficacious grace. We must be careful to avoid this defect which comes from our own defectibility. And then we shall find realized in us the principle that, *to those who do their best* (with actual grace), *God does not deny the (effective) grace*. Such is manifestly the interpretation which St. Thomas gives to the proposition. Cf. Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 3. But it is quite certain that we must not

latter is more human, more complicated, more external; it inclines the soul rather to examine itself than to see God's action in us; it is consequently less exacting (probabilism), for one cannot ask much from a man who cannot rely upon God in coming to a firm resolution and keeping it. There is much that could be learned from Bossuet on this point,³³ and one would see that authors of the spiritual life who had to receive their training in the Molinist or Congruist school, have been led, by reason of the sublime topics they were treating and the souls they were directing, to speak of fidelity to grace and abandonment to Providence like most convinced Thomists.³⁴

The objection against Thomism is that it is a discouraging doctrine. Instead of being opposed to the virtue of hope, it induces us to place all our trust in God and not in ourselves. On the other hand, what is there more discouraging than the doctrine which would have to result in maintaining that God is *powerless* in certain circumstances to keep us from falling into certain defects and cause us to will what is good? ³⁵ Interior tranquillity and peace of mind depend upon the divine action in which we place our trust. How could we hope to reach heaven, if God could give us only an *indifferent* grace, and if we had to *make it efficacious* by the effort of our own poor and inconstant will: *Is not our salvation incomparably more assured in God's hands than in our own?*

We quote, as a footnote on this subject, the appropriate reflections

wait for a *sign* that God is giving us His efficacious grace; we must act as soon as duty calls us or conscience prompts us.

³³ Bossuet, *Elévations*, 18th week, 15th elevation; *Médit. sur l'Ev.*, Part II, 72d day; *Défense de la tradition*, Bks. V, VI, X, XII. See index to his works, under the words "*grâce*" and "*prédestination*."

³⁴ Cf. for instance Father Grou, S.J., *Maximes spirituelles*, 2d maxim: "Grace alone can free us from the slavery of sin and assure us of true liberty. Hence it follows that the more the will submits itself to grace, the more it does everything on its part to make itself absolutely, completely, and continually dependent, the more free it will be. . . . Thus everything consists for it in resigning itself in God's hands, in not using its own activity except for the purpose of being more dependent on Him. . . . Is not our salvation incomparably more assured in the hands of God than in our own? . . . After all, what can we do to save ourselves except what God enables us to do?" See also Father de Caussade, S.J., *L'Abandon à la Providence*; Father Lallemand, S.J., *La Doctrine spirituelle*, fourth principle, "*La docilité à la conduite du Saint-Esprit*," chs. i, ii.

³⁵ This is what John of St. Thomas, Gonet, and Billuart point out in their commentaries on Ia, q. 14, concerning the *scientia media*.

made by a religious soul, after reading the questions of St. Thomas' *Summa* which refer to the divine will and predestination.³⁶

Final obj. Perhaps we must say that St. Thomas did not solve the problem as to how the infallibility of the divine motion is not contrary to our liberty, and this would justify, in case of necessity, the attempts that were made after the Council of Trent to supplement the

³⁶ "There were moments in which, after reading in St. Thomas what concerned the will of God, above all predestination, I was seized with a great fright, for I could not see my way to admit these things. But there again I called upon love and confidence to help me, and I am at peace.

"God loves all souls. To each He gives sufficient graces for salvation, and if we bring damnation upon ourselves it is through our own wilful defects. True, God gives more graces to some than to others. He is free. But He is good to all. He is Wisdom, Holiness, Goodness itself. It is because we are unwilling to correspond with His graces that He ceases to give them to us.

"Formerly I believed, and I think I was wrong, that God gave us more graces and predestined us, because He saw in advance, in His infinite foreknowledge, that we would correspond with His graces; but, after I have read St. Thomas, it seems to me that this way of thinking is false and takes away something from God, so as to make us rely more on ourselves, and that it is better to abandon ourselves to Him who wishes our good and infinitely loves us, assured that He does not wish to damn anyone. How good it is to profit by these questions, so agonizing and troublesome, *so that we may trust more in Him who can do all things* who loves us and whom we wish to love! If He gives us a certain desire, that desire is from Him, and it is not for us to reject it; *by the prayer that He will cause us to utter, He will give us the grace that is efficacious, fidelity, love, perseverance.*

"At times, on seeing such a change in my soul, I am afraid of attributing something of this to myself and I would *not* like to *take away the least part from God*. In order to grant me these graces of peace of mind and abandonment to His will, He waited until I fully realized that *everything, everything comes from Him*. Formerly I relied too much on myself, and well do I know this; now I rely on His divine strength. *He is my strength and my salvation.*

"How inconceivable are the divine predilections! . . . I cannot doubt those of the good God for me, nor can I doubt that they are gratuitous. . . . Thousands of times I would have deserved to be abandoned and repulsed by Him, yet He draws me ever more closely to Him, and the more He does so, the more I see how much I have betrayed Him and what a wretched life I have led as a religious, and I see it all so well, and my soul is stirred with a deep sense of gratitude for these countless benefits. . . . My sufferings, too, seem nothing to me. . . . The only real suffering is to see God so outraged, even by those who believe and who wish to love Him . . . and by me. The other sufferings must be courageously offered up in sacrifice. That is true immolation."

teaching of Catholic theology on this point of such grave consequence.³⁷

Reply: In favor of this point of view, Father d'Alès quotes a text of Cajetan,³⁸ which states practically what St. Thomas himself had written. It is that the solution of the problem is to be found in the *transcendent efficacy* of the divine causality which is essentially a mystery for us. Bossuet says the same thing: "We hold the two ends of the chain." This does not prevent him from expressing himself very plainly in his *Traité du libre arbitre* (chs. vi, viii) against the *scientia media*, and in favor of the divine predetermining decrees, "of physical premotion and predetermination. This perfectly vindicates," he says, "our liberty and dependence on God."

The fundamental difference between the two doctrines is that, for St. Thomas, in the created liberty there is certainly a dominating indifference with regard to all good which does not plainly appeal to it *hic et nunc* as infinite good: but it cannot *produce its act or determine itself independently of God*, who is the First Cause, the First Liberty, the Author of all good. Whereas for the Molinists, it is of the essence of the free act that its immediate cause, the created will, does not depend, as to the determination of its choice, *on any influence of the divine action*. But this definition of liberty cannot be proved *either by experience or by reason*.³⁹ Moreover, it rests upon a *begging*

³⁷ D'Alès, *art. cit.*, p. 24.

³⁸ Cajetan, on Ia, q. 22, a. 4, n. 8.

³⁹ Cf. Guillermin, *L'Opuscule de son Eminence le Cardinal Pecci*, p. 59: "Conscience and reason attest nothing of the kind. Conscience perceives positively only one thing, which is that we are the *immediate principle of what we determine to do*. . . . Far from denying this, the Thomists assert that physical premotion causes us to act in one particular way rather than in a certain other. They deny only one thing: that we are not *the first and independent principle in the determination of our choice*. On this latter point, conscience says nothing and can have nothing to say. Nor has it anything to say about the preservative act by which God continually keeps us in existence. We should not conclude, because of this, that we owe to ourselves, independently of any higher principle, the existence that we have.

"As for philosophic reason, harking back beyond the intrinsic principles of the free act, it comes to the conclusion that no creature in its acts can rid itself of the actual influence of the First Mover, that no creature can be the first cause of anything but imperfection and defect. We must therefore refer to God, as to the First Cause, everything that there is in our choice, of motion, perfection, reality, and positive determination."

of the *question*, and we protest against it by reason of the universal and transcendent supereminence of the divine causality.

Father d'Alès proposed to us a frank exchange of views. No advance has been made for the last three centuries concerning the present question. It is even painful to see Catholic theologians positing principles fruitful of errors so enormous as those of fatalism. The enemies of the faith could take advantage of these disagreements.

And yet in a debate on the truth of a doctrine we cannot treat it as if it were a discussion between business men who must, to come to an agreement, grant some favorable concessions. On the question of *the fidelity to St. Thomas*, the only thing that the Dominicans can admit is that their doctrine does not differ in the least degree from that of their master. The Molinists are not obliged to follow the Angelic Doctor on this point. Molina frankly avows that he separates from him. But how can the Molinists claim that we are the ones who depart from St. Thomas and that we are only followers of Bannez? Not only theologians, but Superiors General of the Order of Preachers, and the most patient of them, have replied: That is a calumny.⁴⁰

The only possible way of reconciling the two doctrines is to begin by examining them *from the point of view of method*, guided by general and evident rules which are accepted by both sides. We should have to see which of the two systems starts from the known in order to arrive at the unknown, from evident and absolutely universal first principles (like the principles of causality and the universal causality of the first agent), so as to solve an obscure question without a begging of the question. There would still be many profound obscurities in the two systems thus compared and it will always be so in this life. But among these obscurities one could distinguish between those which are the result of a want of method and in which there is a contradiction, and those which result from the transcendence of the

⁴⁰ Cf. Cormier, *In Memoriam VII Centenarii ab Approbatione Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum Disceptatio*, Appendix III, p. 110: "Dominicus Bannes, d. 1604. He was a most famous Professor and Magister in the University of Salamanca, and it is to his credit that he deserved to be attacked most vehemently by the opponents of the Thomist School, not by the weapons of knowledge but by those of calumny, so much so that his explanations of the teaching of St. Thomas were given in contempt the name of *Bannesianism* instead of *Thomism*. It is a vain hope indeed."

divine action which is too luminous for our feeble sight.⁴¹ This comparison of the two systems has been given by us (*supra*, pp. 87-90, 387).

St. Thomas starts from the first principles of reason about causality and the first principles of theology about God, the Author of salvation. He is thus led to this conclusion: *Our free wills are moved infallibly and freely by God, and whatever good there is in their acts depends upon God.* He sees in this one of the most sublime of mysteries, which is that God is by His causality more intimate to creatures than they are to themselves.

Molinism, on the contrary, starts out by affirming that there is in this conclusion a manifest absurdity, and not a sublime mystery. It is thus led to deny the absolute universality and necessity of the first principles of reason and theology, without succeeding, moreover, in safeguarding free will that is destroyed by the determinism of the circumstances implied in the theory of the *scientia media*.

Besides, there still remains, even for Molina, the profound obscurity of the mystery of predestination; for he is bound to teach that it depends solely upon God's good pleasure that Peter is placed in circumstances in which he will infallibly be saved, and Judas in another arrangement of circumstances in which he will infallibly be lost. The divine good pleasure could have made the choice in the reverse order.⁴² Apart from these circumstances, it is none the less true for Molina that this one is saved without having been *more aided* by grace than a certain other who is lost. From this point of view God does not help the elect more than He does the reprobates.⁴³ And therefore

⁴¹ It is in this manner that Father Lepidi concludes a study on *the voluntary activity of man and the divine causality*. Cf. *Opuscles philosophiques*, ch. i. See also Father Gardeil, O.P., *Le Donné révélé et la théologie*, 1910, Part II, ch. iii, "*Les systèmes théologiques.*"

⁴² *Concordia*, q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. 13, p. 549: "The fourth is that God willed to establish this order of things rather than some other, and in it to confer these particular helps rather than certain others, by which He foresaw that these particular persons and not certain others, because of their wills being free, will attain to eternal life, there being no cause or reason for this on the part of those either predestined or numbered among the reprobate. And for this reason we have gone so far as to say that there is no cause or reason for predestination on the part of the free will of those either predestined or numbered among the reprobate, but this is to be referred solely to the free will of God."

⁴³ *Concordia*, q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. 11, p. 526: "With the helps given by God, by which one is justified and saved, another by reason of his

what is greatest in the created order, the free determination of the good consent, comes *solely* from us and not from God. "Hence God is no more the cause of our virtue than of our vice, but it is proposed and willed by us."⁴⁴ How does God remain truly the Author of our salvation? Why must we trust in Him and not in ourselves? After offending against this principle, Molinism does not save free will, but radically compromises it by determinism of circumstances which is implied in the *scientia media*. It procures very precarious advantages at a very dear price.

Generally in all the great philosophical and theological problems, above errors that are extreme and opposite in type (in this case Pelagianism on the one hand, and Predestinationism on the other), two doctrines meet: the one rises like a towering peak, being a superior synthesis of the diverse aspects of the true, and is founded on principles and a very exalted notion of God; the other which is eclectic, remains midway between this summit and the divagations of error. Being less concerned with principles than with the solution of objections, it juxtaposes its theses instead of subordinating them, and often avoids contradiction only by literary processes and a series of fluctuations which are not sufficiently in keeping with the rules of logic.

This difference between Thomism and Eclecticism could easily enough be shown,⁴⁵ as regards the problem of universals, those of free will is neither justified nor saved. . . . Nor is it to be doubted that many are tormented in hell who were given by God far greater helps for salvation, than many who in heaven enjoy seeing God face to face."

⁴⁴ *Concordia, loc. cit.*, p. 196. On the Molinist doctrine of predestination, cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, III, 187-261.

⁴⁵ Molinism and the doctrine of Suarez are certainly in harmony with this eclecticism which generally refuses to declare itself plainly either in favor of St. Thomas or in favor of Scotus. Its followers are to be found mostly among authors of a Nominalist tendency who see facts without being impressed by the formal reasons of things, who consequently do not sufficiently take into account the differences, of a very profound nature, to be found in the hierarchy of beings, and who are somewhat inclined to put all things on the same level. This want of elevation or profundity of doctrine may be veiled sometimes by elegance of style in the explanation, and by the writer's moral and religious qualities, but on careful consideration one soon detects it. There are theologians who, by the interior life they lead, are above the theological system they profess; unfortunately there are also some of the opposite kind. The doctrine we profess may be sublime, yet we may be leading a rather mediocre life; this robs the doctrine of that radiance and splendor which attracts souls.

analogy, of unity of the notion of being, of the distinction between essence and existence, of the divine causality, of deliberation (the rôle of the final practical judgment), of the foundation for moral obligation (natural law), of questions that relate to conscience, of that of the essential supernaturalness (*ratione objecti formalis*) of infused faith, and other questions.⁴⁶ These are the occasion of so many controversies that are interesting for those who would be of an argumentative turn of mind. But too often these controversies are fruitless. Preferable, so it seems, is a profound and methodical exposition of what appears to us to be the truth. This latter, once it is demonstrated, is its own defense.

In spite of the impossibility of reconciling the two doctrines of St. Thomas and Molina, we will not say to our adversaries: "Between us and you there is fixed a great chaos (Luke, 16: 26)." If God is truly the master of created free wills, if He is the First Cause of their determinations, the Author of all the good that they contain, if His motion is not indifferent to good and evil, to the good and bad consent, may He deign to give us the gift of expressing this truth without in any way offending against charity toward those who may fail to perceive it.

This controversy would, we believe, become more fruitful, if there were a more pronounced tendency to take a stand, not only on the terrain of theological speculation, but also on that of spirituality. Perhaps from this very exalted and entirely supernatural point of view, the two sides might succeed in coming to an agreement concerning the truly traditional answer which alone can satisfy the legitimate claims, not only of the mind, but also of the soul and conscience of everyone. The works of the most esteemed spiritual authors might facilitate this reconciliation.⁴⁷

We have written these pages with the sole purpose of stating

⁴⁶ We have already discussed the first three of these problems. See *supra*, pp. 190–268: for what concerns deliberation, pp. 269–338. The problem of supernatural nature of theological faith is discussed in the *Revue thomiste*, January 1914, pp. 17–39, and in *De revelatione*, chapter entitled "Credibility." On the questions concerning conscience, cf. Beaudoin, O.P., *Tractatus de conscientia* (1911 ed.), *de conscientia probabili*, pp. 65–137; see also Father Mandonnet's articles on Probabilism, in the *Revue thomiste*, 1901, 1902.

⁴⁷ With this end in view, one could read with profit, among the spiritual writers of the Society of Jesus, the books of Fathers Lallemand, de Caussade, and Grou, which we have quoted. On several points they are much like the spiritual

clearly what St. Thomas really thought. Now, on this grave problem, as Father d'Alès (p. 2) very truly acknowledges, "The teaching of the Church posits for Christians, the double fundamental equation: St. Paul = St. Augustine = St. Thomas."

CHAPTER IV

THE RESULTS OF THIS CONTROVERSY

In the preceding pages we have endeavored to prove that the judgment passed upon Molina's doctrine by the Thomist theologians is based upon an exact knowledge of this doctrine, that it is directed to the formal point at issue, and that it has never been refuted.¹

Father d'Alès, in his reply to this tractate which we have just reprinted, wrote another article of sixty-three pages, entitled: *Autour de Molina*,² in which he strives to maintain his views, but by insisting on the efficacy of grace, as much as he can, so as to solve the difficulties proposed to him.

Often these discussions are altogether futile. This one has not been books written a century later by such Thomists as Massoulié (*Traité de l'oraison: Traité de l'amour de Dieu*), and Piny (*De l'abandon à la volonté de Dieu*).

¹ To show that we have not in the least exaggerated the criticism that the Thomists have always made of the Molinist theory of the *scientia media*, it will suffice to quote the titles that Father Gonet, O.P., places at the head of his sections which treat of this question in his *Clypeus thomisticae theologiae*, disp. 6, a. 6. The *scientia media*, because of its absurdities and incongruities, is an exploded theory. Secs. 1, 2: The *scientia media* seems to favor and prepare the way for the Semi-Pelagian error; sec. 3: *The scientia media does not acknowledge that God is the First Cause*; sec. 4: The *scientia media* does not acknowledge that God is the first free Being; sec. 5: The *scientia media does not acknowledge God's supreme dominion over our wills*; sec. 6: The *scientia media detracts from the divine omnipotence* and weakens the efficacy of grace; secs. 7, 8: The *scientia media* attributes to God a mode of concurrence with free causes that is blind and nescient, vague and indeterminate; sec. 9: *The scientia media apparently favors free will; but in truth it does away with it* and in its first principle stifles or extinguishes it; sec. 10: The *scientia media* makes God equally the cause of good deeds and of evil deeds.

We find the same criticism by John of St. Thomas, in his commentary on Ia, q. 14. The *Salmanticenses* in their commentary on this same article, *Cardinal Gotti*, *Billuart*, all theologians of the Thomist school whose works are commonly quoted, say the same.

² *Recherches de science religieuse*, October–December 1917.

entirely unprofitable. We hasten to say that our opponent has every appearance of being a Thomist when it is not a question of the *auxilia divina*. As he had already said (p. 503) and as we knew, he is hardly a Suarezian. He admits a real distinction between essence and existence in creatures, considers it as the corner-stone of the metaphysical edifice. He firmly accepts the twenty-four Thomist theses recently proposed by the Sacred Congregation of Studies. We believe most sincerely what he says in addition to this, that, "if God had made me a Dominican, I would probably be considered a good Thomist." As we shall see, he even makes three important concessions on the divine concurrence and foreknowledge. He seeks, however, to hold fast to what, in his eyes, is essential in the Molinist conceptions of efficacious grace and the *scientia media*, at the same time granting that our interpretation of St. Thomas is more literal.⁸ Father d'Alès is certainly a man of keen intellect and vast erudition, as his historical works prove. He is also an expert in handling the weapon of irony so as to get out of an argument when cornered. But these brilliant qualities only show the more clearly, so we think, the impossibility in which he finds himself of solving the objections formulated by the Thomists for more than three centuries. He appears to us to be combating the evidence of the principle of causality. No wonder he is obliged to flee in every direction, forced to sway to and fro, without managing to hold himself down to the main point of the dispute.

Certainly we shall never be able to reconcile the two doctrines. What we can do for either side, is to insist less on their opposition. This consists in taking note of all that the Thomists attribute to human liberty in the work of salvation and of all that the Molinists finally concede concerning the efficacy of grace.

With this end in view, let us examine for the last time the answer given to the three fundamental criticisms formulated by the Thomists. It is indeed, "to the true Molina of history" that their words are ad-

⁸ D'Alès, pp. 502 f. Likewise Father Ledochowski, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, in a pamphlet of his entitled, *De doctrina S. Thomae magis magisque in Societate fovenda*, p. 44, wrote as follows: "These statements are not at all intended against those who think they should most strictly follow the Angelic Doctor, since we are persuaded that also this resolution is most beneficial to the Church. But this is not the common rule. It appears, however, that the Society accommodates itself more to the common way, though more closely hemmed in by certain precepts, and hence it pursues a somewhat middle course in the present disputes." The italics are ours.

dressed, and Father d'Alès has not been able to show that men like John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, Gonet, Gotti, Dummermuth, Del Prado, did not know Molinism as it really is, or that they distorted it in order to gain the victory more easily.

Just a word about the particularly sharp tone and a certain attitude of our opponent. If Father d'Alès had had good reasons to give, he would not have departed from his usual calm and courtesy; he would not have said that we cannot understand Molinism because we do not like it. Above all, he would not have insinuated that we quote Molina according to Father del Prado, without having taken the trouble to study him in his own text. This is utterly contrary to the truth.⁴ But let us return to the three objections raised against the Molinists.

⁴ Father del Prado's usual way is to quote Molina's *Concordia* according to the division of the *disputations*, without reference to any particular edition. I have, on the contrary, always referred to the Paris edition (1876) in quoting Molina's work, as everyone can easily consult it. Frequently I add, in a footnote, a reference to Del Prado, *De gratia*, Vol. III. This I do to show that these texts of Molina, which we could merely refer to in a short treatise, were examined at length and compared with those of St. Thomas in Del Prado's work, and the validity of these texts is incontestable to every unprejudiced mind.

Incidentally, it is true that in our pamphlet, *S. Thomas et le néomolinisme*, p. 15, we quoted, solely according to Father del Prado, a text which occurs in the edition of the *Concordia* published at Lisbon in 1588. Not having this edition at our disposal, we were unable to compare it with the Paris edition, and we too readily concluded that the Paris edition no longer contained this passage referring to the doctrine of St. Thomas about predestination. However, we attached only slight importance to this remark, for we said (p. 15): "We set aside the texts in which Molina affirms that the doctrine of St. Thomas on predestination appears to him to be too harsh."

Under cover of this accidental material error, Father d'Alès insinuates that I quote Molina solely according to Father del Prado, and that I see Molina only through the criticisms of this theologian. According to the way in which our opponent quotes St. Thomas—of this later—it would be as easy to say to him that he sees St. Thomas only through Molina.

But, Reverend Father, even then, if I quoted the *Concordia*, only according to the Thomist theologians, would *anything* follow from this that is *contrary to their well-founded criticisms which I state*? You ought to show that these theologians were ignorant of the Molinist doctrine, and you do not succeed in doing this. All the texts that you single out in the *Concordia* were already known to us, and the ordinary student of theology can find them by consulting the index of the Paris edition, under the words "*auxilium*" and "*gratia*."

ARTICLE I

THE UNIVERSAL CAUSALITY OF GOD

Does Molinism restrict the universality of the divine causality? We say that it does restrict it, because Molina (*Concordia*, Paris ed., 1876, pp. 152 ff., 158) rejects the doctrine of St. Thomas (Ia, q. 105, a. 5) according to which, for the secondary cause to act it needs to be premoved, applied to its act by God who is the First Cause.

Father d'Alès (p. 452) makes this concession: "That Molina did not understand this beautiful doctrine of St. Thomas, is to be regretted, profoundly so; we have no idea of dissimulating on this point." But it is from this, so the Thomists say,⁵ that the differences concerning the efficacy of grace and the foreknowledge of free acts originate.

Consequently we said that Molina, believing himself to have the authority of St. Justin Martyr on his side, approved the following proposition: "*Therefore our virtuous acts as also our vicious acts are caused, not by God, but by our intent*" (*Concordia*, p. 196). This proposition, of undoubted Pelagian origin, is a contradiction of canons 20 and 22 of the Council of Orange.

Father d'Alès avows (p. 456) that "the *Quaestiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos* have a rather bad name and it is generally agreed that they must be recognized to be of Pelagian origin." But he believes that Molina has interpreted the above-mentioned proposition in a Catholic sense. We hope so indeed; the words, however, have a fixed meaning, and it is all the more difficult to interpret this phrase in an orthodox sense, since it is negative. It is difficult to see how anybody can find a parallel for it in the following words of the Savior, which are invoked for the purpose of evading a difficulty: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast . . . and come follow me. How often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not" (Matt. 19: 21; 23: 37). If the young man in the Gospel, if Jerusalem, had responded to our Lord's appeal, who could maintain that it was not God, but only the created will that was the cause of these virtuous acts? The proposition, therefore, as it stands, has an absolutely unacceptable

⁵ Cf. Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, Vol. III, ch. iii, *Primum principium Concordiae: Concursus simultaneus*, pp. 58-86.

meaning. If, inadvertently, Molina approved of it, this is because he did not entertain a sufficiently high idea of the divine causality.

Father d'Alès then reproaches us for paying attention, in the *Concordia*, only to texts that refer to God's general concurrence, and for neglecting those that affirm the *special concurrence* of prevenient and co-operating grace. He says we do this "because Father del Prado looks upon these texts as non-existent" (p. 461).

We have but to open Father del Prado's book on Molina to find in it several chapters occupied with the examination of Molinistic texts concerning *God's special influx*, which he compares at length with the texts of St. Thomas, then with those of the Congruists.⁶ In their classical treatises on *efficacious actual grace*, precisely in those places where they criticize Molina for restricting God's universal causality, how could the Thomists, as a general rule, have neglected the Molinistic texts that refer to the question?

The Salmanticenses, for instance, like the Dominican theologians, begin their treatise *De gratia efficaci*⁷ by quoting texts from Molina; they remind us that according to him grace is not of itself intrinsically efficacious, but is so only because it is followed by the good consent foreseen by the *scientia media* in such a way that, if *absolutely equal* prevenient and excitant *graces* are given to two men, it happens that one is converted and the other not; for the first, the same grace was efficacious, for the other, it remained inefficacious. Such is indeed the doctrine of the true Molina of history,⁸ as Father d'Alès admits.⁹ The

⁶ Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, Vol. III, ch. iv, *Secundum principium Concordiae: Influxus Dei specialis*, pp. 86-117; chs. ix, x. The *Concordia* of Molina, whitewashed by Congruism, has not changed its appearance, pp. 339-426.

⁷ Salmanticenses, Tract. 14, *De gratia*, disp. 7, *De gratia efficaci*, dub. 1.

⁸ Molina, *Concordia*, Paris ed., Index: *Auxilium*: Graces of themselves efficacious are not to be admitted, pp. 356, 460; Graces that are efficacious depend upon the free will, and are to be understood in this sense, p. 462. The grace being *equal*, it can happen that one is converted, and that another is not. Aided by a *less* grace, one can rise again, while another with a *greater* grace does not, and remains obdurate, p. 565.

D'Alès (p. 470) attempts to parallel these propositions with that of St. Thomas (IIIa, q. 62, a. 6 ad 3): "With the least grace one is able to resist whatsoever concupiscence and merit eternal life." But it is clear, according to the principles of St. Thomas (cf., e. g., Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4 ad 3), that this last phrase applies in a different way to sufficient and intrinsically efficacious graces; with the first we *can* resist every temptation, the second causes us to resist *effectively*.

⁹ Cf. D'Alès, p. 469, note 2: "We say that (grace) is efficacious a posteriori,

Salmanticenses, though careful not to inflict any theological censure on this doctrine, prove and conclude that this teaching is opposed to that of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, and that it detracts from the divine causality, so as to attribute solely to our free will that which distinguishes the just man from the sinner; "*it would follow that the difference between the one consenting and the one not consenting is to be ascribed not to grace, but to the free will.*"¹⁰

This is what we ourselves had said, and it is truly with the *special concurrence* that we were concerned, according to the very terminology of the *Concordia* (p. 526), when we wrote: "Apart from this indifferent motion, God would but entice us to good by good inspirations which He gives also to the wicked; with *absolutely equal divine help*, one man would follow the good inspirations and another would resist it."¹¹ And we said further: "God would thus be a stranger to the determination of the free will which is the consummation of the work of salvation."¹²

Father d'Alès mentions our text (pp. 453 f.), but he forgets to insert the inverted commas and the reference to Molina. He also finds our last phrase absolutely unjust. According to him, from the fact because according to Molina's view, the divine foreknowledge of man's answer is what distinguishes efficacious grace from that which is not so, and the divine means of being assured of this efficacy." Father d'Alès (p. 496) quotes the principal text of Molina; it is found in the *Concordia*, p. 462.

¹⁰ *Salmanticenses*, *loc. cit.*, sec. 4, n. 17: "If the efficacy of grace depended upon the effect, and there was no antecedent cause, it would follow that the difference between the one consenting and the one not consenting is to be ascribed not to grace but to the free will. This contradicts what the Apostle says in I Cor. 4:7: "*For who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?*" The following illustrates this: Let us give two men the same sufficient prevenient grace; then in the opinion of Molina it can be that, without any further help, one consents, the other does not . . . and this actual difference cannot be ascribed to grace, if indeed each received the same grace, as is supposed. Therefore it must be ascribed not to grace, but to the free will."

¹¹ *Concordia*, p. 526: "Finally, because with God's help, by which one is justified and saved, another of his own accord is neither justified nor saved and on the other hand . . . that *these with more abundant graces were not predestined and saved, but those with less grace were predestined and saved*, no other reason is to be assigned except that *those of their own innate free will refused so to make use of it as to obtain salvation: but the others by all means did so.*"

¹² Pamphlet, *S. Thomas et le néomolinisme*, p. 9, and here too, in this appendix, ch. i, a. 1 (p. 470).

that, with *absolutely equal* prevenient and excitant actual *graces*, one is converted and another not, it does not follow that God remains a stranger to the determination of the good consent. "In the first case," he says (p. 459), "that of conversion, the free creature is moved and determines itself under the very influence of the positive motion of excitant grace; before even its act comes into being, its determination is called forth by God. In the second case, this determination belongs to it in its own right, in virtue of a purely permissive divine decree."

That is equivalent to saying with Lessius (*De gratia efficaci*, ch. xviii, n. 7), quoted here by the *Salmanticenses*, n. 18: "that of two persons called in a like manner, one of whom accepts, the other rejects the proffered grace, this is rightly said to be due *to free will alone*; not that he who accepts does so of his own free will; but *the difference that arises* is solely the result of free will, so that it is not because of the diversity of prevenient grace. Here the word '*alone*' does not exclude co-operation . . . but only the diversity of prevenient grace."

But we shall always say with the Carmelites of Salamanca:¹⁸ This doctrine cannot be upheld; it is contrary to the spirit and words of St. Paul, for whom not only the divine attraction is what prompts the just man to act, but also the initial distinction which differentiates the just man from the sinner comes from grace: "*For who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received?*" (I Cor. 4: 7.) From this it would follow that something real and of supreme importance in the order of salvation, the difference between the just man and the sinner, depends on the created free will as *its first cause*. What would take place in the created will that is most intimate to it, at the precise moment of responding or not responding to the solicitation of grace, would come solely from the created free will. The first step in the acceptance or refusal of grace would come exclusively from us, since it would depend *solely upon us* that our action in the presence of such supernatural attractions be either obedience or revolt.

¹⁸ *Salmanticenses*, *De gratia*, disp. 7, de gratia efficaci, dub. 1, sec. 4, n. 18: "This doctrine cannot be upheld; both because it is contrary to the spirit and intent of the Apostle when he says: '*For who distinguisheth thee?*' and also because the Apostle immediately proves that what distinguishes one person from another does not come from man but from God, saying: '*What hast thou that thou hast not received?*'"

We never misunderstood this doctrine of Molina. It comes to this, as Father del Prado has shown,¹⁴ that such a conception of prevenient and adjuvant grace means that it does not apply the will to give its good consent, does not infallibly move the will to determine itself for good rather than evil; it merely solicits the consent of the will. The simultaneous general concurrence does not explain, furthermore, the *transition* of the free cause *to act*, a point which, as we have seen, was conceded to us; this transition to act as such, takes place, therefore, apart from the divine causality, and as the (undetermined) potency cannot of itself reduce itself to act, this transition is without a cause.

We had even discussed¹⁵ efficacious grace, such as it is conceived by the Congruists, and we have shown that it does not yet solve the objection, since it always remains in the determination of the good consent a first impulse which is to be attributed not to divine causality but solely to ourselves. Hence the necessity of the *scientia media* to enable God to foresee this free determination, which grace cannot infallibly produce in us and with us.

Finally, far from confounding Molinism with Semi-Pelagianism, concerning the problem of predestination, we were careful to point out what Father d'Alès seems not to have seen, for we said: "Moreover, there always remains, even for Molina, the profound obscurity of the mystery of predestination, for he must teach that it depends solely on God's good pleasure that Peter is placed in circumstances in which he will infallibly be saved and Judas in another arrangement of circumstances in which he will infallibly be lost; the divine good pleasure could have made the choice the other way about.¹⁶ *Setting aside this choice of circumstances*, it remains no less true for Molina that a certain one is saved without having been *aided more* by grace than a certain other who is lost. From this point of view, God no more helps the elect than He does the reprobate."¹⁷

It is quite certain that if we had omitted the words "setting aside this choice of circumstances" and "aided more," we should have

¹⁴ *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, III, 98 f.

¹⁵ *S. Thomas et le néomolinisme*, p. 8, note 3; in this appendix, ch. i, a. 1, note 6 (p. 470).

¹⁶ Molina, *Concordia*, q. 23, p. 549.

¹⁷ *S. Thomas et le néomolinisme*, pp. 43, 44, and in this appendix, ch. iii, toward the end (p. 505).

gravely misrepresented Molinism. Father d'Alès, in quoting us (p. 455), forgets to quote these words; this omission enables him to subjoin the following query: "How could one have believed for a moment that these things were taught freely in Catholic Schools fifty years after the Council of Trent?"

We maintain, therefore, that Molinism restricts the divine causality, not only because of its theory of a general simultaneous concurrence, but also because it considers grace to be efficacious a posteriori. According to Molinism, grace is efficacious only because God foresees that man will consent, whereas, for St. Thomas, "God indeed moves the will *immutably*, because of the efficacy of the moving power which cannot fail;¹⁸ but because of the nature of the will that is moved, which is indifferently disposed toward various things, it is not necessitated but remains free."¹⁹

Father d'Alès seeing the difficulty, speaks in certain places about the efficacy of grace like a Thomist, e. g., p. 483, where he says: "All theologians admit that God is not limited in means at His disposal to induce the created will to determine itself freely in a certain way. It is for Him alone to strike Saul down to the ground when Saul was on the way to Damascus, and to break this rebellious will." And even without speaking of extraordinary graces, he adds (pp. 485 f.): "God knows how to attract the creature infallibly to perform a certain good work, by loving it by His grace." He quotes (p. 483, note 1) this text of Molina: "God by His omnipotence is able to move our free will in whatever way He wishes, but not to commit sin." Very good; that is what St. Thomas says; but in vain does Molina seek to reconcile this proposition with that other found on the same page (*Concordia*, p. 318), which is as follows: "*It was in God's power to know by this scientia (media) only that which He actually knew.*" God, supposing the Apostle Peter to be placed in the circumstances of the Passion, *could foresee*, according to Molina, *only* the Apostle's denial. Must we not conclude from this that it was impossible for God to keep Peter from falling in such circumstances? That is why we wrote, not as Father d'Alès quotes us as saying, namely:²⁰ "what

¹⁸ "And not because of the foreseen consent."

¹⁹ *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1, ad 3.

²⁰ Father d'Alès (p. 483, note 1) quotes from the proofs, forgetting to note whether the text was corrected before publication. The punctiliousness of the most diligent is at times found to be at fault. We happened to copy incorrectly

is there more discouraging than the doctrine which claims . . .,” but “what is there more discouraging than the doctrine by which we would have to maintain that it is *impossible* for God in certain circumstances to keep us from falling into certain defects and cause us to do what is good?”²¹

They criticize us for this, saying that our point of view is a poor explanation of how sin is committed. After writing many pages elsewhere²² on this subject, we summarized it all by saying: “God certainly cannot be the cause of sin; this, as such, is merely a deficiency; it requires only a deficient cause, preceded by a purely permissive decree of God. The divine motion thus concurs only in the physical act of sin.”²³

Father d’Alès’ reply (p. 458) is as follows: “But there remains the physical entity of this resolution (that Judas makes of betraying his Master), and that is a positive act which stands out in bold relief. To call that a deficiency seems to me rather to admit that you are defeated. So little do we call the *physical entity* of the sinful act a deficiency that we have just now precisely distinguished it from this very deficiency, according to the teaching of St. Augustine and St. Thomas. All the Thomists, even the strictest of them, have always admitted this “entity standing out in bold relief.” Cf. Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 2. Let us take up the two other criticisms.

a reference to the edition of the *Concordia* published at Lisbon; the same thing happened to Father d’Alès (p. 468), regarding a reference of his to the *De potentia* of St. Thomas, q. 1, a. 5 ad 3; it is, in fact, to be found in article 4. A little farther on (p. 459, note 1) we read: “St. Thomas teaches, not once but always, that ‘*this very inclination* (of the will) *is determined for it not by another but by itself*’ (q. 22, *De veritate*, a. 4). Bannez teaches that ‘*God is the First Cause in being, power, and determination for all things*’ (on Ia, q. 14, a. 13). Father Garrigou-Lagrange thinks that the two teachings are absolutely identical.” Father d’Alès has failed to notice that, in the article of the *De veritate* that he quotes, St. Thomas is not considering the will in its relation to the divine motion, but in that which distinguishes it from the sensitive appetite which, indeed, *is determined necessarily by the object* that attracts it. We have quoted, moreover, in the third chapter of this appendix (pp. 487–489), the texts of St. Thomas that refer to the question. They may be compared with those of Bannez to see if they differ.

²¹ *S. Thomas et le néomolinisme*, p. 40, and in this appendix, ch. iii, solution of the second last objection, p. 501.

²² Cf. *supra*, pp. 365–397.

²³ *Op. cit.*, p. 10, and in this appendix, ch. i, a. 1 (p. 472).

ARTICLE II

HOW ARE WE TO AVOID POSITING A PASSIVITY IN THE PURE ACT
AND ESCAPE DETERMINISM OF CIRCUMSTANCES?

We had asked ourselves if the theory of the *scientia media* can solve these two difficulties. We still say it cannot, because, according to Molina: "It has never been a part of God's liberty to foresee by His *scientia media* other conditional free acts of the future than those that He has foreseen . . . but if the created free will had to make another choice, as it could do, it is this other choice that God would have to know about."²⁴

They reply that this investigation does not posit a *passivity* in the pure Act, since God, according to Molina, derives all His knowledge from Himself and not from creatures. How can He derive from Himself the knowledge of a creature's free conditional determination, the initiative of which in no way comes from Himself? Does not Molina admit that, supposing two men to be placed in the same circumstances, with absolutely equal graces, it happens that one is converted, the other not? He says even that the one who is converted has received at times a less grace than the one who remains in sin (*Concordia*, p. 526).

On this point Father d'Alès (p. 472) confesses that "there is here a material contradiction between the language of Molina and that of

²⁴ *Concordia*, p. 318: "We must answer by saying that it (the *scientia media*) on no account is to be called free, both because it precedes every free act of the divine will, and also because *it was in God's power to know, by this knowledge, only that which He actually did know*. Then again it must not be called natural even in this sense, as if it were so innate in God that He could not know the contrary of what He knows by it. *For, if the created free will had chosen to do the opposite, as it truly can do, this very thing He would have known by the same knowledge, but not that He actually knows it.*" We admire the infallible serenity with which Molina, a few lines later, adds the following words: "Let not this doctrine trouble you at your first reading of it; remember that all these things that follow from it *are most easily reconciled and logically connected*: there is nothing that the creature can do that God cannot do; God by His omnipotence can move our free will in whatever way He wishes but not to commit sin." It is not infrequent to find in Molina's writings, propositions connected by an "*attamen*" which have always appeared contradictory to the Thomists. We confess that these pages of the *Concordia* are unintelligible to us.

St. Thomas who, on the contrary (Ia, q. 14, a. 13), says that '*the knowledge of God is the cause of things.*'"

To our mind, the contradiction is formal, and we absolutely cannot admit that parity which they seek to establish between the doctrine of St. Thomas and that of Molina concerning the antecedent and consequent will of God.²⁵ It is not enough to say: "As regards the divine intellect that devises an order of Providence, *a conditionally future resolution of the creature is a possible like the others*" (p. 473). It always comes back to this, that the possible is confused with the conditional future. It is however clear that in such given circumstances as those, for instance, of the Passion, there are for Peter *two possibilities*, either to be faithful to his Master, or to deny Him, and only *one conditional future* here. The question for us is to know how God foresees *which of these two possibilities* will be chosen by the created free will.

If God is reduced to the condition of verifying this conditional future for Himself, and if He is not free to foresee the contrary of this conditional future, He is *passive* in this prevision. Moreover, for this prevision to be not merely conjectural but infallible, it must be determined by the examination of the circumstances in which Peter would be (and will be) placed. And then how are we to avoid *determinism of the circumstances* for the created free will?

Father d'Alès, in his preceding article (p. 30), already conceded that "the theory of the *scientia media* has often been proposed in such a way as to cause his adversaries to triumph," making this determinism of circumstances inevitable. On this point we have read Father d'Alès' last article attentively, and we fail to see how he can conceive the *scientia media* otherwise so as to avoid this difficulty. He says (p. 477): "The Author of nature and grace knows the potentialities with which He has endowed the very being of each creature; knowing them, He knows the means by which He can bring them into act." But the whole question consists in this: How is it that of contra-

²⁵ D'Alès, p. 432. The opposition between the two teachings is manifest when we recall what St. Thomas says in Ia, q. 23, a. 5, c and ad 3um. For the same reason we cannot admit that St. Thomas took the *scientia media* as his viewpoint when writing his reply to objection 13 of the *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 7, a few words of which are quoted by Father d'Alès on page 468. The context shows that St. Thomas excludes only a divine motion that would necessitate the will.

dictory possible choices, God knows before any divine decree, the one that the creature will choose in a certain combination of circumstances? Foreseeing the whole difficulty, Father d'Alès adds (p. 487): "To be sure, it is a rather bold conception to associate the casual determinations of the creature with the permanence of intelligible essences."

We confess truly on our part that there are obscurities in the Thomist doctrine; but it is of importance for us to distinguish between the obscurities which are the result of a want of method and which contain a contradiction, and those, on the contrary, which result from the transcendence of the divine action, too luminous for our feeble eyes. We persist in saying that, to judge of the two systems, we must compare them from the *standpoint of method*, guided by the light of evident general rules that are accepted by both sides. We must see which of the two, in order to solve an obscure question without a begging of the question, starts from the known to go to the unknown, from absolutely certain and universal first principles (such as the principles of causality and the universal causality of the first agent). Father d'Alès (p. 502) replies: "More than one phase of the divine causality is to be seen here, and more than one divine attribute is the subject of inquiry. I think that both schools are equally desirous to proceed from the known to the unknown." It is a question of the divine causality in all its universality, for nothing must restrict it. To say that the free will of man cannot be infallibly moved by God to determine itself to act in one particular way rather than in a certain other, is not, to our mind, proceeding from the known to the unknown, and is a *begging of the question*. This definition of free will cannot be proved, as we have shown, either by experience or by reason.²⁶

We must indeed admit with the greatest theologians that the two doctrines which confront each other are irreconcilable. That God *firmly* and *suavely* moves our free wills, that His efficacious grace infallibly causes us freely to will the good, is for St. Thomas a sublime mystery, for Molina a manifest absurdity.

We have striven to keep the debate within the domain of ideas; we have no wish to swerve from this course. We shall only quote a few lines from letters written to us on this controversial subject by two theologians who are not Dominicans.

²⁶ See *supra*, in this appendix, ch. iii, note 39 (p. 503).

“Father d’Alès strives not to understand that the concept of the *scientia media* is untenable. He confirms me in my opinion that philosophical analysis is a dissolvent of every Molinist explanation; the latter seeks fatally to set it aside, and to substitute for it psychological descriptions. That is what happens in Father d’Alès’ case. He gives two pages of descriptions; then he tries to confuse you with texts. Such discussions, far from being an incentive to study the question, cool one’s ardor. We must come back to the elementary things, and repeat the rudiments a hundred times.”

“Thus he still finds a way to read the texts of St. Thomas on the peculiar nature of the free faculty as proofs of Molinism.”²⁷

“The arguments of the Thomists are irrefutable, and we must truly admit that they represent the genuine teaching of St. Thomas. We shall be no less firm in attacking the theses of Molina, in confronting ourselves with the peculiar image of God who has need of the spectacles of the *scientia media* to discover future contingent things and of much diplomacy to adjust His government to them.”

There is always, we must confess, something painful about these discussions which, in spite of our efforts, are generally of too human a nature to grasp, as one should, in the calm of contemplation, the divine realities that are in question. Each one prejudices his cause in having the fixed purpose of defending it as his own doctrine, or that of *his* school. It is a question here, however, of misunderstanding *as little as possible* the very doctrine of God.

Among those who have taken this higher point of view and who have wonderfully succeeded in expressing this truth, we must quote Bossuet.

ARTICLE III

THE DIVINE PREDETERMINING DECREES ACCORDING TO BOSSUET

We cite a few extracts from the authoritative pages that he writes on this subject, in his *Traité du libre arbitre*, ch. viii.

“To reconcile the decree and the omnipotent action of God with

²⁷ We have already pointed this out. Father d’Alès (p. 459, note) quotes, in favor of Molinism, a text of St. Thomas (*De veritate*, q. 22, a. 4) which has nothing to do with efficacious grace, but in which St. Thomas, comparing the will with the sensitive appetite, says: “This very inclination of the will is not determined for it by another, but by itself.”

our free will, we have no need to give it a *concurrence which is ready for all things indifferently and which becomes what we please*; still less do we have to *make it wait for what our will is inclined to do*, for it to formulate afterwards with no risk its decrees concerning our resolutions. For without this poor circumspection which gives us a confused notion of the First Cause, it suffices for us to bear in mind that the *divine will, whose infinite power reaches everything*, not only the essence, but all the modes of being, *is of itself accountable for the complete effect*, in which it puts everything that we conceive in it, ordaining that it will be accompanied by all the properties that are befitting it.

“Besides, the basic principle of this whole doctrine is so certain that every school agrees on it.” Somewhat previous to this passage we read: “In the creature, howsoever little of being it may possess, there is nothing which is not entirely owing to God. . . . And we must not bring forward the objection that the characteristic of the exercise of free will is for it to come from this very free will; that would be true if human liberty were a first and independent liberty and not a liberty coming to it from somewhere else. . . . God, as first cause, being the cause of all being, as the first agent He must be the cause of all action, so He *causes in us the act itself*, just as He gives us the power to act. And the action of the creature does not cease to be an act, even if it be from God; on the contrary, it is all the more an action as God gives it being. . . . Thus, far from anyone being able to say that the influence of God’s action upon ours takes away its liberty, on the contrary, we must conclude that our action is free a priori, because God causes it to be free. But to cause our action in us, if one were to attribute this to any other than our Author, one might think that He would be crippling our liberty and, so to speak, by tampering with so delicate a spring which He would not have made, that He would be breaking it; *but it is not in God’s plan to deprive His work of anything by His action, since He is the cause, on the contrary, of everything that it is, even to the least detail*; and He is consequently the cause not only of our choice, but also that we are even free in our choice. . . . To cause the freedom of our action is *to cause that we act freely; and to do so is to will that it be so*; for, with God, to do is to will. Thus, to understand that God is the *cause* of free will in us, we are to understand only that He *wills* us to

be free. But He does not will merely that we have the power to be free, He wills us to be *free in the exercise of this power*; and He does not will merely *in a general way* that we make use of our liberty, but *He wills that we make use of it in this or that act*. For He, whose *knowledge and will always extends to the least detail of things*, is not content to will that beings be in a general way; but He descends to what is called this or that, that is to say, to *what is more particular*, and *all that is comprised in His decrees*. Thus, God wills, from eternity, all the acts that will be performed by the free will of human beings, all the goodness and reality there is in them. What is more absurd than to say, that it is not because God wills, that a thing exists? Must we not say on the contrary that a thing exists because God wills it? And just as it happens that we are free in virtue of the decree that wills us to be free, *so it happens that we act freely in this or that act*, in virtue *even of the decree which includes all this in detail*. . . .

“We see from this doctrine, how all things depend on God. *It is because He ordains in the first place, and then all things come about*; free creatures are no exception to this law. That they are free, is not in them an exception to the law of *common dependence*, but it is a different mode of being compared with God. . . .

“Such is the view of those who are called Thomists. This is what the ablest of them mean by the terms *premotion* and *physical pre-determination*, which seem so crude to some, but which, when understood, convey such good sense. For, lastly, these theologians preserve intact in human actions *the entire notion of liberty* that we gave in the beginning. But they wish that the *use of free will*, thus defined, *should have God as its first cause*, and that He should bring it about *not only by the attractions* that precede it, *but also in what belongs to it mostly intimately*; and this appears to them to be all the more necessary in that there are many free acts in the performance of which we experience no pleasure nor any sweetness, nor, in fine, is there any other reason that urges us to perform them except our own will. *It would place these acts outside the pale of Providence and even of the divine foreknowledge*, according to the principles that we have established, *if one did not admit that God reaches, so to speak, deep down to the whole action of our wills*, giving immediately and intimately to each all that it has of being.”

Moreover, the same Bossuet has shown, against Richard Simon, how

this doctrine of intrinsically efficacious grace is in conformity with the writings of the Fathers,²⁸ and the prayers of the Church. In his *Elévations* (18th week, 15th elevation) he solves "the contradictions concerning the mystery of grace," by saying: "God wills that you should say: *Heal me*, for at every moment I am dying, and I can do nothing without Thee. God wills that you should ask His help in all the good actions you must do; when you have done them, God wills that you should thank Him for having done them. He does not will thereby that you should remain inactive, making no effort; but He wills that in the efforts you make as if you had to do everything alone, you should take no pride in yourself, as if you were doing nothing."

In the *Méditations sur l'Évangile* (Part II, seventy-second day), he gives us, finally, the best interpretation of the profound thought of St. Thomas on predestination: "Proud man fears to render his salvation too uncertain, if it does not rest solely with him; but he deceives himself. Can I be sure of myself? My God, I perceive that my will plays me tricks at every turn. If Thou didst will to make me sole master of my fate, I would refuse a power so dangerous to my weakness. Let not then anyone say to me that this doctrine of grace and preference causes good souls to despair. What? They think to give me greater reassurance by leaving me to my own resources, and delivering me over to my instability. No, my God, I do not consent to this. *The only assurance I can have is in abandoning myself to Thee.* I find this all the more to be so, because those to whom Thou dost give this confidence of abandoning themselves completely to Thee, have in this sweet impulse the best proof possible on this earth of Thy goodness. Increase, then, this desire in me; by this means cause this blessed hope to come into my heart, so that in the end I may find myself numbered among the elect."

²⁸ *Défense de la tradition et des saints pères*, Bk. X entire. But, of course, to find out the teaching of the Fathers on this point, we must see what they say about the words of Scripture in their relation to the efficacy of grace, to our need of divine assistance, and not so much how they give practical exhortations to the faithful to co-operate by their efforts, labors, and daily struggles, with the action of grace in us. A material study of the Patristic texts certainly does not suffice to solve such a problem.

Concerning the interpretation of St. Augustine's doctrine given by Father Portalié, S.J. (*Dict. théol. cath.*, art. "*Augustin*"), see Father Jacquin's articles in the *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, April 1906, and the *Revue des sciences phil. et théol.*, 1907, p. 382.

St. Francis de Sales (*On the Love of God*, Bk. II, ch. xii) says: "Grace acts vigorously, but so sweetly that our will is not left helpless under so powerful an action. . . . When our will follows the attraction and consents to the divine motion, it also does so freely, just as it freely resists when it resists, although *the consent to grace depends much more on grace than on the will*, and resistance to grace depends on the will alone; so gentle is the divine touch in the treatment of our heart. . . . *If thou didst know the gift of God*" (John 4: 10).

St. John of the Cross, in one of his well-known prayers,²⁹ also says: "O Lord, my God, if Thou art waiting for my good deeds to grant me what I ask, give them to me, O Lord, accomplish them in me, and add to them the difficulties which Thou desirest to accept from me."

ARTICLE IV

THE DIVINE MOTION ACCORDING TO THE CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT AND LEO XIII'S ENCYCLICAL LETTER ON LIBERTY

The Catechism of the Council of Trent (Part I, art. 1, "Providence"; English translation by McHugh and Callan, p. 29) reads thus: "We are not, however, to understand that God is in such wise the Creator and Maker of all things that His works, when once created and finished, could thereafter continue to exist unsupported by His omnipotence. . . . Unless preserved continually by His Providence and by the same power that produced them, they would instantly return into their nothingness. Not only does God protect and govern all things by His Providence, but *He also by an internal power impels to motion and action whatever moves and acts, and this in such a manner that, although He excludes not, He yet precedes the agency of secondary causes.*³⁰ For His invisible influence extends to all things, and, as the wise man says, *reaches from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly* (Wis. 8: 1). This is the reason why the Apostle, announcing to the Athenians the God whom not knowing,

²⁹ *Œuvres*, translated into French by the Carmelites of Paris, I, 475.

³⁰ "Non solum autem Deus universa quae sunt, providentia sua tuetur atque administrat, verum etiam quae moventur et agunt aliquid, intima virtute, ad motum atque actionem ita impellit, ut quamvis secundarum causarum efficientiam non impediat, praeveniat tamen, cum ejus occultissima vis ad singula pertineat."

they adored, said: *He is not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and are.*"

The same catechism (Part. II; *op. cit.*, p. 302) says of grace: "For Christ our Lord continually infuses His grace into the devout soul united to Him by charity as the head to the members, or as the vine through the branches. *This grace always precedes, accompanies and follows our good works*, and without it we can have no merit, nor can we at all satisfy God." These are, moreover, the very words of the Council of Trent which in the sixth session (ch. xvi) says: "For, whereas Jesus Christ Himself continually infuses His virtue into the said justified—*as the head into the members and the vine into the branches—and this virtue always precedes, and accompanies, and follows* their good works, which without it could not in any wise be pleasing and meritorious before God."

As for the canon of the same Council concerning the co-operation of the free will, we have shown (*supra*, p. 359) how it agrees with the teaching of St. Thomas and is directed against the Protestant doctrine.

Finally, with respect to resistance of temptations from the devil, the same Catechism (Part IV; *op. cit.*, p. 573) again says: "It will, then, be found most efficacious, remembering our weakness, that we distrust our own strength; and that, placing all our hopes of safety in the divine goodness and relying on the divine protection we encounter the greatest dangers with undaunted courage, calling to mind particularly the many persons, animated with such hope and resolution, who were delivered by God from the very jaws of Satan. . . . Watch ye and pray, it is said, that ye enter not into temptation" (Matt. 26: 41).

Some theologians criticized these passages of the Council of Trent and many others. They objected to them, saying that they contained either a direct or indirect reference to a doctrine not commonly accepted, that of intrinsically efficacious grace.

The Dominican Anthony Reginald at that time wrote his work *De Catechismi romani auctoritate* to show that what the Council teaches in its Catechism, especially on the efficacy of grace, was perfectly in agreement with Tradition and the decrees of this same Council (see ch. xii of this work). Rising above the disputes of the schools, he recalled the teaching of St. Augustine as found in his *De predestinatione sanctorum*, ch. viii, which is as follows: "Far

removed from the carnal senses is this school in which God is heard and teaches. We see many coming to the Son, because we see many believing in Christ; *but we do not see where and how they heard and learnt this of the Father. That grace is most occult.*" In the same passage St. Augustine adds: "Secretely it is bestowed by the divine liberality upon human hearts, and it is spurned by none except the hard of heart; for this very purpose it is bestowed that the hardness of heart may first be taken away. . . . When the voice of the Father is heard interiorly and teaching us to come to the Son, He takes away the stony heart and gives a heart of flesh."

We shall conclude by quoting an extract from Leo XIII's Encyclical *On Human Liberty*, in which he sets forth his views on the reconciliation of grace and free will, using the same terminology as St. Thomas, without in the least alluding to the *scientia media*, devised by Molina to solve this problem.

"The first and most excellent of these aids is *the power of His divine grace*, whereby the mind can be enlightened and the will wholesomely invigorated and moved to the constant pursuit of moral good, *so that the use of our inborn liberty becomes at once less difficult and less dangerous.* Not that the divine assistance hinders in any way the free movement of our will; just the contrary, *for grace works inwardly in man and in harmony with his natural inclinations*, since it flows from the very Creator of his mind and will, by whom all things are moved in conformity with their nature. As the Angelic Doctor points out, it is because divine grace comes from the Author of nature, that it is so admirably adapted to be the safeguard of all natures, and to maintain the character, efficiency, and operations of each."⁸¹

Finally, is it not the doctrine of St. Thomas concerning the efficacy of the divine motion that Leo XIII makes his own when, in the Encyclical *Providentissimus*, he defines the inspiration of the Scripture. He says: "It is a supernatural power, by which God *moved and impelled* those to write whom He chose as His instruments, and He was so present to them that the things which He ordered, and those only, they first *rightly understood*, then *willed faithfully* to write

⁸¹ Encyclical *Libertas*, 1888. English translation by Rev. J. Wynn, S.J., in *Great Encyclical Letters of Leo XIII*, p. 140; also *Acta Leonis XIII*, Vol. VIII, anno 1888, pp. 219 ff.

down, and finally *expressed* in apt words and with infallible truth. Otherwise it could not be said that He was the Author of the entire Scripture.”⁸² This divine motion thus described is intrinsically efficacious of itself without, however, destroying the liberty of the sacred writer. Instead of doing any violence to it, this divine motion infallibly directs it and preserves it from all error. And if it is so in the case of this special gift, why not admit with St. Thomas, for the ordinary course of the Christian life, that the divine motion which effectively inclines us to good, is as *mighty* as it is *agreeable*. These two qualities cannot exist in an eminent way except by being united; to detract from the first is to misunderstand the second and attack the *intimacy* of the divine action in us. If, as is true, a mother whom we intensely love has a great influence on our will to incline it from evil to good, what must we think of the infinitely more profound influence of God in us: “*If thou didst know the gift of God.*”

One would like to be able to put oneself in a thoroughly supernatural atmosphere so as to meditate, far from the noise of disputes, upon the profound meaning of the divine words. The most sublime theological teachings truly have no effect upon us unless the Master interiorly operates in us, enlightening and instructing us. He alone can make us understand in all their depth of meaning the words He has inspired: “*Without me you can do nothing* (John 15: 5). *Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God* (II Cor. 3: 5). *It is God who worketh in you, both to will and accomplish, according to His good will* (Phil. 2: 13). *For who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received?*” (I Cor. 4: 7.)”

⁸² *Op. cit.*, p. 297; *Acta Leonis XIII*, Vol. XIII, anno 1893, pp. 357 f. Denzinger, nn. 1950 ff.: “*Nam supernaturali ipse virtute ita eos (quos tamquam instrumenta assumpsit) ad scribendum excitavit et movit, ita scribentibus adstitit, ut ea omnia eaque sola quae ipse juberet, et recte mente conciperent et fideliter conscribere vellent, et apte infallibili veritate exprimerent: secus non ipse esset auctor sacrae Scripturae universae.*”

EPILOGUE

After the publication of the article on Predeterminism (appendix to the article on Providence) in the *Dictionnaire Apologétique de la foi catholique*, the controversy on grace contained in the preceding pages was resumed from 1925 to 1927 in the *Revue thomiste* and the *Revue de philosophie*; we here give only the conclusion.

GOD DETERMINING OR DETERMINED; NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE

It is with this dilemma of pure metaphysics that we will conclude our articles on this subject. Since for twelve years no one has come forward with the least semblance of an answer to this argument which, in our opinion, is absolutely insoluble, we will not answer our opponent further. Whoever has grasped the meaning and import of the preceding pages, will perceive that this *dilemma* (God determining or determined), as well as the principle that *whatever is in motion is (efficaciously) set in motion by another*, and the affirmation that the *divine decrees and divine grace are intrinsically efficacious*, pervade the whole doctrine of St. Thomas concerning God and His relations to us. To deny the alternative just stated in the title of this article would be to question the metaphysical validity of the five Thomistic proofs for the existence of God.

We have shown¹ that St. Thomas admits, with regard to our free salutary acts, a *non-necessitating predetermination* which is included in the *eternal decrees* of God in relation to these acts. This follows as a necessary consequence from the principle thus formulated by him (Ia, q. 19, a. 4): "*Determined effects* proceed from His own infinite perfection *according to the determination of His will and intellect.*" That is the eternal predetermining decree. A little farther on the holy Doctor states the following objection (Ia, q. 19, a. 8, objection 2): "But the will of God cannot be hindered. Therefore the will of

¹ *Revue de philosophie*, July–August 1926, pp. 379–398, 423–433, 659–670.

God imposes necessity on the things willed." It is this objection that the Molinists are continually bringing up, even in our days,² against the divine predetermining decrees. St. Thomas replies: "FROM THE VERY FACT THAT NOTHING RESISTS *the divine will*, it follows that not only those things happen that God wills to happen, but that they happen necessarily or contingently according to His will." The divine predetermining decree, far from destroying the liberty of our choice by its infallible efficacy, *is the cause of it in us*, in virtue of this transcendent efficacy which appertains solely to the decree and which extends even to the free mode of our choice.

Likewise in Ia, q. 83, a. 1 ad 3, he says: "And just as by moving natural causes He does not prevent their acts being natural, so by moving voluntary causes He does not deprive their actions of being voluntary: *but rather is He the cause of this very thing in them.*" Let us survey St. Thomas' terminology on this subject, and afterwards we will come back to the question of principles.

A QUESTION OF WORDS

In the *Contra Gentes* (Bk. III, ch. xcii) we read: "The operation of an angel merely *disposes a man to choose*, whereas the operation of God gives *completion* to his choice. . . . Man does not always choose what his guardian angel intends . . . ; whereas *he always chooses in accord with God's operation in his will.* . . . Hence the guardianship of the angels is sometimes frustrated . . . , whereas divine providence never fails." Again in Bk. I, ch. lxxviii, he says: "Accordingly, by knowing His essence God knows all things to which His causality extends. Now this extends to the works of the intellect and will. . . . Therefore God knows both the thoughts and the affections of the mind." Likewise in Bk. III, ch. xci, we read: "All movements of will and *choice* must be traced to the divine will, and not to any other cause, because *God alone is the cause of our willing and choosing.*"³ The end of ch. xc, Bk. III, reads: "What Damascene . . . says in the Second Book of his *De orthod. fide*, ch. xxx, that 'God knows in advance but does *not predetermine*, the things

² *Ibid.*, March–April 1927, pp. 203–224.

³ It is a question of our *choices*, considered as *choices* and not merely as *actions*, for it is a question of their *free determination* that God knows in so far as He is the cause of it, as has been said in the preceding text.

that are in our power,' is to be understood as meaning that the things which are in our power ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THE DIVINE PREDETERMINATION IN SUCH A WAY AS TO BE NECESSITATED THEREBY." This is truly non-necessitating determination, as Silvester of Ferrara pointed out, long before Bannez.⁴

Father Synave, O.P., has proved this point very well in two articles written a few years ago, from which we take the liberty of quoting the following passages. "What is beyond doubt," he says,⁵ "is what St. Thomas really thought, for he wrote: 'Those things which are in our power are not subject to the predetermination of divine providence, as if they were necessitated by it.' St. Thomas admits therefore a non-necessitating divine predetermination: the will and choice of man are subject to the predetermination of divine providence, without this predetermination imposing a necessity on them. It is not fair to write that, 'according to the constant practice of St. Thomas, the idea of necessity is inherent in the verb *predetermine*.'

"It is inexact to equate the two terms and say that to predetermine not from necessity = not to predetermine.

"May we at least assert that *to predetermine from necessity in one way only* is but a clearer and more emphatic expression which means the same as *to predetermine in one way only*? No more so. A second text, just as formal as the preceding, will prove that this equation is as false as the preceding, being merely a variant of it by the addition, in the two compared terms, of the expression 'in one way only.'

"To St. John Damascene who affirms that 'those things which are in our power, are not subject to Providence, but to our free-will,' St. Thomas replies (*De Veritate*, q. 5, a. 5 ad rum): "The words of Damascene are not to be understood in this wise, that all things

⁴ *Sylvester of Ferrara* in the third book of the *Contra Gentes*, the end of chapter xc, says: "Gregory of Nyssa in his book *De homine*, and Damascene, in his second book, seem to say that *those things which are in our power are not subject to divine providence*."

But he replies: "They mean simply that such things as are in our power are not necessitated by divine predetermination." This doctrine was affirmed many times by *Ferrariensis*, long before Bannez. A book has recently been published on this subject. Let us point out that St. John Damascene is concerned here most of all, not with salutary acts—for he says farther on that all good comes from God—but with *sin* as such, to which God does not predetermine us, but which He permits.

⁵ *Revue thomiste*, January–February 1927: "Non-necessitating and necessitating predetermination," p. 74.

which are in our power, *i. e.*, in our choice, are to be excluded from divine providence; BUT THEY ARE TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS MEANING THAT THOSE THINGS ARE NOT DETERMINED BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE IN ONE PARTICULAR WAY, AS THOSE THINGS ARE WHICH DO NOT HAVE FREE WILL.'

"Human acts, which depend upon our choice, are therefore truly *determined in one way*. If these acts were not *determined in one way*, St. Thomas would have expressed himself in this manner: Things are not so determined only by divine providence, as those are which do not have freedom of will. But someone may remark that the phrase contains an '*ita*,' to which the negation at the beginning of the sentence applies: *Non sunt per divinam providentiam ITA determinata ad unum, sicut ea quae libertatem arbitrii non habent*: things are *not so determined in one way* by divine providence, *as* those are which do not have freedom of will.

"The determination in one way only of free acts does not take place in the same manner as the determination in one way only of acts which are not free. Now, we know what is the nature of the determination *in one way* of acts which do not depend upon free will; everyone agrees in saying that this is a necessitating determination. There are therefore grounds for admitting a twofold determination *in one way*: a non-necessitating and a necessitating determination; the first is that of free acts, the second of acts that are not free."

Father Synave, moreover, in his second reply to Father d'Alès, confirms this critical comment in a manner that is quite apodictic.⁶

⁶ Cf. *Revue thomiste*, May-June 1927, pp. 231-249: "St. Thomas and non-necessitating predetermination," p. 241: "I take the liberty of pointing out to Father d'Alès that it is he who explains away (the text in the *Contra Gentes*, Bk. III, ch. xc) and very much so the word '*determinationi*' by attaching an a priori necessitating element to the idea of determination, which is an integral part of it, as St. John Damascene did.

"Now that, to my mind, is an error which ends in making St. Thomas speak to no purpose. If, indeed, *the word 'determination' implies necessity, why does not St. Thomas accept the formula of St. John Damascene? . . .*

"That it may not end in nonsense, the negative sentence of St. Thomas: 'What is in our power is not subject to the predetermination of divine providence as if necessitated by it,' amounts to this: Those things that are in our power are subject to the predetermination of divine providence without this predetermination imposing a necessity on them. There is no need of a powerful gloss or even of any gloss, to arrive at this which is the obvious meaning. I know of course that this literal translation is embarrassing for the system of Father d'Alès. But I cannot help it. Words are words. . . .

We must take in the same sense the famous text of the Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4: "*Since, therefore, the will is an active principle, not determinate to one thing, but having an indifferent relation to many things, God so moves it, that He does NOT OF NECESSITY determine it to one thing, but its movement remains contingent and not necessary, except in those things to which it is moved naturally.*"

Non ex necessitate must be translated by *not of necessity*, as is the case throughout question 10. In article 2, *sed contra*, we read: "*Therefore it is not moved, (the will), of necessity, to either of the opposites,*" likewise, in *corp.*: "*Not of necessity* does the will tend to it (particular good)." Also in the *ad ium*, and the *ad zum*: "But other (means) without which the end can be gained, *are not of necessity* willed by one who wills the end"; *not of necessity* means *freely*.

Likewise in article 3 *sed contra*, we have: "Therefore man's will is *not of necessity* moved by the lower appetite." Also, in *corp.*: "*Not of necessity* does the will tend to that whereto the passion inclines it . . . , *not of necessity* does it follow the passion."

In answer to this they say that the verb "*to determine*" is not affected by the words "*not of necessity*" in the same way as the verb "*to move*," and that the phrase "it does not of necessity determine" is clearly "a redundant phrase, exclusive of all determination."⁷ What would be the result of such principles of exegesis? The sober and formal language of St. Thomas is clearly "redundant"! It is the same as saying that, in the phrase "*it does not of necessity determine*," the words "*of necessity*" are absolutely useless, when we have in them the formal answer. The immediate context of the proposition demands that we translate "*non ex necessitate*" by "*not of necessity*," even in the case of the verb "*to determine*." We see this to be so, not only from other parallel texts of St. Thomas which we have just quoted, but especially, and we must stress this point, from the *question as stated* as title of this article, which was made so clear at the start by two objections which do not differ from those always brought forward by the Molinists:

"Every agent that cannot be resisted moves OF NECESSITY; but God

"It seems to me to belong to the most elementary criticism, to accept this clearly established phrase (*determination of divine providence*) and if it goes counter to a system or a point of view on determination, to reform the one or abandon the other."

⁷ *Revue de philosophie*, March-April 1927, p. 206.

cannot be resisted, because His power is infinite" (Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4, obj. 1a).

"Something IMPOSSIBLE follows from the supposition that the will does not will that to which God moves it: because in that case God's operation would be ineffectual" (*ibid.*, obj. 3a). To this St. Thomas replies without the least reference to the divine foreknowledge of our consent by means of a knowledge which would remind us in any way of the *scientia media*, but he insists, on the contrary, upon the *transcendent efficacy* of the divine causality:

"In reply to the first objection it must be said that the *divine will extends* not only to the doing of something by the thing which He moves (choice as action), but also to *its being done in a way* which is fitting to the nature of that thing" (this being choice with *its free mode* of choice, caused by God Himself in us and with us, when He *moves us infallibly* to perform *this salutary act, rather* than that other, and this in virtue of the *intrinsic efficacy of His motion* which man does not in fact resist). "And therefore it would be more repugnant to the divine motion, for the will to be moved *of necessity*, which is not fitting to its nature, than for it to be moved *freely*, which is becoming to its *nature*."

Likewise in his answer to the third objection, St. Thomas again affirms the *intrinsic efficacy* of the divine motion spoken about in the objection, but he replies that under the influence of this motion which man does not in fact resist, he retains *the power* to resist; he could resist if he wished; but under the influence of this motion he never wishes to resist: "In reply to the third objection it must be said that, if God moves the will to anything it is IMCOMPOSSIBLE with this supposition that the will be not moved thereto (otherwise God's operation would be *ineffectual*, as stated in the objection). *But it is not impossible simply*. Consequently it does not follow that the will is moved by God necessarily." To grasp fully the exact meaning of the replies made by St. Thomas, they must not be separated from the objections that he intends to solve.

There is no possible doubt that here it is truly a question of non-necessitating predetermination. To understand these texts in any other way would be to strip them of their metaphysical texture, as the Nominalists did who saw in first principles only solemn futilities. The terms employed by St. Thomas would have even no more meaning.

Moreover, why should he always have recourse, *not to the divine foreknowledge of our consent*, as Molina does, but to the TRANSCENDENT EFFICACY of the divine causality which extends even to our choices and to the free mode of these? If by the words *choice* and *free mode*, he did not mean the determination of our free will, what could he then mean by them?

"Since therefore God Himself is the cause of our choice and of our will, our choices and wills are subject to divine providence. . . . Those things which are in our power are not subject to divine providence AS IF NECESSITATED BY IT" (*Contra Gentes*, Bk. III, ch. xc, beginning and end).

In the preceding articles we quoted other texts as explicit as those we have just referred to.⁸

The passage in *De veritate*, q. 22, a. 6, which is quoted against us,⁹ speaks of the determination *to one thing* "by natural inclination," "by way of nature," which is necessitating, most certain, and therefore quite different from that with which we are concerned.¹⁰

⁸ See Ia, q. 19, a. 8: "Since then the divine will is perfectly EFFICACIOUS, it follows not only that *things are done*, which God wills to be done, but also that they ARE DONE IN THE WAY *that He wills*. Now God wills some things to be done necessarily, some *contingently*." Likewise ad 2um and in the *Contra Gentes*, Bk. I, ch. lxxxv; Bk. II, chs. xxix and xxx; *De veritate*, q. 23, a. 5; *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1 ad 3; q. 16, a. 7 ad 15; *Quodl.* XI, q. 3; XII, q. 3 ad 1. See I *Periherm.*, lect. 14; also Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4, c and ad 1, ad 3; q. 112, a. 3. The text of the *De veritate*, q. 23, a. 5, is particularly characteristic: "But the divine will is a *most powerful agent*. Hence its effect must be in every respect like it, so that not only that is done *which* God wills . . . but that it is done *in the way* that God wills it to be done, either necessarily or contingently."

⁹ *Revue de philosophie*, March-April 1927, pp. 204 f.

¹⁰ Cf. *De veritate*, q. 22, a. 6: "I answer by saying that for this reason anything is said to be *necessary*, in that it is *invariably determined to one thing*. Hence, since the will is indifferently related (as a faculty) to many things, it is not necessitated with regard to all things but only to those to which it is *determined by natural inclination*."

If one would have it that the first line of this text enunciates an absolutely universal principle, then it would be necessary, as St. Thomas so often does, to distinguish between the *absolute necessity* of the determination *by way of nature* and the *conditional necessity* or that consequent upon a free determination. Cf. Ia, q. 22, a. 2 ad 4: "Man has not a prefixed *operating force determined to only the one effect*, as in the case of natural things. . . . But since the *very act of free will is traced to God as to a cause*, it necessarily follows that everything happening from the exercise of free will must be subject to divine providence."

Finally, there is not, whatever one may say,¹¹ a tremendous paralogism, or even any paralogism, in this reasoning, the two premises of which are provided by St. Thomas, and which are as follows: Almighty God can effect, operating *within* our will, to which He is more intimately present than it is to itself, what the will itself does.¹² Now our will is determined *to one thing*, without being necessitated. Therefore Almighty God can determine it without necessitating it. In other words, He can, by His omnipotence, which extends even to the *free mode* of our choice—which mode is also *being* and is included in the adequate object of omnipotence—move it *infallibly to determine itself to this free act rather than to that other*. Certainly there are not two created determinations, one caused by God alone, which, like a little winch, would necessitate ours; there is *only one free determination* which is infallibly caused by God as First Cause and by us as secondary cause pre-moved to it by God: “*There is no distinction between what comes from free will, and what is of predestination: as there is no distinction between what comes from a secondary cause and from a first cause*” (Ia, q. 23, a. 5). If it were otherwise, there would no longer be any mystery in the so mysterious reconciliation, as St. Augustine says, of the divine causality with our liberty. The least intelligent of human beings can understand, indeed, that *liberty remains*, if the free determination is not *infallibly* caused by God. There is nothing easier to understand; but then we must reject by this simplism the text of St. Thomas just quoted: “*There is no distinction between what comes from free will and what is of predestination: as there is no distinction between what comes from a secondary cause and from a first cause.*”

The doctrine of St. Thomas is the same as that expressed by Bossuet in these ever memorable terms: “Thus God eternally wills all

Also in a. 4 ad 2: “The order of divine providence is unchangeable and certain, so far as all things foreseen happen as they have been foreseen, whether from necessity or from contingency.” *Item, De malo*, q. 6, a. 1 ad 3.

¹¹ *Revue de philosophie, ibid.*, p. 209.

¹² See St. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 22, a. 8: “God can change the will from the fact that He Himself operates in the will as He does in nature. . . . Hence, as the will can change its act for another, much more so can God” (*who operates more vigorously*, as St. Thomas has just said). St. Augustine said the same. Cf. *De correptione et gratia*, ch. xiv: “Concerning the wills of men, God does what He wills and when He wills. *The wills of men are more in God’s power than in their own.*”

the future exercise of man's liberty in all its goodness and reality. What, then, is more absurd than to say that, because God wills it, therefore there is no such free exercise of the will? Must we not rather say that there is such a thing precisely because God wills it so; and that, as it happens that we are free by virtue of the decree which wills that we be free, so it also happens that we act freely in this or that act by virtue of the same decree which extends to every detail of the act?"¹³

The study of the terminology thus brings us back to the great Thomist theses.

A QUESTION OF PRINCIPLES

As many Molinists maintain always and notwithstanding every thing, that St. Thomas never admitted, about the *non-necessitating predetermination*, that it is even a "strange"¹⁴ conception of it, contrary to all its principles, and that it admits only a non-necessitating motion, we have replied as follows:¹⁵ The divine motion which is INTRINSICALLY EFFICACIOUS and which inclines one infallibly to this free act rather than to that other, evidently deserves to be called a non-necessitating predetermination, in so far as it gives infallible assurance of the fulfilment of an *eternal predeterminating* and EFFICACIOUS *decree*, and this too OF ITSELF, instead of being due to the foreknowledge of our consent, as the defenders of the *scientia media* will have it, and of which St. Thomas never spoke. The decree is entirely a question of principles; let us return to it for the last time, examining it with the greatest accuracy and from an objective point of view.

St. Thomas admirably pointed out what is the relation of God's foreknowledge to the predetermining decree of His will, when in Ia, q. 14, a. 8 ("Whether the knowledge of God is the cause of things.") he said: "*Since the intelligible form has a relation to opposite things, inasmuch as the same knowledge relates to opposites, it would not produce a determinate effect unless it were determined to one thing by the appetite, as the Philosopher says (Metaph., IX, 5).*"

¹³ Bossuet, *Traité du libre arbitre*, ch. viii.

¹⁴ *Revue de philosophie*, March-April, p. 207. It is for the reader to judge if there is anything "strange" in the admirable lines of Bossuet that we have just quoted and that are expressive of this very exalted and genial concept.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1926, pp. 659-670.

. . . Hence His knowledge must be the cause of things, *in so far as His will is joined to it.*" Behold the decree of the divine will; he says somewhat the same in Ia, q. 19, a. 4, corp. 2a ratio. This doctrine in no way ignores the rôle of foreknowledge, in affirming that of the divine will.

But one of the fundamental reasons, as we have said, why every Thomist will always reject the Molinist theory, is that this theory of necessity causes one to posit *a passivity in the pure Act*. If the divine causality is not *predetermining* with regard to our *choice* (conditionally future at first and then future), the divine knowledge is fatally *determined* by it. To wish to limit the universal causality and absolute independence of God, necessarily brings one to place a passivity in Him, a passivity in the *self-subsisting Being*, in the *self-subsisting intellect*. If, in fact, the divine motion does not infallibly assure the execution of a divine intrinsically efficacious and predetermining decree, it follows, as Molina and his disciples maintain that, *of two men equally tempted and EQUALLY HELPED by God*, it happens that one consents to co-operate with the grace and the other does not.¹⁶ And then the *difference*, which distinguishes the good from the bad consent and this man from that other, does not come from God, but *solely from man's free will. These are the very words of Lessius.*¹⁷ In one case, man's free will has caused the divine grace to be efficacious *in actu secundo*, in the other it remained sterile. But then, as we said, one contradicts the texts of St. Paul (I Cor. 4: 7) who says: "*For who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received?*" It becomes consequently quite clear for one who speaks seriously and does not wish to trifle with words, that *the foreknowledge is passive* when one positively asserts that this *difference* does not at all come from God; just as I am a *passive* spectator *when I see*

¹⁶ It is in this manner that Molina speaks in many propositions of his *Concordia*, and they are summed up in the index of this work in the following manner: "Of two that are called and *equally aided by grace*, it can happen that one of them is converted and the other not. It is possible for one who has received a *less grace* to rise again, when another who has received a greater grace does not rise again, and remains obdurate."

¹⁷ Lessius, *De gratia efficaci*, ch. xviii, n. 7: "Of two *similarly called*, that one accepts the grace offered, the other rejects it: it is truly said *that this is due to free will alone*, not that he who accepts does so by his free will alone, but because the difference is the result of free will alone, so as not to be due to the diversity of *prevenient grace*."

that this man, independently of me, is seated, whereas that other is standing; or again *when I see* that this one is killing someone and that other is being killed. Moreover, with regard to this *difference*, the divine will which consents to this too late, it, too, is not determining but *determined*. A new passivity has entered into the pure Act, who henceforth is no more like to God than is the false diamond like the true.

In the case of these two men as stated above, who, situated in the same external and internal circumstances, equally tempted and EQUALLY HELPED, grace in *the former rather* than in *the latter* and *not vice versa*, in Peter *rather* than in Judas, and not in Judas *rather* than in Peter, was EFFICACIOUS *in actu secundo*, not of itself, nor because God willed it, but because Peter willed it, and it is *only afterwards* that God, although He is Being itself, Intelligence itself, Goodness itself, saw and willed it determinately. There is a twofold passivity in pure Act. I quite understand, it is useless to recall it, that the *scientia media* has foreseen first of all this free consent of Peter as a *conditional future* (what Peter *would choose* if he were situated in such circumstances), but without this passive prevision, God, according to this theory, could not infallibly know what Peter *really will choose* when actually situated in such combination of circumstances.¹⁸

Henceforth we must reject the doctrine of St. Augustine who says: "*Why God draws this one and not that one, judge not, if thou wilt not err*" (in Joann., tr. 26). One could easily answer St. Augustine and say: "Of two men equally tempted and *equally helped*, God draws the one who of his own accord determines himself to co-operate with the prevenient grace, and He does not draw the other who puts an obstacle in the way." One has thus done away with the mystery, but one has put a passivity in the pure Act. One has "*confused*," as Bossuet said, the whole idea of a First Cause.¹⁹ The metaphysical or absolute validity of the proofs for the existence of God has thus been attacked.

It is the same with every doctrine which maintains that man, by his consent, causes the grace of God to be efficacious *in actu secundo*. According to such a view, grace said to be efficacious gives indeed, in *actu primo*, of itself, the proximate power to act, but it is not actually

¹⁸ Let us note that this objection applies as well to the *difference* with regard to easy salutary acts and the continuance of them, as when it is a question of this difference with regard to difficult ~~acts~~.

¹⁹ *Traité du libre arbitre*, ch. viii.

followed by the consent of Peter rather than that of James, because Peter has added to it a DETERMINATION that God Himself, in spite of His omnipotence, cannot infallibly produce in us and with us. Now *this determination* IS WHAT IS OF GREATER IMPORTANCE IN THE WORK OF SALVATION, and that is what is withdrawn from the universal causality of God who is the *Author of salvation*. Moreover, if God does not predetermine our salutary choice *suavely* and *firmly*, without necessitating us, it is He Himself who is DETERMINED by us, and even NECESSITATED TO SEE something which is INDEPENDENT of Him: to see what Peter WOULD CHOOSE if situated in such circumstances and what he will actually choose to do when so situated. Imagine, if you can, this PASSIVITY, this DEPENDENCE as regards a conditional future in the *self-subsisting Intellect*.

If the *dependence*, as regards this DETERMINATION, is not in us, it is in God; and if it is neither in Him nor in us, the relation between us and Him is impossible; He has no knowledge of our free acts.

This is one of the most tiresome of objections, for fundamentally this dilemma is insoluble. And then how are we going to get out of it? Nothing simpler. They reply to us: ²⁰ "Father Garrigou-Lagrange speaks in his first page of a grace that man would cause to be efficacious by his consent and starts to make war upon us. Undoubtedly it is this that he calls a passivity in the pure Act. Is it necessary to point out once more that this foolish notion does not in the least interpret my thought and that I am not interested in the chimera that he is combating? The monster of his creation prevents him from seeing the reality." Likewise, a little farther on,²¹ concerning the Thomists, we read: "They suppose that their adversaries base the efficacy of grace not upon the knowledge and will of God, but on man's free will, and have not words enough of sarcasm for so puerile an invention."

That is one of the most valuable of concessions for us. Now we know that the doctrine according to which "man by his consent causes the grace of God to be efficacious" is a monster, a chimera, or at least a puerile invention.

But who created this monster? Did we? Surely it was Molina himself who wrote in his *Concordia* (q. 14, a. 13, disp. 40; Paris ed., 1876, p. 230): "Hence we assert: under n. 5, the HELPS of prevenient

²⁰ *Revue de philosophie*, March-April 1927, p. 215.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

and adjuvant grace which are granted by the ordinary law to wayfarers, that they be EFFICACIOUS OR INEFFICACIOUS for conversion or justification, DEPEND UPON THE FREE CONSENT AND CO-OPERATION OF OUR WILL, and so it IS FREELY IN OUR POWER EITHER TO CAUSE THEM TO BE EFFICACIOUS by consenting and co-operating with them to the acts which dispose us for justification, or cause *them to be inefficacious*, by withholding our consent and co-operation, or even by eliciting the contrary act of dissent."

If that is a theological monster, it is not a creation of the Thomists. It is constantly to be met with in the *Concordia* of Molina, in which we read such as follows: "It is clearly defined (in the Council of Trent), that it DEPENDS UPON OUR WILL *to cause* the divine *helps to be efficacious or inefficacious* for our conversion and justification" (q. 23, disp. 1, membr. 6, *ed. cit.*, p. 459).

It is this doctrine, indeed, that the Thomists have unceasingly combated. They have not distorted it; they have quoted faithfully and loyally the texts in which Molina has given the least hint of it, particularly this one: "When you hear it said that it is our consent which *causes* the helps of grace *to be efficacious*, do not so understand it as if our free will gave some force or efficacy to the helps of grace . . . but it *applies to it the condition without which such help* will not have the force of *efficacy* in comparison with such effect" (*Concordia, ibid.*, p. 462). The free will, according to this teaching, causes the grace to be efficacious not *in actu primo* (first movement), but *in actu secundo* (completed act), in bringing to it the free determination which is, however, what is more important in the work of salvation.

Hence it follows, according to Molina (*Concordia, ed. cit.*, p. 51), that: "It can happen that *one prevented and called by a far greater grace*, of his own free will is *not converted*, and another, having received a far less grace, is converted." (*Item*, p. 565.) This is absolutely contrary to the doctrine of St. Thomas who, in Ia, q. 20, a. 2, says: "THE LOVE OF GOD CREATES AND INFUSES GOODNESS IN THINGS"; and in a. 4 he says: "*God's will is the cause of goodness in things; AND THE REASON WHY SOME THINGS ARE BETTER THAN OTHERS, IS THAT GOD WILLS FOR THEM A GREATER GOOD. Hence it follows that He loves more the better things.*" He who wills freely to be converted is in that case *better* than the other; and this presupposes that he has been *loved more* and helped more *by God*.²²

²² St. Thomas says the same thing in his Commentary on Matt. 25: 15: "He

The contrary conclusion formulated by Molina is deduced directly from his definition of the *scientia media*: In the *Concordia*, (q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, *ed. cit.*, pp. 317–318), he says: “The *scientia media*, by which from a most profound and inscrutable comprehension of each free will by an intuition of His essence He has foreseen *what, according to the native disposition of the will, it would do*, if situated in this or that or even an untold combination of circumstances, since however it could, if it wished, do just the opposite. . . . We must say in answer to this that it (*scientia media*) *on no account is to be called free*, both because it precedes every free act of the divine will, and also because it was NOT IN GOD’S POWER TO KNOW BY THIS KNOWLEDGE ANYTHING ELSE THAN HE ACTUALLY KNEW. (There you have, indeed, *passivity in the pure Act* as regards what Peter of his own accord *would choose* to do rather than James equally tempted, and *equally helped*, if they were situated in the same circumstances.) Furthermore, not even is it natural in this sense, as if it were to such a degree innate to God that He could not know the OPPOSITE of that which He knows by this knowledge (whereby the *scientia media* differs from the knowledge of simple intelligence). *For if the created free will were to do the opposite, as it truly can, He would have known even this by the same knowledge, but not that He actually knows it.* . . . Likewise that a *being endowed with free will*, if situated in a certain combination of events and circumstances, *is inclined one way or the other, this is not due to God’s foreknowledge*, NAY RATHER THE REASON WHY GOD FOREKNOWS IT IS, BECAUSE *the being itself endowed with free will* freely must do JUST WHAT IT DOES, NOR IS THIS DUE TO THE FACT THAT GOD WILLS IT TO BE DONE, *but because the being itself* FREELY WILLS TO DO IT.” We have here, indeed, a double passivity in the pure Act: (1) in the foreknowledge: “*the reason why* God foreknows it is *because* the being itself endowed with free will freely must do just what it does”; (2) in the divine will which consents too late to what would be the choice of Peter rather than James if they were both situated in the same circumstances.

Now this definition of the *scientia media* must be necessarily defended by all those who wish to preserve intact the intrinsic characteristic of this theory and who hold that God can infallibly know the

who makes a greater effort, has a greater grace, *but that he does so, he needs to be moved by a higher cause.*” (Likewise, on Ephes. 4: 7, and Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 4.)

free conditional futures previous to any determining divine decree. In that, the successors of Molina have been able to modify accidentally his teaching but it still remains substantially his after the changes they have made. It is a case of saying that they have embroidered upon a canvas which is stronger than their thread; the philosophical error is always there under the arabesques: "IT WAS NOT IN GOD'S POWER TO KNOW BY THIS SCIENTIA (*media*) ANYTHING ELSE THAN HE ACTUALLY KNEW . . . ; THE REASON WHY God foreknows it is BECAUSE the thing itself endowed with free will FREELY *must* DO JUST WHAT IT DOES." God, pure Act in the order of being, pure Act in the order of intelligence and love, God, THE SELF-SUBSISTING BEING, THE SELF-SUBSISTING INTELLECT, THE SELF-SUBSISTING WILL, God, sovereign actuality, supreme determination, who is not subsequently *determinable*, is, nevertheless, passive, DETERMINED, and even NECESSITATED, in His foreknowledge, to see what WOULD and WILL be the CHOICE of Peter rather than that of James equally tempted and equally helped in the same circumstances. Contrary to what St. Thomas always taught, *God's knowledge is measured by things*.

We may seek to divert the issue by a literary style and play on words. The fact remains that God is DETERMINED in seeing this choice rather than another; He is even NECESSITATED in this: "It was not in God's power to know by this *scientia (media)* anything else than he actually knew." As for Peter's liberty, how is this safeguarded? If God, by examining this created will and the circumstances in which it will be situated, foresees infallibly what will be its choice, how are we to avoid admitting determinism of circumstances? If that is a theological monster, it is not of our creation.

And that is the theory the germ of which they want to find in St. Augustine and St. Thomas!

But Molina is the first to tell us that one will seek for it there in vain. How can we forget what he wrote on this subject in one of the most precious pages of the *Concordia* (q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. ult., ed. cit., pp. 546, 548)? Permit us to quote this somewhat forgotten text.

"But Augustine believed that, with what he had most correctly taught from the Scripture about grace against the Pelagian heresy, is connected the question of God's eternal *predestination not being according to the merits and nature of the use of free will as foreseen by 'God*, but only according to His election and good pleasure (and in

this sense it is most true as was explained in Member XII); it was in this sense that he interpreted in many of his works the text of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (ch. ix); . . . *But St. Thomas followed Augustine's opinion, and so did many Scholastics after him.*

"In our humble opinion we declare that the whole question of reconciling the freedom of the will with the divine foreknowledge and predestination, which we have always taught throughout article 13 of question 14, and in article 6 of question 19, in question 22 and throughout this question, rests upon the following principles from which we have deduced it, and which we have given in various places. *If these principles had always been given and explained, perhaps neither the Pelagian heresy would have sprung up, nor would the Lutherans have dared so impudently to deny the freedom of our will, objecting that divine grace is incompatible with foreknowledge and predetermination, nor would so many of the faithful have been disturbed in their mind because of Augustine's opinion and the controversies with the Pelagians.*"

The Salmanticenses²³ in quoting this text of Molina cannot refrain from writing: "What a necessary man for those times (of Pelagianism)! What powerful antidote and opportune for such great blindness (of the Lutherans)! . . . Was there any man more learned than Augustine whose lot it was to be so envied by so great a disturbance! . . . As if God finally revealed to Molina alone, whatsoever to Augustine and the holy Fathers and the most learned of theologians for countless centuries even to our own times He has not at all made known."

Fonseca, S.J., Molina's teacher, declared in his *Metaphysics* (Vol. III, Bk. VI, ch. ii, q. 6, sec. 8) that he himself had thought of this theory of the *scientia media* before his disciple, but that he had not made it known, "lest on these grounds he might perhaps be introducing an innovation which is not perfectly in agreement with the common teaching of the Fathers or with the careful consideration and accurate discussion of the Scholastics."

Fonseca must have known, indeed, that this idea of the *scientia media* was current among the Semi-Pelagians, for they affirmed that God grants the grace of Baptism to this child who is about to die

²³ *De gratia*, disp. 5, dub. 7, n. 174.

rather than to that other, because He foresaw what use it *would have made* freely of the grace if it had lived.

Now St. Augustine rejected this foreknowledge, viewed in this way, not only because of the abuse the Semi-Pelagians made of it, but also because it is essentially at fault, in so far as it posits a *passivity* in the divine intellect with regard to man's free choice.²⁴

The necessity of the dilemma, "God DETERMINING OR DETERMINED, *no other alternative*," has its foundation in the first principles from which the five Thomistic proofs for the existence of God are derived. They are as follows: Every movement, whether pertaining to body or spirit, intellect or will, depends upon God the prime mover; every created causality depends upon the causality of the First Agent; every contingent determination depends upon the prime necessary Being; everything that participates in goodness depends upon the sovereign Good; every determination ordained to an end depends upon the supreme Ordainer. St. Thomas himself applies these principles to our choices so as to establish this conclusion, namely: "*God alone is the cause of our wills and choices*" (III *Contra Gentes*, ch. xci, n. 2; *item*, ch. xc). This dilemma is a basic issue of the teaching of St. Thomas concerning the divine knowledge, Ia, q. 14, a. 5, 8, 14; the divine will, Ia, q. 19, a. 4, 6, 8; God's love for us. Ia, q. 20, a. 2, 4; providence and predestination, Ia, q. 22, a. 2 ad 4; a. 4 ad 1; q. 23, a. 4 ad 1; a. 5; divine grace, Ia IIae, q. 109, a. 1; q. 112, a. 3; IIa IIae, q. 24, a. 11.

The gist of the texts is, that what is of more importance in the work of salvation cannot escape the universal causality of God who is the author of salvation. Now, what is of more importance in the work of salvation is the *salutary free determination*, the good use of

²⁴ See St. Augustine, *De dono perseverantiae*, ch. xvii; speaking of our good works, he says: "Or perhaps they say that neither are these predestined. Therefore they are *either not given by God, or He did not know that He will give them. But if they are given* and He foreknew that He will give them, *assuredly He predestined them.*" If God has not decreed our good works, our salutary free acts, He has not given them to us or He has not known that He will give them to us. If, on the contrary, He gives them to us and has *foreseen* that He will give them to us, it is because He has predestined us *by His decree* to bring them to completion. Likewise in the *De praedestinatione sanctorum*, ch. x, he says: "By predestination God foreknew those things which He was going to do"; it is a foreknowledge which has its foundation in the decree to grant the efficacious grace, "*the grace which is spurned by none except the hard-hearted, because it is primarily given to overcome this hardness (of heart).*" *Ibid.*, ch. viii; and *De dono persev.*, ch. ix.

grace. Therefore this salutary free determination which is found in Peter and not in that other man, is the effect of the divine causality, the divine decrees and grace, which are efficacious *of themselves* and not because of the foreseen consent of our will.

God is either *determining* or *determined*, there is *no* other alternative. His knowledge of free conditional futures is *measured* by things, or else it *measures* them by reason of the accompanying decree of the divine will. Our salutary choices, as such, in the intimacy of their free *determination*, depend upon God, or it is He, the sovereignly independent pure Act, who *depends* upon us. There is no other alternative.²⁶

Molina saw quite well that there is no possible middle course between the stand taken by St. Augustine and St. Thomas, and his own, and that is why he was forced to formulate the famous proposition which expresses the very essence of the *scientia media*: "IT WAS NOT IN GOD'S POWER TO KNOW by this *scientia (media)* ANYTHING ELSE than He actually knew . . .; THE REASON WHY God foreknows it is BECAUSE the being itself endowed with free will MUST DO FREELY JUST WHAT IS DONE; NOT is this due to the fact that *God wills* it to be done, but *because the being itself* freely wills to do it."²⁶

We know that Molina had written a little further on²⁷ to this effect: "Although I admit it to be true that St. Thomas seems to suggest the contrary of this (Ia, q. 14, a. 8), in his reply to the first objection, when explaining the same he endeavors to wrest the statement of Origen just referred to, which is clearly the same teaching as ours, *in the opposite sense*." Was Origen a master to follow on the subject of foreknowledge and predestination? (See St. Thomas, Ia, q. 23, a. 5.)

The knowledge of God is the CAUSE of our free determinations, or else it is CAUSED by them, because Peter would choose if he were situated in such circumstances and *in fact will choose* when so situated. *The knowledge of God either measures things or is measured by*

²⁶ The exclusion of a third clause in the dilemma is based upon the principle given by St. Thomas in *De veritate* (q. 8, a. 8), that: "it is impossible for any two things to be alike (as the one knowing and the thing known, of which St. Thomas is speaking in this article), except in one of two ways; either one is the cause of the other, or both are caused from the same cause which impresses the same form on each."

²⁶ *Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, cit., p. 318.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 325.

them. Only anthropomorphism can admit the second term of the dilemma and therefore, from sheer necessity, we must keep to the first. There is no other solution. It has its obscurities, those of a profound mystery, but it avoids contradiction. Said a Dominican cardinal: "It is only by dint of fighting against this sublime doctrine that one can be deprived of the efficacious grace, necessary for willing to understand it properly and for actually understanding it properly." There might be some truth in this remark.

At all events, the Thomist position is so strong that even its adversaries feel themselves obliged to concede to it the following propositions, considering themselves free afterwards to stamp them with the note of relativity by reintroducing, through some adverb, a *scientia media*, shameful in itself, which unwarrantably makes its presence felt everywhere without giving its name.

These precious concessions are as follows:

*"To find out the reason for this efficacy, we shall turn more naturally to God, the Author of every excellent gift; and this is the immediate answer of faith, to wit, that grace is efficacious, because God willed it so. . . . If you ask why such grace is efficacious, there is only one answer: God willed it, Complacuit."*²⁸

Then why not admit that God, without necessitating, *mightily* and *suavely* determines Peter's choice, because, in fine, grace will be efficacious only if it is followed by Peter's salutary choice, and therefore, in the end, we must say that it is followed by this choice (which is at first a conditional future and then a simple future), *because* God, the Author of all good, *willed it?*

What we are fully agreed upon is this, that the doctrine according to which "man by his consent *causes* the grace of God to be *efficacious*, is truly a theological "*monster*."²⁹ The word is not ours, but we fully endorse it. This discussion has therefore not been absolutely useless. It has shown once more that the dilemma, in the precise form as given here, is necessarily connected with the fundamental articles of St. Thomas concerning the divine knowledge and will in their relations to created liberty. God determines the free choice of the salutary acts of the will, or, if it is not so, then it is He Himself who is deter-

²⁸ *Revue de philosophie*, March 1927, p. 215.

²⁹ *Idem.*, March-April, p. 215, note 2.

mined ⁸⁰ by them. This dilemma rests ultimately upon the distinction between potency and act, the foundation for which we shall again bring to the reader's notice. (See *infra*, p. 558 ff.)

FOUNDATION FOR THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN POTENCY AND ACT ACCORDING TO ST. THOMAS

In these closing pages, especially in answering the objections formulated by Louis Rougier in a recent book of his which he wrote against the Christian faith and Thomism, we should like briefly to recall how the doctrine of act and potency, when properly understood, is seen to be the soul of the whole philosophy of Aristotle and St. Thomas, and how, on the contrary, it would be the total destruction of this same doctrine to conceive of *potency* as an *imperfect act*, such as some Scholastics, and after them Leibniz, conceived it to be.

Many authors, taking more or less into account this difference of opinion, state truly, by way of a *nominal definition*, what is the nature of act and potency; they point out their mutual relations and the commonly admitted axioms in the Schools, but they do not sufficiently determine with Aristotle, *why* it is necessary to admit the reality of a potency between nothingness and determinate being, nor how potency is distinguished from *privation*, from the *mere possible*, or, on the contrary, from the *imperfect act*.

We must first give our attention to this, so that we may have a clearer conception of the validity of the applications of this doctrine either in the order of being or in that of operation. This article will be concerned with this point and the first of these applications, namely, those that refer to the order of being, and we will start from sensible beings and ascend to God.

DEFINITION OF POTENCY AND THE NECESSITY OF A REAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN IT AND ACT

According to Aristotle, as appears from the *Physics*, Bk. I and II, and the *Metaphysics*, Bk. I, chs. v and ix, the real distinction between potency and act is absolutely necessary, so that we may reconcile

⁸⁰ As for sinful acts, we have several times explained that God *is the cause of the physical entity of these and merely permits the disorder there present*; it is in His permissive decree that He foresees this. Cf. Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1, 2.

these two facts attested by experience, namely, the becoming and multiplicity of beings *with the principle of contradiction or of identity*: "being is being, non-being is non-being," or "being is not non-being," and "there can be no intermediate state between nothingness and being."

We see clearly what was Aristotle's teaching from the way he solves the arguments of Parmenides. *In virtue of the principle of identity* or of contradiction, Parmenides, contrary to Heraclitus, understood by this the denial of *all change* and *all multiplicity* in beings: (1) Being, he said, cannot *come* from being, *ex ente non fit ens*, for what *becomes* does not yet exist, and the being from which it should come already exists, is already determined and is not susceptible of further determination; *being does not come from what is already being*; a statue does not come from what is already a statue; an ox does not come from what is already an ox, and that which is becoming as yet does not exist. Besides, nothing can come from non-being, for non-being does not exist; it is pure nothing, and nothing can come from nothing: *ex nihilo nihil fit*. It absolutely follows from this that THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS BECOMING. (2) The limitation, diversity, and multiplicity in beings cannot evidently be explained by being itself, nor by a principle foreign to it, for apart from being there is only *non-being*, and non-being is nothingness. There is only one existing substance, and a second substance is absolutely impossible of realization; it could not be distinguished from the first, as Spinoza said in more modern times.

Plato, in order to solve these two arguments of Parmenides, distinguished between *being* and *non-being which in a certain way exists*, though not of itself determined; thus, for him, *matter* is a *non-being which* is, as it were, the receptacle for the participation of ideas. So, in this way is explained and by it, multiplicity of beings in the same species and becoming.⁸¹

With greater penetration and clearness of mind, Aristotle solved these arguments of Parmenides by distinguishing between act and potency.⁸²

Being, he said, cannot come from *actual being*, because it would exist before becoming so, and what is becoming does not yet exist; for instance, the statue does not come from the statue, but from this

⁸¹ See Plato, *Sophista*, 241 d, 257 a, 259 c.

⁸² *Physics*, Bk. I, ch. viii; *Metaphysics*, Bk. I, ch. v; Bk. IV and Bk. IX.

matter which was first a statue in potentiality, and then the actual statue comes from what was in potentiality to be a statue; it is made from wood that was capable of becoming a statue, by receiving a new determination.

What then is *potency* or *potential being*, from which the statue comes? It is the wood in so far as it is *determinable*. But the *determinable* as such, what is it?

1) It is not *nothingness: ex nihilo, nihil fit* (nothing is made from nothing), as Parmenides said.

2) It is not *non-being*, which is solely the negation or privation of the form called statue. This negation, of itself is nothing, and *ex nihilo per se nihil fit*; moreover, this negation is equally present in the air and the water as in the wood, and they cannot however become a statue.

3) It is not the *essence of the wood*—for according to this the wood is already in act—nor is it its actual form; nothing comes from a being that is already in act, for what is becoming, previous to this was not in existence.

4) Neither is the determinable as such *the imperfect form of the statue*, that is to say, the *imperfect act*, for this imperfect act already would be the external form of the statue that is in the process of becoming; one would thus be only deferring the question; it is the very beginning of becoming, the act as imperfect as possible, that we must explain.

The “determinable” which becomes the statue, is the *real capacity* of the wood to receive the form called statue, a capacity that is found neither in the air nor in the water; it is called a *real potency* for becoming a statue, or a statue in potentiality.

That is how Aristotle defined potency in his *Physics*, whereas Plato spoke of a *non-being existing in some way*, which he confounded sometimes with privation, sometimes with possibility, sometimes, on the contrary, with the imperfect act. That is why the Platonic conception of matter and non-being always remained very obscure.

St. Thomas perfects the Aristotelian notion of *real passive potency*, by distinguishing it more clearly from *pure possibility*. Only this latter is a prerequisite for creation *ex nihilo* (out of nothing), but it is not sufficient for becoming which demands a determinable or changeable subject. Moreover, creation, since it does not presuppose any real passive potency, requires an actively infinite power; it can therefore be

attributed only to God, and not to the sculptor who is the cause of the statue.⁸³

Thus becoming or change is explained, contrary to Parmenides. Something comes not from actual, but from potential being.

In like manner is explained the *multiplicity* of forms or acts. When what was in potency *is* in act, there is still a *real potency* underlying the act that it receives; the wood, having already the form called statue, *can* lose it and *receive* another. But as long as the form called statue remains in the wood, it is received and *limited* by it. This same numerically one form *is no longer susceptible of participation*, although a form in every respect like it can be produced in other matter of this kind. Thus is explained the *multiplication* of Apollo's *form*, for instance, according as it can be received and is so, in fact, in the diverse kinds of second matter: wood, earth, marble, etc., and thus it is *susceptible of unlimited participation*.

From all this, it is evident, at least in the order of sensible beings, that *the act, in so far as it is a perfection, is NOT the potency or the capacity for perfection, but it is limited and multiplied by the potency*. Now if the act *is not* the potency, if this latter is not identified with the imperfect act, if this judgment, which has its foundation both in the principle of contradiction and in the existence of becoming and multiplicity, has an objective validity, it follows that the potency which limits the act that it receives, is *really distinct* from it.

From this follow several conclusions either in the order of being or substance, or that of action. We will note only the first, adopting the method which starts from sensible things to arrive at God. We shall see that none of these consequences, deduced either by Aristotle or St. Thomas, is of any value unless one views potency as an imperfect act.

1) *Matter is not form, and they are really distinct.*

The principle as given above, that "*act is limited by potency,*" becomes much more evident, if we consider the substantial changes, either, for instance, as to what remains after the death of a lion, the corruption of its corpse—which are remnants certainly deprived of all vegetative and sensitive life—or again the power of assimilation of the nutritive faculty, in virtue of which non-living food undergoes a

⁸³ See Ia, q. 45, a. 1, 2, 5; IIIa, q. 75, a. 8.

substantial transformation, so as to become living flesh, human flesh.

These substantial changes presuppose a *pure potency*, that is to say, a subject purely determinable and in no way determined. If it were otherwise, the subject of these changes would be already a substance, and these changes would, for the same reason, be accidental and not substantial.

But this pure potency or this pure capacity for a substantial form, is neither nothingness (*ex nihilo, nihil fit*) nor the simple privation of a form to be acquired nor something substantial that is already determined, "*non est quid, nec quale, nec quantum, nec aliquid hujusmodi: it is not a quiddity, nor a quality, nor a quantity, nor anything of this kind,*" neither is it the initial realization of the form nor the imperfect act, just as the wood as determinable subject, which will become a statue, is not the statue in the imperfect state, since this begins to take shape only as the result of the sculptor's labor; *the imperfect act* here is the movement, but not the real potency required for this movement. This capacity for the substantial form is therefore a certain *reality*, a real potency which *is not* the form, but is opposed to it, as the determinable is opposed to the determining. Moreover, this real potency can lose such substantial form and receive another: *corruptio unius est generatio alterius, the corruption of one thing is the generation of another.* Thus it is evident that prime matter is really distinct from substantial form.

The real distinction between prime matter and the form is derived therefore from the distinction between potency and act. This distinction is necessary for the explanation of substantial *change*. The *multiplicity* of the substantial form is explained in the same way. Since matter *endures under the form that it receives*, which it *can* lose, it follows that, for instance, the form of the lion is susceptible of unlimited participation in the matter which *limits* it, so as to constitute with it a composite that is generated and corruptible.

All this is explained at length by Aristotle in the first two books of the *Physics*; the truth of this principle, that *act is limited and multiplied by potency*, is there most clearly demonstrated, at least as regards beings of the sensitive order. St. Thomas considered this principle from a higher plane, that is to say from the domain of metaphysical abstraction. It is to this that he appeals in solving the more universal question of the *changeableness* and *multitude* found in finite beings,

even those quite spiritual, and of God's *infinity* which is essentially and really distinct from everything created.

2) *Created essence is not its existence. There is a real distinction between them.*

St. Thomas considers this principle of Aristotle, that "the form is limited only by the matter," not only from the physical, but according to the highest degree of abstraction, from the metaphysical point of view.

He remarks that the *form* is limited not only, and precisely in so far as it is a *form of the sensible order*, but also as *act or perfection*. Every perfection, indeed, which is not limited by itself is so, in fact, by a certain *capacity that it has for perfection* or by the matter inasmuch as it is a *potency*. Hence the absolute universality of the principle, either in the sensible or suprasensible order, that "*act as a perfection is limited only by the potency which is itself a certain capacity for perfection.*" Now, adds St. Thomas, *existence* is an act, and even what is most formal in all things, as it is ultimate actuality. "Being is the most formal of all things."⁸⁴ Nothing has actuality except by *existence*. "It is that which actuates all things, even their forms; it is not compared to other things as the receiver is to the received, but rather as the *received* to the receiver. When I speak of the existence of this man, or this horse, or anything else, existence is considered a formal principle, and as something received, and not as that which is capable of existing."⁸⁵ *In itself* existence is not a limited perfection; it is *de facto* limited only by the real potency in which it is received, that is to say, by an infinite essence which is capable of existing. On the other hand, as God's existence is not received in a capacity which limits it, since God is the self-subsisting Being, it is manifest that God is *infinite*, that is to say, *infinitely perfect*,⁸⁶ and consequently "*distinct from all other beings*"⁸⁷

For want of a proper understanding of this notion of potency which is a capacity for perfection, certain authors deny the principle that "*the act is limited only by the potency in which it is received,*" or at

⁸⁴ See Ia, q. 7, a. 1.

⁸⁵ See Ia, q. 4, a. 1 ad 3.

⁸⁶ See Ia, q. 7, a. 1.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, ad 3.

least they do not admit its application in the metaphysical order. Act, they say, is perhaps limited by itself or by the agent who produces it.⁸⁸ Louis Rougier in his recent book against Thomism, claims that St. Thomas, in admitting the aforesaid principle in the metaphysical order and affirming a real distinction between essence and existence, is absolutely unfaithful to Aristotle. For us, on the contrary, from this St. Thomas deduces one of the most sublime consequences of the Aristotelian principle, and thereby shows us, whatever Rougier may say, how this principle admirably harmonizes with the dogma of creation and the divine utterance in Exodus: *I am who am*.

Can we demonstrate this principle? It is impossible to give a direct and strictly deductive proof of it. We have here not a conclusion, but a self-evident principle, *per se notum*, obtained solely by the explanation of the terms "act" and "potency."⁸⁹ Nevertheless we can offer this explanation of the terms in a discursive form, which is at the same time an indirect demonstration, or one by the process of *reductio ad absurdum*.

It may be said: "*The act*, in so far as it is a *perfection of itself unlimited* in its order (like being, wisdom, love), cannot *de facto* be *limited* except by a principle that is intrinsically relative to this very limitation. Now this principle that is intrinsically relative to this limitation of act, can be only potency or a certain *capacity* for perfection. Therefore the act, in so far as it is a perfection, is limited only by potency, which is itself a capacity for perfection.

The major is evident. If the act is *de facto* limited, but not by itself, being *of itself* unlimited (as appears in the case of existence, wisdom, love), it follows then that the act is *limited* by a principle *other* than itself. Moreover, this principle must be intrinsically relative to this very limitation. If it were otherwise, beings could not exist that are *intrinsically* limited, as the plant and man.

The minor is equally evident. The principle that is intrinsically relative to the limitation, can be only potency or a *capacity for perfection*, as, for instance, the essence of the plant limits its existence which is more restricted than that of the animal, man, or angel. It is not enough, in order to explain this limitation, to have recourse to the

⁸⁸ Suarez, *Disp. Met.*, 30, sec. 2, n. 18 f. *Disp. Met.*, 31, sec. 13, nn. 14 f. *De angelis*, Bk. I, chs. xii-xv.

⁸⁹ Cf. Guido Mattiussi, S.J., *Le XXIV tesi della Filosofia di S. Tommaso d'Aquino approvate dalla S. Congregazione degli studi* (1917), pp. 1-33.

agent which is the cause of the plant; since it is the *extrinsic* cause, it cannot constitute this limit *intrinsically*, that is, constitute a being that is intrinsically limited.

Moreover, the agent can effect only what *can be caused*. Now the essence of what can be caused *is not* existence, but is only capable of existing. As St. Thomas says (Ia, q. 7, a. 2, ad 1): "*It is against the nature of a made thing for its essence to be its existence; because a subsisting being is not a created being.*"

If it were otherwise, the argument of Parmenides, revived by Spinoza, would remain unsolved, namely, that being cannot limit itself, nor multiply itself by itself, but only by a principle *other* than itself. Now, what is not being, is nothing.

We reply to this argument by saying that apart from existence there is the *real capacity* for receiving the act of existing and also of limiting it. This receptive capacity which limits the acts, is not nothing or privation or the imperfect act: it is real potency and is really distinct from the act of existing, just as is the capacity which the wood has for receiving the form of a statue and for losing it. Thus again, prime matter is really distinct from the substantial form that it *can* lose. Matter, previous to any consideration of our mind, is NOT THE FORM. They are even opposed to each other as "perfectible" to that which perfects, determinable to that which determines. Likewise, created essence or the receptive capacity for existence is NOT its existence; *existence is not included in the formal concept of it* (the essence of the plant does not include existence as an essential predicate); and neither does the essence itself of the plant belong to the formal concept of existence; this latter can indeed have such or such other limitations, or even be without limitations. *Finite essence* and its *existence* are in opposition therefore to each other as the *perfectible* is to that which *perfects*, the *determinable* to that which *determines*, or as the limit to that which limits.⁴⁰ Therefore they are *really distinct* previous to consideration of the mind. We cannot deny it without rejecting either the objectivity of our intellectual faculty, or the truth

⁴⁰ Essence and existence are not in opposition to each other as genus and specific difference are, which constitute one sole essence expressed by one unique concept, just as animality and rationality constitute humanity. On the contrary, essence and existence are *objectively irreducible concepts* between themselves and with a third concept; *existence is not an essential but a contingent predicate of all contingent beings.*

of this proposition, that the *essence* of this plant is not *its existence*. This real distinction cannot be perceived by the senses or by the imagination; but the intellect differs from sense perception and imagination, in that it sees or reads what underlies things, the intelligible hidden under the sensible; *intus legit*.⁴¹

From this we see what a difference there is between the teaching of St. Thomas and of those who say: "Being is absolutely simple, and therefore all that which in some way exists, is *actual being*, although it can be potential as to something else." For them prime matter is already in act, at least imperfectly so; in like manner, created essence is actual being and is not really distinct from its existence. Being, the act of existing, in their view, is limited by itself or *perhaps by the external agent* that produces it, but not by the potency in which it is received.⁴²

This solution does not go beyond the physical order (that of the physical production of things in a material sense) and does not reach the metaphysical order to which the question however belongs. Consequently, the argument of Parmenides, taken up by Spinoza, against the multiplicity of beings, remains unsolved. It was quite otherwise for St. Thomas. He refuted the argument of Parmenides by saying that it is of the very nature of a *thing made or caused* that its essence is not its being.⁴³ Thus existence is limited by the essence which is intrinsically in proportion to limit it, whereas the agent is the extrinsic cause. Hence these words of St. Thomas: "*Together with the being God produces that which the being receives*" (*De potentia*, q. 3, a. 1 ad 17). In this way, far from abandoning Aristotle, as Rougier claims, the Angelic Doctor shows us how profound is the Aristotelian answer to the arguments of Parmenides.

According to the Thomists, the difference between these two views of potency is far more profound. It has to do with the very notion of *being* which comes in question at the very beginning of ontology, before the discussion of the divisions of being.⁴⁴ For St. Thomas,

⁴¹ For the same reason the person of Peter (and the personality which formally constitutes him as such) is *not* his existence; it is really distinct from the latter, and in this it differs from the uncreated personality of Christ.

⁴² Cf. Suarez, *Disp. Met.*, XV, sec. 9; *Disp. Met.*, XXX, XXXI.

⁴³ Cf. Ia, q. 7, a. 2 ad 1.

⁴⁴ See Reginald, O.P., who in his work entitled, *Doctrina D. Thomae tria principia*, posits as principles: Being is transcendent and analogous; God is pure Act; absolutes are specified by themselves, relatives by another.

indeed, *being is not univocal, but analogous*; otherwise being could not be diversified. The univocal, like the genus, is diversified by differences which are extrinsic to it. Now, apart from being there is nothing which can constitute a difference. That is why St. Thomas says in his Commentary on the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle (Bk. I, ch. v, lect. 9): "*In this Parmenides and his disciples were deceived, in that they employed the term being, as if it were one in meaning and nature, as the nature of any genus is. But this is impossible. For being is not a genus, but is predicated in many ways of diverse things.*"

Scotus, in teaching the univocation of being, shows a tendency to return some way to the doctrine of Parmenides. Suarez, in seeking a *via media* between St. Thomas and Scotus, maintains that the objective concept of being is "*simply one*," and consequently all that which *is* in some way, even prime matter, is actual being.⁴⁵ In other words, we cannot, according to his view, conceive of pure potency; it would be other than being. Thus it is that the Aristotelian solution of Parmenides' arguments is abandoned, and they remain incapable of solution.

This difference of opinion concerning the fundamental notion of *being* at the very outset of metaphysics, when we start out by arguing from sensible beings to God, brings us in the end to another difference. The supreme truth of Christian philosophy, a truth which very much confirms that of analogy of being, according to St. Thomas is this: "*That only in God are essence and existence identical* (Ia, q. 3, a. 4). In every creature they are distinct. Such is for St. Thomas, whom Suarez abandons on this point, the terminus of the *via inventionis*, way of finding, which, by means of the five classical proofs for God's existence, starts from finite beings, their movements, contingency, compositeness, finality detected in them, until it arrives at *Being itself* who subsists immaterial above all things. This supreme truth is also the starting-point of the *via iudicii*, way of judgment, (Ia, q. 79, a. 9), which judges of things from a higher plane, by assigning the highest motive. It is from this source that we deduce the divine attributes and the relations of God the Creator and mover to the being and action of every creature whatsoever it may be.⁴⁶

It is because in God *alone* essence and existence are identical, be-

⁴⁵ Suarez, *Disp. Met.*, XV, sec. 9; *Disp. Met.*, XXX, XXXI.

⁴⁶ Cf. Ia, q. 1, a. 7; q. 14, a. 8; q. 19, a. 4, 8; q. 22, a. 2; q. 25, a. 3; q. 45, a. 5; q. 54, a. 1, 2, 3; q. 104, a. 2; q. 105, a. 3, 4, 5, etc.

cause He alone is *Being itself*, that we must conclude that only in Him can there be no accident, that He alone is infinite, that nothing that is external to Him can exist unless it has been created and preserved in being by Him, that nothing external to Him can act without the divine motion. Action, in fact, presupposes being, and the mode of the action corresponds to the mode of the being that is in action. God alone, who is His existence, who is Being itself, is consequently action itself, intellection itself, love that is itself eternally subsisting. On the other hand, no creature, however perfect it may be, since it is not its existence, is not its own thought and will; but the most perfect angel, just as the least endowed human soul, always is in need of the divine motion in order to think and will anything whatever. Nothing, consequently, escapes the divine motion except evil, which, being a defect, presupposes only a *deficient* cause. It cannot come from God, but is permitted by Him, because He is powerful enough and good enough to draw from it a greater good that is known to Him, a glimpse of which is at times given to us.⁴⁷

Many of these consequences resulting from the distinction between potency and act have been definitely stated in the twenty-four theses approved by the Sacred Congregation of Studies, as being the authentic expression of the main points in the teaching of St. Thomas. It is to these twenty-four theses that we must, in fact, return for a true understanding of this synthesis, the parts of which are not only mechanically juxtaposed as happens in eclectic concepts, but which are also perfectly subordinated according to their close and necessary dependence upon the first truth which is the soul of this body of doctrine.

The last answer to the dilemma: "God determining or determined; there is no other alternative."

This dilemma has been answered as follows: "God, the primary source of being, is thereby the primary source of all determination. Therefore, if it is only a question of an influence *more or less direct*, more or less immediate, of a causality in the broad sense, it will be right to say that God is the universal determiner. . . . Rational beings, subject to the prevailing system of liberty . . . realize the divine plan only by a *supplementary determination which they give*

⁴⁷ Cf. Ia, q. 48, a. 1, 2, 3; q. 49, a. 1, 2; q. 22, a. 2; Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1, 2.

to themselves. . . . The person's choice determines the act to be such as it is and not otherwise; the divine influence, without which nothing exists, determines the act simply to be."

What is this answer worth? It is equivalent to saying that, if Peter and Judas are supposedly situated in *the same circumstances* with the same duty to fulfil, with *the same* divine concurrence, receiving *equal help* (a simultaneous concurrence or even an indifferent, physical premotion), the person's choice *determines* the act to be *such* as it is and not otherwise; in other words, *determines* the act *quite as much in the direction of good* as in that of evil. Thus it does not depend upon God that the good consent is *in Peter rather* than Judas, and not vice versa. The *difference* between the two men is due solely to the created free will, not at all to God. Hence God, since He is not *determining*, has been *determined* to see *which* of these two, supposedly situated in the same circumstances and *equally* helped, *would* choose and will choose the good, when they are actually situated in these very circumstances. Therefore the dilemma remains in full force.

The proffered answer is perfectly in conformity with the teaching of Molina, who says: "It can happen that one prevented and called by a far greater grace, of his own free will is *not converted*, and another with a far less grace is converted" (*Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. XII, Paris ed., 1876, p. 51; also p. 565). On p. 196 we read: "That our acts are performed in a *good* or *bad* way, which we can accomplish by the faculty alone of our free will and the general concurrence of God, *is due not to God*, but to ourselves as an individual and free cause." The answer given is also equivalent to the well-known proposition of Lessius, who says: "Of two *equally called*, the one accepts and the other rejects the grace that is offered, this is truly said *to be due to the free will alone*; not that he who accepts, does so of his own accord, but because *the DIFFERENCE COMES FROM THE FREE WILL ALONE*, so that it is not due to the diversity of prevenient grace" (*De gratia efficaci*, ch. xviii, n. 7).

To this the Thomists have always replied, that this doctrine cannot be maintained without being in contradiction to the spirit and even the words of St. Paul who (I Cor. 4: 7) says: "*Who distinguisheth thee? What hast thou which thou hast not received?*" It would follow indeed from this that what is of *preference* in the salutary act, its *free determination to good* rather than evil, does not come from God. It would be, as they tell us, "a supplementary determination that the

creature gives itself." That which would come from the First Cause would be, not this good that is freely determined, but the being or existence of the act, and this equally so for the bad as for the good act.

On the contrary, St. Thomas says (Ia, q. 20, a. 2): "*The love of God infuses and creates goodness in things*"; a. 4: "God's will is the cause of goodness in things; *and the reason why some things are better than others, is that God wills for them a greater good.* Hence it follows that *He loves more the better things.*" Also (on Matt. 25: 15), he says: "He who makes a greater effort, does so because of a greater grace; but that *he makes a greater effort, he needs to be moved by a higher cause.* Also, on Ephes. 4: 7, and Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 4. Cf. Salmanticenses, *De gratia*, disp. VII, *De gratia efficaci*, dub. I, sec. 4, nn. 17 ff.

They say that the person's choice is only the cause of "a purely negative determination." It would be a purely negative determination, if it were a question of the bad act as such, the determination of which is essentially deficient; but if it is a question of the good act, that is quite another thing. Here the free determination, far from being "purely negative," is what is noblest in the salutary act, that which distinguishes it from sin.

This *free determination* in the direction of good, though being a *limiting* potency with reference to the *existence* itself of the free act, is itself a positive perfection with reference to the *free faculty* that it actuates. In like manner, the soul is in potency with reference to its act of existing, but it is act and perfection with reference to the matter that it animates.

The doctrine that we here defend comes back to this simple proposition: The *divine decrees* that concern our salutary acts, *are efficacious of themselves* and not because our consent was foreseen. This doctrine is manifestly that of St. Augustine,⁴⁸ St. Thomas,⁴⁹ and almost all theologians who never admitted the *scientia media*.

⁴⁸ *De civitate Dei*, V, ch. ix: "All bodies are most of all subject to the will of God, to whom all wills also are subject, since they have no power except what He has bestowed upon them. . . . *Wherefore our wills have just so much power as God WILLED and foreknew that they should have.*" Hence it is evident that the foreknowledge of our free salutary acts is founded, according to St. Augustine, upon the decree of the divine will, as the Thomists generally point out from several other texts taken from *De dono perseverantiae*, ch. xvii, and *De praedestinatione sanctorum*, ch. x. Both St. Augustine and St. Thomas deduce from this thesis, all the others that concern foreknowledge and predestination.

⁴⁹ See Ia, q. 19, a. 4: "*Determined* effects proceed from His own infinite

We consider it a duty, a religious duty on our part, to defend this sublime doctrine; for if it is properly understood, it saves us from falling into many theoretical and practical errors. It prevents us from dealing with God as with a mere associate who would have merely his part to do, whilst we would be doing our part, at times in a very human way, and it would not be the less important. On the contrary, St. Thomas has said: "*There is no distinction between what comes from free will and what is of predestination; as there is no distinction between what comes from a secondary and from a first cause*" (Ia, q. 23, a. 5).

This sublime doctrine teaches us how essentially necessary it is for us to pray according to the spirit of our Lord's words: "*Without me, you can do nothing*" (John 15: 5), and those of St. Paul, who says: "*It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will*" (Phil. 2: 13). If this Thomist doctrine is true, we fully understand why our Lord recommends that "*we ought always to pray and not to faint*" (Luke 18: 1), and precisely for this that we may ask for the grace that of itself is efficacious, and which we stand in need of every moment for the fulfilment of our duties.

Bossuet very well understood this when he wrote: ⁵⁰ "Here again is a terrible stumbling-block for human pride. Man says to himself: I have my free will; God has made me free and I wish to justify myself. I wish that the act which decides my eternal salvation, originate from me. . . . I wish to find something which I can cling to in my free will, which I cannot grant with this surrender to grace.

"Proud contradictor, do you wish to grant these things, or truly believe that God grants them? He grants them in such a way, that He wills, without dispensing you from doing your part, that you attribute finally to Him all that pertains to our salvation; for He is the Savior and He says: 'There is no Savior besides me' (Is. 43: 11). *Believe indeed that Jesus Christ is the Savior, and there will be an*

perfection according to the *determination of His will and intellect.*" Cf. Ia, q. 19, a. 8: "Since the divine will is perfectly efficacious, it follows not only that things are done which God wills to be done, but also that they are done *in the way that He wills.*" *Ibid.*, ad 2: "*From the very fact that nothing resists the divine will, it follows that not only those things happen that God wills to happen, but that they happen necessarily or contingently according to His will.* Also Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4 ad 3.

⁵⁰ *Elévations sur les mystères*, 18th week, 15th elevation.

end of all contradictions." Theological researches which are not directed to this contemplation, are to no purpose. Let us be grateful to St. Augustine and St. Thomas for having shown us the true way that leads to it. They were not only dialecticians, they were true and great contemplatives. Let us truly believe with them that Jesus Christ is the Savior, and there will be an end of all contradictions.