I. In quolibet fieri naturali tria inveniri principia, subjectum, terminum, oppositum.

II. Artes quae actiones et passiones humanas imitantur dependant quantum ad veritatem ipsius artificii a synodessi et scientia morali.

III. Est in nobis lex naturalis.

IV. Intellectus est amplius perfectior voluntate.

V. Homo non ordinatur ad communitatem politicoam secundum se totum et secundum omnia sua.
PRACTICAL IGNORANCE IN MORAL ACTIONS

by Joseph Caulfield

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Philosophy, Laval University, in partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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INTRODUCTION

In the third book of his *Ethics*, Aristotle writes:

Now every wicked man is ignorant of what he ought to do and what he ought to abstain from, and it is by reason of error of this kind that men become unjust and in general bad.\(^1\)

By this statement he seems to agree with Socrates who identified virtue with science and held that ignorance was the sole cause of sin in man.\(^2\) Yet later on in the seventh book\(^3\), after relating Socrates's opinion that no one acts contrary to what is best knowingly but through ignorance, he rejects it on the ground that it is at variance with plain facts. And so it is obviously, for as a general rule men who sin through passion know they are doing wrong, and more so when they sin from malice. And for that matter the laws hold them to be blameworthy and punishable.

Besides, he himself defines the incontinent man as one "knowing that what he does is bad, does it as a result of passion"\(^4\), and the intemperate man as one who "is led on in accordance with his own choice."\(^5\)
Furthermore, if all sins were due to ignorance, there would be no point in distinguishing, as Aristotle himself and all the scholastics do, between sins committed through ignorance on the one hand, and sins caused by passion or habit on the other hand. As Saint Thomas remarks in his De Malo:

> communiter ab omnibus ponitur, aliqua peccata ex infirmitate committi, quae a peccatis ignorantiae non distinguenterur, nisi contingert aliquem scientem ex infirmitate peccare. 

Again, it is not easy to see how the above statement of Aristotle fits in with his doctrine on the voluntary, a property of human actions. According to him "the voluntary would seem to be that of which the moving principle is in the agent himself, he being aware of the particular circumstances of the action", as opposed to the involuntary one "which is done under compulsion or by reason of ignorance." If then sin is voluntary, as is commonly admitted, and if knowledge belongs to the very definition of the voluntary, there would appear to be no escaping the fact that Aristotle contradicts both himself and the truth when asserting universally that "every wicked man is ignorant of what he ought to do and what he ought to abstain from."

One might object here that this contradic-
tion is solely of our own making and cannot be honestly laid at Aristotle's door. Indeed in the very chapter from which we extracted the text cited at the beginning, he expressly distinguishes between acting evilly through ignorance and in ignorance. In the first case the evil action is due to ignorance as its cause, and hence "is not voluntary," whereas in the second case it is caused not by ignorance but by some passion or the will, ignorance being somehow only concomitant with it. To quote his own words:

Acting by reason of ignorance seems also to be different from acting in ignorance; for the man who is drunk or in a rage is thought to act as a result not of ignorance but of one of the causes mentioned, yet not knowingly but in ignorance.

And it is then, and only then, that he refers to all wicked men as being ignorant of what they ought to do and refrain from doing. Therefore, one must not interpret this statement as meaning that all wicked men act through ignorance, but that all wicked men, while acting through passion or malice, are ignorant of what they are doing. As Saint Thomas' comment runs:

ita omnis malus operatur non quidem propter ignorantiam sed ignorans in particulari quae bona operet facere, et a quibus malis oportet fugere.
However, this distinction seems entirely beside the point, for the fact still remains that Aristotle holds here, in the third book, that a man who is drunk or in a rage acts "not knowingly", whereas in the seventh book, as has been previously remarked, he says that the incontinent man does things "knowing that which he does is evil", and the intemperate man yields to his desires "in accordance with his own choice." Moreover, if knowledge is of the very nature of the voluntary, it would not seem to matter much, so far as the voluntariness of the act is concerned, whether a man does wrong through or in ignorance, since in both cases he actually does not know what he is doing.

Aristotle also distinguishes, in the same chapter of the third book, between not knowing what ought to be done or avoided, and not knowing the circumstances of the act. For instance, one who does not know that fornication as such, or this particular act of fornication, is evil and must be avoided, cannot be said to commit fornication involuntarily, and is therefore blameworthy. On the other hand, if one, actually knowing that fornication in general and in particular is evil and must be avoided, is only ignorant of the particular circumstances of the act, one is said to commit fornication.
tion involuntarily. But this distinction, far from being an adequate answer to our problem, rather makes it more difficult. Indeed, the one who does not know that fornication in general and in particular is evil and must be avoided, would seem to be more ignorant than the one who, though not knowing the circumstances of the act, nevertheless knows in general and in particular that fornication is evil and must be avoided. And yet the former is said to sin voluntarily, but not the latter.

However, the truth of the matter is that every sinner is ignorant of what he ought to do or refrain from doing, and yet knows what he does to be evil. In the seventh book of the Ethics Aristotle shows how this is possible with regard to sins of passion or incontinence. But sins of malice are no exception, as we shall prove later on with texts of Saint Thomas and his commentators. And our intention is precisely to inquire into the nature of ignorance common to all sins, usually called practical ignorance or ignorance of choice, and to show how it can exist in the sinner together with the knowledge required by sin as a voluntary act.

For that purpose, we think it well to proceed as follows. With regard to the nature of practical ignorance in general, we shall endeavour first
to make good the statement of Aristotle by showing that all sin necessarily implies some ignorance.

Secondly, we shall prove that this ignorance is a practical, not a speculative one. And thirdly, that it is the effect of sin, rather than its cause.

Then, in the second part, we shall consider sin as it arises from passion, malice, and negligence, in order to show the compatibility of practical ignorance with the voluntariness of evil actions.
PART I  NATURE OF IGNORANCE FOUND IN ALL SIN
CHAPTER I

ALL SIN NECESSARILY IMPLIES SOME IGNORANCE

As pointed out in the introduction, our purpose is to inquire into the nature of ignorance found in all sin. But since Aristotle's statement, that all sinners are ignorant of what they ought to do or avoid, seems to be contrary to the general opinion which holds that no man can sin unless he knows that what he is doing is wrong, it is necessary to prove first of all that all sin actually implies some ignorance, for the knowledge of the existence of any subject must precede all inquiry concerning its nature.

1. Man Cannot Will Evil Except Through an Error of Reason

To achieve this purpose requires a knowledge of the nature of a human act. Therefore, we recall the doctrine of Aristotle that the end is the principle in man's operations. Man then, and for that matter every agent, acts for a good. For all agents, in acting for an end, tend to that end in a determinate manner, whether the determination comes from himself or from some other source. In
any case the tendency is to some object in accord with the agent, for he would not act for some determined object unless there were a concordance between this object and himself. Since that which is suitable, and agreeable, and according to the nature of the object is good, every agent in acting for an end acts for a good. Saint Thomas draws such a conclusion from the nature of the agent's action:

\[
\text{Id autem ad quod agens determinate tendit, oportet esse conveniens ei: non enim tenderet in ipsum nisi propter aliquam convenientiam ad ipsum. Quod autem est conveniens ali-cui, est ei bonum.}
\]

Man, however, moves and directs himself to his own end, and in this way differs from those who are led to their end with no knowledge on their part, or even those who know the end absolutely speaking, yet fail to discern the relation and proportion of the means to that end. Thus Saint Thomas states that it is proper for a rational creature to move and direct himself to his end; and this implies the apprehension of the end sub formali ratione finis, that is, from the apprehension and attraction of the end he is able to direct and order the means by which the end may be attained.

This self direction to an end supposes two conditions, namely the apprehension of the end and an indetermination on the part of the agent. For man
could not direct himself to an end which he did not know, nor could he determine himself to those things to which he is already determined.

Thus, in man's self directing to an end two faculties are involved, and each exercises causality in a human action in its own manner. For the end is apprehended by man's reason, and this faculty moves the will in the sense of proposing an object to it. However, the movement of the will to this object, that is, the efficient causality of the movement itself remains within the domain of the will. Saint Thomas manifests the order of the intellect and the will in man's actions:

Unde intellectus movet voluntatem per modum quo finis movere dicitur, in quantum scilicet praeconcept rationem finis, et eam voluntati proponit sed movere per modum causae agentis est voluntatis et non intellectus.15

In this way actions which are properly human proceed from a deliberate will, and the manner of such actions must be in accord with the nature of that potency. And, since the will is an appetite, its object is the good. This idea is fundamental to Aristotle's moral doctrine, for in the very beginning of the Ethics\textsuperscript{16} he writes that good is "that to which all things aim." The reason for this is that any inclination by its very nature tends to some-
thing suitable to itself and retracts from that which is repugnant. For, whatever is in accord with the appetite, and therefore good, serves to perfect the appetite and as such moves the inclination of the appetite to it. On the other hand, that which is defective is in itself an imperfection and as such repels the appetite.

Therefore, man being an *agens per intellectum* cannot determine by and for himself the end of his operation unless he apprehend it *sub ratione boni*, that is as convenient and suitable to him. As Saint Thomas has it:

> Agens per intellectum non determinat sibi finem nisi sub ratione boni; quia intelligibile non movet nisi sub ratione boni, quod est objectum voluntatis.\(^\text{17}\)

From this it is apparent that evil as such, since it is opposed to the good which every agent intends, cannot pertain directly to the object of the will. For the intention of the will follows the apprehension of the good, and that which is not apprehended as good is outside the intention of the agent. Any evil therefore, that comes about in the actions of man is outside his primary purpose. As Saint Thomas points out:

> agens igitur per intellectum non operatur malum nisi praeter intentionem.\(^\text{18}\)
And John of Saint Thomas:

voluntatem ita adaequate pro ratione
formali respicer e bonum actu prosecu-
tivo, quod nullo modo possit ferri
in aliquid sub ratione mali.19

However, the good which is the object of the will is the good as apprehended by reason. It is not necessary therefore, that the will tend to an object as good in itself, but only as apprehended as such by the reason. Saint Thomas in proving the inclination of the will to good states this point:

ad hoc igitur quod voluntas in aliquid tendat, non requiritur quod sit bonum in rei veritate, sed quod apprehendatur in ratione boni.20

Therefore, since the inclination of the will is only to the good, and since the apprehension of the good is according to the judgement of reason, it is evident that man cannot will anything evil except under the aspect of good and this entails some error of reason.

2. The Root of Ignorance of Sin Lies in the Imperfection of Reason

Since it is the good as apprehended by the reason that moves the will, and since that which is actually evil can be apprehended as good, we can see how the sinner, while doing wrong, still intends a good by his actions. And this opposition between
the apprehension of good and the reality of evil is explained by the operation of reason, which can base its judgement on a full consideration or a partial consideration, and in this way can attain a true knowledge or an imperfect knowledge. If it fails to acquire a true knowledge, and errs in the apprehension of the true good, it is evident that evil is chosen under the aspect of good, and that this decision involves some ignorance due to which the choice is made.

Every action then, that is morally wrong and opposed to the true perfection of man may still be an object of the will, but only because of some appearance of good which is apprehended, and this incongruity between what is truly good and what is apparently good cannot exist without some ignorance on the part of our apprehension.

The fact is that if there were no ignorance there could be no sin. Both Aristotle and Saint Thomas are clear in their insistence on the existence of some defect in the reason before the will can sin. We have Aristotle's statement from the third book of the Ethics that every evil person is ignorant of what he should do and of what he should avoid. That this is also the teaching of Saint Thomas is evident from the following texts:
quia non potest esse peccatum in voluntate, nisi sit aliquo modo deceptio in ratione. 22

quod ratio quamvis sit cognitiva potestia, tamen est directiva voluntatis; unde non potest esse peccatum in voluntate nisi sit aliquo modo in ratione, praeipue cum voluntas non sit nisi boni vel apparentis boni; unde malum voluntatem aliquo modo praeceedit falsa aestimatio. 23

Quia cum voluntas sit boni vel apparentis boni, numquam voluntas in malum movetur, nisi id quod non est bonum, aliququaliter ratione bonum apparetet, et propter hoc voluntas numquam in malum tenderet, nisi cum aliqua ignorantia vel errore rationis. 24

Ubi non est defectus in apprehendo et conferendo, non potest esse voluntas mali in his quae sunt ad finem sicut patet in beatis. 25

John of Saint Thomas, too, places the root of sin in the defect of reason.

quia racix peccandi a dictamine defec-tuosa, et inconsideratione intellectus desumitur. 26

From this it is evident that a completely perfect knowledge on the part of the reason would destroy the potency to sin. This knowledge, however, would have to extend to the use of reason in particular cases, as Saint Thomas explains in his statement that there is no sin in the presence of knowledge.

quod scientia praesente non peccatur; si tamen hoc extendatur usque ad usum rationis in particulari eligibile. 27
In regard to this point John of Saint Thomas places the impeccability of the Blessed in their inability to form a defective judgement, for their possession of the Absolute Good renders them incapable of placing any other good in opposition to it. As he writes:

Ex quo sequitur, quod visio beata per se immediate, et formaliter destruit omne dictamen defectuosum, scilicet omnem propositionem boni creati cum desertione, et oppositione, seu non subordinatione ad bonum divinum: quia tale dictamen non stat cum propositione et representa­tione summi boni, ut summum bonum est. Unde formaliter, et immediate destruit omnem potentiam, et radicem peccandi quia radix peccandi a dictamine defectuoso, et inconsideratione intellectus desumitur.28

If there is no possibility of the intellect proposing something to the will in a deficient manner, there is no possibility of a deficient action on the part of the will. This is likewise shown by John of Saint Thomas:

quia non potest voluntas esse defectuosa, et peccare, nisi ratio sit ignorans practice, et dif­ficiens, qui defectus, et ignorantia consistit in hoc, quod proponat aliquid, ut vo­lendum, non obstante contrarietate, et deficientia ejus a fine recto. Ergo si est impossibilis talis deficientia in proponendo, est impossibile peccatum in voluntate.29

Given the possibility to sin, then there is also given the possibility of a defect on the part
of the reason, or, as expressed by Saint Thomas, "non potest esse peccatum in voluntate nisi sit aliquid modo deceptio in ratione." 30

What then is this defect in the reason's proposal of the apparent good to the will? Here we note that Saint Thomas points out the imperfection that exists in the created intellect. For, unlike the divine intellect which knows all things comprehensively, the created intellect cannot know all things at once, and consequently is able to judge something as good according to some aspects of the thing considered, which is not so according to other aspects which are not considered. Saint Thomas states:

\[ \text{nihilominus intellectus creatus, quia non est omnium simul, potest deficere, ex hoc quod judicat de re quod sit conveniens secundum aliquam conditionem rei consideratam, quod non est conveniens secundum alia quae non considerat.} \] 31

In this, the reason is bound in a certain sense, for while it considers one thing it is necessarily prevented from the consideration of other things. This is shown by Saint Thomas in the Sentences:

\[ \text{potest tamen ligari inquantum considerando unum retrahitur a consideratione alterius; eo quod ejus intellectus simul plurium non est.} \] 32

If we keep in mind this imperfection of the
reason, in that it has to consider the different conditions of a thing successively, and that the apprehension of any good is sufficient to move the will, we have the basis of practical ignorance. For as Saint Thomas points out there is no object completely devoid of goodness: "nihil est adeo malum quod non potest habere aliquem speciem boni." Now, if we consider that even this limited good is sufficient to move the will we have the reason for the completion of the quotation: "et ratione illius bonitatis habet quod movere possit appetitum."

In other words the will is specified by the good as such, and cannot be moved by evil as such, which would be the case if that towards which it tended were completely devoid of all goodness. A thing cannot possibly be attractive to the will unless it be good under some aspect. Now if this goodness, however limited, of the thing known actually pleases the will, the latter will bring the reason to limit its consideration to it, and ignore the other aspects of the thing which are evil. Consequently, reason will judge the thing to be a good simpliciter, although in reality it is a good only secundum quid.

This sufficiently explains the statement of Saint Thomas "non potest esse peccatum in voluntate
nisi sit aliquo modo deceptio in ratione." The inconsideration of those things which should be considered in performing any action explains the ignorance that is in every sin. According to the statement of Cajetan:

\[
\text{voluntas ipsa flectit judicium, sed non nisi concurrente ad hanc flexionem aliquo alio defectu intellectus, saltem non consideratione omnium considerandorum, quae sufficit ad hoc quod omnis malus ignorans sit.}
\]

In other words, because the reason is limited in its consideration, there exists the possibility of the appetite's interference on the proposal of the practical intellect. Not that the reason is so completely overcome that it loses its ability to perform its functions, but that the interference of the appetite impedes it from reasoning rightly.

This omission or inconsideration which makes for the defective proposition is common to all sin. For if the sinner actually knew that the good proposed is in reality an evil for him he could not be attracted by it and therefore could not sin. This is in accord with the teaching of Saint Thomas that one who knows perfectly the singular in act would not sin. In the Sentences he points out the omission common to all sin:

\[
\text{in omni enim peccato commune est hoc quod aliquis non facit quod in se est}
\]
ad resistendum peccato, quod si faceret et non peccaret?

From what we have said it is evident that every sinner is ignorant, in that he fails to make a proper rational evaluation in regard to the action he is to perform. As Saint Thomas has pointed out in the passage just quoted he does not take the proper measures to avoid sin. For every action should be according to reason, and those actions that are according to reason are without sin. It is only when the estimation of reason is interfered with, and an imperfect judgement is made, that sin exists. Thus it is not difficult to understand the words of Saint Thomas that the sinner does not take the means to resist sin and that this failure is a common characteristic of sin.
CHAPTER II

IGNORANCE COMMON TO ALL SINS IS A PRACTICAL IGNORANCE

1. Speculative and Practical Knowledge

Once we have established the fact that some ignorance exists in every sin, we naturally proceed to inquire what kind of ignorance this is. Since ignorance is known from the types of knowledge to which it is opposed, we will review the divisions of knowledge given in the Summa Theologica. We recall that Saint Thomas divides knowledge into that which is speculative only, that which is partly speculative and partly practical, and that which is purely practical.

Knowledge may be considered speculative from three points of view; that of the thing considered, the manner of knowing and the end. From the first point of view knowledge is speculative when it has for its object something not operable by the knower, for example, the study of natural science is speculative only. If science proceeds in a speculative manner, that is, by analysis, defining, and dividing, it is speculative in its man-
Knowledge may also be considered practical from the thing considered, the manner of knowing, and the end. When the object is something the knower can make, it is practical from the first point of view. If the consideration of an operable proceeds by synthesis and composition, it is practical in its mode of knowing. When the knowledge is used in the attainment of the end, it is practical from the third point of view.

For our purpose it is important to note the different kinds of practical knowledge. And, since we are here concerned with moral actions, we can limit our observations to ignorance in relation to the operable considered in its order to operation. Here we note that the operable may be considered as such without actually advancing to execution. In this consideration the reason is concerned with the speculative truth of the operable based on the reality of the thing considered. Consequently, the truth or falsity of such knowledge is taken from whether the thing is or is not. If the knowledge conforms to reality there is speculative truth; if there is no conformity there is speculative error or ignorance.
The intellect that considers the operable only according to its speculative truth is evidently not the proximate principle of operation. For, in this sense, the understanding of what is good or bad remains within the limits of the intellect, and is concerned with the knowledge of the operable without advancing to execution. It is therefore removed from the action itself, and concerns only speculative truth and not the prescribing of some action to be done or avoided. Saint Thomas points this out in the De Anima:

Aliquando autem intellectus considerat aliquid agibile, non tamen prae­tice, sed speculative, quia considerat ipsum in universalis, et non secun­dum quod est principium particularis operis. Et de hoc consequenter dic­it, quod neque intellectus, cum fuerit speculative, ideat speculative consideraverit aliquid hujusmodi, idest aliquid agibile, nondum prae­sicit prosequi vel fugere;39

To actually pass to execution requires the judgement that something is good and to be done, since the will would not make its choice without such a judgement on the part of the reason. From the above we know that such a judgement does not belong to the speculative intellect; it does however, belong to the practical intellect, which is immediately related to action, and which is concerned with the proposal of the good to the will. Therefore,
not any kind of judgement is sufficient to move the will, but only one which is concerned with something to be actually done or avoided, and this pertains only to the perfectly practical intellect, as is pointed out by Gajetan:

\[
\text{quod apprehensio requisita ad hoc quod voluntas appetat aliquid (non enim ferri potest nisi in apprehensum), non est quaecumque cognitio, alicuius intellectus speculativa sufficeret, cuius oppositum habetur ex III de Anima: sed est cognitio judicans et praecipiens hoc esse appetendum.}^{40}
\]

Since it is true that the practical intellect proposes the good to the will, it is evident that any appearance of good, or any defect in the object of the will must first pertain to the practical intellect. We may conclude then that the ignorance common to all sin is an ignorance of the practical intellect, proposing an apparent good to the will.

If there is a true judgement on the part of the practical intellect, there will follow a good election on the part of the will. On the other hand, if the judgement is defective, the will also will be defective in its choice of the good. Since this brings us to the question of truth or falsity in the practical intellect let us now attempt to determine in what this truth or falsity consists.
2. **Practical Truth and Right Appetite**

For, now that we have established that some ignorance exists in every sin, and that this ignorance is in the practical reason proposing the apparent good to the will, we wish to inquire further into this subject. And since ignorance is a defect of the reason, we naturally start from the point of view of the reason, and inquire whether this defect in the practical intellect depends on the reason alone.

Cajetan points out that Saint Thomas places an intellectual virtue in the practical intellect in regard to contingent things, and yet does not indicate such a virtue in the speculative intellect. With the latter there is no difficulty since the contingent is variable and remains outside the certain judgement of the intellect. Saint Thomas states this in the *Ethics*:

> est autem considerandum quod quia contingentium cognitio non potest habere certitudinem veritatis repellentem falsitatem, ideo quantum ad solam cognitionem pertinet, contingentia praetemmuntur ab intellectu qui perficitur per cognitionem veritatis.42

With the practical intellect however, Saint Thomas joins these elements which seem contrary, namely that it is in regard to contingent things, and yet
the subject of an intellectual virtue and therefore, true and certain.

Those who attempt to place the rectification of the practical intellect in the line of cognition alone cannot avoid a dilemma. For no matter how far our intellect proceeds in the judgement of contingent things, it cannot conform to them infallibly, since the contingent is variable. Therefore, the judgement they have in mind is either of contingent things, and consequently not true and certain, and not an intellectual virtue; or else it is a virtue, but not of the contingent.

To ascertain in what the truth or falsity of the practical intellect consists and how it is the subject of virtue, we recall the operation of practical reason as it differs from the operation of the speculative reason. For the end of the speculative reason is knowledge only, while the practical reason is concerned with directing man's actions. The former, therefore, rests in the acquisition of knowledge, while the latter not only acquires knowledge but uses it in ordering man's actions towards an end. The perfection of the practical intellect therefore, does not consist in knowing, but in ordering that which is to be put into act. Saint Thomas makes this comparison between the specula-
tive and practical reason:

Ad cujus evidentiam considerandum quod in speculativis, in quibus non est actio, est solum duplex opus rationis: scilicet invenire inquirendo, et de inventis judicare. Et haec quidem duo opera sunt rationis practicae, cujus inquisitio est consilium, quod pertinet ad eubuliam, judicium autem de consiliatis pertinet ad synesim. Illi enim dicuntur sensati, qui possunt bene judicare de agentibus. Non autem stat hic ratio practica, sed ulterius procedit ad agendum. Et ideo necessarium est tertium opus quasi finale et completivum, scilicet praecipere quod procedatur ad actum; et hoc proprio pertinet ad prudentiam.43

Since reason in this case is concerned with actually directing and ordering the action, its truth or falsity will consist in the conformity or non conformity of the direction to the directive principle. Cajetan states this opinion in comparing the truth of the speculative and practical reason:

Veritas intellectus speculativi consistit in hoc, quod cognoscere adaequatur rei cognitae: veritas autem intellectus practici consistit in hoc, quod dirigere adaequatur principio directivo.44

The directing principle in every moral action is that which the subject intends, for our deliberation concerning any action presupposes an end towards which that action is directed. Therefore, the intention or the end is the principle of the practical intellect, and since it occupies such a
primary place we must investigate more closely what this end is, and its relation to the practical intellect.

In regard to the ends of moral actions, Saint Thomas points out that they exist in man in a two-fold manner, first on the part of the reason knowing these ends, and then on the part of the appetite’s affection for them. The first of these man has by his natural knowledge, just as he attains the principles of speculative knowledge. In other words, just as there is a habit of first principles in the speculative order, so there is a similar habit in the operative order. The affection for the ends offered by this natural knowledge is through moral virtue, by which man is attracted to these ends, so that he not only knows he should live justly and temperately, etc., but also wishes to do so. Saint Thomas shows both of these elements:

Sed finis agibilium praeexistit in nobis dupliciter; scilicet per cognitionem naturalis de fine hominis; quae quidem naturalis cognitione ad intellectum pertinet, secundum Philosophum in VI Ethic, (cap. IX), qui est principiorum operabilium sicut et speculabilium; principia autem operabilium sunt fines, ut in eodem lib. dicitur. Alio modo quantum ad affectionem; et sic fines agibilium sunt in nobis per virtutes morales, per quas homo afficitur ad justa vivendum vel fortiter vel temperate, quod est quasi finis proximus agibilium.45
The rectitude of the practical intellect hinges on the right appetite of the end, as Aristotle and Saint Thomas show in defining the good of the practical intellect, not as something absolute, but as conforming to a right appetite. If the appetite is rectified with regard to the end, then the practical intellect will be true by conforming itself to the inclination of the appetite to the end. However, as Saint Thomas points out, the truth of the practical intellect is destroyed by the destruction of its principle:

non enim potest esse recta ratio, nisi principia rationis salventur; et ideo ad prudentiam requiruntur et intellectus finium, et virtutes morales, quibus affectus recte colloca tur in fine;\textsuperscript{46}

A good moral action then, demands a right intention of the end, and the direction of prudence in those things which are performed for the end. "Recta autem ratio praexigit principia ex quibus ratio procedit,"\textsuperscript{47} as Saint Thomas says. The principle from which the temperate man proceeds is his attachment to a moderate use of sensible goods, but such an end seems good only to a virtuous man, one whose appetite is rightly inclined by the virtue of temperance.

One cannot form a correct syllogism if he errs in regard to the principles; nor can one be
prudent if the principles of prudence are destroyed. Virtue makes a right intention in regard to the end which is the principle of prudence, so that without virtue and without a right intention of the will we cannot reason rightly in moral matters. As Saint Thomas shows:

_Cum ergo ad prudentem pertineat recta syllogizare de operabilibus, manifesteum est, quod impossible est esse prudentem illum qui non est virtuosus, sicut non potest esse sciens qui erraret circa principia demonstrationis._

In arriving at a conclusion in the practical order the reason uses two premises, one of which is universal, the other particular. For example, the major of a practical syllogism will be similar to this: "temperance is to be observed," and since this proposition is of the practical order, its object is a practical truth. From this proposition and the movement of the appetite comes the truth of the minor premise showing what is to be observed as regards temperance in this particular case, and the practical truth of the conclusion follows about the means conforming to the intention of the appetite. Cajetan shows this relation between the propositions in the practical syllogism:

_A prima autem praemissa ad secundam non est ordo immediatus in istis, si- cut est in speculativis. Sed a propo- sitione quae est prima praemissa, provenit in appetitu motus eius rea-


The minor proposition depends on the major in the same measure that the means conform to the end intended. If the end is desired according to reason and subordinated to its proper place by a rational consideration, the means in accord with such an intention will be practically true, i.e., in conformity with right appetite. If the end is desired immoderately, in that the will is attached to something outside the right order of reason, the primary fault is the inordination of the will to the intended end, which then causes a lack of rectitude in those actions which conform to such an intention. The universal proposition, however, can exercise its force on an action only through the application to a particular proposition, since actions are in particular and look to a particular as their proximate cause.
We have seen that practical truth is measured by conformity to a right appetite, in that the intention of the will is the cause of the actions that are performed for that intention, and, since it is the cause of eliciting the action, it is the reason and measure of whatever is done in reference to it. Through the practical syllogism the choice of some actions is not something absolute in itself but related to the primary intention of the agent. John of Saint Thomas writes:

Finis autem attingitur per intentionem, et sic a recta intentione dependet bonitas actus circa medium tamquam a regula, quia finis est mensura in ordine ad quam medium sumunt proportionem, et contingentionem, atque adeo bonitatem.

There is no difficulty, then, in joining the truth and certitude of the practical intellect even though it be concerned with contingent things. For its truth and certitude come, not from its adequation to reality, but from its conformity to the right appetite. As Cajetan says:

intellectus practicus, ut sic: quoniam eius perfectio ac veritas in actu dirigendi consistit, quae directio infallibiliter est vera circa contingentia, si consossa sit appetitui recto praecedenti. Et sic Auctor virtutem intellectualem semper veram respectu contingentium salvavit, non inquantum cognitorum, sed inquantum attingibilium ab humano opere, propter conformitatem ad appetitum rectum.
3. **Ignorance of the Practical Intellect**

Ignorance in the practical intellect begins with this intention, when the appetite, in failing to follow the reason, is disposed to some good outside the order of reason, with the consequent error in the conclusion of the practical syllogism.

Just as the virtue of temperance developed according to reason results in a firm attachment to the moderate use of sensible goods, so that actions in accord with this intention seem pleasing to the temperate man, so a failure in the appetite's affection for the ends of moral virtue will result in a tendency of the will towards goods which are divergent from the dictates of right reason. What is appetible here and now depends on the disposition of the appetite, for the reason in presenting some good offers it as an object to the appetite. When the appetite is rightly disposed there is no difficulty with the proposal of the practical intellect; when, however, the will is disposed to follow certain goods which are contrary to the order of reason there results a conflict between reason and the will and it may happen that the will leaves aside the reason to attain the sensible good.

An example of this is found in the contrast of the liberal and the prodigal man in their common
intention to give money. The former intends the giving of money in a rational manner, all due circumstances being observed. The actions that are in accord with his intention will be good, since the intention concerns an end to be acquired, not in any manner, but according to reason. The prodigal, on the other hand, intends to give money without being restricted by the limitations of reason, with the result that he fails in the proper manner of giving. While the liberal man performs a good moral action in giving to whom he ought, and when he ought, the prodigal man, in this inordinate giving, departs from the morally good.

We would say that the prodigal man is disposed to giving away money in an inordinate manner, at times, places, and conditions contrary to right reason. It seems good to the prodigal man that he give away money under these conditions, because his appetite is inclined to such giving and he chooses to follow his appetite rather than his reason. He is still acting for a good, but one which appeals to his appetite without the consideration and evaluation by reason.

It is evident, then, that a good moral action demands the perfection of all the potencies involved, and here we must consider not only the reason's part
in proposing the good to the appetite, but also the
disposition of the appetite to which the proposal is
made. Aristotle states that the perfection of both
elements are required for a good election, that is,
that the reason be true and the appetite be right.

therefore both the reasoning must be
true and the desire right, if the
choice is to be good.52

This position concerning the truth of the
practical intellect clarifies an important point
in moral matters. Once we know that a man with a
right intention is determined to seek the mean be-
tween excess and defect, as long as his intention
lasts, we have the basis for distinguishing between
what is called "peccatum" and "culpa". The former
is any action opposed to the moral law, whether or
not culpability is imputed to the subject, the lat-
ter is an action imputed as culpable.

For example, the man who is temperate will
seek the mean of sensible delectations. If he uses
all the means which are at his disposal to determine
this mean in a particular case, (which he will do if
he is truly temperate) his action will be prudent
and practically true even though it be wrong from
a speculative consideration. Thus there is no dif-
ficulty with the same action being practically true
and speculatively false, or with the notion of pec-
oatum without the notion of culpa.

On the other hand, an action may be good according to the right judgement of the moral law and yet be a moral fault due to the erroneous conscience of the subject. For such actions are not committed without practical ignorance and the departure from what the subject believes to be an estimation according to right reason.

It seems impossible to give any solution to these problems unless we define the truth of the practical reason, not as an adequation of reason to reality, but as a conformity to a right appetite. In his commentary on the question already referred to, Cajetan seems unusually insistent on this point, constantly warning his readers against the error of placing the truth of the practical intellect in the reason alone.

4. The Error in the Practical Intellect Does Not Depend on an Error in the Speculative Intellect

In treating of the practical intellect, and the ignorance found therein we stated that the will tends to a good without the consideration of reason, and inclines to that good as to an ultimate end. It seems, therefore, that there necessarily precedes the judgement, at least practically, that
this is the ultimate end. A practical judgement, however, presupposes a speculative judgement, and the speculative judgement that some particular good is the ultimate end is erroneous. If this is true it seems necessary for a speculative error to precede practical ignorance, and hence all moral evil would be based on speculative error.

The basis for the answer has already been given and from what has been established we may readily see that an erroneous speculative judgement need not precede practical ignorance. For a speculative error supposes an inadequation between the mind and reality, while a practical judgement is based on the apprehension of something as a good and pleasing to the appetite. For example, the practical judgement that fornication here and now is a good, does not depend on the speculative judgement that fornication in itself is a good, but only on the apprehension of fornication as agreeable to the appetite.

In other words, all that is necessary for the movement of the will is the apprehension of good, even though that apprehension be limited to a very narrow aspect. In the case of fornication, the intellect apprehends the conformity to the sensitive appetite, which is sufficient to move the will des-
pite the knowledge that in itself and according to reason, fornication is evil. For with this apprehension there is formed the false practical judgement that fornication is to be followed, which is a judgement made according to the appetite leaving aside the true judgement of reason.

For, if the subject is actually, or habitually, inclined to sensible goods as such, more so than to sensible goods as ordered by right reason, he will choose to pursue them for themselves regardless of the exigencies of right reason. His appetite is so disposed that he judges the sensible goods to be, **hic et nunc**, more connatural and convenient than the good of reason.

It is evident, then, that the error in the practical intellect does not depend on a speculative error. In fact there is no contradiction between the judgement of a thing in itself, and the judgement of its conformity to an inordinate appetite. John of Saint Thomas shows there is no necessity of speculative error preceding practical error:

Non requiritur etiam ad formandum judicium practicum, quod praeceedat judicium speculativum positive de illa convenientia, quod ita vere in re sit, verbi gratia, ad formandum judicium quod sibi est bonum, et conveniens fornicari **hic et nunc**, non requiritur quod praeceedat judicium speculativum quod fornic-
From what we have said on this question it is evident that even if man attained a complete knowledge of moral matters he would not remove himself from the possibility of sin. For, despite this knowledge, there still remains the possibility of the appetite's interference with the particular judgement.

This point, as well as the entire doctrine of practical ignorance is well illustrated in the sin of the angels. In this we must recall the manner in which the angels know things, that is, without 'discursus', but attaining a knowledge of things in their principles. Since it belonged to the angelic nature that it possess in act a knowledge of all those things which it could know naturally, there could be no error, and thus no sin in these matters, because of the impossibility of the reason presenting a proposition in a defective manner, Saint Thomas writes:

\[\text{Hoc autem ad naturam angelicam pertinet, ut actu habeant notitiam om-}\]
The angels did sin, however, not in regard to their natural end, but in regard to a supernatural good. Since in this latter sphere they proceeded somewhat obscurely, failing to attain a perfect knowledge, some defect was possible. As Saint Thomas points out:

Verum est autem quod sunt in potentia respectu motus in supernaturalia, sive per conversionem, sive per aversionem, unde haec sola mutatio in eis esse po-
test, ut de gradu naturae ipsorum move-
antur in id quod est supra naturam con-
vertendo se vel avertendo.  

The appetite, therefore, was unable to influence the judgement of the practical reason in regard to the natural knowledge of the angels. However, if the object did not concern the proper knowledge of the angels, the appetite was free to exercise its influence on the practical judgement. This they did when the supernatural end was offered to them by God, and attached themselves to their own good in opposition to the supernatural good. In this instance the angels could have referred this supernatural end to their own natural law, which would have shown them that their natural order should be subjected to a superior order, but they were al-
so free to reject such a reference and to choose according to their appetite. John of Saint Thomas points out the practical error in the sin of the angels:

Practical ignorance is most clearly illustrated here, since, the angels could not err speculatively, and therefore in their sin the only error involved was practical. As Saint Thomas teaches:

The angels desired their natural happiness above a supernatural end, even though they knew that absolutely speaking and taken in itself the supernatural end was superior to this natural state. In recognising the relative merits of the two orders
involved there was no speculative error. They were also right in their knowledge, that if they accepted the supernatural end they would depend on another for their happiness, and that they would share it in common with other inferior creatures. Since they had their own state by right of creation, and in the very fact that they were angels they enjoyed a certain preeminence in the created order, they disdained an end that would depend on another and which they would share with others inferior to themselves. Because of their love of their own singularity, and their unwillingness to depend on another, the angels erred practically. As John of Saint Thomas notes:

Errabat autem practice, quia singularitatis avidus, et impatiens dependentiae ab aliens gratia, et noniens quidquam precario habere, anteposuit inferiori excellentiam ut propria, et non ex gratia speciali, excellentiae superiori, ut ex gratia danda. Et in hoc tantum erravit practice, quantum superbivit.58

Here again we find the inconsideration common to all sin. John of Saint Thomas states:

et non error speculativus, licet practicus non defuerit, quae est inconsideratio et imprudentia omnibus peccatis communis.59

We notice here that they knew their own natural excellence was a lesser good than the superior or supernatural beatitude. The angels in this case
chose a lesser good, not because they were unaware of the relative merits of the goods proposed, (this they knew very well), but because of their appetite, which led them to reject the greater good for the lesser.

We have now seen that every moral action entails the proposal of an object to the will by the practical reason. The fact that such an action is evil does not depend on speculative error, but rather on the ability of the appetite to influence the judgement of the practical reason. For we have defined practical truth or falsity according to the appetite, and have shown that in every morally bad action the appetite has destroyed the principle of prudence. We may conclude, therefore, that in every sin there exists this defect in the proposal of the practical reason which is the ignorance common to sin.
CHAPTER III

IGNORANCE OF SIN IS AN EFFECT, RATHER THAN A CAUSE, OF SIN

We have already seen that every good action must be directed by reason, and that in every sin there exists the failure of the reason to present the object to the will according to a proper rational evaluation. In this sense, it seems that practical ignorance is a deficient principle in sin. But, although this ignorance is necessary for the existence of a bad moral action, we have still to determine the exact relation of this deficiency in the reason to the cause of sin. From the previous sections, it is evident that a defect exists in the reason's presentation of the object, but whether this defect is a cause or an effect of sin, has still to be determined.

1. The Cause of Moral Evil

To understand this, we must recall that sin is an inordinate action. On the part of the action it has a cause per se, as every action has a cause; on the part of the inordination it has a cause, not
per se, but as a negation or privation has a cause. This in a two-fold manner. In the first place, the negation of the effect follows the negation of the cause: for example, darkness is caused by the absence of the sun. In the second place, the privation is attached to something primarily intended and follows *per accidens* from the intention of the agent. The first of these, although sufficient for a simple negation is insufficient for sin, since the inordination in a sin is the privation of that which the act should have, and this must be effected by some cause impeding the proper perfection of the act. This inordination in the effect that the agent produces is due to a deficient cause, or follows from the intention of the agent *per accidens*. As Saint Thomas points out:

> et secundum hoc consuevit dici quod malum, quod in quadem privatione consistit, habet causam deficientem vel agentem per accidens.\(^6\)

Cajetan states that a doubt exists in the words of Saint Thomas, as to whether the phrase "*malum habet causam deficientem vel agentem per accidens*" should be interpreted disjunctively or not, and he concludes that the proper cause of evil is assigned disjunctively, either as a deficient cause or a *causa per accidens*.

> Ad hoc dicitur quod Auctor concludit
illam disjunctionem secundum veritatem disjunctionis. Et intendit quod propteræa, cum causa propria mali assignatur, aut assignatur causa deficientis, aut assignatur causa per accidens. 61

The doctrine of Saint Thomas in regard to the cause of evil clearly supports his interpretation:

Est ergo duplex modus quo malum causatur ex hono* in uno modo est causa mali in quantum est deficientis; alio modo in quantum est per accidens. 62

This is illustrated by a comparison with natural things, for in natural phenomena evil results when the cause itself is deficient or when the evil follows in a per accidens mode. The first is exemplified by the presence of some foreign principle in the cause, which is responsible for the deficient effect, as when a deficient seed is the cause of an abnormal product. The second is exemplified in the displacement of one form by another, since that which is per se intended is the introduction of the new form; the fact that this necessitates the privation of another form is intended per accidens.

Sin as a voluntary action has the will as its proper and immediate cause. All causes exterior to the will may effect the will and even lessen the voluntary character of the action, but as long
as sin remains a human act, it remains subject to the will, and the will is the principal cause from which the action proceeds. Since it is the cause of the action it is also the cause per accidens of the evil in the action, and from this it follows that the will per accidens causes the inordination. Furthermore, we have already observed that the will in tending to some inordinate object disregards the estimation of reason, and acting with this deficiency is the cause of evil as a deficient cause. Thus the will is the cause of evil in both senses mentioned above, as is evident from the words of Saint Thomas regarding the causality of evil.

Quae quidem est causa mali secundum utrumque praedictorum modorum, scilicet et per accidens, et in quantum est bonum deficiens; per accidens quidem, in quantum voluntas furtur in aliquid quod est bonum secundum quid, sed habet conjunctum quod est simpliciter malum; sed ut bonum deficiens in quantum in voluntate optet praecssiderare aliquem defectum ante ipsam electionem deficientem, per quam elegit secundum quid bonum, quod est simpliciter malum; quod sic patet.

The will then, tends to a good as it is represented by the reason. This representation may be with an evaluation that measures and regulates the good according to the moral law, or it may be according to some aspect that is pleasing to a bad will. When the will tends to an object in the first
manner, a good action results; in the second case, however, the will tends to an object that is only secundum quid good, and, thus acting without the full consideration of reason, it causes a bad action. As Saint Thomas shows, it is the defect in the direction of the will that is responsible for sin.

Sic igitur voluntas carens directione regulae rationis et legis divinae, intendens aliquod bonum commutabile, causat actum quidem peccati per se, sed inordinationem actus per accidentem et praefer intentionem; provenit enim defectus ordinis in actus ex defectu directionis in voluntate.64

This movement of the will to its object without the regulation of reason may be compared to a carpenter, who would proceed to cut a board without using the available instruments of measuring. If the cut is not made as it should be, he is responsible for it, because his disregard of the measure is voluntary.

Similarly, whatever is appetible should be regulated by reason. Yet the will has the potency to receive the appetible with or without the consideration of right reason. And here we must note that the appetible, whatever the force of its attraction, does not necessarily move the will in a human act, since the cause of the motion to the object is primarily on the part of the will. Thus it is that the will, in tending to an object properly encompassed in the evaluation of reason, causes a good ac-
tion, while its departure from such estimation causes a bad action. Saint Thomas points out that there is a want of application to the rule of reason prior to the inordinate election:

unde non uti regula rationis et legis divinae praeintelligitur in voluntate ante inordinatam electionem.⁶⁵

In itself an inattention on the part of the will is nothing culpable, since it is not obligatory or possible that every good be actually under the consideration of reason. Saint Thomas calls this defect a pure negation:

quod defectus qui praeintelligitur in voluntate ante peccatum non est culpa neque poena, sed negatio pura.⁶⁶

Culpability arises when the will applies itself to an object, without regarding the estimation of reason. Saint Thomas remarks that it is from such an action that fault first arises.

Sed ex hoc accipit primo rationem culpae, quod sine actuali consideratione regulae procedit ad hujusmodi electionem.⁶⁷

To locate the responsibility for the failure to consider the good according to reason, we need look no further than the will itself, which is free and has the power to act, either according to reason or to depart from it, which Saint Thomas points out:

Hujusmodi autem quod est non uti reg-
ula praedita, non oportet aliquam causam quaerere; quia ad hoc sufficit ipsa libertas voluntatis, per quam potest agere vel non agere.68

In saying that the will is defective in its failure to adhere to the rule of reason, and that this deficient principle is the cause of sin, we must be careful in determining the meaning of a deficient principle, for it may be argued that this deficiency is voluntary and itself a sin, whose cause therefore must in turn be sought for, and so on to infinity.

This objection is similar to the rejection of a deficient cause because of the fact that this would entail a defect in the will before the defect of sin.

In answer to this, it must be said that though a lack of relation to the reason exists in the will before the sin, this is not morally evil; for moral evil only occurs when the will moves to its object with this lack of order. Thus Cajetan points out that there is no contradiction in saying that this defect exists before the inordinate action, provided that such a defect is understood as a negation and not as a morally culpable fault.

Ante primum defectum in actu peccati, esset defectus; patet responsio, quod non inconvenit ante talem primum defectum, duci defectum absque ratione mali culpae et poenae.69
This is also pointed out by Saint Thomas in his summary of this point:

_Dicendum quod, sicut dictum est, voluntas sine adhibitio ad regulam rationis vel legis divinae, est causa peccati. Hoc autem quod est non adhibere regulam rationis vel legis divinae, secundum se non habet rationem mali, nec poenae nec culpae, antequam applicetur ad actum. Unde secundum hoc peccati primi non est causa aliquod malum, sed bonum aliquod cum absentia aliquius alterius boni._

2. **Relation of Practical Ignorance to the Cause of Moral Evil**

Practical ignorance occurs with the movement of the will to the inordinate object. As we have seen above, the reason cannot apprehend all the aspects of an object at once, while the apprehension of anything under a particular and limited state of goodness is sufficient to attract the will. Sin exists with this movement of the will to a good viewed under these limited conditions, that is, without the right consideration of reason.

Saint Thomas states that the perfection of the act of sin pertains to the will, with the conditions we have many times mentioned: namely, the proposal of the object without due consideration:

_dictum est quod causa peccati est aliquod bonum apparens motivum cum defectu debiti motivi, scilicet regulae rationis vel legis divinae; ip_
Although this ignorance that arises with the movement of the will to the inordinate good is quite evident, there remains a doubt as to whether the ignorance is naturally prior to the movement of the appetite, or whether the appetite precedes the ignorance. Cajetan notes a difficulty at this point. For on one hand, the object presented is the object of the will, and therefore must be judged prior; on the other hand, since this ignorance is an effect of the will deterring the intellect, it seems posterior to the will.

Saint Thomas seems to maintain that such ignorance follows the sin, when he points out that the ignorance that is in all sin follows the sin:

> quod error ille ex quo omne peccatum procedit est error electionis, prout eligit quod eligendum non est, secundum quem omnis malus ignorans dicitur a Philosopho in III Ethic. (cap. 1 a med.) Hic autem error praesupponit inordinationem in parte appetitiva. Ex hoc enim quod appetitus sensibilis afficitur ad suum delectabile, et appetitus superior ei non repugnat, impeditur ratio ne id quod habitualiter habet, in electionem deducat. Et sic
The answer to this difficulty is given by Cajetan in his commentary. There he points out the inconsideration which arises with the movement of the will to an inordinate object, and the elements involved in its action. In the first place, the judgement in regard to the performance of some morally bad action is naturally prior to the will, when it is considered as something proposed to that potency. But, as something accepted by the will it is posterior, and since the will does not desire evil, the acceptance of the moral evil is with some defect of the reason. The question then is resolved to these three elements: the judgement accepted, the defect of the reason, and the acceptance by the bad will. The first two precede the will in regard to the object accepted and the condition of acceptance, while the third is an effect of the will, as is shown by Cajetan:

Judicium igitur de agendo vel adpetendo morali malo, cum in ratione propositi sit prius natura voluntate mala, et in ratione acceptati sit posterius natura eadem, et acceptatur ex aliquo defectu intellectus: quia malum secundum se non est acceptabile, resolvendum est in tris; in ipsum judicatum seu judicium, quod acceptatur; et in defectum intellectus, unde quodammodo acceptatur; et ipsum passive acceptionem a mala voluntate illatam. Et quoad duo prima
praeventit voluptatem malam ut obiectum et conditio nonnulla eius, sive ex parte eius sive ex parte intelligen
tia; quoad tertium autem, est effectus voluntatis. Et sic omnia consona inveniuntur.

It seems evident, then, that the defect that exists on the part of the reason's presentation of the object is a condition rather than a cause of sin. For sin is an act of the will tending to an inordinate object, and as such it is primarily and formally constituted by its relation to this object. However, there follows upon this relation the privation of rectitude in the act of the will, and it is in this manner that sin is completed as an evil. We may say, therefore, that ignorance in sin is a formality of sin, but one which is caused by the will, and which is consecutive to the will's tending to a contrary object.

Therefore, while we say that nothing is willed unless it be known, and that a defective operation of the will necessarily demands a defective proposition on the part of the practical reason, we do not lose sight of the fact that such a defective proposition is due to the will itself. For it is proposed as such because of the will's mastery of the practical intellect in forcing the considerations of those aspects which please the will, and the withdrawal of those that are displeasing. The
reason for this is that the will is the principle of human action, and although it is true that its movement can only be through reason, this extends only to the presentation of the object, as John of Saint Thomas shows:

\[\text{quod intellectus movet praesentando objectum voluntati; ergo movet tantum quantum movet objectum praesentatum.}\]

And, since the presentation of particular goods do not of necessity move the will, it remains for that potency to determine the judgement of the practical intellect with regard to those objects towards which the will moves. It is true that passion or habit may influence the judgement of the practical intellect, but this is accidental to the determination of the judgement which comes from the will. In speaking of the determination of the practical intellect Cajetan remarks:

\[\text{quod determinatio intellectus ad al-}
\text{teram partem in moralibus, cum contingentia sunt, quando ex passione provenit, praevenit manifeste electionem, ut patet ex supra declaratis. Sed quoniam hoc est per accidens absolute loquendo de determinatione intellectus, dicendum simpliciter est quod voluntas determinat intellectum ad judicandum alterum oppositorum facien-
\text{dum.}\]

In a sense it may be said that a deficiency exists in the reason before the sin is committed, inasmuch as it is natural for the created intellect
to proceed in succession. We have already pointed out this fact in our treatment of the root of ignorance in sin. Here we recall to mind that such a deficiency is natural to man since it is the normal procedure in man’s reasoning. Since this is so, such a defect cannot be called a privation in the absolute sense of the word.

However, this deficiency becomes a privation in the real sense with the movement of the will to the inordinate object. For in this case the will prevents a true evaluation and forces the reason to an imperfect estimation of the object in question. This ignorance, therefore, or the lack of consideration according to which what is good under a certain aspect is regarded as simpliciter good, is the error from which sin proceeds. And because this ignorance is caused by the will as endowed with freedom of choice, it is voluntary. As Saint Thomas writes:

> quod error ille ex quo omno peccatum procedit est error electionis, secundum quem Philosophus, ubi supra, omnem malum ignorantem esse dicit, haeo autem ignorantia non causat involuntarium, immo est ex voluntate causata; quia ex ipsa inclinatione corruptae voluntatis in peccatum, quae est per habitum vel passionem, consequitur ut hoc quasi bonum aliquis eligat quod voluntati placet;??

In this manner practical ignorance is exemplified in the sin of Eve followed upon her incor-
dinate appetite. For Eve could have avoided all er-
ror if she had chosen to consider, for her knowledge
was perfect, not comprehensively, but by reason.
She needed deliberation lest she fall into error,
but by deliberation she could have avoided all er-
ror. However, since she had to deliberate she could
not avoid the consideration of things according to
successive aspects, and, since Eve’s affection was
not infallibly attached to the true good there was
left the possibility of an inclination to an imper-
flect good, and the interference of the appetite on
the reason. In this way she was affected by the
words of the serpent and immediately inclined to
the promise he made to her, turning away from the
consideration of reason which would have shown her
the error in the serpent’s statement. Therefore,
her error presupposed an inordination in her appe-
tite, and this may be seen from the words of Saint
Thomas, showing the character of Eve’s knowledge
and the error that followed her sin.

quod intellectus hominis in statu
innocentiae indigebat deliberatione
ne incideret in errorem, sicut in-
digebat comestione, ne corpus ejus
deficeret. Erat autem ita rectae
deliberationis, ut deliberando pos-
set omnem errorem vitare, sicut come-
dendo, omnem defectum corporalem.
Unde sicut si non comederat, peccaret
omittendo; ita si non deliberaret,
sum tempus esset; et sic error pec-
catum sequeretur.78
Saint Thomas then lists this ignorance among those which are consequent to the will:

consequenter autem se habet ignorantia ad voluntatem... Hoc igitur modo dicitur ignorantia, sive dum aliquis actu non considerat quod considerare potest et debet, quae est ignorantia malae electionis.79

In his commentary on this article, Cajetan draws a distinction between ignorance of the law and ignorance of election, noting that both are quasi objects of the will, but that the former is an habitual privation of knowledge, while the latter is an actual inconsideration of what ought to be considered and applied to the particular case or instance:

inter has autem duas differentia sit quod ignorantia electionis consistit in ipsa voluntaria actuali inconsideratione, ignorantia vero iuris in voluntaria habituali privatione scientiae:80

The ignorance that is common to sin then, is based on the imperfection of the reason, and in the ability of the appetite to attach itself to some good whether it is truly good or not. Those who attribute all sin to ignorance are willing to concede the first point, but they are mistaken in the nature of the will. For they supposed that the will was entirely subjected to the reason, that it could follow no good except a rational good, and that there was no possibility of its interference with the proposal of reason. We have shown that the will may
incline to any good, and therefore the defect in practical intellect is radically more on the part of the will as Saint Thomas shows:

Et ideo cum aliquis est inordinate affectus ad aliquid, impeditur judicium intellectus in particulari eligibili ex inordinate affectione. Et sic principaliter vitium est non in cognitione sed in affectione.81

As long as the will remains free in the choice of its object, and as long as the intellect has to consider things successively, there remains the possibility of the appetite's interference with the rational evaluation of reason. The various goods of man should be regulated and subordinated according to reason, that is, the preferring of one thing to another, and the right ordination to the end. But, as we have seen, the will may be attracted to one of these goods outside the order of reason, and tend to it apart from the estimation of right reason. As this action on the part of the will involves the choice of a lesser good, as is evident in the angel's choice of their own excellence, there seems to be a contradiction between such a choice and the words of Aristotle, "and we choose what we best know to be good."

In treating this problem, we may note that in an election there are two things to be considered, the thing chosen, and the motive or the reason
for the choice. In regard to the thing itself, absolutely considered, it may be a better good, and even judged as better by the speculative reason, and yet an opposing good may be more efficacious in moving the will because it is judged practically as better, that is as more in accord with the appetite:

"Qualis unusquisque est talis finis ei videtur." 82

And in this sense the will always chooses the greater good, that is, one that is better practically considered.

We do not mean that the will of itself can immediately change the nature of the good, but that this is done through the medium of the intellect which proposes the good to the will, so that the intellect proposes the lesser good as more convenient or with some condition that makes it preferable to the greater good. The good proposed in this manner is due to the will, for the lesser good is clothed in a more attractive mode because of the will's influence on the reason, since it is the reason which makes the proposition according to the pattern dictated by the will. The foundation of this is that the will can only be aroused by the attraction of the good presented by the intellect, and when the will is moved to a lesser good at the expense of a greater good, it is because of a greater attraction in what the intellect proposes. As John of Saint
Thomas notes:

Sed quaecumque allicientia, et attractio objecti debet fieri media propositione, et judicio, seu dictamine intellectus, ergo voluntas, ita est libera ut feratur in minus bonum relecto meliori, quod id necessario debet fieri mediante majori attractione, et allicientia unius praet alio, eo quod non potest intelligi quod voluntas feratur, et trahatur, nisi sit tractio, et allicientia objectiva, et haec oportet quod appareat, et modiante intellectu ponatur, alias est nulla.83

We may conclude therefore, that in sin the will always acts for the greater good, practically speaking, but that this is the greater good depends on the will.

This is sufficient for the explanation of the relation between the will, as the cause of sin, and the ignorance that is common to sin. However, since Saint Thomas84 states that ignorance is the cause of sin, it might serve our purpose to review what he means by this statement, and to determine what kind of ignorance this is, and how it is the cause of sin.

3. Practical Ignorance and the Ignorance Which Causes Sin

It is evident that ignorance cannot be a per se cause of any action, since ignorance is a privation and cannot of itself produce any action. Per
accidens, however, it may be a cause, that is "removens prohibens." In the case of morals this applies to the removal of actions by which human actions are directed.

In this direction of action there is a two-fold knowledge: one universal, the other singular, and the privation of either is sufficient to cause sin. Sometimes, too, man is prevented from a bad action by his universal knowledge; for example, because he knows that fornication is wrong he will not commit such an action. However, even if he has universal knowledge he still may not know the particular, and since our actions are in regard to particulars, man may sin through such ignorance. For example, a man may know that it is wrong to kill a man, but in particular may not be aware of his action, as in the case of the hunter who kills a man thinking he is a deer.

Ignorance which causes sin then, is the ignorance which would prevent the action if it were known to be evil. This seems also to apply to practical ignorance, since practical ignorance is an omission of those things which should be considered in the commission of an action, and the consideration of which would prevent the evil action. As Saint Thomas states:
in omni peccato commune est hoc quod aliquis non facit quod in se est ad resistendum peccato, quod si faceret non peccaret. 85

Here we observe that Cajetan86 does not exclude practical ignorance as the cause of sin, but only excludes it as a general cause. It seems, therefore, that practical ignorance may be considered a cause on the part of the object, which is deprived of the considerations of reason which are due to it, and which would prevent the sin if they were present.

However, when Saint Thomas speaks of ignorance as the cause of sin, as an ignorance which deprives the subject of a knowledge that would prevent sin, he does not seem to mean practical ignorance. For, according to his statement, only that ignorance which removes knowledge which would prevent the action can be the cause of sin:

\[
\text{non quaelibet ignorantia peccantis est causa peccati; sed illa tantum quae tolit, scientiam prohibentem actum peccati.} \]

Therefore, if the subject were willing to commit the action even if he were not ignorant, it could not be said that ignorance is the cause of his action. As in the case of the hunter, if he were willing to kill a man, even though he was unaware that he was actually killing one, his action could not be said to be caused by ignorance. The supposition in cases of this kind is that he would com-
mit the action even if he were aware of it.

Therefore, since evidently one can do evil and this not from ignorance as a cause, there must be a difference in this ignorance that causes sin, and practical ignorance which is in all sin.

Furthermore, only the ignorance that is the cause of sin excuses or diminishes sin as Saint Thomas states in the Sentences. By ignorance as the cause of sin he means an ignorance which is the reason why the sin is committed, and which is capable of lessening or removing the voluntarium. This is evident from the words of Saint Thomas:

Ignorantia autem quae non est causa actus, non causat involuntarium, ut Philosophus dicit in III Ethic., cap. 11; unde illa nullo modo excusat nec diminuit peccatum; sed solum illa quae est causa actus. 88

Practical ignorance, however, follows the will, and neither excuses nor diminishes sin. Therefore, it cannot be said to be a cause of sin as being the reason why the subject commits the sin. Saint Thomas states this difference between practical ignorance and the ignorance which causes sin:

quod ignorantia quae consequitur omne peccatum non est causa peccati, ut dictum est; et ideo non excusat nec diminuit peccatum. 89

We may say, therefore, that the ignorance common to sin is an ignorance caused by an inordin-
ate will. For the will is the cause of sin in tending toward an object without the full consideration of reason. In this way it is also the cause of the ignorance which occurs with its choice. We must conclude therefore, that such ignorance follows the motion of the will, and is an effect rather than a cause of sin.

This brings us to the end of the first part of our work in which we have shown that every sinner is ignorant, at least to the extent of choosing without the full consideration of reason. Since the act of choice must include the proposal of the practical intellect we concluded that such ignorance belonged to the practical reason, and then in our examination of the operations of that faculty we saw that its truth or falsity depends on the appetite. Therefore, in those acts that are morally bad, an inordinate appetite exercises its influence on the practical reason so that an imperfect good is proposed to the will. From this it follows that the ignorance occurring with the proposal of the imperfect good is caused by the appetite; and in our treatment of the will as the cause of sin in its tendency to an object without the consideration of the reason, we showed that it is also the cause of the ignorance which follows upon its choice.
PART II. PRACTICAL IGNORANCE AND THE VOLUNTARY
CHAPTER I

IGNORANCE WHICH IS CONTRARY TO SIN AS A VOLUNTARY ACT

1. Nature of a Voluntary Act

In order to prove that ignorance exists in all sin we had to recount the nature of a human act, and the manner in which the intellect and the will are the principles in those actions which are properly human. We stated, therefore, that man acts with a knowledge of his end, moving himself to that end by his own free will. This manner of acting is evidently voluntary as it proceeds from an interior principle with a knowledge of the end, and this is the nature of a voluntary action as defined by Aristotle in the third book of the Ethics. 90

The fact is that man, in apprehending the end sub formali ratione finis, acts for that end in a more perfect manner than those creatures who merely apprehend the end through their sense and natural evaluation. Because of this Saint Thomas states that a perfect voluntarium is found in a rational creature, while an imperfect one is proper to brutes.
Unde soli rationali naturae compe­tit voluntarium secundum rationem perfectam; sed secundum rationem imperfectam, competit etiam brutis. 91

Since the voluntary character of man's actions necessarily includes the motion of the will, and since this motion of the will presupposes a knowledge of the good, a deficiency in apprehension results in an involuntary action on the part of the will following such knowledge. On this account, ignorance is cited by Aristotle92 as the cause of an involuntarium, and Saint Thomas in his commentary on this passage explains his doctrine in this manner:

Voluntarium autem importet motum appetitivae virtutis, quae prae­suponit cognitionem apprehensivae virtutis, eo quod bonum apprehen­sum movet virtutem appetitivam. Dupliciter autem aliquid est in­voluntarium....alia modo quia ex­cluditur cognitione virtutis apprehensivae. 93

Both Aristotle and Saint Thomas therefore, agree on the fact that ignorance causes an involuntary action. In fact, since it is of the very nature of sin to be voluntary, we might conclude from the above that in the presence of ignorance no sin can exist. And yet we know from Aristotle's own teaching94 that many things which men do wrongly are im­puted to them because of ignorance, and this cer­tainly implies that such actions are voluntary.
2. Differences to be Observed Regarding the Relation of Ignorance to Voluntary Actions

As the difficulty mentioned above obviously points to differences in ignorance itself, we will use the distinctions Aristotle makes in the third book of the *Ethics*, where he states that in regard to ignorance there are three differences to be observed. The first of these concerns the relation of ignorance to the will, for at times ignorance is responsible for actions which are contrary to the will, and these actions are properly called involuntary. Sometimes, however, actions done in ignorance are not contrary to the will, but only outside the will in the fact that they are unknown. Actions such as these are not called involuntary, for they are attributed to an agent willing to perform such actions even outside his ignorance. They are therefore, called nonvoluntary actions which does not signify opposition to the will, but the mere removal of the will from the object unknown. However, these actions which are done through ignorance, and which are attributed to an agent unwilling to perform such action in the presence of knowledge are properly speaking involuntary.

The second difference concerns the relation of ignorance to action, for, of those actions done
in ignorance, some are caused by ignorance itself and some have another cause. For example, a drunken man acts in ignorance and yet his actions are attributed to drunkedness rather than to ignorance. In reference to this Aristotle states, "acting by reason of ignorance seems also be different from acting in ignorance." And he concludes that every sinner acts not by reason of ignorance, but ignoring in particular what he should do or avoid. Therefore, whoever acts in ignorance and not because of ignorance does not act involuntarily, for no one is judged evil because of what he does involuntarily.

The third difference refers to what is unknown, and under such an aspect ignorance is twofold. For, in one manner the subject may be ignorant of what he should do or avoid, and an ignorance of this kind concerns those things which are necessary to know for one's own operations. Ignorance of this nature, therefore, occurring as it does through negligence does not cause an involuntary action, for each one is bound to use sufficient care in order to learn what he should do or avoid. Since the ignorance itself is voluntary, it follows that any action proceeding from such ignorance is likewise voluntary.

In this manner we may be ignorant of the
particular action to be performed, for example, one who supposes that fornication is to be committed because of concupiscence. Or he may be ignorant in his universal knowledge in thinking that fornication is a licet action. In either case it is an ignorance of what one should know, and does not render the act involuntary, for, in the first instance, concupiscence, rather than ignorance is the cause of the action, and in the second, blame is attached to those actions which proceed from a universal ignorance of what one is supposed to know.

Another ignorance is that of the particular circumstances involved in an action, and through a justifiable ignorance in these matters pardon is given to those who transgress. For this reason ignorance of particular circumstances may cause an involuntary action, not, however, an ignorance of what one is supposed to know.

3. Effect of Ignorance on the Voluntary Character of an Action

In view of these differences, let us return to the position of Aristotle that ignorance causes an involuntary action in bearing away the knowledge required for a voluntary act. It is now evident however, that not every kind of ignorance deprives
the subject of knowledge and makes his action involuntary. For, as Saint Thomas points out, an action flowing from voluntary ignorance is itself in some way voluntary.

\[ \text{quia actus sequens ex hoc ipso quod procedit ex ignorantia, quae est voluntaria est quodammodo voluntarius.} \]

Therefore, in order to determine the effect of ignorance on the voluntary nature of an action, we must take account of its relation to the will. This relation is threefold, depending on whether the ignorance is concomitant, consequent, or antecedent to the action of the will.

Ignorance is concomitant when it concerns that which is done, but nevertheless would still be done if the ignorance were not present. Thus this ignorance does not effect the actions, but merely coexists with the actions of the will. For example, a hunter may be willing to kill his enemy, but unknowingly kills him thinking he is a deer. Such ignorance does not cause an involuntary action, as pointed out by Aristotle in the first difference given above. For it does not make an action involuntary, but only non voluntary.

Consequent ignorance is that which follows the action of the will, and this may be directly voluntary, when the subject wills the ignorance with a
view to sinning more easily. Or it may be indirectly willed when through negligence one fails to apply himself to the acquisition of knowledge which he can and should have for his ordinary actions. Needless to say one is not held accountable for what he should not know or cannot know. Ignorance may also be voluntary per accidens when someone either directly or indirectly wills something and the ignorance follows. This may be direct as in the case of drunkenness which deprives one of the use of reason, or indirect when through concupiscence one fails to consider what should be considered in order to avoid sin, and this is the ignorance of election resulting from passion or habit. Since each of these types of ignorance is voluntary they cannot cause a totally involuntary action. However, if the voluntary ignorance is of such a nature that it precedes the motion of the will in reference to some action which would not be done in the presence of knowledge, then such ignorance is said to cause an involuntary action secundum quid.

Antecedent ignorance is that which is not voluntary, and is the cause of the action which otherwise would not be performed. Just as one does not know some circumstance of an action, which he is not obliged to know, and which he would not commit ex-
cept for his ignorance. An example of this is found in the case of a hunter who uses sufficient care to ascertain that no one is within range of his rifle, and yet accidently shoots someone who happens to pass by. Since ignorance such as this totally precedes the will, and is in no way voluntary it causes a totally involuntary action. Thus, Saint Thomas after citing the types of ignorance which follow the will remarks that any ignorance not included in any of these voluntary modes, and existing without any inordination on the part of the will, causes the following act to be totally involuntary.

Si autem ignorantia nullo praedictorum modorum sit voluntaria, puta cum est invincibilis, et tamen est ahsque omni inordinatione voluntatis, tunc totaliter facit actum sequentem involuntarium.98

Antecedant ignorance is therefore, the only ignorance that entirely precedes any action on the part of the will, and due to its involuntary character it is inculpable and the actions which follow from it are involuntary.

Thus, when Saint Thomas takes up the question whether ignorance totally excuses from sin, his affirmative reply extends only to the ignorance which is the cause of the action. In this way he eliminates concomitant and consequent ignorance which are not the cause of the action, and which do
not cause an involuntary action.

Et talis ignorantia quae non est causa actus peccati, ut dictum est, quia non causat involuntarium, non excusat a peccato. Et eadem ratio est de quacumque ignorantia non causante, sed consequente vel concomitante actum peccati. Sed ignorantia quae est causa actus, quia causat involuntarium, de se habet quod excusat a peccato, eo quod voluntarium est de ratione peccati.99

However, ignorance that is the cause of the action may excuse from sin either totally or in part, depending on the voluntary nature of such ignorance. Therefore, Saint Thomas states that only ignorance which is totally involuntary entirely excuses from sin.

Si vero sit talis ignorantia quae omnino sit involuntaria, sive quia est invincibilis; sive quia est eius quod quis scire non tenetur, talis ignorantia omnino excusat a peccato.100

From what has been said it should be apparent in what manner ignorance is contrary to sin as a voluntary act. For we have reviewed the relation of ignorance to the voluntary character of moral actions and have determined how ignorance which is entirely voluntary excuses from fault in the action that flows from it. There now remains to study another type of ignorance which does not cause a totally involuntary action, and we proceed therefore, to the ignorance caused by negligence.
CHAPTER II

IGNORANCE IN SINS OF NEGLIGENCE

1. The Ignorance that Results from Negligence

In treating of ignorance that is voluntary, Saint Thomas states that it may be voluntary in an indirect manner, that is, when someone fails to use sufficient care in learning those things which he can and should know for the direction of his moral actions. This he calls the ignorance of negligence.

$$\text{ignorantia dicitur voluntaria indirecte quia non adhibet studium ad cognoscendum; et haec est ignorantia negligentiae.}$$

Since the knowledge that man uses in directing his actions is universal and particular, the neglect of either one of these may cause a sinful action. For, by his universal knowledge man is sometimes retracted from sin; for example, one who knows that fornication is evil may on that account abstain from such an action. Knowledge of particulars may also prevent man from sinning, as in the case of the hunter who would not shoot if he knew a man was passing by, but in the absence of such knowledge due to his own neglect kills the passerby. Such ignorance is said to be willed indirectly,
since it is not a direct object of the will, but is caused by some preoccupation on the part of the subject. As Saint Thomas points out it is because of some other occupation that such ignorance results:

sicut cum aliquis propter laborem, vel propter alias occupationes, neglijit addiscere id per quod a peccato retraheretur.102

This ignorance which results from the neglect of learning what we can and should know for the exercise of our own moral activities is itself a moral fault. As Saint Thomas states:

Manifestum est autem quod quicumque negligit habere vel facere id quod tenetur habere vel facere peccat peccato omissionis. Unde propter negligentiam ignorantia eorum quae aliquis scire tenetur, est peccatum.103

Since the ignorance of negligence applies only to what one can and should know, it does not refer to those matters which do not concern the actions of the subject, nor to those things which he cannot know. For the former is a case of pure nescience to which no blame is attached, and the latter by its very nature is involuntary.

In the ignorance rising from negligence, however, there can be no question of its voluntary character, since the neglect is on the part of the subject himself, and it is absurd to suppose that an ignorance of those things which one can and should
know is entirely involuntary.

2. **The Voluntary Character of Actions that Flow from Such Ignorance**

Therefore, since the ignorance is itself voluntary, the actions that flow from this ignorance are likewise voluntary in some degree. For the subject in this case knows his own ignorance, which he has willed indirectly, and since he is the cause of such ignorance he is also the cause of those actions which flow from it. For to be voluntary *in causa* is to be voluntary in some manner as Cajetan remarks:

*Et ratio est quia haec sunt voluntaria in suis tantum causis. Ex hoc namque quod sunt quodammodo voluntaria (esse enim voluntarium in causa, est esse aliquo modo voluntarium), sunt in genere humanorum et moralium, et non excusantium a tota culpa.104*

However, as this ignorance is indirectly willed it differs from affected ignorance which is directly willed with a view to sinning more easily. In the latter case the bad will rather than the ignorance is the cause of sin, and therefore such ignorance in no manner excuses or diminishes sin. For the act of sin is pleasing to the will and as such its voluntary character is in no way lessened. When the ignorance is caused by negligence however, such ignorance is itself the cause of those actions which result from it, since in this case the subject
acts because of his ignorance and would not act if the knowledge of the evil were present to him. Therefore, his actions are voluntary in the sense that he is the cause of the ignorance which is responsible for such actions, but in a certain sense they are involuntary in that they would not be done in the presence of knowledge. Saint Thomas in referring to this type of ignorance says that it causes an involuntarium secundum quid:

causat autem secundum quid involutarium, inquantum praecessit motum voluntatis ad aliquid agendum qui non esset scientia praesente.105

Since it is the cause of the action, the negligence has a certain similarity to antecedent ignorance which is also the cause of the action. However, as we stated above the ignorance of negligence is listed by Saint Thomas as a consequent ignorance. Therefore, while antecedent ignorance precedes all action of the will and is thus entirely involuntary, the ignorance of negligence precedes the will with reference to the action which it causes, but follows the action of the will with reference to the ignorance itself as caused by the will.

On this account antecedent ignorance renders the act which it causes totally involuntary. The ignorance of negligence, since it is the cause of the action, and the cause of an involuntarium se-
suntum quid, lessens the sin in the action that it causes. Saint Thomas states that ignorance lessens the sin in whatever proportion it diminishes the voluntary nature of the action.

Dicendum quod, quia omne peccatum est voluntarium, intantum ignorantia protest diminuere peccatum, inquantum diminuit voluntarium; 106

The ignorance of negligence then, since it precedes the will with reference to the action which it causes, diminishes the voluntary character of this action. For an action that is caused by ignorance must be judged less voluntary than one that is committed knowingly. Saint Thomas states therefore, that the ignorance arising from the neglect of knowledge diminishes the following sin.

Quandoque vero ignorantia quae est causa peccati, non est directa voluntaria, sed indirecte vel per accidens, puta cum aliquis non vult laborare in studio, ex quo sequitur esse ignorantem; ... Et talis ignorantia diminuit voluntarium et per consequens peccatum. 107

However, in saying that the ignorance of negligence diminishes the following sin we are faced with an obvious difficulty. For this ignorance is itself a sin, and one who sins through such ignorance adds sin to sin. Due to such an addition it seems that ignorance does not diminish sin, and our conclusion to that effect cannot be true.
In answer to this we admit that the ignorance of negligence adds sin to sin, and because of this one sinning through negligence commits a double fault. However, this does not prevent the following sin from being lessened by his ignorance. In fact, Saint Thomas points out, this does not always result in a greater sin, for, if the first lessens the second it may happen that the two together may be less serious than a single sin. Just as homicide is a more serious sin if it is committed by a sober man, than by a drunken one, even though in the latter case there are two sins. For drunkenness diminishes the following sin to a degree that the gravity of both together are less than wilful murder. In view of these considerations we may say that sins committed through negligence, even though such negligence is itself a sin and the cause of other sins, are still less serious than those committed knowingly.

Therefore, one who neglects to acquire a sufficient knowledge for his own moral actions is morally guilty for the ignorance he possesses. Furthermore since he has in a manner willed the ignorance it cannot be supposed that he is totally opposed to the actions which follow such ignorance. As we have pointed out his ignorance does not excuse from sin, for as he is willing in a way that such actions
should come about, and allows those actions when he causes his ignorance. However, he is opposed in the degree mentioned above and in this way the voluntary nature of the following action is valued and the sin diminished.
CHAPTER III

IGNORANCE IN SINS OF PASSION

1. Problem of Knowledge and Ignorance in Actions Which Proceed From Passion

There is no doubt that man is influenced by passion towards certain actions which normally he would not do, and that when passion passes he is sorry for those things he has committed under its influence. It is our task to inquire into the relation between passion and the actions that proceed from passion, and to determine whether passion has an effect on the knowledge of the subject.

Daily experience will attest that the force of passion influences man to judge things in a different manner than he would usually do, and the reason for such judgement and the actions that flow from them are assigned to passion. For example, man may hold certain acts as bad, and yet at times commit those very actions which ordinarily seem evil to him. Passion in the sensitive appetite seems to be the cause of the change in judgement, for by a more vehement and forceful presentation of the object, the outlook of the subject undergoes a change with refer-
ence to the object, and what was previously regarded as evil is now regarded as a good.

But, though passion may be responsible for the actions that are committed, we may inquire whether or not it is the cause of a formal sin. For if passion overcomes the reason there is no sin, since sin requires a knowledge of the evilness of the action. If, on the other hand, passion fails to overcome the reason, then the reason and the will are capable of performing their functions and man would sin knowingly.

To say that passion overcomes the reason supposes that in some way the reason so departs from its knowledge that it presents the good of the sensitive appetite to the will. This, then, makes the certitude of reason a very fragile thing, and it was for this reason that Socrates was opposed to such an admission, for the stronger and more certain should never be under the command of the inferior.

And it cannot be argued that passion overcomes the particular reason and not the universal. For example, if man knows in his universal knowledge that no fornication should be committed, he could not have a particular opinion that this particular act of fornication should be committed. For these opinions are contrary, since they are of contradictories,
—that is, a universal negative and a particular affirmative. And, since no one can hold contrary opinions at the same time, it is impossible for any one to suppose that no fornication should be committed, and at the same time to think that this particular act of fornication should be committed.

Furthermore, one who knows the universal also knows the singular contained under the universal, just as one who knows that all Scandinavians have blue eyes also knows this particular person has blue eyes, once he apprehends him as a Scandinavian. Similarly, one who knows that no fornication should be committed, once he apprehends this act as fornication also knows it should not be committed. If he knows only the universal and not the singular, the bad action is attributed to ignorance, just as one may fail to know that this particular person has blue eyes because of his ignorance in apprehending him as a Scandinavian, even though universally he may know that all Scandinavians have blue eyes. Sins of passion, however, are not attributed to ignorance, and if the sinner does not sin through ignorance it seems that he has knowledge in universal and in particular.

This is evident from the words of the sinner himself, who, though influenced by passion, will
often admit that he should not be following the delectable good. Since his own admission is that he is doing wrong, this seems evident proof that he is acting with full knowledge in universal and in particular.

In answer to these questions, Saint Thomas quickly dismisses the opinion of Socrates, that man could not act against the knowledge he has. For experience demonstrates the contrary, namely, that man sometimes acts in opposition to his knowledge and that knowledge is no guarantee against moral evil. This is evident in the case of passion, which somehow influences man against his rational judgement so that he supposes some action should be performed while habitually holding to the opposite opinion. We now wish to inquire in what manner this error of judgement is caused by the sensitive appetite and how passion effects a judgement contrary to the judgement of reason.

There are some who are unwilling to say that man could act against what he knows to be true, and therefore, offer a solution to this problem by proposing that passion could overcome opinion, but not knowledge. But this is really no solution, for opinion is either strong or weak. If weak, as happens to one in doubt, it is quite easily understood how one could act against it, since the reason clings
to such an opinion with only a slight margin of preference and could quickly change. In the case of strong opinion, however, the situation is no different from knowledge, for man adheres to a strong opinion as he does to knowledge, and to a false one no less than to a true one. Experience establishes that man acts against the knowledge he has, not only in doubtful matters, but even against that knowledge which he holds as most certain.

2. The Different Senses in Which Knowledge is Taken

To understand the solution of the difficulty involved in stating that man, under the influence of passion, acts against his knowledge, Saint Thomas considers the different senses in which knowledge is taken.

First of all, one may be said to know in habit, for example, when someone possesses a knowledge of geometry but at present is not considering it. Or the knowledge may be in act, when actually here and now use is being made of knowledge one has. There is a great deal of difference between an action proceeding from knowledge in act and one proceeding from habit only. For, in the case of actual knowledge, it is difficult to see how anyone could act against what he is actually thinking. On
the other hand, it is easy to understand how an action could be against knowledge that existed only in habit.

Secondarily, there are two modes of propositions in the practical reason, the universal, and the singular. One may know both the universal and the singular in habit, but in act he considers only the universal proposition. If one does not consider the singular about which actions are concerned, it is not difficult to understand how the action can be contrary to universal knowledge. However, we can understand the universal in two senses, one as it exists in itself, and as it exists in the singular. For example, one may have universal knowledge that fire is made from combustible material and not know that this is combustible material. The universal in itself then can be known in habit and in act; in the singular, however, it can be unknown either in habit or in act. Knowledge in universal only, or of the singular in habit, offers no obstacle to ignorance in a particular actual case. It seems unreasonable, however, to suppose that one could act against his knowledge if he knew the singular in act.

The third division of knowledge under consideration has to do with the passage of habitual knowledge to act. Sometimes this can happen as man
wishes, that is, his knowledge is free and no impediment is offered to its actual realization. Sometimes, however, the habit is restricted in its passage to act, by some cause that prevents the normal actions of reason.

A vehement passion on the part of the sensitive appetite may prevent the application of what is habitually known to this judgement so that man judges not according to reason, but outside reason.

3. **Nature of the Ignorance Existing in a Sin of Passion**

If we apply the above to the practical syllogism we may more easily see how a man acting in passion does not know that what he is doing is evil, in that he suffers a voluntary ignorance in which he supposes that this act which is evil should be done.

In every act of virtue or vice there is a kind of syllogistic reasoning, but men reason differently according to the different states of temperance, intemperance, continence, or incontinence. The temperate man since he is moved according to reason syllogizes in this manner:

No fornication is to be committed.

This is fornication.

Therefore, it is not to be committed.

The intemperate man who is habitually in-
clined to evil, reasons according to his habitual in-
clination, as follows:

All delectable things are to be pursued.
This is delectable.
Therefore, it is to be pursued.

Continent and incontinent men are not habit-
ually inclined to evil, neither are they strong in
virtue as is a temperate man, with the result that
they are influenced by both reason and concupiscence.
For the continent man will judge that no sin is to be
committed which is according to the right reason,
but because he is inclined to the concupiscible good,
reason will also propose to him that all delectable
things are to be followed. The question hinges on
the minor proposition, and the continent man being
able to master his passions will assume as the minor,
the particular proposition that this act of fornication
is evil and must be avoided, thus concluding
under the first major.

The incontinent man has the same major
premises, but averts from the right judgement of
reason in particular, and instead of rightly reason-
ing that this particular is a sin he departs from
right reason in favor of its consideration as a de-
lectable, and so concludes under the second proposi-
tion that it is delectable and should be done.
Thus it is evident that one who knows universally may fail to apply that universal knowledge to this particular case, just as the incontinent man withdraws from a rational consideration of this particular act and instead considers it as a delectable, and in this manner still retains his universal knowledge, but makes it inoperative. This is the ignorance proper to a sin of passion: that only the particular reason is overcome. The universal knowledge remains as most certain, but is impeded by passion from an application to the particular.

From the division of knowledge and the practical syllogism it is also apparent that one cannot have in act a particular affirmative and a universal negative or e converso, since these would be contrary opinions, but it is possible to have a knowledge of one contradictory in habit and the other in act, for act is not contrary to habit but to act.

However, if the universal and the particular are not in regard to the same thing, the appetite may follow the particular while the universal knowledge is retained— as in the case of one who knows in his universal reason that no fornication should be committed, yet in a particular case judges that fornication is a good and to be done. In the latter case, the choice is made under concrete conditions as added
aspects which appeal to the appetite, so that fornication is judged to be a good as a particular operable, not however in its universal consideration. Thus the universal judgement may be contrary to the appetite, not however, the particular judgement. As Saint Thomas shows:

Et quod quandoque appetitus videatur cognitionem non sequi; hoc ideo est, quia non circa idem accipitur appetitus et cognitionis judicium; est enim appetitus de particulari operabili, judicium vero rationis quandoque est de aliquo universalis, quod est quando contrarium appetiti. Sed judicium de hoc particulari operabili, ut nunc, nunquam potest esse contrarium appetiti. Qui enim vult fornicari, quamvis sciat in universalis fornicationem malum esse, tamen judicat sibi ut tunc bonum esse fornicationis actum, et sub specie boni ipsum eligit.

Cajetan further points out that the propositions known and unknown in particular in the practical act are not contradictory. For example, one may rightly know that this fornication in itself should not be done, and yet under the circumstances in which it is actually presented suppose that it should be done.

quod propositiones scitae et ignotae in particulari in actu practico, non sunt contradictoriae. Licet enim existens in passione credat hanc nunc fornicationem secundum se non esse faciendam, credit tamen, omnibus concurrentibus, nunc hanc for-
This manifests two ways of considering the moral act, i.e., either in itself or with reference to the conditions which actually affect the subject choosing the good. A man in passion suffers no defective knowledge in the first sense since he knows that considered in itself this act is wrong. However, in the second sense he does suffer a defective knowledge since he supposes that under these conditions such an act is to be chosen. Thus it happens that this act viewed under the particular circumstances that encompass it is judged as a good and presented as such to the will.

There is no contradiction then in the possession of actual knowledge in universal and in particular that fornication in itself should not be done, and in the judgement that this particular act of fornication should be done, since the latter is considered with the attraction that the pleasure in the act has on the subject disposed by passion. In this case the judgement is made according to the appetite and not according to reason, for fornication is chosen because it is judged suitable to a subject dis-
posed by passion or who judges according to passion rather than weighing the object according to a rational consideration according to which fornication would not be chosen.

4. **The Role of the Sensitive Appetite in Sins of Passion**

To further this inquiry into how passion overcomes the particular reason and is the cause of the judgement being concluded according to concupiscence, we must take account of the sensitive potency and its relation to the superior faculties.

It is according to the natural order that the inferior should be subjected to the superior, and that the inferior appetite should be moved according to the reason and the will. At times, however, the converse may happen, when the inclination of the sensitive appetite is to some particular good in accord with man's inferior nature but repugnant to his superior nature, and the sensitive appetite succeeds in presenting its good to the detriment of the rational good.

Saint Thomas gives the natural order of procedure pointing out that moral fault occurs when the process is reversed.

*Et iste est naturalis ordo, ut superior appetitus moveat inferiorem;...Et similiter appetitus*
inferior, etsi aliquid de motu proprio retineat, movetur tamen naturali ordine, motu appetitus superioris, et motu rationis de-liberantis. Si autem e converso accidit, quod appetitus superior transmoveatur ab inferiori, hoc est praeter ordinem naturalem. Unde et hoc facit peccatum in moribus, sicut peccata sunt monstrata in natura.\textsuperscript{112}

The reason for this is that the sensitive appetite is not totally subordinated to the higher faculties, but sometimes seeks its own good outside the order to reason. Aristotle compares this to the dominion of a ruler over free subjects who retain their own right to accept or reject his legislation.

Since the sensitive appetite may be attracted to a particular good in accord with man's inferior nature it has a strong influence in moving man to action even if its object is contrary to the rational good. For man has a strong tendency to those goods which are immediate to him and which are presented by the sense appetite so that these objects are more known to him than the goods of reason, as Saint Thomas shows:

\textit{quia sensibilia bona sunt magis nota apud multos quam bona rationis.\textsuperscript{113}}

Furthermore, man's actions are in regard to singulars and for a singular good, and it is the particular reason that is concerned with singulars,
that is, the proximate mover in human actions. The universal can be said to be a cause of the movement only as it is applied to the particular and is then a remote cause.

Saint Thomas points this out in stating that the practical reason is universal and particular, but that it is the latter that is applied to the motion.


For the universal to effect its causality in an action it must be applied to the singular, but the universal judgement of the reason may not be applied in certain cases, for example, in the case of the incontinent man his universal judgement that no fornication is to be committed fails to exercise any effect. To be applied effectively in operations even as a remote cause the universal needs the particular
proposition. Sin occurs when the particular judgment is corrupted by delectation or passion, not however corrupting the universal judgement, as Saint Thomas shows:

Et propter hoc etiam peccatum in actionibus accidit, quando opinio in particulari operabili corruptur propter aliquam delectationem, vel propter aliquam aliam passionem, quae talem universalem opinionem non corrumpit.

The universal reason remains uncorrupted yet does not exert any influence on the act, and that is why a man may judge that no fornication is to be committed and yet commits this act which is fornication. For in this case he averts from a rational consideration of the act which would be a participation of the universal reason and would force a rational conclusion, and turns to this act as delectable and choosing it as such still retains his universal knowledge that no fornication should be committed. Thus it is when the sensitive appetite is in rebellion against reason, forcing the consideration of this object as delectable rather than under its true aspect, and preventing the application of the universal knowledge according to which the delectable would not be chosen.

There is no doubt that man under the influence of passion has taken on a new disposition
according to which things are judged in a different light than they would be if he lacked that disposition. In inquiring how the sensitive appetite affects the will we recall that Saint Thomas 116 states that an object may seem good and agreeable in a two-fold manner; first from the condition of that which is proposed, and secondly, on the part of the one to whom the proposal is made. Cajetan explains this by showing that the sensitive appetite may be understood to move the will in two senses. First, directly and immediately, and this cannot be since the sensitive appetite is not in immediate contact with the will. Secondly, through the medium of the object, just as warmth is suitable to a body growing cold, and from this the apprehension of warmth as something proper, there follows its presentation to the will as desirable. Or, in the case of anger, revenge seems agreeable, so that the practical intellect apprehends some harm to the enemy and it is presented as a suitable object to the angry appetite. Cajetan makes the point that the disposition of the subject moves the will only on the part of the object, as he shows:

Et sic patet quod dispositio appetentis, quamvis se tenet ex parte subiecti, non movet tamen voluntatem nisi ex parte objecti: quia non movet ipsam nisi pro quanto redundat in talem apprehensionem objecti voluntatis. 117
There is a difficulty here, however, for if the sensitive appetite cannot act directly on the will, the reason being that the material cannot act directly on the immaterial, then for the same reason the sense appetite cannot act on the reason, and therefore, cannot move the will through the medium of its object, since this must be presented by the reason. This is the objection John of Saint Thomas brings against the position stated above: namely, that the will is moved on the part of the object. He answers it by showing that the sensitive appetite and its object act not directly on the intellect, but on the phantasm. It is the phantasm which regulates and directs the appetite in representing a good proportionate to it, and in turn the affection of the appetite for its object is represented in the phantasm in much the same way that the intellect knows the affections of the will. The phantasm moves the intellect by means of the agent intellect and the passive intellect understands by returning to the phantasm. The intellect then sees in the phantasm the affection of the sensitive appetite for its object and struck by this representation presents it as such to the will.

The affect that passion exerts on the higher faculties may be considered on the part of the
soul itself. Since all potencies are rooted in one soul, when one of them is intent on its action, another is impeded or averted in its operation. This is similar to intense concentration which often is responsible for failing to see or hear something, or to the effect that anger would have on the normal functions of the other faculties. In the case of a strong passion in regard to some particular good there is a corresponding impediment to the function of reason with the result that its operation is hindered in reference to such a particular act.

The second reason is taken from the contrariety that exists between passion and knowledge, in that passion is in regard to singular things, and it is the singular to which the universal knowledge is applied. Both passion and knowledge therefore, are concerned with the singular, but in a contrary fashion, for passion attempts to eliminate the application of knowledge to the particular case, and knowledge on its part attempts to make the application to the destruction of passion.

Since there is this impediment to the reason, passion which precedes the will lessens the culpability of the following act, when because of passion the will is inclined to the sensible good. Saint Thomas explains that the more the reason is
unaffected and the purer its judgement, so will the following act be regarded as more meritorious or not:

Passio autem obnubilât vel etiam ligat judicium rationis. Quanto autem judicium rationis fuerit purius, tanto electio est perspicacior ad merendum vel demerendum. 119

As long as the reason remains bound in its inability to apply its knowledge to a particular case, there will follow a perverse election, but it is within the power of the will to remove the impediment or not, as Saint Thomas shows:

quod ratio ligatur ex hoc quod intentio animae applicatur vs-hementer ad actum appetitus sensitivi; unde avertitur a considerando in particulari id quod habitualiter in universali cognoscit. Applicare autem intentionem ad aliquid vel non applicare, in potestate voluntatis existit. Unde in potestate voluntatis est quod ligamen rationis excludat. 120

The actions then that are committed under passion are voluntary when passion does not completely absorb the reason, for in this case even though the object of the sensitive appetite has a strong appeal for the will, yet that potency still retains the controlling influence in accepting or rejecting the proposed object. Saint Thomas states that it is not from necessity that the will tends to the object of passion.

Inquantum ergo ratio manet libera et passione non subjecta,
intantum voluntatis motus qui
manet, non ex necessitate ten­
dit ad hoo ad quod passio in­
clinat.121

So it is that although passion is the cause
of sin this must be interpreted as urging the will
rather than forcing it, by presenting the object in
a more favorable light, as Saint Thomas shows:

inordinatio appetitus sensibilis,
 pedestal quod est in voluntate,
quodammodo causa est, non quidem
cogens sed inducens.122

It is evident then that one who sins from
passion is somewhat impeded in his normal rational
judgement, but it remains for the will itself to
accept the good as delectable or to follow a ration­
al consideration which would manifest this good as
truly an evil. For example, the incontinent man as
illustrated in the syllogism above knows he should
not commit fornication considered in its universali­
ty, and yet he is led by concupiscence to desire
the delectation contained in this act. It is for
the will which applies or withholds the considera­tion
of reason so that if the particular is received as
delectable the conclusion will be according to con­
cupiscence, while if it is rightly viewed as a sin
it will be concluded according to reason.

Passion, therefore, overcomes the particular
judgement of reason, leaving the universal reason un­
affected but inoperative; and because man wills to judge the particular as delectable instead of subjecting it to a rational consideration, the incontinent man suffers a voluntary ignorance under which he supposes the good of the sensitive appetite should be attained. Thus it is true that a man in passion may claim that he knows what he is doing is wrong, yet he does not really believe this; as Saint Thomas points out:

Ætsi enim dicat, non est mihi bonum nunc prosequi tale delectabile, tamen non ita sentit in corde. Unde sic existemandum est, quod incontinentes dicant hujusmodi verba quasi simulantes, quia scilicet aliud sentiunt corde, aliud præferunt ore.

A disorder in the sensitive appetite may be more easily understood by comparing it to this appetite when it is controlled by the virtue of temperance, and consequently under the control of reason. In the case of temperance, the principle and the end, as it seems to the temperate man, will be the attaining of the medium in the sense of touch. His sensitive appetite will be so formed by the repeated impressions of reason as to present no interference with the rational procedure, so that he will judge in particular according to the habit instilled by reason.

On the other hand, due to the lack of this
virtue of temperance, man is not well disposed on
the part of his sensitive appetite which may rebel
against his reason. Due to a forceful and vehement
representation of the sensible good, the will may
choose to follow this rather than the judgement of
reason.

The continent man whose reason remains right
in the presence of passion and the incontinent man who
gives in to passion have the same universal knowledge,
and outside of passion would view things in the same
manner. How is it, then, that one chooses according
to right reason and the other according to passion,
since in neither case the sensitive appetite is regu-
lated by virtue? The answer is that the will of the
continent man is more firmly attached to the good of
the reason, and hence can resist the impulse of pas-
sion. And it is this firmness of the will which we
call continence, which is a virtue in the will streng-
thening the resistance to concupiscence and enabling
man to make his choice according to reason rather
than according to passion.

On the other hand, the incontinent man lacks
the firmness of the will, and yields to the impulse
of passion. It must not be supposed, however, that
he is totally subjected to passion, for, despite the
weakness of his will he still has the ability to
choose according to right reason.

In our study of the manner in which he departs from right reason, we began by pointing out the impediment passion exerts on the particular judgement, and how this results from the attraction of the sensitive appetite to its own particular good. We then reviewed the voluntary nature of the sins committed under passion, and found that when passion does not completely absorb the reason the will still remains free to accept or reject its object, and in this way the acts committed under the influence of passion are voluntary. However, since passion precedes the will and influences it to the extent of presenting a more favorable object it effects the will as an exterior agent, and therefore lessens the gravity of sin. On this account one who sins from passion is not blamed to the same extent as one who sins without passion, as will be more evident when we compare sins of passion with sins of habit.
CHAPTER IV

IGNORANCE IN SINS OF HABIT

1. The Inordinate Will as a Principle of Moral Evil

Saint Thomas tells us that sin results from an inordination of some principle of human actions. Since the principles of action are the reason and the appetites, evil may result from a defect of the reason, when one sins from ignorance; from a defect in the sensitive appetite as in a sin of passion; or from an inordination in the will itself. We are now concerned with the last case, when the will itself is the cause of evil in tending to a bad object from its own habitual inclination and not from passion.

In sins that proceed from passion, because man is disturbed by the movements of his sensitive appetite, he fails to apply his habitual knowledge to his particular actions, and as a consequence is not aware that they are evil and should not be done. There comes a time, however, as Saint Thomas notes in the second book of the Ethics, that repeated actions with regard to the same good, generate in
the appetite an inclination "ad modum naturae sicut etiam multae guttae cadentes lapidem cavant." So also when one continually fails to resist and repress the repeated assaults of his passion, one will eventually acquire an habitual disposition toward sensible goods such as to be inclined to choose them in preference to the good of reason even where one is not moved by passion. For this reason Saint Thomas states that sins of habit and of passion differ as perfect from imperfect. 126

In this way man proceeds to a state in which he is habitually inclined to the sensible good, and not from passion interfering with his reason, but from an acquired interior disposition of the will inclining him to the delectable. In a sin of this kind the bad will is the first principle of sin. Saint Thomas shows:

In eo autem qui peccat ex infirmitate, voluntas mali non est primum principium peccati, sed causatur ex passione; sed in eo qui peccat ex malitia, voluntas mali est primum principium peccati, quia ex se ipso et per habitum proprium inclinatur in voluntatem mali, non ex aliquo exteriori principio. 127

Once the subject has developed this propensity for the delectable good, he tends toward the latter as if impelled by a second nature, since one who possesses a habit tends to whatever is in accord with
his habit. Thus it happens that because of an habitual inclination of the will a lesser good is more loved. For example, riches or pleasure are more loved than the order of reason or even God.

Although inclined to a lesser good absolutely speaking, the will has as its object a greater good practically considered.

We have already treated this point in a previous section in our discussion of practical ignorance and the choice of a lesser good. We mention it now in connection with an habitual inclination of the will, when the good proposed by the practical intellect is in accord with a will disposed by such an inclination.

2. Knowledge and Ignorance in a Sin of Habit

In passion, we have seen how a man has habitually a right estimation of what is to be done or avoided, and how his judgement is corrupted in particular. In habit, however, the corruption of the appetite proceeds to such an extent that it dominates the reason, and man follows this inclination of the appetite thinking that its good is his best end. As Saint Thomas states:

\[ \text{Si vero intantum invalescat appetitus perversitas ut rationi dominetur, ratio sequitur id in quod appetitus corruptus inclinat sicut principium quoddam existimans illus ut finem optimum.} \]
It is because of the attachment of the will for its object that the reason proposes it as an end. For example, a man habitually inclined to delectation has an appetite that is warped in its love for such a good, and in accord with this inclination the reason proposes that delectation should be followed, and this meets with the approval of the will. Just as all things taste bitter to an ailing tongue, so delectation seems good to an appetite prone to pleasure.

In judging according to this habitual inclination, man's knowledge is corrupted in regard to the right end of his actions. Just as we have seen how moral virtue saves the principle of prudence, so malice corrupts the principle. As Saint Thomas states:

\[\text{virtus et malitia respiciunt principium operabilium quod malitia corruptit, virtus autem salvat.}^{129}\]

Since man has this false estimation of the end, actions that are in accord with such an end will be chosen by him, and he sins \text{ex electione}, since he knows that his action is wrong, but chooses it to attain his perverse end. Saint Thomas writes:

\[\text{Ex electione autem peccatur, quando homo deliberans peccato adhaeret, non quasi aliqua tentatione victus, sed quia, propter hoc quod habet corruptum appetitum, placet sibi illud peccatum secundum se.}^{130}\]

Although a bad election is common to all sin, those which proceed from habit have an election
as their principle, and it is proper to an habitual
sinner that he knowingly choose evil. Saint Thomas
shows the difference between choosing ex electione
in a sin of habit and the choice in a sin of passion:

quod etiam in peccato infirmitatis potest esse electio; quae tamen
non est primum principium peccandi, cum causetur ex passione, et
ideo non dicitur talis ex electione peccare, quamvis eligens peccet.131

Although the incontinent man chooses the
delectable good offered to him, he does not reason
that delectation is an end to be pursued, but fol-
lows his concupiscence which presents such an aim.
The intemperate man, on the contrary always supposes
that the delectable is to be followed, and accepts
the particular delectation offered to him even though
he knows it as evil. Saint Thomas points out this
difference in the judgement of the incontinent and
intemperate man,

Quia hic, scilicet intemperatus,
ex electione ducitur ad peccandum,
 quasi existimans, quod semper aliquid
debet prosequi, idest accipere de-
lectabile sibi praezentialiter ob-
latum. Sed incontinenta non hoc ex-
istimat, sed tamen prosequitur de-
lectabile, quando est sibi praesens.132

It is evident then that those who sin from
habit speak the truth when they say they know they
are choosing evil, which is not so in one who sins
from passion. As Cajetan remarks:

Unde tales habituati verum aient,
dicentes se cognoscere quod male
faciunt, et quod volunt nihilomini-
nus facere: sciunt enim actuali-
ter hoc esse nunc malum. Quod in
ipsa passione positi, dicentes se
scire, mentiuntur.133

There is then this difference in the ig-
norance that exists in a sin of passion and a sin
of habit; in passion the knowledge is excluded by
which man knows this act is now evil, while in a
sin of habit man knowingly chooses evil that he
might attain the end that is in accord with his in-
ordinate will. Saint Thomas points out that such a
man knowingly chooses evil and that his ignorance
extends to the knowledge that he should not sustain
this evil to attain the good he has in mind:

Quandoque autem excludit scienti-
am qua aliquis scit hoc malum non
sustinendum esse propter consecuti-
onem illius boni, scit tamen sim-
pliciter hoc esse malum; et sic
dicitur ignorare qui ex certa mal-
itia peccat.134

For example, a man commits adultery either
from passion or habit; if from passion, he knows that
adultery is wrong, but passion interferes with his
reason, so that what is habitually known is not ap-
plied to this particular action, and under these cir-
cumstances he considers this action as a good and
pursues it. If from habit, he recognizes this par-
ticular act of adultery as evil and as an unjust ac-
tion, yet he is ignorant of the fact that he should
choose the good of justice rather than the delectable. On the contrary, because of his corrupt will he judges that the delectable good is to be preferred to justice and he is willing to sustain what he considers the lesser evil in order to attain what he considers the greater good.

A doubt may arise here whether the evil is actually willed only per accidens, since it seems that what is primarily intended is the delectation and that the evil is attached to this per accidens. The fact is that all evil is per accidens in that it is outside the intention of the agent. However, evil sometimes occurs unknown and unforeseen, as in the case of ignorance, and then the evil is involuntary. Sometimes the evil is known and actually willed in some manner, and since this evil is voluntary it is not only per accidens. This seems to be the sense of Saint Thomas in the following quotation:

\[\text{quod illud quod conjungitur bono principaliter desiderato, si sit improvisum et ignotum, non est volitum nisi per accidens; sicut cum aliquis ex ignorantia peccans vult aliquid quod nescit esse pecatum, quod tamen in rei veritate pecatum est; talis enim non vult malum nisi per accidens. Sed si sciat illud esse malum, jam ex consequenti illud malum vult, ut dictum est, et non solum per accidens.}\]

There is no doubt that the subject chooses
a good as primarily intended, as is necessary from the nature of the will. But that which is chosen is in accord with his inclination to some good outside the rational order, and choosing according to this inclination rather than according to reason man supposes that this good is to be followed.

Although he chooses evil to attain this good, man may wish that he could attain his end without the privation of any good: for example, he might wish that he could attain delectation without violating the order of reason or the law of God, but, faced with a choice of either one or the other, he chooses spiritual evil rather than the privation of delectation.

It may also be argued that one who sins from passion does knowingly choose evil, and that therefore this is not proper to sins of habit. If we answer that one man sins from passion because of the greater attraction of the sensitive appetite, while one who sins from habit does so from a disposition of the will, the reply seems insufficient. For passion and habit have the same potency as their subject: for example, a man may sin against temperance either from incontinence or intemperance, both of which are in the sensitive appetite. Since both are in this one potency, why in one case do we say...
that passion in the sensitive appetite is the cause of sin, and in the other claim that the inordinate will is the cause of sin? Since in either case the sensitive appetite is affected, it seems that the will is inclined to the good of that potency as it is so affected, and therefore it is not correct to say that the will of itself is disposed to evil.

The answer to this difficulty supposes that we first determine how habit in the sensitive appetite implies an inordination on the part of the will. Saint Thomas points out that habit, unlike passion, is a stable disposition of the sensitive appetite. A disposition of this kind influences the subject who possesses it: for example, a man is inclined to delocation when his sensitive appetite is so inclined. The result is that the sensitive appetite influences the will, for the will is the inclination of the subject, and those things which are pleasing to the subject will be pleasing to the will. In other words, the appetite of the subject depends on the disposition of the subject, and the will, inasmuch as it is an appetite of a badly disposed subject is inclined to the evil objects which are in accord with such dispositions.

It is said, therefore, that the habit of vice in the sensitive appetite includes the inclin-
ation of the will to evil, so that in acting from habit the will itself is said to move to evil.

It might be asked whether this is true of passion as well as habit, and in reply to this we must recall that the formation of the habit was under the power of the will, so that the acts that help form the habit were in accord with the will. It follows from this that what is in accord with the habit is also in accord with the will. Passion, however, precedes the will, making something appear good which ordinarily would not attract the will, and even if the will moves towards the object of passion, there is not the immediate concordance that there is when the will is habitually inclined to its object. If the passion itself were excited by the will, the object would be immediately pleasing, but the sin would primarily proceed from the will rather than from passion.

Banez presents an answer to this difficulty by explaining how the habit acquired from actions which are in accord with the will is a voluntary effect of the will itself. Therefore, the acts that flow from such a habit are immediately pleasing to the will which is not so in the case of passion.

quoniam habitus acquisitus ex actibus per consensum voluntatis est effectus voluntarius ipsius voluntatis. Ex quo enim
This seems to answer the difficulty how one who acts from a habit in the sensitive appetite is said to possess an inordinate will, while the man who acts from passion is attracted to sin not from the will itself, but from the good of the sensitive appetite which is chosen by the will because of man's passion.

3. Habit and the Free Will

Because the intemperate man sins "ex habitu", it may seem that he necessarily chooses evil, for habit inclines "ad modum naturae", and nature is determined "ad unum". In fact one would gather as much from the Ethics,137 where Aristotle states that virtue and vice are principles, and Saint Thomas remarks that such principles may not be taught:

principium autem in actionibus est finis, cujus gratia aliquid agitur: quod ita se habet in agibilibus, sicut suppositiones, idest prima principia in demonstrationibus mathematicis. Sicut enim in mathematicis principia non docentur per rationem, sic neque in operabilibus finis docetur per rationem.138

In the same lesson Saint Thomas calls such men "insanabiles" and all this seems to indicate that he
is too deeply rooted in evil to extricate himself.

Saint Thomas makes note of this point in reference to the habit of synderesis. At this point he states an objection which shows the force of the argument just stated, namely that a habit of vice corrupts the knowledge of the end, and on that account seems to extinguish the principle of synderesis. We quote his objection:

Item per Philosophum, VII Ethic ille qui habet habitum vitii est corruptus circa principia operabilium. Sed principia operabilium pertinent ad synderisim. Ergo in habente habitum vitii alicuius extingitur. 139

In his answer to this objection Saint Thomas admits that he who has a habit of vice is corrupted in regard to his principles of operation, not universally however, but only in regard to some particular operable. For as he explains the habit of sin suppresses the reason so that it is unable to apply its universal judgement to the particular case.

ille qui habet habitum alicuius vitii, est quidem corruptus circa principia operabilium, non quidem in universali, sed in particulari operabili; in quantum soliæt per habitum vitii de-primitur ratio ne universale judicium ad ejus particulare operabili applicet in eligendo. 140

This limits the influence of the will on the reason to some particular matter, for example,
a man supposes that good is to be done, but interprets the particular good according to his corrupt appetite, and in this way the perverse appetite affects the reason to suppose as best the particular matter to which the will is inclined.

However, one who has a habit need not necessarily act from such a habit, since to use a habit falls under the power of the will. This is so since the reason is not totally ineffective because of habit, but still retains the power of not acting in accordance with it, and of determining the good according to reason. Even with an habitual inclination it remains within the power of the will to reject the good proposed in accordance with the perverse appetite, since neither the habit of virtue or vice move the will of necessity—that is, they do not remove the possibility of the will's acting against the habit. This fact, as well as the difficulty involved in acting against a habit, is pointed out by Saint Thomas in the De Malo:

quod habitus virtutis, vel vitii est forma animae rationalis. Omnis autem forma est in aliquo secundum modum recipientis. De natura autem rationalis creaturae est quod sit arbitrio libera; nam habitus virtutis vel vitii non inclinat voluntatem ex necessitate, sic quod aliquis non possit contra rationem habitus operari, sed difficile est operari contra id ad quod habitus inclinat.141
The fact that a man habitually inclined to vice is practically ignorance of some moral matter does not exclude a true speculative knowledge of this matter. For he can have a true speculative knowledge of moral matters and yet not use it. This is why Aristotle excludes the followers of passion as students of moral science, for the end of moral science is not only knowledge, but right actions. Even though those who follow their passions could possibly attain this knowledge of the moral law it would be useless and ineffective in their life. Man who loves delectation may still have a true evaluation of delectation according to the moral law, but, since he chooses according to his inclinations rather than according to reason, the final end for him consists in what is in accord with his desires.

4. The Gravity of Sins of Habit and Sins of Passion

A study of the relative gravity of sin which proceeds from habit, as compared to a sin of passion, may serve to illustrate some characteristics of these two causes of moral evil. The gravity may be judged from several aspects, but we will consider only those which relate to ignorance.

Let us inquire whether the man in passion suffers a greater ignorance than the man who acts from
habit, and what is the effect of this ignorance on the gravity of sin.

In his commentary on this question regarding the gravity of sins of habit and sins of passion, Cajetan distinguishes between the ignorance in the sin itself and in the reason for sinning. He then points out that as regards the sin itself, the ignorance in passion is greater since it extends to the act, which is not true in habit. For, as pointed out above, the man who sins from habit knowingly chooses evil, which is not so in one who sins from passion.

From the viewpoint of the reason for the sin, however, the ignorance of habit is greater since here the sin proceeds from the inordinate attachment of the will to the lesser good, and from the judgement that this lesser good is to be followed. For example, a man habitually inclined to sensible delectation judges according to his corrupt appetite: all delectation is to be followed. Therefore, the actions which he places in order to attain delectation proceed from this erroneous judgement, and as such entail greater ignorance than an action which proceeds from passion and corrupt only the particular reason.

Secondly, the ignorance in a sin of habit extends to both principles and conclusions, since
the subject believes that delectation should be followed, and supposes that this particular act should be done for the sake of attaining his end. Thus the ignorance of habit is greater formally, because both principles and conclusion are formally not known which is not so in the case of passion where the ignorance concerns only the particular reason.

Thirdly, ignorance of habit is greater because it is more permanent than the transient ignorance that characterizes a sin of passion. For passion is a transient thing, and the restriction lasts only as long as the passion. As it passes quickly, the reason returns to its normal state, and one is grieved for the actions he has done. Habit, on the contrary, is a permanent form, and he who sins from habit is more steeped in evil, and his actions will continue as long as the habit lasts. He is not sorry for what he has done, but on the contrary is pleased with his evil actions. That is why, in the comparison of these two to physical deformity, one sinning from habit is likened to one suffering from a permanent disability, while the subject of passion is likened to someone with a chronic illness.

Furthermore, one who has a will inclined to some delectation outside the order of reason is not so easily led to a true conviction. For the in-
ordination of the will is responsible for an error in regard to principles, and the closer his error is to the more universal principles the more difficult it is to retract from such a condition, since general principles are not deduced from some prior knowledge, but are accepted, or are arrived at, with little reason. In passion, the will follows the reason as it is restricted in its judgement, but once the passion passes man no longer adheres to these delectations as a per se good. However, in the case of habit he does just this and regards such a good as his ultimate end, loving nothing else better than it.

A comparison is made by Aristotle between those who do not make good use of the reason they have, and who fail in the face of passion, and those whose reason is perverse owing to a perverse appetite. The former are like people who have good laws to guide them, but have no concern for obeying the law. The latter are like those who have bad laws and obey them.

From one point of view, it may seem that he who sins from passion is in equally as bad a state as one who sins from an inclination of the will. For he also is incapable of improvement by knowledge, since he has the knowledge and disregards it. It is
true that while he is sinning the passionate man is not helped by knowledge, nevertheless, little by little he is able to bring his sensitive appetite under control and make himself better able to resist passions. For unlike the habitual sinner his reason is not corrupted, and when not under the influence of passion judges and acts rightly, and thereby is better able to develop control over his appetites. He who sins from habit, on the other hand, is corrected with more difficulty, as has been already pointed out.

Moreover, the ignorance of the habitual sinner, since it extends to both principle and conclusions, seems to lessen the gravity of his sin, and if ignorance is an excuse of sin, he is less culpable than the man who sins from passion and retains a true universal reason.

On this point, Saint Thomas states that such ignorance follows the inclination of the appetite, and the greater the corruption of the appetite, the greater the ignorance.

*Ignorantia autem tam incontinentia quam intemperati provenit ex eo quod appetitus est in aliquid inclinatus; sive per passionem, sicut in incontinenti; sive per habitum sicut in intemperato. Maior autem ignorantia causatur ex hoc in intemperato quam in incontinenti.*

Not any kind of ignorance excuses from sin,
however, as we have already seen, and since the ignorance in sins of passion and habit follow the will there is no reason to suppose that they exclude or diminish sin.

According to what we have just said, it is evident that an habitual inclination gives a greater impulse to sin, than does passion. Now, as the impulse is greater it should lessen the culpability of sin, for what impels one to action diminishes the voluntary character of the act. However, the impulse on the part of the sensitive appetite is extrinsic to the will, and hence passion, if not rectified, bears on the will like "quoddam violentum", and to the extent it does offer violence to it, the act that follows is not voluntary. But if the impulse is on the part of the will itself, that is intrinsic to it, the greater the impulse the more voluntary the act, for the voluntary is "id cujus principium est ab intra".145 On this point Saint Thomas states:

Quod impulsio quae est ex passione, diminuit peccatum, quia est quasi ex exteriori; impulsio autem quae est ex voluntate, auget peccatum. Quanto enim motus voluntatis est vehementior ad peccandum, tanto gravius peccat. Habitus autem facit motum voluntatis vehementiorem; et ideo illi qui peccat ex habitu, gravius peccat.145

We have now seen the type of ignorance that
occurs in a sin of habit when the will itself is the cause of the defect in the practical reason. In treating this subject we explained that an acquired interior disposition of the will affects the judgement of the reason itself, and therefore, this ignorance differs from that caused by passion since the latter extends only to the particular judgement. Since this habit does not necessarily move the will we judged as voluntary those actions which proceed from it. In fact since the sins that proceed from an interior inclination are more voluntary and more serious than those which are caused by an exterior agent, we said that sins of habit have greater gravity than sins of passion.

Thus we have completed the task set for ourselves in the introduction. For, we have explained the nature of ignorance found in all sin by first proving that every sinner is ignorant in choosing without the consideration of reason. We then showed that such ignorance is on the part of the practical intellect proposing the object to the will. And, since the will is the cause of sin, it is also the cause of the ignorance in the practical reason which occurs with the will's movement to the inordinate object. As such, the ignorance common to sin is consequent to the constitution of the sin, and an
effect rather than a cause of sin. This was the third and last point we started out to prove in the first part of this thesis, and its treatment concluded our consideration of the nature of the ignorance found in all sin.

Then, in order to show that this ignorance exists in the sinner together with the knowledge necessary for a voluntary act, we first explained how ignorance that was totally involuntary rendered the following acts involuntary. In negligence however, where the ignorance is indirectly willed, we explained that such a voluntary ignorance is the cause of actions that are voluntary, but, since the actions occur through ignorance, their voluntary character is reduced and their gravity diminished. Then in treating the ignorance in sins of passion we explained that it extends to the particular judgment, and is caused by an inordination in the sensitive appetite preventing the application of what is habitually known to the practical judgement. In this case one chooses not according to reason, but outside reason. That this ignorance is voluntary is evident from the nature of the will which is not moved of necessity by the object of the sensitive appetite, and is left free to make the application according to knowledge or not. Then, as we have
just explained, the ignorance occurring in sins of habit extends to the judgement of reason itself. But, as habit does not destroy the nature of man, his will is left free to act according to habit or not, and, as the use of the habit depends on the will, the actions that proceed from habit are still voluntary.

In this manner we have explained the nature of the ignorance found in sin, and how this exists together with the knowledge required for a voluntary action. Since this was our aim in this work we may now judge it as concluded.
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