The XXI. and last chapter contains a division of sciences into physics, practics, and logic or grammar. Locke here understands by physics, the nature of things, not only the nature of bodies, but of minds, God and the soul; it is the ancient physics and the modern ontology. I have nothing to say of this division, except that it is very old, evidently arbitrary and superficial, and much inferior to the celebrated division of Bacon, reproduced by d'Alembert. I have difficulty in persuading myself that the author of this paragraph could have known the division of Bacon. I rather see in this, as in the third book on signs and words, a recollection of the reading of Hobbes.

We have now arrived at the end of this long analysis of the fourth book of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*. I have followed, step by step, chapter by chapter, all the important propositions contained in this fourth book, as I have done in regard to the third, in regard to the second, and in regard to the first. Nevertheless, I should not give you a complete view of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, if I did not exhibit to you some theories which are scattered throughout the work of Locke, but have an intimate relation to the general spirit of his system, and have acquired in the sensualistic school an immense authority. It has therefore appeared to me proper to reserve these diverse theories for a particular examination: I propose to make them known to you and to discuss them in the next lecture, which will be the last of this year, and will contain my definite judgment in regard to the philosophy of Locke.

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which you render to the human race does not turn to its credit, and men would be much more excusable in sincerely following their opinions than in counterfeiting them by considerations of interest. Perhaps, however, there is more sincerity in fact than you seem willing to understand; for, without any knowledge of the cause, they may come to exercise implicit faith by submitting themselves generally and blindly, but often in good faith, to the judgments of others, whose authority they have once recognized. It is true that the interest they find in it often contributes to this submission; but this does not hinder opinion being formed."



# LECTURE XXV.

## ESSAY, LIBERTY. SOUL. GOD. CONCLUSION.

Examination of three important theories which are found in the *Essay on the Human Understanding;* 1st, Theory of Liberty: that it inclines to fatalism. 2d, Theory of the nature of the Soul: that it inclines to materialism. 3d, Theory of the existence of God: that it relies almost exclusively on proofs borrowed from the sensible world.—Recapitulation of all the lectures on the *Essay on the Human Understanding;* Of the merits and defects which have been pointed out.—Of the spirit which has guided this examination of Locke.—Conclusion.

The theories which I must to-day present to you are those of liberty, of the soul, and of God. I will unfold to you these three theories in the same order in which they are found in the *Essay on the Human Understanding.*

In order that you may clearly understand the true character of Locke's theory of Liberty, some preliminary explanations are indispensable.*

All the facts which can fall under the consciousness of man and under the reflection of the philosopher, are resolved into three fundamental facts which contain all the others, three facts which without doubt in reality, are never solitary, but which are not the less distinct, and which a scrupulous analysis must discern, without dividing them, in the complex phenomenon of intellectual life. These three facts are: *to feel, to think, to act.*

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* On the true notion of liberty, see 1st Series, Vol. 1, Course of 1816, Lectures 23 and 24, p. 189, and Course of 1817, Lecture 23; Vol. 2, 3d Part, Lecture 18 and Lecture 20; Vol. 3, Lecture 1, *Locke*, p. 71, Lecture 3, *Condillac*, p. 149, etc.; Vol. 4, Lecture 23, *Morals of Reid*, p. 541–574. This last passage contains, with the other, sufficiently developed, all our doctrine on human liberty.

I open a book and I read; let us decompose this fact, and in it we shall find three elements.*

Suppose that I do not see the letters of which each page is composed, the shape and the order of these letters; it is very evident that I will not comprehend the sense which usage has attached to these letters, and that thus I shall not read. To see, then, is here the condition of reading. On the other hand, to see is not still to read; for the letters being seen, nothing would be done if the intelligence were not added to the sense of sight in order to comprehend the signification of the letters placed before my eyes.

Behold then two facts which the most superficial analysis immediately discerns in reading: let us investigate the characters of these two facts.

Am I the cause of vision, and in general of sensation? Have I the consciousness of being the cause of this phenomenon, of beginning it, of continuing it, of interrupting it, of augmenting it, of diminishing it, of maintaining it, and of abolishing it as I please? I will take other examples more striking. Suppose I press upon a sharp instrument; a painful sensation follows. I approach a rose; an agreeable sensation succeeds. Is it I who produce these two phenomena? can I make them cease? do the suffering and enjoyment come and go at my bidding? No; I am subject to the pleasure as well as to the pain; both come, subsist, disappear, without the concurrence of my will; finally, sensation is a phenomenon marked in the eyes of my consciousness, with the incontestable character of necessity.

Let us examine the character of the other fact which sensation precedes and does not constitute. When the sensation is accomplished, the intelligence applies itself to this sensation, and first it pronounces that this sensation has a cause, the sharp instrument, the rose, and to return to our example, the letters placed

* We have already chosen this example in the *Examination of the Lectures of M. Laromiguière*, *Philosophical Fragments*, in order to authorize the distinction here established.



before my eyes: this is the first judgment which the intelligence passes. Besides, as soon as the sensation has been referred by the intelligence to an external cause, to wit, the letters and the words which they form, this same intelligence conceives the sense of these letters and of these words, and judges that the propositions which these words form are true or false. The intelligence, therefore, judges that the sensation has a cause; but, I ask you, could it judge the contrary? No, the intelligence can no more judge that this sensation has not a cause, than it was possible for the sensation to exist or not to exist when the sharp instrument was in the wound, or the rose under the nose, or the book before my eyes. And not only does the intelligence necessarily judge that the sensation is related to a cause, but it judges quite as necessarily that the propositions, contained in the lines perceived by the eye, are true or false: for example, that two and two make four, and not five, etc. I ask again whether it is in the power of the intelligence to judge at will that such an action of which the book speaks is good or bad, that such a form which it describes is beautiful or ugly? In nowise. Doubtless different intelligences, or the same intelligence at different moments of its exercise, will often pass very different judgments in regard to the same thing; often it will be deceived; it will judge that which is true to be false; that which is good to be bad, that which is beautiful to be ugly, and the reciprocal: but at the moment when it judges that a proposition is true or false, that an act is good or bad, that a form is beautiful or ugly, at that moment it is not in the power of the intelligence to pass another judgment than that which it passes; it obeys laws which it has not made; it yields to motives which determine it without any concurrence of the will. In a word, the phenomenon of intelligence, to comprehend, to judge, to know, to think, whatever name may be given to it, is marked by the same character of necessity as the phenomenon of sensibility. If then the sensibility and the intelligence are under the empire of necessity, it is not in them, assuredly, that we must seek for liberty.

Where shall we seek it? We must find it in the third fact mingled with the other two, which we have not yet analyzed, or we shall find it nowhere, and liberty is only a chimera.

To see and feel, to judge and comprehend, do not exhaust the complex fact submitted to our analysis. If I did not look at the letters of this book, should I see them, or at least should I see them distinctly? If, seeing these letters, I paid no attention to them, would I comprehend them? No, certainly. Now, what is it to pay attention, to consider any thing? It is neither to feel nor to comprehend; for to look is not to perceive, if the organ of vision is wanting or is unfaithful; to give attention is not to comprehend; it is certainly an indispensable condition, but not always a sufficient reason; it is not sufficient to be attentive to the exposition of a problem in order to resolve it: and attention no more contains the understanding* than it is contained in the sensibility. To be attentive is a new phenomenon which it is impossible to confound with the first two, although it is continually mingled with them, and with them completes the total fact of which we wish to render an account to ourselves.

Let us examine the character of this third fact, the phenomenon of activity. Let us first distinguish different sorts of actions. There are actions which man does not relate to himself, although he may be the theatre of them. Others may tell us that we perform these actions; we, ourselves, know nothing of them; they are performed in us; we do not perform them. In lethargy, in real or artificial sleep, in delirium, we execute a multitude of movements which resemble actions, which are actions even, if you please, but actions which present the following characters:

We have no consciousness of them even at the moment when we appear to be performing them;

We have no remembrance of having performed them;

Consequently, we do not refer them to ourselves, neither while we are performing them, nor after having performed them;

* See the *Philosophical Fragments, Examination of the Lectures M. Laromiguière.*



Consequently, again, they do not belong to us, and we no more impute them to ourselves than to our neighbor or to an inhabitant of another world.

But are there no other actions than these? I open this book, I look at the letters, I give my attention to them; these are certainly actions also: do they resemble the preceding?

I open this book: am I conscious of doing it? yes.

This action being done, have I a remembrance of it? yes.

Do I refer this action to myself as having done it? yes.

Am I convinced that it belongs to me? Could I impute it to such or such another person as well as to myself, or am I not alone and exclusively responsible in my own eyes? Here I again answer to myself, yes.

Finally, at the moment in which I perform this action, have I not, with the consciousness of performing it, the consciousness of being able not to perform it? When I open this book, have I not the consciousness of opening it, and the consciousness of being able not to open it? When I look, do I not know at the same time that I am looking, and that I am able not to look? When I give my attention, do I not know that I am giving it, and that I am able not to give it? Is not this a fact which each of us can repeat as many times as he pleases and on a thousand occasions? And is not this a universal belief of the human race? Let us generalize and say that there are movements and actions which we do with the double consciousness of doing and of being able not to do them.

An action which is done with the consciousness of being able not to do it, is what men have called a free action; for there is no longer in it the character of necessity. In the phenomenon of sensation I could not avoid enjoying when joy fell under my consciousness; I could not avoid suffering when it was pain; I had the consciousness of feeling with the consciousness of inability not to feel. In the phenomenon of intelligence, I could not avoid judging that two and two make four: I had the consciousness of thinking this and that, with the consciousness of

being unable not to think it. In certain movements, again, I had so little consciousness of being able not to perform them, that I had not even the consciousness of performing them at the moment when I performed them. But in a very great number of cases, I do certain acts with the consciousness of doing them and of being able not to do them, of being able to suspend them or to continue them, to finish them or to abolish them. This is a class of very real acts; they are very numerous: but although there should be but one of them, this one would be sufficient to attest in man a special power, liberty. Liberty belongs neither to the sensibility nor to the intelligence; it belongs to the activity, and only to acts which we perform with the consciousness of performing them and of being able not to perform them.

After having stated the free act, it is necessary to analyze it more attentively.

The free act is a phenomenon which contains many different elements mingled together. To act freely is to perform an action with the consciousness of being able not to perform it: now, to perform an action with the consciousness of being able not to perform it, supposes a choice of doing it or of not doing it; to commence an action, being able at the same time not to commence it, is choosing to commence it; to continue it, being able to suspend it, is choosing to continue it; to carry it on to the end, being able to abandon it, is choosing to accomplish it. But to choose supposes motives for choice, motives for doing this action, and motives for not doing it, that these different motives are known, and that these are preferred to those. Whether these motives are passions or ideas, errors or truths, this or that, is of little consequence; what is important, is to know what is here the faculty in play, that is, what knows these motives, what prefers the one to the other; what judges that one is preferable to the other; for this is to prefer. And what knows, what judges, if it is not the intelligence? The intelligence is then the faculty that prefers. But in order to prefer some motives to others, to judge that some are preferable to others, it is not



necessary merely to know these different motives, it is necessary to compare them and weigh them; it is necessary to deliberate and conclude. And what is deliberating? It is nothing else than examining with doubt, appreciating the relative goodness of different motives, without perceiving it by that evidence which decides the judgment, the conviction, the preference. But what is it that examines, what is it that doubts, what is it that concludes? Evidently the intelligence, that same intelligence which, subsequently, after having passed several provisional judgments, will abrogate all these judgments, will judge that they are less true, less reasonable than such another, and will pass this last judgment, that is, will conclude, that is, again, will prefer after having deliberated. It is from the intelligence that the phenomenon of preference and the other phenomena which suppose it spring. Thus far we are still in the sphere of intelligence, and not in that of action. Assuredly intelligence has its conditions; no one examines who does not wish to examine, and the will intervenes in deliberation; but it is the simple condition, it is not the basis of the phenomenon; for, if it is true that, without the faculty of willing, every examination and every deliberation is impossible, it is also true that the faculty itself which examines and which deliberates, and which passes a judgment, suspensive or decisive, is the intelligence. Deliberation, conclusion, or preference, are then purely intellectual facts. Let us pursue our analysis.

We have conceived different motives for doing or not doing an action. We have deliberated upon these motives, and we have preferred some of them to others; we have concluded to do it rather than not to do it; but to conclude to do it and to do it are not the same thing. When the intelligence has judged it necessary to do this or that, from such or such motives, it remains to pass on to action, at first to resolve, to say to itself, not I ought to do, but I will to do. But the faculty which says I ought to do, is not and cannot be the faculty which says I will to do, I take the resolution to do. Here the part of the intelligence ceases. I ought to

do is a judgment; I will to do is not a judgment. Behold then a new element, which must not be confounded with the preceding; this element is the will. Just now we were at the point of judging and of knowing; now we are at the point of willing. I say willing, and not doing; for, as judging that it is necessary to do any thing is not willing to do it, so to will to do any thing is not doing it. To will to do is an act, not a judgment, but an act entirely internal. It is evident that this act is not an action properly so called; in order to arrive at action, it is necessary to pass from the sphere of the will to that of the external world, in which the action is definitively accomplished which at first you conceived, deliberated upon, and preferred, which afterwards you willed, and which must be executed. If there were no exterior world, there would be no terminated action; and not only is it necessary that there should be an exterior world, but it is necessary that the power of willing, which we recognized after the power of comprehending and of judging, should be connected with another power, with a physical power which may serve it in reaching the external world. Suppose that the will is not connected with the organization, there is no longer any bridge between the will and the external world; there is no external action possible. The physical power necessary to action, is the organization; and in this organization it is recognized that the muscular system is the special instrument of the will. Take away the muscular system, there is no more effort possible, consequently there is no locomotion, no movement possible, and if there is no movement possible, there is no exterior action possible. Thus, in order to resume, the total action which we were to analyze is resolved into three perfectly distinct elements: 1st, the intellectual element, which is composed of the knowledge of motives for or against, of deliberation, of preference, of choice; 2d, the voluntary element, which consists neither more nor less in the resolution to do; 3d, the physical element, or external action.

The question now is, to which of these three elements does liberty precisely belong, that is, the power of doing with the consciousness of being able not to do. Does this power of doing, with the consciousness of being able not to do, belong to the first element, the intellectual element of free action? No, for we are not masters of our preference; we prefer such a motive to such another, the *for* or the *against*, according to our intellectual nature, which has its necessary laws, without having the consciousness of being able to prefer or to judge otherwise, and even with the consciousness of not being able to prefer and to judge otherwise than we do. It is not then in this element that we must seek liberty. Neither is it in the third element, in the physical action; for this element supposes the external world, an organization which corresponds with it, and in this organization a muscular system, healthy and suitable, without which the physical action is impossible. When we accomplish it, we have the consciousness of acting, but under the condition of a theatre of which we have not the disposal, and under the condition of instruments of which we can but poorly dispose, which we cannot recover if they escape us, and which may escape us at every moment, nor repair if they become deranged and betray us, and which betray us very often, and obey their own laws, over which we have no power, and which even we scarcely know; whence it follows that we do not act here with the consciousness of being able to do the contrary of that which we do. It is then no more to the third than to the first element that liberty belongs; it can then be only in the second, and it is there, in fact, that we encounter it.

Neglect the first and the third element, the judgment and the physical action, attach yourself to the second element, to the will: analysis discovers in this single element two terms still, a special act of willing, and the power of willing to which we refer it. This act is an effect by a relation to the power of willing, which is its cause; and this cause, in order to produce its effect, has no need of another theatre, of another instrument than itself.* It produces it directly, without intermediation and without condition.



* On this essential point, see 1st Series, Vol. 4, Lecture 13, p. 545, etc.

continues it and consummates it, or suspends it and modifies it, creates it entirely or destroys it entirely; and at the moment even when it exercises itself by such a special act, we have the consciousness that it could exercise itself by a special act entirely contrary, without being thereby exhausted; so that after having changed its acts ten times, a hundred times, the faculty would remain integrally the same, inexhaustible and identical with itself, in the perpetual variety of its applications, being always able to do what it does not do, and not to do what it does. Here in all its plenitude is the character of liberty.

Should the entire world be wanting to the will, if the organization and muscular system remained, the will would still be able to produce muscular effort, and consequently a sensible fact, although this fact would not pass beyond the limits of the organization; this was perfectly established by M. de Biran,* who placed the type of causality, of the will and of liberty, in the phenomenon of muscular effort. But whilst with him I cheerfully grant that in muscular effort, in the consciousness of this effort and of the sensation which accompanies it, we find the most eminent and the most easily appreciable type of our causative power, voluntary and free, I say that this is but an exterior and derivative type, and not the primitive and essential type; or M. de Biran ought to have carried his theory so far as to say, that where there is absence or paralysis of muscles, there can never be causation, volition, active and free phenomenon. Now, I maintain the contrary; I maintain that if the exterior world be taken away, and the muscular and locomotive system also, and if there remained to man, with a purely nervous organization, an intelligence capable of conceiving motives, of deliberating, of preferring, and of choosing, there would remain to him the power of willing, which would still be exercised in special acts, in volitions, in which would be visible the proper causality and freedom of the will, although these effects, these free volitions would not pass beyond the internal world of the will, although they would have no counter-stroke in the organization through the muscular system, and would not produce the phenomenon of effort, an internal phenomenon without doubt in relation to the interior world, but itself external in relation to the will. Thus, suppose I will to move my arm without being able for want of muscles, there will still be in this: 1st, the act of willing to move my arm, a special volition; 2d, the general power of willing, which is the direct cause of this volition; there will then be the cause and the effect; there will be consciousness of this effect and of this cause, of an action caused and of an internal causative force, sovereign in its own world, in the world of will, though it might be absolutely unable to pass to external action, because the muscular and locomotive system were wanting to it.

* See Lecture 19; and Works of M. de Biran, *passim*.



The theory of M. de Biran considers the free act only in its external manifestation, in a remarkable fact without doubt, but which itself supposes the fact quite as profound and intimate, the fact of willing with its immediate and proper effect. Here, in my opinion, is the primitive type of liberty, and this is the entire conclusion of this analysis too long for its place, and too brief in itself in order not to be still very large.* When we seek freedom in an act, we may be deceived in two ways:

* *Fragments Philosophiques*, preface of the first edition. It is a fact, that in the midst of the movements which exterior agents determine in us, in spite of us, we have the power of taking the first step of a different movement, first of conceiving it, then of deliberating whether we will execute it, finally that of resolving and passing to the execution of it, of commencing this execution, of continuing or suspending it, of accomplishing or arresting it, and always of being master of it. The fact is certain, and what is not less certain is, that the movement executed on these conditions takes in our eyes a new character; we impute it to ourselves, we refer it as an effect to ourselves, considering ourselves then as the cause of it. This is for us the origin of the notion of cause, not of an abstract cause, but of a personal cause, of ourselves. The proper character of the *me* is causality or will, since we refer to ourselves, and impute only to ourselves, that which we cause, and that we cause only what we will . . . We must not confound the will or the internal causality which produces at first effects, that are internal as well as their cause, with the external instruments of this causality, which, as instruments, appear