

and especially to Fr. Charles Boyer, S.J., who suggested the inquiry, directed me in it, and despite the pressure of many duties found time to read the manuscript.

#### INTRODUCTION.

A study of St. Thomas's thought on gratia operans offers a three-fold interest. It reveals him working into synthesis the speculative theorems discovered by his predecessors. It brings to light the development of his own mind. It suggests an attitude and direction of thought distinct from the one resulting in the impasse of the controversy De Auxiliis.

It is necessary that the study move on the level of this interest, not merely incidentally, but systematically, not merely by way of a foot-note expressing a judgement with which the reader may be expected to agree in view of the evidence adduced, but by way of a scientific conclusion in which the inductive process of the whole inquiry terminates. The grounds for this assertion are, perhaps, evident. Without the integral unity so postulated, an inquiry would presuppose that the unimportant issues can be settled scientifically while the important ones are merely matters of personal opinion. The effect of such a presupposition is only too well known. In the question treated in these passages it is notorious that for over three centuries theologians have been studying St. Thomas's thought on grace with Molinists uniformly concluding that the medieval doctor would have been a Molinist and Banezians with equal conviction arriving at the conclusion that he was a Banezian. Unless a writer can assign a method that of itself tends to greater objectivity than those hitherto employed, his undertaking may well be regarded as superfluous.

It remains that, though a method which solves the problem is

possible, its use makes extreme demands on a reader. It involves the exposition and use of a theory of the history of theological speculation. It rules out the arts of presentation which by emphasis and selection make reading easy and fallacy still easier. It postulates a capacity to see in several hundred pages which discuss a great variety of points a single argument with a major premiss in the theory of development and a minor in a number of facts.

While apologising most sincerely for the use of so complicated a procedure, we would point out that we have no alternative. A study of St. Thomas's thought on gratia operans cannot but be historical. An historical study cannot but be inductive. An inductive conclusion, though it may be certain when negative, can for the most part be no more than probable when positive. If that probability is to be, not an opinion, but a scientific conclusion, no other method than the one we have adopted appears available.

Because the inquiry is historical, it does not open with the a priori scheme of current systematic theology with its point of view, its definitions, its interests, and its problems. That would be simply to ask St. Thomas a series of questions which he did not explicitly consider - had he done so, there would be no need to ask them today - and then work out the answers from a consideration of St. Thomas's answer to questions which we do not explicitly consider. Patently such a procedure would be fallacious: it would be deducing an extrapolation from the thought of St. Thomas before taking the trouble to find out what St. Thomas was really thinking about.

On the other hand, though the inquiry is historical, there is no acceptance of the principles of positivism. To refute such principles lies outside the scope of this introduction. Suffice to say that even historians have intelligence and perform acts of understanding; performing them, they necessarily approach questions from a given point of view; and with equal necessity the limitations of that point of view predetermine the conclusions they reach. From this difficulty positi-

ivism offers no escape, for as long as men have intelligence, the problem remains, and were they deprived of intelligence and became mere observers of fact like jelly-fish, then they would be truly positivists but their positivism would not be of any service to them.

It remains that history can follow a middle course, neither projecting into the past the categories of the present, nor pretending that historical inquiry is conducted without a use of human intelligence. That middle course consists in constructing an a priori scheme that is capable of synthetizing any possible set of historical data irrespective of their place and time, just as the science of mathematics constructs a generic scheme capable of synthetizing any possible set of quantitative phenomena. In the present work this generic scheme is attained by an analysis of the idea of a development in speculative theology.

The procedure provides a true middle course. On the one hand, it does not deny, as does positivism, the exigence of the human mind for some scheme or matrix within which data are assembled and given their initial correlation. On the other hand, it does not provide a scheme or matrix that prejudices the objectivity of the inquiry. The quantitative sciences are objective simply because they are given by mathematics an a priori scheme of such generality that there can be no tendency to do violence to the data for the sake of maintaining the scheme. But the same benefit is obtained for the history of speculative theology by an analysis of the idea of its development, for the analysis does yield a general scheme but it does so, not from a consideration of particular historical facts, but solely from a consideration of the nature of human speculation on a given subject.

To express more concretely the nature of this benefit, it will suffice to say that the argument will be able to proceed not from the twentieth century through the sixteenth to the thirteenth but from the fourth century through the twelfth to St. Thomas. So far from allowing the haunting figures of Dominicus Banez and Ludovicus Molina to domina-

te our investigation of St. Thomas's thought, we hope to make it continuously evident that these great theologians wrote three centuries after St. Thomas had ended his brilliant career.

Because the inquiry is historical, it cannot but be inductive. It is possible to construct a priori a general scheme of the historical process because the human mind is always the human mind. But there is no more a possibility of filling in the details of that scheme a priori than there is of predicting the future. Concretely, when commentators tell us that St. Thomas must mean this or that, either they are misusing the word must - which connotes necessity - or else they are claiming to demonstrate in a science that does not proceed by demonstration. It is possible to exclude any given interpretation with certitude, for then one merely has to produce evidence that St. Thomas contradicts it. But the only possible way to demonstrate an interpretation is to enumerate the entire list of speculative possibilities, demonstrate that the enumeration is complete (that is the difficult point), and then exclude all views except one.

For this reason we aim at certitude only in negative conclusions; in positive ones we are content with probability. ✓

The degree of probability attained will appear from the structure of the induction to be made.

In the first place, all guessing is excluded by the method. The argument does not consist in proposing and then verifying hypotheses. Instead of hypotheses there is used the a priori scheme of speculative development, which is not an hypothesis but a demonstrable conclusion. Consequently, instead of assembling the data and guessing at their significance, the argument employs what strategists term a "pincer" movement. It does so in five distinct stages.

First, it determines the general form of the speculative movement on the nature of grace from St. Augustine to St. Thomas. The analysis of such a movement has revealed that there are seven phases in the normal evolution of an explanation by a compound theorem. It happens that

the explanation of the necessity of grace in the Prima Secundae is a compound theorem and that each of the six earlier phases can easily be verified in earlier works. The procedure is essentially the same as when a mathematician works out an equation from general considerations and then a physicist evaluates the unknown coefficients by objective measurements. Just as the physicist obtains the formula for a natural law, so also by this means do we obtain the basic form of the development that extends from the fifth century to the thirteenth. Thus, without making any hypotheses on the nature of grace, we are able to correlate statements made by different people at different times merely in virtue of the assumption that the people in question were all men, all thinking, and historically inter-dependent in their thought.

Such is the first inductive movement. The second proceeds inversely from the particular to the general ; it consists in assembling the explicit statements on the nature of gratia operans to be found in the writings of St. Augustine, St. Anselm, Peter Lombard, St. Albert the Great, and St. Thomas.

The third and fourth movements are incidental. In simpler sciences than the history of speculative theology, the "pincer" process from both general to particular and from particular to general would suffice to yield the conclusion. But it happens that speculative theology is a very peculiar science. Its problems have to do with the relations between the natural and the supernatural orders. Inasmuch, then, as speculative theology conceives the supernatural on the analogy of the natural, it is necessary to make a special inquiry into St. Thomas's idea of operation. Inasmuch as there is a natural element within the field of the theological problem, it is necessary to make another special inquiry into St. Thomas's theory of the human will, its liberty, the limitations of its liberty, and the general way in which God operates upon it. Both of these inquiries are subsidiary, undertaken not for their own sakes but principally to eliminate misinterpretations of St. Thomas's position and to reveal that his mind is far more resource-

ful than is commonly supposed.

With this work accomplished, it is possible to return to the main problem: the idea of operative grace. As it is only in the Prima secundae that St. Thomas posits an operative grace that is not habitual but actual, and as none of his predecessors had thought things out with such finess and precision as to be able to entertain, explicitly and formally, that very complex idea, we are content briefly to treat his position in the Sentences and the De Veritate - where operative grace is habitual grace - and concentrate our attention on the well-known 1a 2ae., q. 111, a.2.

Throughout the study of St. Thomas strict attention is paid to the chronological order of his work, and our conclusions are drawn mainly from the works whose sequence is known, namely, the Commentary on the Sentences, the De Veritate, the Contra Gentiles, the De Potentia, the Pars Prima, the Quodlibetum Primum, the De Malo and the Prima Secundae. The Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans and the Commentaries on Aristotle's Physics, Metaphysics, and Peri Hermeneias, form an extremely useful subsidiary source; I do not make use of them in establishing the line of development of thought on particular questions, but as far as their content goes, they appear to be contemporary with the Pars Prima. As is plain, the degree of importance to be attached to the chronological sequence varies in almost every question that is raised. It is paramount with respect to the theory of grace, which is well-known to have developed (1). The same is true with res=

(1) The existence of a development in St. Thomas's thought on grace is explicitly affirmed by Capreolus (2 dist. 28, q. 1, a. 3, § 4, in fine) Did. Deza Hispanensis (2 dist. 28, q. 1, a. 3, not. 1, in fine), Cajetan (In 1m 2ae., q. 109, a. 6), Dominicus Soto (De nat. et grat., lib. 2, cap. 3.). The pertinent remarks they make are quoted by Lange, De Gratia, pp. 91 (note 2), 146 (note 1).

pect to the theory of free will. On the other hand, St. Thomas's theory of divine foreknowledge is always the same, his theory of pre-motion is always the same in itself, though naturally it varies with the variation in the theory of the will. Finally, with regard to opinions which St. Thomas never held, there is no need to bother at all about the sequence of his writings.

So much then for the nature of the inquiry before us. It may be well to add a statement of what we do not propose to do.

We are not engaged in proposing a theory in speculative theology. We are giving an account of someone else's theories. And in that task we are not concerned with the implications of his position, the ulterior development of his position, or even the defence of his position. We ask what he said, why he said it and what he meant in saying it.

Confined to the history of theological speculation, per se the inquiry is confined to the thought of a single writer. Discussion of anyone else's views or opinions is purely incidental. Thus, earlier writers are considered because of the influence they would exert on St. Thomas whether directly or indirectly. Later writers are considered inasmuch as their views provide a clear formulation either of what St. Thomas meant or of what he certainly did not mean. As the earlier writers are helpful because of their influence on St. Thomas, so the later writers must be considered because of their influence on the reader. For this reason it has seemed unnecessary to attempt any exposition of later opinions: for if the reader has been influenced by them, he is already acquainted with them; if he has not been influenced by them, then he will find it simpler to grasp St. Thomas's thought by direct study.

Concerned solely with an account of the thought of a single writer, we are concerned solely with that thought as speculative. Dogmatic truths are one thing; their speculative correlation and unification is quite another. A perfect expression of dogmatic truth, as when a child

repeats his catechism, or an eleventh century theologian recites the creed, is no evidence of a speculative position. On the other hand, speculative deficiency is no proof of heterodoxy. The two are really distinct, and this work presupposes that distinction. Moreover, the two are disparate, so that no specialised inquiry can possibly deal with both at the same time. Hence when we speak of speculative development, we do not mean the development of dogma : as far as our argument goes there need be no dogmatic development whatever from St. Paul to the Council of Trent ; and the reason why there is no such need, is that speculative development and dogmatic development are quite different ; for instance, there can be speculative decline, as in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries ; but I do not believe one can speak of dogmatic decline within the Church.

This distinction is, of course, of primary importance. The reason why certain writers are able to "demonstrate" that St. Thomas in all his work held exactly their views on actual grace, when in point of fact St. Thomas himself did not hold the same view in all his works, is that they argue from a dogmatic to a speculative continuity. Ex falso sequitur quodlibet.

Finally, confined to the history of the speculation of a single writer with other writers and other questions all excluded, we are not aiming at writing a manual De Gratia or even De Gratia Operante. We do not propose to offer any systematic treatise or to show how a treatise might be developed from St. Thomas's thought. Thus, we are able to omit entirely the question of the entitative perfection of gratuitous dispositions prior to justification. In a systematic inquiry on operative grace, that question could not be omitted. But in an historical inquiry one has to limit oneself to what appears to be, not in the forefront of modern speculation, but in the forefront of St. Thomas's thought.