

## *Paulicians.*

It is thus that the Manicheans in Armenia were called when a certain Paul became their leader in the seventh century. "They became so powerful, because of either the weakness of the government, or the protection of the Saracens, or even perhaps the favor of the Emperor Nicephorus, who was very friendly to this sect, that, when they were finally persecuted by the Empress Theodora, the wife of Basil, they were in a position to build towns and to take up arms against their rulers. These wars were long and bloody during the reign of Basil the Macedonian, that is, at the end of the ninth century."<sup>a</sup> Moreover, so great was the slaughter of these heretics by the Empress Theodora that it seemed that they would never again be able to recover. It is thought that the preachers whom they sent to Bulgaria established the Manichean heresy there, and "that it is from there that it soon spread to the rest of Europe."<sup>b</sup> They condemned the worship of saints, and the images of the Cross, but this was not their principal view. Their fundamental doctrine was that of two coeternal principles, independent of one another. One is horrified as soon as he hears this doctrine, and therefore it is strange that the Manichean sect was able to seduce so much of the world. But, on the other hand, it has been so difficult to answer their objections about the origin of evil (E) that we



E. (*It has been so difficult to answer the Manichean objections about the origin of evil.*) I have prepared my readers<sup>13</sup> to find three observations here that I would have placed in the article on

<sup>a</sup> Bossuet, *Histoire des variations des églises protestantes*, Bk. XI.

<sup>b</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> In article "Manicheans," footnote 61 [p. 152].

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should not be surprised at the fact that the hypothesis of two principles, one good and the other evil, had dazzled several ancient philosophers and has found so many adherents in Christendom, where the doctrine that teaches of the basic hostility of the devils for the true God is always accompanied by the doctrine that teaches of the rebellion and fall of a group of the good angels. This hypothesis of the two principles would probably have made even more progress if the details of the view had been presented less crudely, and if it had not been accompanied by several odious practices,<sup>c</sup> or if there had been as many disputes then about predestination as there are today (F),\* in which Christians accuse one another of making God the author of sin or of depriving him of the government of the world. The pagans could better answer the Manichean objections than the Christians could; but some of their philosophers found it difficult to do. It will be necessary to indicate in what sense the orthodox seem to admit two first principles (H),† and in what sense it cannot be said that, according to the Manicheans, God is the author of sin. We shall also criticize a modern author who has denied that the doctrine that makes God the author

the Manicheans had I not wanted to avoid being too prolix there. Let us now keep our promise and not frustrate the expectations of those who wish to follow up our cross reference. My second and third observations will appear separately afterwards.<sup>14</sup> Here is the first one.

The Church Fathers, who so well refuted the Marcionites, the Manicheans, and, in general, all those who admitted two principles, hardly gave a good answer to the objections that deal with the origin of evil. They should have given up all a priori reasons as the outposts of a place that can be attacked but not defended. They should have contented themselves with a posteriori reasons and put all their strength behind these battlements. The Old and New Testaments are two parts of the revelation that mutually confirm one another. Then, since these heretics acknowledged the divinity of the New, it would not

<sup>c</sup> See article "Manicheans," remark D [not included in these selections].

\* [Remark F appears on p. 179.]

† [Remark H appears on p. 186.]

<sup>14</sup> In remarks G and H [only H is included in these selections (p. 186)].

of sin leads to irreligion. He has even said that this doctrine raises God to the highest conceivable degree of glory. The ancient Fathers were not unaware that the question of the origin of evil was a most perplexing one. They were not able to resolve it by employing the Platonic hypothesis, which is basically a type of Manicheanism, since it admits of two principles; they were obliged to have recourse to the privileges of man's free will. However, the more one reflects on that way of untangling the difficulty, the more one finds that the natural light of philosophy supplies arguments that tighten and entangle this Gordian knot still more (M).<sup>\*</sup> A learned man claims that the Pythagoreans gave rise to this thorny question. They searched for the superlatives in all things; that is to say, their investigations aimed at a knowledge of that which is the highest degree of each species. They asked, for example, what is the strongest, the oldest, the most common, and the truest thing? To the last item the answer was given that men are wicked and that God is good. This gave rise to another question, how does it happen that if God is good, men are wicked? The solution of this problem seemed to be of great importance to Simplicius.

have been difficult to prove the divinity of the Old to them, after which it would have been easy to destroy their objections by showing that they are contrary to experience. According to Scripture there is only one principle, a good one, and yet moral and physical evil have been introduced into the human race. Therefore it is not contrary to the nature of the good principle to permit the introduction of moral evil and to punish crimes; for it is no more evident that four and four make eight than it is evident that if a thing has happened, it is possible. "From the act to the potency is a valid inference" is one of the clearest and most incontestable axioms of all metaphysics.<sup>15</sup> This is an impregnable rampart, and it should render the cause of the orthodox victorious even though their a priori reasons can be refuted. But some may say to me, "Can they actually be?" Yes, I will answer: the way in which evil was introduced under the government

<sup>\*</sup> [Remark M appears on p. 187.]

<sup>15</sup> See article "Manicheans," remark D, footnote 59 [p. 152].

of a supreme, infinitely good, infinitely holy, and infinitely powerful being is not only inexplicable, but also incomprehensible. And all that can be opposed to the reasons why this being has allowed evil agrees more with the natural light and the ideas of order than do the reasons themselves. Consider carefully this passage from Lactantius, which contains an answer to an objection of Epicurus. Epicurus says, "God is either willing to remove evil and cannot; or he can and is unwilling; or he is neither willing nor able to do so; or else he is both willing and able. If he is willing and not able, he must then be weak, which cannot be affirmed of God. If he is able and not willing, he must be envious, which is also contrary to the nature of God. If he is neither willing nor able, he must be both envious and weak, and consequently not be God. If he is both willing and able—the only possibility that agrees with the nature of God—then where does evil come from? Or why does he not eliminate it? I know that most philosophers who assert there is a Providence are perturbed by this argument and are forced, almost against their will, to acknowledge that God does not concern himself with the government of the world, which is the very view that Epicurus is trying to establish. But this formidable argument is easily overthrown by clear reason. For God can do whatever he pleases, and there is no weakness or enviousness in him. Consequently, he is able to remove evil but is not willing to do so, and, nonetheless, he is not envious. He does not remove evil for this reason: because he also (as I have shown) bestows wisdom, and there is more good and satisfaction in wisdom than there is painfulness in evil. It is by wisdom that we come to know God, and by that knowledge attain immortality, which is the chief good. And therefore unless we first know evil, we shall not be able to know good. But neither Epicurus nor anyone else has noticed this point: If evil were to be removed, wisdom would also have to be removed. No trace of virtue would remain, since virtue consists in bearing with and overcoming the pains of evil. And so, the price of the small advantage of removing evil would be the deprivation of the greatest, the most real and proper good. It is evident therefore that all things, evil as well as good, were intended for the benefit of mankind."<sup>16</sup>

The full force of the objection could not be more accurately stated. Epicurus himself could not have set it forth more precisely and force-

<sup>16</sup> Lactantius, *De ira dei* XIII.

fully. See footnote 17. But the answer of Lactantius is pitiful. It is not only weak, but it is full of errors, and perhaps even heresies. It supposes that God had to produce evil because otherwise he would not have been able to communicate either wisdom, virtue, or the knowledge of goodness to us. Is it possible to find anything more monstrous than this doctrine? Does it not overthrow all that the theologians tell us about the joys of paradise and the state of innocence? They tell us that in that happy state Adam and Eve felt, without any admixture of discomfort, all the pleasures available to them in the garden of Eden, that delightful and charming place in which God had put them. The theologians add that if they had never sinned, they and all of their descendants would have enjoyed this happiness without ever being subject to diseases or sorrows, and without either the elements or the animal kingdom ever being unkind to them. It was their sin that exposed them to cold and heat, to hunger and thirst, to pain and sorrow, and to the misfortunes that certain beasts cause us. It is so far from being the case that virtue and wisdom cannot subsist in man without there being physical evil as well, as Lactantius claims, that it is necessary to maintain, on the contrary, that man has only been subject to this evil because he gave up virtue and wisdom. If the doctrine of Lactantius were sound, we would necessarily have to suppose that the good angels are subject to thousands of discomforts, and that the souls of the blessed change alternately from joy to sorrow; so that in the mansions of glory, and in the very bosom of the beatific vision, none is safe from adversity. Nothing is more contrary to the unanimous opinion both of theologians and of right reason than this. *One can experience one of two contraries without having ever experienced the other.* It is even the case that according to sound philosophy it is in no way necessary that our soul should have to experience evil in order that it might enjoy good, or that it should have to change successively from pleasure to pain and from pain to pleasure in order that it be able to tell that pain is an evil and pleasure a good. And thus Lactantius' view is no less shocking to the natural light than to the theological light. We know from experience that our soul cannot feel pleasure and pain at the same time. It must then necessarily have first felt either pain before pleasure or pleasure before pain. If its first

17 Note that this objection of Epicurus does not concern moral evil. If it did it would be even more difficult to answer.

feeling had been that of pleasure, it found that state to be agreeable even though it was unaware of pain; and if its first feeling had been that of pain, it found that state to be disagreeable even though it was unaware of pleasure. Suppose that its first feeling had lasted for several consecutive years without any interruption. You recognize that during all that time it was either in an agreeable or in a disagreeable state. *Why custom dulls feeling.* And do not appeal to experience against me. Do not tell me that a pleasure which lasts a long time becomes insipid, and that pain in time becomes bearable; for I will reply that this happens as a result of a change in the organ, so that, although the feeling continues to be the same with regard to its species, it is not so with regard to its degree. If at first you had a feeling of six degrees, it will have, at the end of two hours or at the end of a year, not six degrees but only one degree, or a quarter of a degree. It is in this way that custom dulls the edge of our feelings. Their degrees correspond to the agitation of parts of the brain. This agitation diminishes with frequent repetition, and as a result the degrees of feeling also diminish. But if pain or joy were communicated to us at the same degree for a hundred consecutive years, we would be as unhappy or as happy in the hundredth year as on the first day. This plainly shows that a creature can be happy with a continuous good, or unhappy with a continuous evil, and that the alternative that Lactantius speaks of is a bad solution. It is not based either upon the nature of good and evil, or upon that of the subject who receives them, or upon that of the cause which produces them. Pleasure and pain are no less proper to be communicated the second moment as the first, the third moment as the second, and so forth. Our soul is as susceptible of them after it has experienced them one moment, as it was before having experienced them; and God who gives them is not less capable of producing them the second time than the first one. This is what we learn from the natural ideas we have of these objects. Christian theology invincibly confirms this, in that it tells us that the torments of the damned will be eternal and continuous, and as strong at the end of one hundred thousand years as they were the first day, and that on the contrary the joys of paradise will last forever and continuously without their strength ever diminishing. I would very much like to know whether, supposing something very simple, namely, that there were two suns in the world, one of which rose when the other set, we would not have to conclude that darkness would be

unknown to mankind. According to the lovely philosophy of Lactantius, we would also have to conclude that man would not know light, would not know that it was day, that he saw objects, and so on. . . .

What I have just said invincibly proves, it seems to me, that nothing would be gained against our Paulicians if they were told that God has mixed good and evil together only because he foresaw that pure good would seem insipid to us in a short time. They could answer that this property is not contained in the idea that we have of good, and that it is in direct opposition to the usual doctrine about the happiness of paradise. And with regard to what experience teaches us only too well: (1) that the joys of this life are only felt to the degree that they deliver us from an annoying state; (2) that they entail that after them we feel a disgust no matter how short a time they have lasted; the Paulicians maintain that these phenomena are explicable only if we have recourse to their hypothesis of two principles. For if we depend, they will say, on only one cause, all powerful, infinitely good, infinitely free, and which universally disposes of all beings according to the good pleasure of its own will, then we ought not to feel any evil, all our goods ought to be pure, and we ought never to experience the least disgust in them. The author of our being, if he is infinitely beneficent, ought to take continual pleasure in making us happy and in preventing everything that might trouble or diminish our pleasure. That is an essential characteristic contained in the idea of supreme goodness. The fibers of our brains cannot be the cause of God's diminishing our pleasures; for according to you he is the sole author of matter, he is all powerful, and nothing prevents him from acting in accord with the full extent of his infinite goodness. He need only will that our pleasures not depend on the fibers of our brains; and if he wishes that they so depend, he can preserve these fibers forever in the same state. He need only will either that they not wear out, or that the damage they suffer be quickly repaired. Therefore you can only explain our experiences by the hypothesis of two principles. If we feel pleasure, it is the good principle that gives it to us. But if we do not feel it in completely pure fashion, and if we are soon disgusted with it, it is because the bad principle thwarts the good one. The latter acts in the same way. It makes it such that pain is less aggravating when we are used to it, and it always gives us some resource even when we are afflicted with the greatest evils. This, and the good use that is often made of adversity, and the bad use that is

often made of good fortune are phenomena that are admirably explained by the Manichean hypothesis. These are the things that lead us to suppose that the two principles have made an agreement that reciprocally limits their operations. The good one cannot do us all the good that it wishes to. It was necessary that in order to do us much good, it consented that its adversary do us as much harm; for without this agreement chaos would always have remained chaos, and no creature would ever have experienced what is good. Thus the supreme goodness, finding a better means of satisfying itself in seeing the world sometimes happy and sometimes unhappy than in never seeing it happy, made an agreement that produced the mixture of good and evil that we find in the human world. By ascribing to your principle an almighty power and the glory of alone enjoying eternity, you have deprived it of an attribute that precedes all others, for *optimus*, the best, always precedes *maximus*, the greatest, in the manner of the most learned nations when they speak of God. You suppose that with nothing to prevent him from bestowing good things on his creatures, he oppresses them with evils; and if he raises any of them above this state of affairs, it is in order that they may fall further. We clear him of any guilt on this score. We explain it without impeaching his goodness and saying of it what can be said of the inconstancy of Fortune, the jealousy of Nemesis, and of the continual game that Aesop makes the occupation of God. He elevates, Aesop says, the things that are low and abases those that are high. We say, however, that he could not obtain a better agreement from his adversary. His goodness went as far as it could. If he does not give us more good, it is because he cannot. Thus we have nothing to complain about.

Who will not admire and deplore the fate of our reason? Behold that here the Manicheans, with a completely absurd and contradictory hypothesis, explain experiences a hundred times better than do the orthodox, with their supposition so just, so necessary, and so very true of an infinitely good and all-powerful first principle.

Let us show by means of another example the lack of success the Fathers have had in their dispute with the heretics regarding the origin of evil. Here is a passage from St. Basil: "But to say that evil did not proceed from God is a pious assertion; for no contrary can arise from its contrary. . . . But if evil is not innate, you will say, and does not come from God, then where does it come from? For nobody alive will deny that evil does exist. What then must be said? My

answer is that evil is not a living essence, endowed with a soul, but that it is a quality of the soul, contrary to virtue, planted in the slothful and lazy because they have departed from good. Do not therefore look around and seek for evil elsewhere, nor imagine that there is a first principle of malignity, but let everyone acknowledge himself as the author of his own wickedness. For those things that happen to us are partly the result of nature—for example, old age and illness—and they are partly the result of their own natures—for example, sudden accidents from external causes . . .—but, also, they are partly the result of activities within our own powers—such as our ability to mortify our desires, to moderate our pleasures, to govern our passions, to lay our hands on someone who has injured us, to speak the truth or to lie, to be meek and even-tempered, or to be filled with pride or arrogance. Therefore do not look anywhere else for the source of those things of which you yourself are the master, but know that what is properly evil results from free will and choice.”<sup>22</sup> The German theologian<sup>23</sup> who cites this passage is right in saying that this Father grants the Marcionites more than he ought to; for St. Basil does not even want to admit that God is the author of physical evil, such as illness and old age, or of the hundreds of things that result from external causes and that happen unexpectedly. Thus, in order to extricate himself from difficulties, he adopts errors, and maybe even heresies. But there is another fault in his answer. He imagines that he will get himself out of difficulties by exonerating Providence, provided that he claims that vices have their origin in the human soul. How is it that he did not see that he is either evading the difficulty or offering as his solution the very point in which the chief difficulty lies? The claim of Zoroaster, Plato, Plutarch, the Marcionites, the Manicheans, and in general of all of those who admit a naturally good principle and a naturally bad one, both eternal and independent, is that without this supposition one cannot give an account of how evil came into the world. You answer that it came by way of man. But how can this be, since according to you man is the product of an infinitely holy and infinitely powerful being? Would the product of such a cause not be good? Could it be other than good? Is it not more impossible that darkness should result from light, than that it be possible that the

<sup>22</sup> Basil, *Hexaëmeron*. Homil. II, according to Tobias Pfanner, *System. Theologiae Gentilis*, Chap. IX.

<sup>23</sup> Tobias Pfanner, *ibid.*

product of such a principle be bad? That is where the difficulty lies. St. Basil could not be unaware of it. Why, then, does he say so coldly that we only have to search for evil inside man? But who put it there? Man himself in misusing the grace of his creator, who, being supreme goodness, had produced him in a state of innocence. If you give this answer you are begging the question. You are disputing with a Manichean who maintains that two contrary creators were involved in the production of man and that man has received what is good from the good principle, and what is bad from the bad principle; and you reply to his objections by supposing that man's creator is one being, supremely good. Does this not amount to giving your own thesis for an answer? It is obvious that St. Basil argues badly. But since this is a problem that reduces all philosophy to helplessness, he should retire into his fortress; that is to say, he should have proven by the Word of God that the author of all things is one, and infinite in goodness and in all kinds of perfections; that man, having come from his hands both innocent and good, lost his innocence and his goodness by his own doing. This is the origin of moral and physical evil. Let Marcion and let all the Manicheans reason as much as they please in order to show that under an infinitely good and holy Providence this fall of innocent man could not happen. They will be arguing against a matter of fact, and consequently they will make themselves ridiculous. I am always supposing that they are such people who may be reduced by *ad hominem* arguments to acknowledge the divinity of the Old Testament. For if one had to deal with Zoroaster or Plutarch, it would be another matter.

In order that one may see that it is not without reason that I am urging that these sectarians should be opposed only with the maxim, "From the act to the potency is a valid inference," and this short enthymeme, "This has happened, therefore this is not contrary to the holiness and goodness of God," I will show that one cannot enter into this dispute on any other grounds without some disadvantage. The reasons for the permission of sin which are not drawn from the mysteries revealed in Scripture have this defect: that no matter how good they are, they can be opposed by other reasons both more convincing and more in conformity with the ideas we have of order. For example, if you say that God has permitted sin in order to manifest his wisdom, which shines forth more in the midst of the disorders that man's wickedness produces every day than it would in a state of innocence,

you will be answered that this is to compare God either to a father who allows his children to break their legs so that he can show every-one his great skill in mending their broken bones, or to a king who allows seditions and disorders to develop through his kingdom so that he can gain glory by overcoming them. The conduct of this father and this monarch is so contrary to the clear and distinct ideas by which we judge goodness and wisdom and in general all the duties of a father and a king, that our reason cannot conceive how God could act in this way. But, you will say, the ways of God are not our ways. Stop at this point, it is a text of Scripture,<sup>27</sup> and do not reason any further.<sup>28</sup> Do not tell us any more that without the Fall of the first man the justice and mercy of God would have remained unknown, for you will be answered that nothing could have been easier than to have made man know these two attributes. The idea alone of a supremely perfect being clearly teaches sinful man that God possesses all of the virtues that are worthy of an entity that is infinite in all respects. How much more would it have taught an innocent man that God is infinitely just? But had he never punished anyone, this very state of affairs would have made his justice known. This would have been a continuous act, a perpetual exercise of that virtue. No one would have deserved to be punished; and consequently, the prevention of all punishment would have been an exercise of justice. Please tell me your answer to this: There are two princes, one of whom lets his subjects fall into a miserable state, so that he can rescue them from it when they have languished there long enough; and the other keeps them in a prosperous state. Is not the latter better and even more merciful than the former? Those who teach the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin demonstratively prove that God poured out his mercy and the benefits of redemption upon her more than upon any other members of the human race. One does not have to be a metaphysician to know this; a peasant clearly knows that it is a greater act of goodness to prevent a man from falling into a ditch than to let him fall into it and then rescue him an hour later, and that it is much better to prevent a murderer from killing anyone than to break him on the wheel after he has been allowed to do his killing. All of this warns us that we should not dispute with the

<sup>27</sup> Isaiah 55:8. ["For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord."]

<sup>28</sup> See remark M of this article, toward the end [pp. 191ff].

Manicheans until we have established the doctrine of *the elevation of faith and the abasement of reason*.<sup>31</sup>

Those who say that God permitted sin because he could not have prevented it without destroying the free will that he had given to man, and which was the best present he made to him, expose themselves greatly. The reason they give is lovely. It has a *je ne sais quoi*, an undefinable something, that is dazzling. It has a grandeur. But in the end it can be opposed by arguments more easily understood by all men, and based more on common sense and the ideas of order. Without having read the fine treatise of Seneca on benefits, everyone knows by the natural light that it is essential to a benefactor not to bestow gifts that he knows will be abused in such a manner that they will only serve to bring about the ruin of the person to whom they are given. There is no enemy so impassioned, if this were the case, who would not load his opponent with gifts. It is the essence of a benefactor to spare nothing to see that his bounty makes the person he bestows it upon happy. If he were able to bestow upon him the knowledge of how to make good use of it, and he refused to do so, he would be a poor benefactor indeed. He would not be any better if, being able to keep the person he was helping from making bad use of his gifts, he did not do so by ridding him of his bad inclinations. These are notions as well known to ordinary people as to philosophers. I admit that if one could only prevent the bad use of a gift by breaking the arms and legs of the recipients or by putting them in leg irons in a dungeon, one would not be obliged to prevent it. It would be better to refuse to give them the gift. But if one can prevent it by changing the heart and giving man a taste for good things, one ought to do so. Now this is what God could easily do if he so wished. . . . There is no good mother who, having given her daughters permission to go to a dance, would not revoke that permission if she were assured that they would succumb to temptations and lose their virginity there. And any mother who, knowing for sure that this would come to pass, allowed them to go to the dance and was satisfied with exhorting them to be virtuous and with threatening to disown them if they were no longer virgins when they returned home, would, at the very least, bring upon herself the just charge that she loved neither her daugh-

<sup>31</sup> Amyraut has produced a book that has this title. [Moïse Amyraut was a leading French Protestant theologian who taught at the Academy of Saumur.]

ters nor chastity. It would be in vain for her to try to justify herself by saying that she had not wished to restrain the freedom of her daughters or to indicate that she distrusted them. She would be told this type of behavior was preposterous and was more indicative of a provoked, cruel stepmother than of a mother, and that it would have been better to keep her daughters in her sight than to give them the privilege of freedom and the signs of her confidence for such a bad end. This shows the temerity of those who offer us as an explanation the consideration that God had for the first man's free will. They would be better off believing and keeping quiet than offering reasons that can be refuted by the examples I have just made use of. Cotta, in a book of Cicero's, offers so many arguments against those who say that the faculty of reason is a gift the gods bestowed upon man, that Cicero did not find himself capable of resolving these difficulties. For if he had found that he was capable of so doing, he would have refuted them, since his Academic skeptical spirit was in its element when he was able to show that the pro and the con could be maintained ad infinitum. In view of this, since he let the arguments of Cotta go without any answer, we have to assume that he did not know what to say against them. Cicero, however, was one of the greatest geniuses there ever was. Cotta, having shown that reason is an accomplice in all crimes, and that thus the gods should have given it to us if they wanted us to commit evil, then offered the usual solution, which is that men make bad use of the heavenly gifts. . . . Then he replies that this misuse should have been prevented, and that men should have had a reason that would drive away evil, and that those who give what they know will be pernicious cannot be excused. He proves this by several examples. "Men should have been given such a type of reason as might have excluded vice and guilt. Where then was there room for the mistake of the gods? We leave estates to children in hopes that those children may do well, and we may be deceived. But could a god be deceived? Either as Phoebus was when he took his son Phaëton on up into his chariot, or as Neptune was, when Theseus destroyed Hippolytus after the former had been granted three free wishes by his father Neptune? These are the fictions of poets, but we wish to be philosophers, dealing with realities not fables. And yet these poetical gods would be thought culpable for bestowing these favors, had they known they would prove pernicious to their children. And if it be true, as Aristo the Chian used to say,

that philosophers did harm to those who misinterpreted their good sayings (for dissolute persons might emerge from the school of Aristippus, and cruel persons from that of Zeno), undoubtedly if auditors departed corrupt because they misconstrued the philosophers' views, it would be better for the philosophers to be silent than to harm those who hear them. So, if men turn the reason, given to them with good intention by the immortal gods, into fraud and wickedness, it would be better not to give it at all than to give it to mankind. Just as a physician would be much to blame if he prescribed wine for a patient, and if he knew that the patient would drink it undiluted and would die immediately, so also would that Providence of yours be to blame if it should give reason to those who it knows would misuse it wickedly and perversely; unless perhaps you will say that it does not foresee this. I wish it were indeed so! But you will not dare to say it, for I know what a value you put upon that name [Providence]."<sup>36</sup> By means of these reasons it is easy to show that the first man's free will, which was preserved full and complete in him in circumstances in which he was to make use of it to bring about his own downfall, the ruin of the human race, the eternal damnation of most of his descendants, and the introduction of a terrible flood of evils, of guilt, and punishment, was not a good present at all. We will never understand that this privilege [of free will] was preserved in him as the effect of goodness and for love of holiness. Those who say that it was necessary that there be free beings so that God might be loved by a love of choice<sup>37</sup> are aware that this hypothesis is not satisfactory to reason. For when it is foreseen that those free beings will choose not the love of God, but sin, it is clearly seen that the desired end has disappeared, and that thus it is in no way necessary that free will be preserved. I will examine this again in remark M [p. 187]. . . .



F. (*If there had been as many disputes then about predestination as there are today.*) If the Manicheans had remained at this point, they would have given up their principal advantages. For the more terrible objections are the following ones: (1) It is incon-

<sup>36</sup> Cicero, *De natura deorum* III. 31.

<sup>37</sup> See the *Traité de morale* by Father Malebranche.

ceivable that the first man could have received the faculty for doing wrong from a good principle. This faculty is vicious; and everything that can produce bad is bad, since evil can only arise from a bad cause; and thus the free will of Adam is the result of the action of two contrary principles; insofar as it was able to move in the right way, it depended upon the good principle; but insofar as it was able to embrace evil, it depended upon the bad principle. (2) It is impossible to understand that God only permitted sin; for a simple permission to sin adds nothing to free will and would not have enabled anyone to foresee whether Adam was going to persevere in his innocence or whether he was going to fall from it. Besides, according to the ideas we have of a created being, we cannot comprehend at all that it can be an originating source of action; that it can move itself; and that, while receiving its existence and that of its faculties every moment of its duration, while receiving it, I say, entirely from another cause, it should create in itself any modalities by virtue of something that belongs exclusively to itself. These modalities must be either indistinct from the substance of the soul, as the new philosophers claim, or distinct from the soul's substance, as the Peripatetics assert. If they are indistinct, then they can only be produced by the cause that is able to produce the substance of the soul itself. Now it is obvious that man is not this cause and that he cannot be it. If they are distinct, they are created beings, beings produced from nothing, since they are not composed of the soul, or of any other pre-existent nature. They can then only be produced by a cause that can create. Now all the sects of philosophy agree that man is not such a cause and that he cannot be one. Some contend that the motion which pushes him comes from causes other than himself, but that, nonetheless, he can stop it and fix it upon a particular object.<sup>39</sup> This is contradictory, since it does not require any less force to stop something moving than to move something at rest. Seeing therefore that a creature cannot be moved by a simple permission to act, and that it does not have the principle of motion in itself, it must necessarily be the case that God moves it. Therefore, he does something more than just permitting it to sin. (3) This may be shown by a new reason, namely, that one cannot comprehend that a simple permission would bring contingent events out of the class of things that are just possible, or that this

<sup>39</sup> Father Malebranche in *Traité de la nature et de la grace*.

would put the divinity in a position of being completely sure that the creature will sin. A simple permission cannot be the basis for divine foreknowledge. It is this fact that has led most theologians to suppose that God has made a decree that declares that the creature will sin. This, according to them, is the foundation of foreknowledge. Others claim that the decree declares that the creature will be placed in the circumstances in which God has foreseen that it would sin. Thus some contend that God foresaw the sin by reason of his decree, and others contend that he made the decree because he had foreseen the sin. No matter how it is explained, it obviously follows that God wished that man sin, and that he preferred this to the perpetual duration of innocence, which was so easy for him to bring about and ordain. Reconcile this, if you can, with the goodness that he ought to have for his creatures, and with the infinite love that he ought to have for holiness. (4) If you join with those who come closest to exonerating providence, by saying that God did not at all foresee the Fall of Adam, you will gain very little; for at the very least he certainly knew that the first man ran the risk of losing his innocence and introducing into the world all the evils of punishment and guilt that followed his revolt. Neither his goodness, nor his holiness, nor his wisdom could allow that he risked these events; for our reason convinces us in a most evident manner that a mother, who would allow her daughters to go to a ball when she knew with certainty that they ran a great risk of losing their honor there, would show that she loved neither her daughters nor chastity. And if one supposes that she possesses an infallible preservative against all temptations and that she does not give it to her daughters when she sends them to the dance, one then knows with complete assurance that she is guilty and that she hardly cares whether her daughters keep their virginity. Let us push this comparison a little further. If this mother went to the ball, and if she should see and hear through a window that one of her girls was defending herself only weakly in the corner of a study against the demands of a young lover; if she should see that her daughter was but a step away from giving in to the desires of her tempter, and if she would not go to her aid and rescue her from that trap, would we not rightly say that she would be acting like a cruel stepmother and that she would be quite capable of selling her own daughter's honor?<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> See below, footnote 50 [p. 184].

Now this is the picture of God's conduct that the Socinians paint. They cannot say that he only knew of the sin of the first man as a possible event. He knew all the stages of the temptation, and he must have known a moment before Eve succumbed that she was going to ruin herself. He must have known it with such certitude, I say, that it makes it inexcusable that the evil was not prevented, and he cannot make the claim that, "I had reason to believe that this would not happen; I still had great hopes." There are no people so little experienced who, without seeing what goes on in the heart, cannot tell by signs when a woman is ready to yield, if they should happen to see through a window how she defends herself when her fall is imminent. The moment of consent is preceded by certain signs that cannot be deceptive. With much stronger reason, God, who knew all Eve's thoughts as they were formed (the Socinians do not take this knowledge away from him), could not doubt that she was about to succumb. He therefore wished to let her sin. He wished this, I say, at the very time that he foresaw that she would certainly sin. Adam's sin was still more certainly foreseen, for Eve's example gave some light for better foreseeing the Fall of her husband. If it had been God's purpose to preserve man and his innocence and to keep out all the misfortunes that would be the infallible result of sin, would he not have at least fortified the husband after his wife had fallen? Would he not have given him another wife who was sound and perfect instead of the one who allowed herself to be seduced? Let us say then that the Socinian system, in depriving God of foreknowledge, reduces him to slavery and to a pitiful form of government, and does not remove the great difficulty which it ought to and which forces these heretics to deny the foreknowledge of contingent events.<sup>42</sup>

I refer you to a professor of theology, who is still alive,<sup>43</sup> who has shown as clearly as day that neither the method of the Scotists, nor that of the Molinists, nor that of the Remonstrants, nor that of the Universalists, nor that of the Pajonists, nor that of Father Malebranche, nor that of the Lutherans, nor that of the Socinians can resolve the objections of those who impute the introduction of sin to

<sup>42</sup> See Arnauld, *Réflexions sur le système du P. Malebranche*, Bk. I, chap. 13, where he shows that, unless God combines by particular wills the wills of men and the movements of matter, the events that are called contingent would be so even with respect to God.

<sup>43</sup> I am writing this at the beginning of April 1696.

God, or of those who claim that its introduction is not compatible with his goodness, or his holiness, or his justice.<sup>44</sup> Inasmuch as this professor finds nothing better elsewhere, he keeps to the hypothesis of St. Augustine, which is the same as that of Luther and Calvin, and as that of the Thomists and the Jansenists. He keeps to it, I say, "discomforted with the amazing difficulties" he has set forth in it, and "overwhelmed by the weight of them." Since Luther and Calvin appeared on the scene, I do not believe a year has gone by without someone accusing them of making God the author of sin. The professor of whom I am speaking admits that the accusation is just with regard to Luther. The Lutherans nowadays make the same claim about Calvin. The Roman Catholics make the claim about both of them. The Jesuits say it is the case with Jansenius. Those who are somewhat fair and moderate do not take as insincere the protestation that the adversary makes that he does not impute man's sin to God, that he does not make God the author of it. They are quite willing to agree that he does not teach this formally and that he does not see everything that his doctrine involves; but they add that a "protestation contrary to fact proves nothing," and that if he will take the trouble to set down exactly what God would have had to do in order to be the author of Adam's sin, he will find that, according to his own view, God has done everything necessary to accomplish that. "You therefore act," they add, "just the opposite of Epicurus. The latter basically denied that there were any gods, and yet he said that there were some. You, on the contrary, deny verbally that God is the author of sin, but, at bottom, you teach it."

Let us come at last to the text of this remark. The disputes that have arisen in the West among Christians since the Reformation have so clearly shown that a man does not know what course to take if he wants to resolve the difficulties about the origin of evil, that a Manichean would be much more formidable than previously; for he would refute each side by the others. "You have used up," he would tell us, "all your mental ability. You have invented something called

<sup>44</sup> Jurieu, *Jugement sur les méthodes rigides et relâchées d'expliquer la providence et la grace*. See above, article "Nihusius," footnote 36. [Bayle is again trying to needle his enemy Jurieu. The translator's comments following footnote 36 (p. 165) describe this work of Jurieu and the role the work played in the Bayle-Jurieu controversy.]

*scientia media*\* as a *deus ex machina* to get you out of your chaos. This invention is chimerical. It cannot be understood how God could see the future other than in his decrees or in the necessity of causes. It is no less incomprehensible in metaphysics than in ethics that he who is goodness and holiness itself should be the author of sin. I refer you back to the Jansenists. See how they attack your 'middle science' both by direct proofs and by throwing your arguments back at you; for it does not prevent all the sins and miseries of man from proceeding from the free choice of God; nor does it prevent one from comparing God—*Absit verbo blasphemia* [I mean this without blasphemy], see footnote 50—to a mother, who, knowing with certainty that her daughter would give up her virginity if, at such a time and in such a place, she were asked by a certain person, should then arrange that interview, lead her daughter there, and leave her to conduct herself as she sees fit. The Socinians, overwhelmed by this objection, try to get out from under it by denying foreknowledge. But they have the disgrace of seeing that their hypothesis vilifies the government of God without exonerating him of the guilt, and that it does not at all avoid the comparison of this mother. . . . I refer them to the Protestants who have knocked them down and demolished them. As to absolute decrees, the certain source of foreknowledge, take a look, I beg of you, at the way the Molinists and the Remonstrants attack them. There is a theologian as resolute as Bartolus, who admits, almost with tears in his eyes, 'that there is no one more perplexed than he by the difficulties' of these decrees, and that he remains in this condition only because he found that, when he wished to adopt more mitigated methods, 'he found himself even more overwhelmed by these same pressures.'<sup>51</sup> He explained himself even more forcefully elsewhere on this, and you cannot deny that he has completely and thoroughly refuted all these methods. And, consequently, you have no other recourse unless you adopt my system of the two principles. In that way you will get yourself out of the problem. All the difficulties will vanish. You will fully exonerate the good principle, and you will

\* [This refers to the Molinist doctrine.]

<sup>50</sup> This comparison has shocked several Protestants. But I beg them to consider that it is only to give the Jesuits and the Arminians some of their own medicine. They make the most horrible comparisons in the world between the God of the Calvinists, as they say, and Tiberius, Caligula, etc. It is good to show them that they can be fought with the very same weapons.

<sup>51</sup> Jurieu, *Jugement sur les méthodes*.

realize that you are only passing from a less reasonable Manicheism to a more reasonable one; for if you examine your own system carefully, you will see that you, just as I, admit that there are two principles, one of goodness, and one of badness; but instead of locating them, as I do, in two subjects, you combine them together in one and the same substance, which is monstrous and impossible. According to you, the sole principle, which you admit, desired from all eternity that man should sin, and that the first sin should be contagious,<sup>53</sup> that it should ceaselessly and endlessly produce all imaginable crimes over the entire face of the earth. In consequence of which he prepared all the misfortunes that can be conceived for the human race in this lifetime—plague, war, famine, pain, trouble—and after this life a hell in which almost all men will be eternally tormented in such a way that makes our hair stand on end when we read descriptions of it. If such a principle is also perfectly good and loves holiness infinitely, do we not have to recognize that one and the same God is simultaneously perfectly good and perfectly bad, and that he loves vice no less than he loves virtue? Now is it not more reasonable to divide these opposing qualities and to attribute all the good to one principle and all the bad to another principle? Human history will prove nothing to the disadvantage of the good principle. I do not say, as you do, that of his own accord, of his pure and free will, and solely because it had been his pleasure, he submitted the human race to sin and misery when it was within his power to make mankind happy and holy. I suppose that he only consented to this in order to avoid a greater evil, and that he did it as if he were defending himself. This exonerates him. He saw that the evil principle wanted to destroy everything. He opposed it as much as he could and managed to achieve the state of affairs to which things are now reduced. He acted as a monarch who, in order to avoid the destruction of all his dominions, is obliged to sacrifice a part of them for the good of the rest. It is a great inconvenience, which at first frightens human reason, to speak of a first principle and of a necessary being as an entity that does not do all that it wishes to, and that is constrained to submit to combined actions by virtue of its own impotency. But it is still

<sup>53</sup> According to the Molinists, God decreed that men be placed in the circumstances in which he knew with complete certainty that they would sin, and that he could have either placed them in more favorable circumstances, or not placed them in those particular ones.

a greater imperfection to be able from wantonness to resolve to commit evil when one was capable of doing good." That is what that heretic could say. Let us conclude by showing the good purpose for which I made these remarks.

*What use can be made of the dispute reported above.* It is more useful than one would think to humiliate man's reason by showing him with what force the most foolish heresies, like those of the Manicheans, may play games with it in order to confuse the most fundamental truths. This ought to teach the Socinians, who want reason to be the rule of faith, that they are throwing themselves onto a road to perplexity that is only fit to lead them step by step to denying everything, or doubting everything, and that they are laying themselves open to being beaten by the most abominable people. What must be done then? Man's understanding must be made a captive of faith and must submit to it. He must never dispute about certain things. In particular, he must only fight against the Manicheans by appealing to Scripture, and by the principle of submission, as St. Augustine did. . . .

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H. (*The orthodox seem to admit two first principles.*) It is a view continually spread throughout Christendom that the devil is the author of all the false religions; that he is the one who leads the heretics to dogmatize; that he is the one who inspires errors, superstitions, schisms, lewdness, avarice, intemperance, in a word, all the crimes committed among men; that he is the one who made Eve and her husband fall from the state of innocence; from which it follows that he is the source of moral evil and the cause of all of the misfortunes of man. He is then the first principle of evil; but, nonetheless, since he is neither eternal nor uncreated, he is not the basic wicked principle in the Manichean sense. This has furnished these heretics with I know not what sort of material for boasting and for insulting the orthodox. You do much more harm to the good God than we do, they could tell them, for you make him the cause of the bad principle. You claim that he is the one who has produced it, and that, having been able to stop it from taking its first step, he allowed it to usurp so great an empire on this earth with the result that the human race was divided into two cities, that of God, and that of the

devil,<sup>75</sup> of which the first has always been very small and was so small for several centuries that it did not have two inhabitants while the other had two million. We are not obliged to look for a cause that accounts for the wickedness of our bad principle; for when an uncreated thing is such and such, it cannot be asked why it is that way. That is its nature. One must necessarily stop there. But with regard to the qualities of a created being, one ought to look for the reason for them, and one can only find this in its cause. You would then have to say that God is the author of the devil's malice, that he himself produced it such as it is, or that he sowed the seeds of it in the soil he created. This is to do a thousand times more harm to God than to say that he is not the only necessary and independent being. This leads back to the objections set forth above concerning the fall of the first man. It is not necessary to insist on this further. It is necessary to acknowledge humbly that all philosophy comes to a halt here, and that its weakness ought to lead us to the lights of Revelation, where we will find a sure and firm anchor. Observe that the heretics made bad use of the passages in Holy Scripture in which the devil is called "the prince of this world" (John 14:30) and "the god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4).

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M. (*However, the more one reflects . . . the more one finds that the natural light . . . supplies arguments that . . . entangle this Gordian knot still more.*) I found this out by experience in rereading this article when I had to get it ready for the second edition. Some new thoughts occurred to me<sup>120</sup> that convince me all over again, and more strongly than ever, that the best answer that can be naturally<sup>121</sup> made to the question, "Why did God permit man to sin," is to say, "I do not know; I only believe that he had some reasons for it that are really worthy of his infinite wisdom, but which are incomprehensible to me." By offering this answer you will stop the most obstinate disputers short, since if they want to continue arguing, you will leave

<sup>75</sup> See Augustine, *City of God*.

<sup>120</sup> See also the new remarks in the article "Origen" [not included in these selections].

<sup>121</sup> That is to say, without consulting Revelation, but only philosophical ideas.

them to talk to themselves, and they will soon be quiet. If you should enter into a dispute with them, and if you should take on the task of maintaining before them the contention that the inviolable privileges of free will constitute the real reason that led God to allow men to sin, you will have to satisfy them about the objections they will make to you on this score, and I do not know how you might be able to do this, since they would be able to offer you two objections that seem most evident to our reason:

I. The first is that since God gave being to his creatures as an effect of his goodness, he also gave them, in his role as a beneficent cause, all the perfections proper to each species. We therefore have to say that he has shown more love to those that received very excellent qualities than to those that received less excellent ones. It is then as a result of a particular goodness that he bestowed free will on men, since that quality raises them above all other beings on earth. Now it is inconceivable that a beneficent being would give such an important gift unless it would contribute greatly to the happiness of the recipient; and consequently it would have to be the case that he arranged that they gain such an advantage from it, and that he prevent them, if possible, from being desolated and completely ruined by it. If there be no other way of avoiding this result than by revoking his donation, he would have to do this. This would better preserve his character as patron and benefactor than anything else he might do. This would not involve any change with regard to the recipient and would preserve without the slightest variation the good will with which the present had been given. The same goodness that leads to giving something that one judges is capable of making the recipients happy leads to withdrawing it as soon as it is seen that it will make them unhappy; and if the benefactor has time and sufficient strength, he will not delay taking back this present until after it already has become the cause of misery. He will take it away before it does any harm. This is where the ideas of order and the notions by which we are able to judge of the essence and characteristics of goodness lead us, whether it be with regard to a creator or a creature, father, master, or king, and so on. And this is what gives rise to this dilemma; either God has given men free will as an effect of his goodness, or without any goodness. You cannot say that it was done without any goodness. Therefore you say that it was done with a great deal of goodness. But it follows necessarily then that he should have deprived them of it at

any cost rather than wait until it should result in their eternal damnation through the production of sin, a monstrosity that he abhors essentially. And if he was so patient as to leave so dismal a present in their hands until the evil occurred, it is a sign either that his goodness had changed even before they left the right road, which is something that you would not dare say; or that free will was not given to them as the effect of goodness, which is contrary to the supposition granted in the dilemma stated above.

There are conditions involving strict obligation. They ought not to be dispensed with except in cases of necessity. But when these cases occur, the conditions ought to be set aside. A son who sees his father about to jump out a window, either in a fit of frenzy, or because he is temporarily insane, would do well to bind him with chains if there be no other way to restrain him. If a queen fell into the water, the first servant who could get her out, either by embracing her or by pulling her by the hair, even though he might pull off more than half of it, would do very well in so acting. She would certainly not complain that he failed to show respect for her. And what excuse could be more frivolous for allowing a finely dressed lady to fall down a precipice than to say that she could only be stopped by putting her ribbons and her coiffure in disarray? In such situations the force and violence used on people is an effect of goodness; and even if people were snatched from the jaws of death against their own wills, it would be an act of charity to do so, even if one ran the risk of dislocating their limbs if they could not be saved in any other way. Those who are saved will be the first to give thanks when their frenzy is over. The maxim that to save a man against his will is the same as killing him does not apply here; and the strongest advocates of tolerance will tell you that the alleged commandment, "Compel them to come in," ought to be obeyed in the literal sense if the sole, sure, and certain way of saving heretics were to make them go either to Protestant services or to Mass by using a pitchfork. I offer the testimony of the philosophical commentator. "If I saw," says he,<sup>124</sup> "a man in front

<sup>124</sup> *Commentaire philosophique sur ces paroles de Jesus Christ, Constrains les d'entrer*, Pt. III. [The philosophical commentator is, of course, Pierre Bayle himself. The passage in question is from section 8 of the *Commentaire philosophique*, Pt. III, in *Œuvres diverses* (The Hague, 1727), II, 452-453. The passage is then followed by Bayle's analysis showing why this scheme of saving souls by force would not work (though it was being tried

of the door of a house who was very wet during a heavy rain, and if, out of pity for him, I wished to rescue him from the sorry situation in which I found him, I could make use of these two means: either I could ask him to come into the house, or I could take him by the arm, if I was stronger than he, and push him inside. These two methods are equally good for achieving the desired goal, that of preventing the man from being drenched; and in terms of that goal, it is of little importance whether he enters the house willingly, or whether he is forced to; for whether he enters by his own action, or whether he waits until he is asked, or whether he is pushed, he is equally protected from the rain. If hell could be avoided in the same way, I grant that those who are trying to convert people would be on firm ground; for if it sufficed to accomplish that end that a person be under the vaults of a church, then it would matter little whether he came into it voluntarily or were dragged in with hands and feet bound; and thus the strongest laborers or porters in the world should be used to grab heretics as soon as they turn up on the streets and to transport them on their shoulders to the nearest church; and still further, if necessary, they should blast open the heretics' doors, pull them from bed, in order to carry them quickly to some church." What we have said about the right that man has, by virtue of the laws of charity, to annoy and attack people in order to prevent their deaths by these means, is even truer with respect to fathers. They would neglect all their duties if they did not take a knife or a sword away from a son when they saw he was about to make bad use of it to wound himself. They would be obliged, in spite of his tears, to snatch away those presents; and if they saw him on the verge of ruining his life by some disastrous course of action, they ought to restrain him from it by force, even by appealing to secular authority. If they neglect the welfare of their sons, and if they claim that they do not want to use force since they would thereby be treating their sons as if they were slaves, they show either that they have no love or that they are not aware of its proper function.

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by Catholic dragoons in France at the time). Baile argues that those who are engaged in conversion by force also admit that a necessary condition for anyone to be converted is that the person consent to being converted. Hence, dragging people into churches and giving them the sacraments will not help to save them unless they want to be saved in this manner.]

All these things show us clearly that those who would like to submit the conduct of God's providence to the judgment of reason with respect to the allowance of the first sin would infallibly lose their cause if they had nothing to say but that the privileges of free will ought not to be violated. They would be answered: How can you conceive that God is the father of men, and yet say that he prefers to spare them the slight disturbance by making them give up a pleasant conversation in which they were about to make bad use of their freedom, than to spare them the eternal damnation they would incur by misusing their free will? Where do you find such ideas of parental goodness? To have regard for man's free will, to abstain carefully from interfering with the inclination of a man who is going to lose his innocence forever and is going to condemn himself eternally, do you call that a legitimate observation of the privileges of freedom? You would be less unreasonable if you should say to a man who had fallen down near you and had broken his leg, "What kept us from preventing your fall is that we were afraid of undoing some of the folds of your gown; we have too much respect for symmetry to do anything to disturb it, and it seemed to us that it was better to let you run the risk of breaking your bones."

I do not deny that the permission to make use of something and to abuse it has sometimes had the character of a very special favor, but then this permission carries with it the impunity for the abuse. This then has nothing to do with the present case.<sup>126</sup>

II. But the second item that is left for me to set forth will be more troublesome still for the defenders than was the other. I have argued up to now on this principle: When those whom one loves cannot be protected either from death, or infamy, or some other major evil unless they are made to experience a lesser pain, then one is obligated to make them experience it. To be complacent about, or tolerant of, their capricious acts or their bad inclinations would be less an act of kindness than one of cruelty; and as they would be first to get angry when they could see what the consequences would be, they would also be the first to thank those who hurt them for their own good. The self-evidence of these propositions leaps to everybody's eyes, and it can-

<sup>126</sup> The right way of conferring a benefit is not to allow that it may be misused, but to add to it the art for using it correctly. Without that a present is a body without a soul, as Horace says to Tibullus (*Epistles* I, 4. 6). . . .

not be doubted that Adam and Eve would have looked upon God's restraining them from falling as as great a favor as the preceding ones.

That is what my first observation is based on and leads to. But now I will make use of another approach. I will grant my opponents all that they wish. I will agree that they have established that, in view of the fact that man had received the privilege of free will, he was to have complete possession and use of it, and not the slightest constraint was to be placed upon him. I will agree if they say that it was not the right time for saving someone by pulling him by the arm or by the hair, by throwing him to the ground, and by telling him, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (Acts 9:5). Let them say that free will was an absolutely inviolable barrier and a privilege that was not allowed to be challenged. I will agree. Were there not enough other means to prevent the Fall of man, even taking all this into account? It was not a question of opposing a bodily motion. Such an opposition causes pain. It was only a question of an act of the will. Now all philosophers cry out that the will cannot be constrained, . . . and there is a contradiction in saying that a volition is forced, since every act of the will is essentially voluntary. Now it is infinitely easier for God to imprint on man's soul whatever act of the will he may wish, than it is for us to fold a napkin. Therefore, etc. Here is another observation that is even stronger. All theologians agree that God can infallibly produce a good act of the will in the human soul without depriving it of its free functions. A pleasing delectation, the suggestion of an idea that weakens the impression of a tempting object, and a thousand other preliminary ways of acting on the mind and on the sensitive soul will surely make it the case that the rational soul makes good use of its freedom and directs itself toward the right road without being invincibly pushed to it. Calvin would not deny this with regard to Adam's soul during the period of his innocence; and all the theologians of the Roman Catholic Church, not even excepting the Jansenists,<sup>129</sup> agree to this with respect to man the sinner. They acknowledge that his actions can be meritorious although he

<sup>129</sup> That is to say, by taking them at their word when they maintain that they condemn the propositions of Jansenius in the sense in which the pope has condemned them. [This was a crucial point in the dispute between the Jansenists and Rome. Rome had condemned five propositions of Jansenius, which were taken as the core of the Jansenist doctrine. Leading Jansenist theologians—e.g., Arnauld and Quesnel—refused to accept the papal con-

acts only by means of a grace, whether it be efficacious in itself, or whether it be sufficient to such a degree that it be infallibly followed by its effect. Then they have to acknowledge that a proper assistance furnished by God to Adam, or some help that was so arranged that it would have infallibly prevented his Fall, would have been in complete accord with the use of his free will, and would not have led him to feel under any constraint or difficulties, and would have left him sufficient room to act meritoriously.

Thus the opponents are driven from their defenses. Will they say, as their last resort, that God owes nothing to his creatures and that he is not obliged to supply them with a necessitating or infallible grace? But then why did they say earlier that he was obliged to have regard for human freedom? If he was obliged to preserve this prerogative for man and to abstain from interfering with it, then he has some obligations to his own creations. But, leaving this *ad hominem* argument aside, can they not be answered that, if he is in no way obligated to his creatures, he is completely obligated to himself and cannot act contrary to his essence? Now it is of the essence of a holiness<sup>131</sup> and of an infinite and omnipotent goodness not to permit the introduction of moral and physical evil.

Yes, they will finally say, but "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, 'Why hast thou made me thus?' " (Romans 9:20). This is well put, and there is where the matter should rest. We are back at the beginning of the discussion. It would have been better to have remained there; for it is useless to enter into a dispute, if, after it has gone on for some time, one is forced finally to shut oneself up in one's own thesis. The doctrine that the Manicheans oppose ought to be considered by the orthodox as a truth of fact, clearly revealed; and since it must finally be admitted that the causes and the reasons for it cannot be understood, it would be better to say this from the outset, and stop there, and allow the objections of the philosophers to be considered as vain quibblings, and to oppose nothing to them but silence along with the shield of faith.

demnation as a condemnation of Jansenism and insisted that they agreed that the five propositions in question were heretical in the sense condemned by the pope, but not in the sense in which they interpreted them, and as also claimed, not in the sense in which Jansenius, the late Bishop of Ypres, intended them.]

<sup>131</sup> That is to say, it seems so to the light of our feeble reason.