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AN INQUIRY INTO THE NOTION OF

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of Theology of

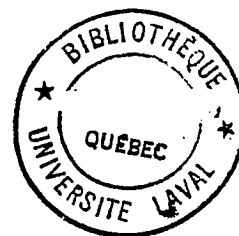
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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Degree of Doctor of Theology

by

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The subject which this thesis will examine is the notion of Christian philosophy. In a general way the question proposed is twofold: first can philosophy truly be called Christian ? and secondly, how is this denomination to be explained ?

The consideration of this problem can be no means be called original; in fact in recent years the problem of Christian philosophy holds the place of being one of the most debated, if not unquestionably, the most debated question among Neo-Scholastics. Strangely enough, the discussion was opened not by a philosopher, but by an historian, M. Emile Brehier. In his book entitled Histoire de la Philosophie (1927), and later in a lecture given before the Institut des Hautes Etudes de Belgique in 1928 and the Société Française de Philosophie in 1931 he set forth the thesis that Christianity in its inception contributed no intellectual values functionally original or different from those of paganism and that in its development it had little or no influence on the progress of philosophical thought--in a word, it had never succeeded in establishing a Christian philosophy. This was not for want of trying; indeed,

throughout the twenty centuries of its existence Christianity had made numerous efforts to annex philosophy, but all of them had proved to be in vain. Augustinianism had strong influence on the development of Scholasticism as well as on the philosophy of the 17th century; but St. Augustine himself as philosopher was totally pagan, that is, Platonist or neo-Platonist. Likewise, St. Thomas Aquinas, who himself made clear the distinction between philosophy and theology, as a philosopher took his doctrine from the pagan Aristotle. At no time--during the Patriistic period, the Middle Ages, or even less in modern times--did Christianity succeed in founding what could be termed a distinctively Christian philosophy. The reason for the failure is not difficult to detect: in the very elements to be united, Christianity, "L'histoire mystérieuse des rapports de Dieu avec l'homme" and philosophy, "la connaissance claire et distincte de la raison.... qui a pour sa substance le rationalisme," there was an irreconcilable separation and opposition. Accordingly, it would be no more correct to speak of a Christian philosophy than to speak of a Christian mathematics or Christian chemistry.

It was inevitable that such a radical thesis, written on a subject which Catholic philosophers were disposed to regard as their own, should have aroused immediate discussion among the Neo-Scholastics. In the many and long discussions which followed M. Bréhier was forgotten and the Neo-Scholastics were occupied with trying to resolve the problem from principles of their own philosophy and to defend their respective positions. The controversy was conspicuous not only because of the great quantity of articles which appeared on the problem, but also because of the fact that a number of philosophical conventions devoted panel discussions or sometimes an entire meeting to the problem. Besides being considered at the Société française de philosophie, Christian philosophy was the topic at the Journée d'Etudes sponsored by the Société Thomiste at Juvisy in 1933, a meeting notable because of the large number of Scholastic philosophers and historians who either were present in person or sent communications. At the Second International Thomistic Congress held in Rome, 1936, the question was again debated. In America also the problem came up for discussions at the meeting of

the Société Thomiste de l'Université d'Ottawa in 1933, as well as at the session of the American Catholic Philosophical Association in 1935. Besides the articles which were given at these discussions, the meetings were oftentimes followed by series of articles or even books, stating, defending, or attacking the positions set forth in the discussions. These, in turn, produced still other articles which added further reasons for one position or another, stated new opinions, or tried to reconcile the existing positions, pretending to see in the diversity a mere difference of words. (1)

If one takes into account all that has appeared in recent years, it may seem superfluous to add one more paper to the already impressive number written on the subject. Yet, there is not only good

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- (1) For a bibliography of recent articles that have appeared on the subject, consult: "Le problème de la philosophie chrétienne," Bulletin Thomiste, t. IV, nn. 437-462 (for the period 1931-1934); "Le problème de la philosophie chrétienne," Bulletin Thomiste, t. V, nn. 277-306, juil.-1937 (for the period 1934-1937). "La philosophie chrétienne" Journées d'Etudes de la Société Thomiste, 11 Juvisy, 11 Septembre, 1933, pp. 165-189. Baudoux, B., O.F.M. "Quaestio de Philosophia?", Antonianum, XI, pp. 487-552, 1936.

reason for reopening the discussion, but a definite need for doing so. The decade of the 1930's was not the first occasion that the problem of Christian philosophy was debated by Catholic theologians and philosophers. The theologians of the 16th and 17th centuries were well acquainted with the problem. Not only were there earlier theologians who discussed questions which are at the foundation of this problem, such as Capreolus, (1) Durandus, (2) Cajetan, (3) but others later took up the problem of the Christian philosopher specifically and discussed it at length

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- (1) Capreolus, Joannis, Defensiones Theologiae Divi Thomae Aquinatis, in III Sent., dist. 23 quass. unica (Turonicus: sumptibus Alfred Cattier, 1904), T. V, p. 331 seq.
  - (2) Durandus, In III Sent., dist. 23, 24, as referred to by Capreolus, T. V, p. 323 et alibi.
  - (3) Cajetan, Thomas De Vio, In Illan-las, q. 1 (ed. Leon.: Roma, 1895), v. VIII.



and with precision. Among them must be mentioned Suarez, (1) John of St. Thomas, (2) the Salmanticenses, (3) Conet, (4) Toletus, (5) and Ripalda. (6) Besides these, there were many theologians who treated aspects of the problem, such as Valentia, (7) Lugo, (8) Cano, (9)

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- (1) Suarez, Franciscus, S.J., De Fide, disp. 3 sect. 9 (Parisiis: apud L. Vives, 1858), Opera Omnia, v. XII, p. 79 seq.
  - (2) Ioannis a Sto Thoma, Cursus Theologicus, In Illam-llae D. Thomae, disp. 2.a. 1 (Parisiis: apud L. Vives, 1886), T. VII.
  - (3) Salmanticenses, Cursus Theologicus, Tract. XVII De Fide, disp. 3 (Parisiis: apud V. Palmé, 1879), T. XI.
  - (4) Conet, Joannis Baptista, O.P., Clypeus Theologiae Thomisticae, Tract. I De Virtutibus Theologicis, disp. 1, a. 6 (Parisiis: apud L. Vives, 1876), v. V.
  - (5) Toletus, Franciscus, S.J., In Summam Theologicam S. Thomae, ll. 2, 1, a. 5, 2a concl. (Roma, 1869).
  - (6) Ripalda, Joannis Martinez, S.J., De Virtutibus Theologicis, disp. 12, sect. 3, (Parisiis: apud L. Vives, 1873,) Opera, T. VIII.
  - (7) Valentia, Gregorius de, S.J., Commentaria Theologica, De Fide, disp. 12, q. 1, punct. 4 (Lutetiae Parisiorum: ex typogr. R. Theoderici et P. Chevalerii, 1609), T. III, col 65a seq.
  - (8) De Lugo, Joannis, S.J., Disputationes de Virtute Fidei Divinae, disp. 2, sect. 1 (Venetiis: sumptibus N. Pezzana, 1718), T. III, p. 59 seq.
  - (9) Cano, Melchior, De Locis Theologicis, lib. 12, cap. 13 (as referred to by the Salmanticenses, T. XI, p. 197).

Fonseca, (1) Sylvester Ferrariensis (2) and others (3). However, despite the penetrating treatises of these theologians on faith and natural science, their opinions, as far as this author was able to determine, have not been brought to bear on the discussions of recent years. The need for taking into account what was said by these eminent theologians would in itself be sufficient inducement for adding at least a few more words to the debate. There are, however, more considerable reasons for examining what they have said on the problem.

In comparing the discussions of the modern writers with those of the older Thomists, we cannot but remark the different method of attacking the problem. The problem of Christian philosophy--in that lies precisely the first difficulty. What exactly is the problem ? and what does the question mean:

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- (1) Fonseca, Petrus, S.J., Commentariorum in Libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis, lib. 6, q. 1, sect. 6 (Coloniae, 1615) (as referred to by Salmanticenses, T. XI, p. 203.
  - (2) Franciscus Sylvester (Ferrariensis), Commentaria in Libros S. Thomae Contra Gentem, lib. 3, cap. 40 (ed. Leon.: Roma, 1926), v. XIV.
  - (3) Cf: Salmanticenses, Curs. Theol., Tract XVII De Fide, passim for a list of authors who discussed the problem with their respective positions.

Is there, or can there be a Christian philosophy ? In the writings of the modern authors what is immediately striking is not so much that they arrive at different solutions (one might expect that in such a debate), but that they begin with different "problems" of Christian philosophy. To such an extent is this true that one can quite consistently agree with one author that there is a Christian philosophy, and at the same time with another that there is not. Again, different authors admit that there can be a Christian philosophy, but for entirely opposed reasons. It is not difficult to account for the divergent solutions when one appreciates the fact that they are not answering the same questions. Nor is there any reason to wonder that all the solutions do not convince, since many are offered as opinions and sometimes even by way of practical counsels, as if the question were one to be regulated by prudence.

The Thomists of the 16th and 17th centuries also had different solutions, some of them wrong, some of them right. Nevertheless, it must be said in their favor that all were concerned with the same problem

and, since this alone would not be sufficient recommendation, they are all asking the right question. This precision enabled them to pursue not only a consistent discussion because it avoided the meanderings which must necessarily accompany a start from wrong principles, but, above all, it enabled at least some of them to arrive at the right answer by rigorous proof and not by mere opinion and conjecture. When an author like John of St. Thomas, whose arguments are set forth in this paper, has finished his series of objections, discussion, and resolutions to the objections, he leaves no doubt about whether there can be a Christian philosophy and why the reason for his position are the right ones. And, because his treatment of the problem is so formal and conclusive, it is also most interesting and satisfying.

Some observations on how this paper will treat the problem may be appropriate here. While all the principles for the solution will be set forth when the problem itself is considered, certain pre-suppositions must be borne in mind from the beginning. First, it should be noted that, regardless of what the title may seem to imply, this problem belongs

properly to the habitus of theology not philosophy. The judgment on any philosophy or the difference between one philosophy and another belongs to the historian of philosophy in so far as by the light of the habitus of philosophy he can judge what has been included in them, or neglected, what is right and wrong, and such like subjects. Christian philosophy, however, by its very name implies a difference more profound than one of natural doctrine. The very problem arises by reason of the fact that Christian revelation intervenes, bringing with it supernatural truths and the new light which they add—and not merely add, of course, but produce as a greater perfection. Because this new light brought by faith is superior to the judgment of reason, whatever judgments are made must be the work of theology. Accordingly, the consideration of the problem of Christian philosophy must belong to the theologian and not to the philosopher. The complete explanation of this will appear later in its proper place. Further, this paper will not discuss what has been called the "historical problem," either what is is, or how it differs from the "doctrinal problem," or even whether there is such a question. Nor will there be any

attempt to define the "doctoral problem" in so far as it is thought to be opposed in its principles and subjects to the "historical problem," if there is such a distinction. Whatever problem there is will be considered adequately; and the sufficiency of this method must await the solution.

A word about the order to be followed will not be out of place here. In the pages which follow the intention has been to present the argument in a general way according to the method which St. Thomas uses in considering a problem: first, a presentation of the difficulties, objections, and opinions of others; next, a solution according to proper principles of the problem and finally, an answer to the original difficulties. Following this plan, then, first, the opinions of modern Scholastics will be presented with arguments to support their positions; secondly, a resolution of the problem will be given, restating the arguments of John of St. Thomas and following principally the treatment which he gives in the Cursus Theologicus; thirdly, in the light of the solution given the original difficulties will be answered.

1. The Position of Modern Scholastics.

When the question of the existence or the possibility of Christian philosophy arose in the recent controversies, an attempt was first made to enunciate the problem in definite terms. In some instances the question was simply stated in terms of the possibility of a "Christian philosophy," and this was thought sufficient. Others, however, tried to give precision to the question so that the non-essential would be avoided and the true difficulties would be brought out. The problem in a general way they said, was to define the mutual relations between reason and faith, between theology and philosophy, between the natural and the supernatural order. Specifically, it sought to determine whether Christianity has had any positive influence on the development of philosophic thought. It was not simply a question of recognizing

certain influences and denoting these by a convenient label, to characterize a philosophy which was developed in a certain atmosphere by certain men and at certain periods of history. The problem, rather, was to see if it was possible to enunciate in one concept and express in this complex Christian philosophy the development and enrichment of philosophical thought according to purely rational methods, but under the influence of revealed truths. More precisely, the problem was to discover whether this complex Christian philosophy contained something beyond the mere juxtaposition of two abstract essences, Christianity and philosophy; for, if it did no more than that, Christian philosophy would be but an artificial aggregate, and the adjective Christian would be entirely extrinsic to the substantive philosophy. Is it possible they demanded to discover an intelligible connection, an intrinsic liaison between revelation and philosophy so that the two can be joined in a single concept, Christian philosophy ? To put it still another way: is there between Christian and philosophy an irreducible heterogeneity or can there be a mutual attraction and cooperation, and a



certain homogeneity between revelation and natural reason united in Christian philosophy ? The principal difficulty lay in this: under a regime of Christian philosophy would it be possible for natural science to develop according to rational principles and methods, or would the autonomy according to rational principles and methods, or would the autonomy of reason itself be sacrificed along with the very existence of a truly rational philosophy ?

They stressed the point that a full answer to the problem demanded more than an attempt to find a Christian philosophy in fact, for even if this were so, it would not explain the meaning of the term. Rather, the burden of proof consisted in examining the terms to see if such a conception was possible: can philosophy be called Christian ? Is it simply uttering an inherent contradiction to maintain that what is purely rational in its discovery, elaboration, and conclusions can be intrinsically influenced by and united to revelation to form a Christian philosophy ? Briefly then, the question resolved itself to this: not simply is there, but can there be a Christian philosophy ?

Out of the vast amount of material that appeared on the subject several position stand out.

Note: To enumerate all the opinions arguments, reconciliations, etc. would require a study in itself. Since it is not the intention here to recount the opinions of particular authors, certain general positions are grouped for the sake of the argument. It is not implied that every modern author holds everything that is here placed under an opinion similar to his own. The positions enumerated here are used rather to show the various possible answers to the question and to serve as an introduction to the solution given here.

Some denied that the notion of Christian philosophy had any right, formal or technical sense. The denial of the legitimacy of any philosophy under the name Christian derives first of all from the radical independence and autonomy of reason in the purely natural scientific order. Any philosophy which admits faith into his its process automatically loses its rational character. Christian and philosophy are not only incompatible terms, but the very notion of Christian philosophy implies a contradiction. The question, they held, was one of elementary Logic: What is philosophy ? and, What does it mean "to be Christian ?" Philosophy is an explanation of reality which is the object of purely natural knowledge,

the work of reason alone: it begins from what is objectively and evidently given, and attains its knowledge by purely rational methods. In principles, method, and conclusions philosophy is purely rational; if it is not this, it is not philosophy. This rationality not only assures the unity and aim of philosophy, but also its perfect autonomy and distinction from faith. The truths known by faith, on the other hand, are not reducible to reason; they are not evident but revealed; they do not proceed from rational principles but from authority. Reason and revelation are two distinct and opposed ways of knowing. To seek help for philosophy from revelation is to go beyond what reason can attain by itself and, at least, to attempt to introduce something foreign to the rational order. If any meaning can be given the terms, it may be true to say that there have been Christian philosophers, in the sense that they were philosophers who were, at the same time, Christians. The error, however, lies in transferring the unity which exists only in the subject, who has both philosophy and the faith, to a unity of philosophy and faith. If a harmony exists between the truths

which the philosopher had discovered by reason and the truths of revelation, it must be concluded that the harmony exists not because the philosophy is Christian, but because it is true.

From the viewpoint of the formal objects of reason and faith, the same conclusion holds. Any attempt to unite revelation and philosophy and thereby construct a "Christian philosophy" would destroy the order of specification of the sciences. Whatever be the proper object of the several natural sciences, they are all at least distinguished from faith in this, that they have objects which are known by the sole light of reason, where as faith and theology have as their object God known through revelation. Any scientific construction in which revelation intervenes formally as a source of knowledge belongs not to a "Christian philosophy" but to theology properly speaking. Theology is distinguished from the purely human sciences precisely by the fact that it derives from a light other than reason. Whenever reason, basing itself on principles revelation, arrives at new truths, the product is theology, not philosophy. The reason for this is that the object

in a science is the first intelligible light from which the knowledge is derived. In philosophy this light is discovered by reason; in faith or in theology, the light is revealed. If any kind of unity is to be achieved between Revelation and reason to construct a "Christian philosophy", recourse would have to be made to some object and some light above both philosophy and theology--which is obviously impossible. Hence, there can be no unity such as a "Christian philosophy" demands. And, unless this clear distinction is made between the object of reason and faith, the natural sciences and theology, there is a danger of returning to that confusion which existed before St. Albert and St. Thomas clearly distinguished their respective fields. To try to establish a "Christian philosophy", i.e., a unity of the objects of reason and faith, is not to Christianize philosophy, but to destroy it.

It is sometimes argued that Christianity has exercised considerable influence on the progress of philosophy. Before admitting, however, whatever truth this contains, it should be noted that whatever influence Christianity has had on philosophy, this

has not been a positive influence in the philosophical order. True, Christianity has left its imprint on philosophy, but this has been effected only by preserving the philosopher in a negative way from error, or by aiding the philosopher indirectly and extrinsically in the psychological order. The reason for this is evident: progress in philosophy is not made by revelation, but by reason. If Christian revelation has suggested to the philosopher ideas, insights, or truths which hitherto he had not perceived; if the presence of faith has been for him a governing influence preventing him from asserting anything contrary to faith; if grace and the precepts of the Christian life have been a means of offering him a higher motive in the search for truth and of freeing him from passions which distract from that search—in all this the influence of Christianity has been merely negative, extrinsic, or psychological. Christianity may have prepared the way for philosophical advance by placing the philosopher in an atmosphere favorable to speculative work, but it did not itself accomplish that work or discover new truths. It may have suggested new truths to the philosopher, but



once the work of the philosopher as philosopher began, whatever truths were discovered, they, like any others, depended on the principles and method of reason alone, and not on the revelation which may have suggested them. It may have given the philosopher an interior peace and serenity, and a greater love for truth but these are merely psychological aids to the philosopher, not principles in the development of philosophy itself. Granted that all these influences aided the progress of philosophy, they are, nevertheless, extrinsic and do not warrant calling the philosophy developed under their influence a "Christian philosophy."

Finally, the expression "Christian philosophy", even when it is to a certain extent legitimate, should be avoided. The use of the term, because of the mere negative and extrinsic value it possesses, is more than offset by the fact that it plays into the hands of those adversaries of the Church who have maintained all along that in the Middle Ages reason was enslaved by theology and religious authority, so that in fact at no time was there a truly autonomous philosophy. The continued use of the term today places Catholic

philosophers in an unfavorable position before a world which takes pride in its right to think freely. More over it leaves Catholic philosophers open to the charge that they still are not true philosophers but are trying to put forth a theological doctrine in the guise of philosophy.

The conclusion to this is clear. There have been Christian philosophers, or rather philosopher who were Christian, because their faith negatively guarded them from error and indirectly disposed them through its teaching and through grace to develop a philosophy which was true. And in the measure in which its content coincided with what was revealed it arrived at truths compatible with the truths of revelation. Nevertheless both fields of knowledge remained distinct, each having its own object, principles and method. In no true and formal sense can the two be united. Although there may be a harmony between reason and faith, there is never a synthesis, since this would be an inherent contradiction. Therefore, it is true to say that in any strictly formal or intrinsic sense, there cannot be a Christian philosophy any more than there could be a Christian mathematics or a Christian physics.



Opposed to the position just enunciated were many modern Scholastics who held that there could be an influence of revelation on philosophy and a certain union between faith and philosophy. Therefore, they concluded that there was a justification for the expression Christian philosophy. While admitting that the formal object of philosophy remained always the same, and therefore that Christian changed nothing in regard to the specification of philosophy, at the same time they maintained that a philosophy growing in the atmosphere of the faith, was intrinsically so affected that it could justly and in no mere accidental sense be called a Christian philosophy. Their reasons were based on the proposition that while man could have natural speculative science and speculative wisdom (philosophy), de facto in the present fallen state of man this could be verified only imperfectly. Natural wisdom could not be realized as a perfectum opus rationis without a certain reinforcement or strengthening (confortatio) which grace furnished to human nature wounded by original sin. This perfection of the work of reason was explained by a twofold

reinforcement to nature: the conformationes objectivae, and the conformationes subjectivae.

The conformationes objectivae comprise those revealed truths which, absolutely speaking, could have been known by human reason but which de facto in the present state of fallen nature were not known before revelation and which either could not have been discovered or would not have been known with certitude and without error but for the fact that revelation made them known. This does not imply that the early philosophers were in total ignorance of all of these truths. They knew at least some of them, but they perceived them only obscurely and uncertainly. The Christian philosophers knew them more perfectly because the faith by affirming them gave confirmation of their truth. St. Thomas, they maintained, was aware of the role which revelation plays even in the knowledge of natural truths. In the Summa Theologica he says:

Ad ea etiam quae de Deo ratione humana investigari possunt, necessarium fuit hominem instrui revelatione divina; quia veritas de Deo per rationem investigata, a paucis ho-

minibus et per longum tempus, et cum admixtione multorum errorum proveniret; a cujus tamen veritatis cognitione dependet tota hominis salus, quam in Deo est. Ut igitur salus hominibus et convenientius et certius proveniat, necessarium fuit quod de divinis per divinam revelationem instruerentur. Necessarium igitur fuit, praeter philosophicas disciplinas, quae per rationem investigantur, sacram doctrinas per revelationem haberi. (S. T. Ia, q.1, a.1)

The Vatican Council likewise affirms the same conclusion:

Huic divinae revelationi tribuendum quidem est, ut ea, quae in rebus divinis humanae rationi per se impervia non sunt, in praesenti quoque generis humani conditione ab omnibus expedite, firma certitudine et nullo admixto errore cognosci possint. (Sess. III, cap. 2, D.E. 1786.)

Whether one believes in revelation or not it is a matter of plain fact that there has been a change in philosophy since the time of the Greeks. Between their age and ours some profound influence has intervened, and there is no doubt but that this influence has been the Gospel. Further more, everyone recognizes that the philosophy which has developed in the climate of the faith has clearly manifested

a Christian influence. Among the several truths which, through attainable by reason itself, were nevertheless not clearly understood by reason except in the Christian state the following may be mentioned:

1o Creation of the world ex nihilo, a truth unknown to the ancient philosophers and even today not clearly understood outside the Christian tradition;

2o A clear and certain knowledge of the spirituality of the soul and personal immortality;

3o The distinction between essence and existence;

4o A clear distinction between nature and person, developed because of the doctrine of the Trinity and the Incarnation; in the same line, the doctrine of the Incarnation showed that human nature, while remaining human, is not closed to the supernatural order;

5o And many others, such as: the unicity of God, divine providence, and free will.

While it does not require revelation to realize the debility of the human intellect in its

pursuit of truth, nevertheless the Christian has this advantage that by reason of his faith he is in a position to detect the source of this weakness and recognize the remedy for it. For the Christian believes that, though human reason in the fallen state was darkened by original sin through the wounds of ignorance and concupiscence, in the state of repaired nature it is aided by reason of man's elevation to the supernatural state. Accordingly, the acquisition of philosophy in this latter state, even in regard to purely natural truths, is made easier and more certain because faith proposes to reason objects which reason by itself would not otherwise have known with certitude and without error. And lest there be any misunderstanding about this aid, it should be noted that the objects which faith suggests are not proposed as indifferently true or false. The influence which faith, exercises in regard to the philosopher's knowledge is in the order of final causality, in so far as the truths are already known by a mode of knowing superior to human reason. Hence, they come into the orbit of philosophy not as mere objects for consideration (as might be suggested by any natural source), but

as truths already infallibly established and known through faith to the philosopher, towards which he can now direct his philosophical inquiry. This orientation towards a solution already known as true in no way detracts from the philosophical character of the inquiry, since the philosophy remains intrinsically conformed to the laws of natural scientific inquiry. If a man climbs a mountain alone or with the help of a guide, he attains the summit in any case, but what a difference in the ascent ! It is much the same in the comparison of non-Christian philosophy with Christian philosophy. Both may arrive at the same conclusions and both are entirely in the philosophical order because the principles and method belong to purely rational inquiry. The Christian philosopher, however, has this advantage that in so far as the term of his inquiry is already established by faith, he will be guarded from error and be more surely directed toward the truth and more likely to attain it in the philosophical order than the non-Christian philosopher. Hence, P. Pius IX justly called faith a stella rectrix which would guide Christian philosophers towards the truth and keep them from error.

Quamvis enim naturales illae disciplinae suis propriis ratione cognitae principia nitantur, catholici tamen earum cultores divinam revelationem veluti rectricem stellam prae oculis habeant oportet, qua praecludente sibi a syrtibus et erroribus caveant, ubi in suis investigationibus duci, ut saepissime accidit, ad ea proferenda, quae plus minusve adversentur infallibili rerum veritati, quae a Deo revelatae fuere. (Ex ep. "Tuas liberter" ad archiepo. Monacho-Frisingensem, 21 Dec. 1863, D.B. 1881)

If it be objected that philosophy has its own proportionate object in virtue of which it extends to the entire realm of natural knowledge and thus needs no extrinsic aid, it must at the same time be remembered that this philosophy exists in philosophers who suffer from the effects of original sin. This natural wisdom, universal though it be, cannot exist in them in its universality and perfection without these external, supernatural reinforcements. The advantage which Christian philosophy possesses is that the faith intervenes and, by placing the subject in an essentially new condition in regard to the object, supplies a deficiency intrinsic to the pursuit of that object.

Besides the superiority just mentioned, Christian philosophy enjoys certain confortationes

subiectivae. These are the strengthening which the habitus of faith and theology communicate to the natural scientific habitus whereby these latter are reinforced in their own order, and, as it were, even elevated to a superior mode above it. In this confortatio, the Christian philosopher is so fortified by the infused virtue of faith and by the act of faith that the natural truths which he knows by reason are now strengthened and appear with such vividness that his work is rendered easier and more fruitful. Furthermore, the Christian philosopher, once he has arrived at the truth, adheres to it with greater firmness, when for example, the certitude of faith confirms subjectively the philosophical certitude of the proposition God exists. There cannot exist in the same faculty two habitus, one superior to the other, without the superior one influencing the inferior one, and by a simpler objective light confirming and strengthening it with a greater certitude. Not only is there at each degree of knowledge a specific light, but there is also a communication of lights at the various levels. Applying this to the present problem, the non-Chris-



tian philosopher will have only the light at the philosophical level, whereas the Christian philosopher will have also the superior light of faith which, in turn, is communicated to the lower level and hence confirms and strengthens the light of philosophy in its own order.

Therefore, not only because of the objects which faith has proposed to philosophy and which it would not have known clearly by itself, but also because of the subjective fortifying which faith gives to the philosophical assent, it can be affirmed that Christianity has had a profound and intrinsic influence on philosophy. It has not changed but strengthened its character of truth, without at the same time disturbing the autonomy of philosophy. For these reasons philosophy can be called Christian in a true and intrinsic sense.

11. The Terms and the Problem.

Before undertaking the solution of the problem of Christian philosophy it will be desirable first to reconsider what the problem is. As has already been noted, an obscurity and lack of precision in regard to the meaning of the terms can lead and has led, even though the fact is not always recognized, to formulating several different "problems" of Christian philosophy; and this, in turn, can result and has resulted in many, even opposed solutions. Even without examination it is unlikely that all or even the majority of these attempts are attacking the fundamental question. Since it would be of no interest whatsoever to know in how many accidental senses philosophy can be called Christian, but quite imperative to understand in what strict and formal sense, if any, it can be so designated and what that sense is, it will be necessary first to be clear on what the terms mean and what precisely is the question. The words of Aristotle are eminently true and appropriate here:

It behooves those who wish to investigate the truth of any problem to seize well the difficulties before they undertake the work. The subsequent inquiry into the truth is nothing else but the resolution of the previous difficulties, for one does not untie a knot of which he is ignorant. Difficulties are like knots to the mind and have the same effect, for in so far as the mind has difficulties, it is similar to those who are bound; in either case it is impossible to proceed. Therefore, the mind must survey all the difficulties and their causes beforehand. The reason for this is that those who try to attain the truth without having first considered the difficulties are like those who do not know in which direction they have to go. Furthermore, a man of this sort, when he does arrive at the term of his inquiry, does not know when he has found the truth he was seeking and when he has not, because the end of the inquiry is not clear to him; whereas, to him who has considered the difficulties, it is manifest ! (1)

Accordingly, then, it will be fitting to inquire into the meaning first of the terms used and secondly of the problem.

The term philosophy throughout this discussion will be taken according to the same signi-

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(1) Aristotle, Metaphysics, III, c. 1., 995a27-996b2.)

fication which it had for St. Thomas and for Aristotle. They were content to accept the nominal definition given by Pythagoras: amor sapientiae. For them, the philosopher was "a lover of wisdom." This definition has the advantage that it not only comprises all that philosophy is, but says, as exactly as can be said, what it is. Philosophy is simply the search for the causes of things, which will have for its term the ultimate causes of things. It does not designate a single separated science, but includes all those disciplines and sciences in which the speculative intellect works by a knowledge of causes from what is most known to itself to what is most knowable secundum se, that is, from the most inferior discipline, through all the sciences to metaphysics. Philosophy, then, is the investigation of causes--at its term, the ultimate causes; but it does not exclude the intermediate causes. In so far as the inferior and particular disciplines are ordered to wisdom, they are parts of philosophy. The definition amor sapientiae, consequently, expresses not only the diversity of disciplines included in philosophy, but also the unity of order in philosophical inquiry.

In this order all speculative knowledge has its determinate place, because all speculative knowledge is a participation to a greater or less extent in wisdom.

If the examples used in the consideration of Christian philosophy are restricted more to one discipline than to others, it should not be inferred from this that the conclusions arrived at apply only to that science. True, revelation does not affect truths of certain disciplines such as mathematics, physics, or grammar. The reason for this is that the end of revelation is not the manifestation of natural truths for the sake of the knowledge, but the ordering of man to his salvation. Hence, the philosophical truths which will serve as illustrations of Christian philosophy will be those which concern God, his nature and attributes, man, human act, and truths of any discipline which are related to end of revelation. Moreover, if it can be shown that Christian revelation perfects the truths of the speculative sciences, which are more philosophical than the practical sciences since they are not ordered to a further end, a fortiori

revelation can perfect the practical disciplines.

The clarification of the term philosophy should at the same time avoid such false problems as "Whether there are several Christian philosophies," or, "Whether Christian is said of philosophy in so far as the latter is an inquiry, a process, or a system," or, "Whether Christian philosophy is found applicable both to philosophy in the strict sense and to philosophy as a Weltanschauung." Fundamentally all of these pseudo-problems fail in this that they ignore the definition of philosophy. Whenever that search for the causes of things through demonstration, which is philosophy, is perfected formally in its work, there is Christian philosophy. As will be shown more at length later, even if one habitus of a philosophical science were thus perfected in only one act of demonstration, there would be reason for saying to that extent that there was Christian philosophy, and that the subject possessing the habitus so perfected was a Christian philosopher.

The full meaning explanation of the term Christian as applied to philosophy--whether it can

be said, and, if so, in what sense--will appear only at the end of the inquiry, for in that lies the solution of the problem. For the present purpose, the term Christian will be taken in a general way to indicate any modification and perfection of philosophy by the content of Christian revelation, if this is possible.

### The Problem.

The first and fundamental problem of Christian philosophy, as has been already indicated, is to discover what exactly is the problem. Until this is stated in precise terms, no progress can be made. If, despite this fact, an attempt is made anyway, the only result will be something like the state of the man of whom Aristotle says: "When he arrives at the term of his inquiry does not know when he has found the truth he was seeking and when he has not, because the end of the inquiry is not clear to him..." (Aristotle, Metaphysics, 111, c.1, 997a35).

How, then, should the problem be stated correctly ?

Certainly it is insufficient to enunciate the problem in the terms which many neo-Scholastics has used. For example, it only conceals the difficulty of the problem to propose it, as some of them have done: "Is there an intrinsic liaison or intelligible homogeneity between Christianity and philosophy." Even after the terms "intrinsic liason" and "intelligible homogeneity" would be explained (and usually they are not), there would be no formal philosophical or theological difficulty; or, if there would be, then that would be the problem, and it should have been so stated. Nor, for the same reason, does it clarify the question to ask it in terms of whether this complex Christian philosophy signifies more than the juxtaposition of two essences. Again, it is of no help to state the difficulties in terms of "the autonomy of reason in relation to the influence of revelation," or "the possible inherent contradiction latent in the connection of Christianity with philosophy." Such statements are inadequate because they do not lead to a solution by only leave the inquirer with the further question: "What exactly is this 'autonomy of reason' and what is meant by



the 'influence of Christianity' and why precisely would there be 'an inherent contradiction?' Like-  
wise, it is insufficient merely to ask: Is there  
a Christian philosophy, or Can there be a Christian  
philosophy? because these statements, like the others  
fail to state the problem in its proper terms--in  
which alone a right answer can be found.

What, then, is the problem? A preliminary  
clarification can perhaps be arrived at by comparing  
Christian philosophy with other designations common-  
ly applied to philosophy. It is customary to speak  
of Greek philosophy, or Modern philosophy, or Kantian  
philosophy, and these appellation are accepted without  
question. Can they be applied to philosophy? There  
seems to be no objection to doing so, provided that  
it be understood that these qualifications are pure-  
ly accidental to the order of science. A philosopher  
is not a better philosopher for being Greek, or French,  
or modern. Nor is a philosophy, because it is Kantian,  
or Roman more excellent as philosophy. And, indeed,  
everyone recognizes that these ~~various~~ denominations  
were intended to express a greater perfection of phil-  
osophy itself, but are used merely to denote a certain

ensemble of philosophical theories, opinions, subject or tendencies discussed by a certain philosopher, or at a certain epoch, or in a certain milieu. While they are convenient designations, customarily and rightly used to set apart a certain assemblage of philosophical doctrine, they are not intended in any instance to denote a new light or perfection brought to the science or to signify a new species of philosophy.

The case of Christian philosophy, however, is entirely different. Those who deny the possibility of Christian philosophy as well as those who support it are both in agreement in this: they are arguing about a notion more profound than a certain ensemble of doctrines, or a philosophy showing traces of being developed in a certain milieu. In inquiring into the possibility of Christian philosophy, no one is seeking to apply a convenient accidental label, but rather to discover whether it is possible for philosophy, by being Christian, to have a greater perfection in the order of science than philosophy which is not Christian. In other words, can it be said that the

natural science receive a new intelligible light from the fact that it exists with faith in the same knowing subject? In regard to the Christian philosopher, also, it is not simply a question of discovering whether his knowledge is superior because, in addition to the habitus of science, he possesses a superior mode of knowing according to the habitus of faith, while the non-Christian philosopher has only the habitus of science. Rather, the problem is to determine whether the philosopher, who is Christian has a greater excellence as philosopher precisely because of his faith. Can supernatural faith communicate a new light and perfect philosophy without at the same time destroying it as a natural science? Yet, even this does not present the problem as precisely as it should be stated.

If the problem is to be seen in its right perspective, some consideration must be given to the proper habitus to which it belongs. The problem of Christian philosophy is properly attached to the habitus of theology, not to any habitus of the philosophical sciences. In any demonstration the truth and the certitude of the conclusions will be formally

dependent on the truth and certitude of the principles known under some formal ratio. Applied to the problem of Christian philosophy this means that the certitude of the conclusions arrived at, namely, whether and how natural science can be perfected by faith, will depend formally on principles received from divine faith, in other words, known per medium luminis Dei testificantis. It is evident, then, that the one discussing Christian philosophy is to have any certitude of these principles, he must actually believe, that is, proceed from principles known thru the light of God revealing. Consequently, certitude about Christian philosophy can be had only if the one demonstrating has and proceeds from divine faith. Now, any discourse proceeding from infused faith is theology. Therefore, if the problem of Christian is to be discussed with any certitude, it must be attached to the habitus of theology. Conversely, it is true that any consideration of the perfection science by faith which is not based on infused faith can be only opinionative and hypothetical. And this is all that can be ascribed to the philosopher who argues solely as philosopher, because, by

proceed in this way, he uses only principles known by the light of natural reason and does not know whether faith can or cannot perfect the natural demonstration, because he does not believe. Consequently, in the conclusions he has only opinion or hypothesis. From either way of looking at the problem, then, it is clear that any conclusions arrived at in regard to Christian philosophy must proceed from infused faith. Further more, it should be noted that when even the argument extends to natural truths, they too are attached to the habitus of theology.

The reason for this is that theology is wisdom and therefore architectonic in regard to the other sciences even metaphysics.

Scientiae quae habent ordinem ad invicem hoc modo se habent quod una potest uti principiis alterius sicut scientiae posteriores principiis priorum scientiarum sive sint superiores sive inferiores. Unde metaphysica quae est omnibus superior, utitur his quae in aliis scientiis sunt probata. Et similiter theologia cum omnes aliae scientiae sint ei quasi famulantes et praecambulae in via generationis, quamvis sint dignitate posteriores, potest uti principiis omnium aliarum. (1)

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(1) De Trinitate, q. 2, a. 3 ad 7.

Wisdom, while still retaining its superiority, can use the principles of other sciences, deduce conclusions from them, treat of things they consider through its own higher causes, make judgments, and defend them. Thus, wisdom infers conclusions which are formally reduced to its own superior ratio, in the light of which these conclusions are judged, approved and defended. Although wisdom materially uses principles of inferior sciences, it does not derive its certitude from the inferior science but from its own formal ratio.

Now theology, above all, among all human disciplines is called wisdom, not just in regard to one genus of knowledge, but in regard to all knowledge without restriction, because it treats of the absolutely highest cause of everything, God, and of all else in so far as it is known through revelation from God. (1)

Accordingly, when theology which proceeds from higher principles, namely from revealed truth, considers what pertains to faith in its relation to the natural sciences, it arrives at conclusions of a higher order than if the conclusions

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(1) Cf. Ia, q. 1, a 6.

were only of the natural sciences themselves, for it affirms and defends truths which are inferred from and formally dependent on premises known by faith.

These principles while determining the habitus to which the problem of Christian philosophy belongs, at the same time indicate its proper place within theology, namely within the treatise on faith. The question of Christian philosophy is not concerned with natural demonstration in relation to a specific doctrine revealed, such as the existence of God or the immortality of the soul, but to all the truths of revelation in as much as they are known by infused faith. The problem is usually proposed because some natural truths, known by all philosophers, Christian and non-Christian alike, are also known to be revealed; nevertheless, the very formality of the question will consist in discovering the problems and relations which arise between the naturally known truth and the revealed truth precisely as known by faith, for example, whether the same truth can be known and believed by some one at the same time, or whether its being known by faith will

influence the knowledge by demonstration, and similar problems. Consequently, the consideration of Christian philosophy will be attached to the question on the theological virtue of faith at the beginning of the Secunda Secundae. To place the question even more exactly, the precise reasons for the solution will not follow from faith in so far as it is an act or a habit, or because of the subject in which it exists, or from its effects, but from the formal ratio of faith itself. Therefore, Christian philosophy is considered as an auxiliary question to those articles of the first question which discuss the object, the formal subject, the obscurity, and the certitude of faith. This is the place where the earlier theologians discussed it, and this is where it belongs.

The question, then, in its most precise form resolves itself to this: In the same subject can the perfection and light of faith about an object be in anyway communicated to a natural demonstration about the same object so that the demonstration is perfected, illuminated and strengthened in its very act of natural science? In what ways is a greater



perfection not possible ? in what ways is it possible? And, in regard to the latter, how is this greater perfection to be explained? In an affirmative reply can be given to the first question, there will be ample reason for saying there is Christian philosophy. In determining the answer to the latter questions will consist the explanation of the expression.

### III. The Solution of the Problem.

The argument on which the entire argument will be based may be stated as follows: any speculative science which is more certain than another is more excellent (nobilior) than the other. But the natural scientific knowledge which the Christian philosopher has--at least as regards certain demonstrations--is more certain by reason of a greater certitude communicated to the demonstration by faith. Therefore, this philosophical knowledge, so perfected by faith, is more excellent than the science of the non-Christian philosopher, and because of this strengthening of added certitude received from faith can rightly be called Christian philosophy. The main point to prove will be the minor proposition:

that faith can communicate an added certitude to the scientific demonstration.

The principle by which one speculative science is superior to another is mentioned by St. Thomas in two texts, one in the Summa Theologica (1), and the other in the De Anima (2). In the Summa St. Thomas says:

Speculativarum enim scientiarum una altera dignior dicitur, tum propter certitudinem, tum propter dignitatem materiae.

The text in the De Anima is more explanatory:

Sed et in ipsis scientiis speculativis invenitur gradus quantum ad bonitatem et honorabilitatem. Scientia namque omnis ex actu laudatur; omnis autem actus laudatur ex duobus: ex objecto et qualitate seu modo, sicut edificare est melius quam facere lectum, quia objectum aedificationis est melius lecto. In eodem autem, respectu ejusdem rei, ipsa qualitas gradum quemdam

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(1) Ia, q. 1, a. 5.

(2) Commen. in De Anima, Lib. I, n. 4 (Marietti: Taurini, 1925), p.4.

facit; quia quanto modus aedificii est melior, tante melius est aedificium. Sic ergo si consideretur scientia, seu actus ejus ex objecto, patet, quod illa scientia est nobilior quae est meliorum et honorabiliorum. Si vero consideretur ex qualitate seu modo, sic scientia illa est nobilior, quae est meliorum et honorabiliorum. Sic ergo dicitur una scientia magis nobilis altera aut quia est meliorum et honorabiliorum aut quia est magis certa. (1)

Thus, in comparing the perfection or excellence of any two sciences, two things must be considered:

1) the dignitas materiae of the two sciences, and 2) the quality or mode of the sciences which is certitude. In accordance with these norms, one science will be superior and more excellent than another either if it treats of objects which are better and of greater intrinsic worth--for example the objects which metaphysics treats are more excellent than the objects which natural philosophy considers--or, if it is more certain than the other science,

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(1) Commen. De Anima, Lib. 1, n. 4 (Marietti, 1925), p. 4.

as mathematics, for example, gives greater certitude than natural philosophy.

Applying these principles to the immediate problem, there can be a Christian philosophy, and it will be more excellent and perfect than non-Christian philosophy either 1) if it can have matter of greater intrinsic worth than the matter of other philosophy, or, 2) if, by reason of a connection with faith, the philosophy which the Christian has will have a greater certitude.

Can there be a philosophy called Christian which would be more excellent on account of the superior matter of the science? If this were true, it would be necessary to suppose that the subjects of the natural sciences would in some way be made more excellent in themselves by an affinity with the philosopher's Christian faith. For example, mobile being, the subject of natural philosophy for the philosopher who was Christian would have to be superior and of greater intrinsic worth than mobile being the subject of natural philosophy for any other philosopher. Regardless of how this hypothesis would be expressed

or of what attempts might be made to defend it, a conclusion in favor of a Christian philosophy in this sense seems impossible. If this new "mobile being" of Christian philosophy were more excellent than the mobile being of natural philosophy, what would it be? Since there are no further abstractions than those which specify the sciences, there could be no intermediate between the subject of natural philosophy and mathematics. Would the subject of natural philosophy, then, become the subject of mathematics? or of metaphysics? And what would the subjects of these sciences become in a Christian philosophy? Even supposing that this were possible, what advantage would there be in changing around the matter of the sciences? Furthermore, while it is at least conceivable that the presence of faith might affect the knowledge which the philosopher has, it seems in no way admissible that faith would change the objects studied. The dignitas materiae must always be judged from the conditions of the matter considered in itself, not from anything arising in the subject who knows this matter. It should be clearly noted that the question here is

not one of considering the same things in one instance under the light of philosophy and in another under the superior light of faith. Even within the philosophical disciplines themselves, there is nothing to prevent the same things from being considered by more than one science, for example when the same things are considered by the astronomer and by the natural philosopher in so far as in each instance they are known through different media. When natural things are considered under the light of faith, however, they are not thereby elevated and made superior to what they are in themselves, even though the knowledge in which they are known may be superior by reason of the fact that they are considered under the more perfect ratio formalis of faith. Moreover, the new knowledge in which they are then known is not a "Christian philosophy" but the science of theology. It must be concluded, then, that there can be no philosophy called Christian in this respect that the matter considered would be different and more excellent by reason of a conjunction with the faith of the philosopher. And this conclusion is not contested, but admitted, at least implicitly, by all.

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The second alternative, namely that philosophy might be called Christian because it could have a more excellent quality of mode, that is, a greater certitude communicated to it by faith, is a far more complicated problem, and, because of the many difficulties which arise in connection with it, a longer consideration will be necessary. An orderly presentation will demand that the discussion of the problem proceed according to the order of the questions which present themselves. These may be enumerated as follows:

1. First, what is the very perfection of the intellect? What perfection does science give to the intellect, and what perfection does faith give, and in what does the greater excellence of faith consist? By itself, the answer to this question could not determine the possibility of Christian philosophy because, conceivably, there could be acts of science and faith about entirely different objects, and any superior perfection of faith would have no relation to the perfection or imperfection of philosophy. If faith is to influence and perfect the philosophical

knowledge, the two habitus, must somehow or other be brought together to bear on the same object.

ii. Hence, a second question arises: Is there any contradiction in positing in the same intellect an act of faith and an act of science, or the habit of faith and the habit of science about the same object? A solution to this question will demand explanation of the radical difference between faith and natural scientific knowledge.

iii. If the answer to the above question is negative (as it will be shown to be), a further question must then be asked: can faith and natural scientific knowledge be brought together in any way so that the faith of the Christian philosopher will influence and perfect his science? and, if so, how is this to be explained?

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1. Certitude, the Perfection of the  
Intellect. The Certitude of Faith  
and Science Compared.

How is certitude the perfection of the intellect? St. Thomas considers the reasons for this in the De Veritate where he says:

Intellectus enim nostri secundum Philosophum in Libro de Anima duplex est operatio. Una qua format simplices rerum quidditates, ut quid est homo, vel quid est animal; in qua quidem operatione non invenitur verum per se nec falsum, sic nec in vocibus incomplexis. Alia operatio intellectus est secundum quam componit et dividit, affirmando et negando. Et in hac jam invenitur verum et falsum, sicut et in voce complexa quae est ejus signum...Intellectus autem possibilis, cum, quantum sit de se, sit in potentia respectu omnium intelligibilium formarum, sicut et materia prima respectu omnium sensibilium formarum. Est etiam, quantum est de se, non magis determinatus ad hoc quod adhaereat compositioni quam divisioni, vel e converso. Omne autem quod est determinatum ad duo, non determinatur ad unum eorum nisi per aliquid movens ipsum.

In this text St. Thomas shows four things:

1. There are two operations of the intellect: simple apprehension in which the intellect seizes simple quiddities of things; and composition and division, in which the intellect affirms or denies one thing of another. In this operation is found formal truth in so far as the intellect is conformed to what is.

2. Secondly, he says that the possible intellect, quantum est de se, is in potency to all intelligible forms, altogether indifferent to one over another. Just as prime matter is different to all form, so the intellect, which is as a tabula rasa, is indifferent to all forms which perfect it. It is first of all indifferent to all species and objects which actuate and perfect the intellect as regards the first operation. Furthermore, because the intellect is directed towards knowing truth which it attains in judging that something is or is not, it is also indifferent in regard to all truths, inclined neither to this one nor to that, having no determined inclination either to composition or division. This indetermination of the intellect is its imperfection.

3. Thirdly, he shows that if this imperfection is to be removed and the intellect is to attain its perfection, it must be determined so that it may know perfectly and judge surely. It is important to define precisely what this determination is of which St. Thomas speaks. He is not referring to intellectual virtues, which are qualities in the entitative order, superadded to the potency and perfection it in ordine ad operationem perfectam et consummatam, by which the intellect is disposed to proceed orderly and surely in knowing the truth. He is not speaking of an entitative determination but of a preceeding determination in the intentional order. Even here, it is not a question of that determination of the intellect whereby the intelligible object informs the intellect and reduces it from potency to act. What St. Thomas means is clear from what he says:

Intellectus possibilis quantum sit  
de se est in potentia...non magis  
determinatus ad hoc quod adhaereat  
compositioni quam divisioni, vel e  
converso.

In other words, the determination in

question is a determination ad verum cognoscendum where the intellect through composition and division adheres firmly ad suum cognoscibile, that is, knows perfectly and judges firmly. Thus, when the intellect in composition and division judges firmly and without fear of error, and excludes the contradictory of what it affirms, then it is in a state of determination to its object which is its perfection. This determination and firm adherence to its knowable object is called certitude.

Virtus intellectus, cum versetur circa verum cognoscendum, perfectio ejus consistit in certitudine, quia tunc perfecte cognoscit et judicat. Intellectus cum cognoscit firmiter et certe, ita illa cognitio deficere non potest, tunc enim perfecte excludit suum oppositum et contrarium quod est falsum in quo consistit defectus intellectus. (1)

Certitude, then, always denotes determination, firmness, stability of assent and unwavering determination to the object. Formally, it signifies

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(1) Cf: Joan. a Sto Thoma, Curs. Theol., In Iam-IIae, disp. 16, a. 1, (Vivès, 1895), VI, p. 438.

the perfection of the intellect in which it is determined to its object. St. Thomas defines it:

Certitudo nihil aliud est quam  
determinatio intellectus ad unum.(1)

From this it is evident that the certitudo in question is not participated certitudo, that efficacious tending of the will, conjoined to and ordered by a preceeding knowledge and moved by an infallible motive towards its end. Nor is it that certitudo materiae, called objective certitudo, which is simply that permanent and unwavering stability of the thing entitatively considered, in so far as it is predetermined in its causes so that it cannot be other than it is. The certitudo in question, rather, is formal certitudo, (1) that determination and firm adherence of the intellect in affirming or denying one thing of another. And indeed, this is

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(1) Cf: III Sent., dist. 23, q. 2, a. 2, ala 3; et dist. 26, q. 2, a. 4; Ian a Sto Thoma, Curs. Theol., In Iam, disp. 2, a. 9, n. 1 (Solemnnes: Tournai, 1931), l. p. 289; Curs. Phil., Log., ll P., q. 26, a. 4 (Reiser: Taurini, 1930), v. 1, p. 803; Salmantienese, Curs. Theol., Tract. 17, disp. 2, dub. 5, n. 105 (Paris, 1879), xl, p. 153.

certitude strictly and simply speaking, because the determination and firm adherence to the object is found formally in the intellect and only in a related way in anything else. It should be further noted that not all adherence of the intellect is called certitude, but only the adherence ad suum cognoscibile.(1) An assent to what is false may be characterized by a certain "firmness" or rather, obstinacy, but this is not certitude because what is false is in no way the object or the perfection of the intellect. Furthermore, while it is true that certitude will always be found where there is formal truth, truth and certitude are formally distinct. For truth, it suffices that what the intellect affirms be conformed with what is. This conformity or adequation obtains even when there is no firm adherence to the object, as is evident in the case of opinion. Moreover, since this conformity to the object is indivisible--the intellect either is or is not conformed--one judgment cannot be truer than another. Certitude, however, consists in a decisive

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(1) Cf: 111 Sent., dist. 26, q. 2, a. 4.

adherence to what is affirmed, and can be greater or less according as the motive moves the intellect to greater firm adherence.

4) Finally in this text of the De Veritate St. Thomas determines the cause of formal certitude. This is a most important point in the comparison of the certitude of faith and science, first, because the intellect will be said adhere firmly only when it can be shown that the cause is capable and sufficient of producing firm adherence, and secondly, because the different degree of certitude will be determined according to more infallible causes capable of determining the intellect. In order to see the reason for this, it will be necessary to consider the rest of the text.

Omne autem quod est determinatum ad duo, non determinatur ad unum eorum nisi per aliquid movens ipsum. Intellectus autem possibilis non movetur nisi a duobus: scilicet a proprio objecto, quod est forma intelligibilis, scilicet quod quid est, ut dicitur in III De Anima, et a voluntate quae movet alias vires...

St. Thomas then shows how the intellect can stand in relation to the two parts of a contra-

diction. First, there are two instances in which the intellect is not determined:

- 1) Quandoque enim non inclinatur magis ad unum quam ad aliud, vel propter defectum moventium, sicut in illis problematibus de quibus rationes non habemus; vel propter apparentem aequalitatem eorum quae movent ad utramque partem; et ista est dubitantis dispositio;....
- 2) Quandoque vero intellectus inclinatur magis ad unum quam ad alterum; sed tamen illud inclinans non sufficienter movet intellectum ad hoc quod determinet ipsum in unam partem totaliter... et haec est dispositio opinantis....

He then sets forth instances in which the intellect is determined and therefore attains certitude:

Quandoque vero intellectus possibilis determinatur ad hoc quod totaliter adhaereat uni parti; sed hoc est quandoque ad intelligibili, quandoque a voluntate.

- 1) Ab intelligibili quidem quandoque mediate, quandoque immediate;
  - a) immediate quando ex ipsis intelligibilibus statim veritas propositionum intelligibilium infallibiliter apparet; et haec est dispositio intelligentis principia...



b) mediate vero, quando cognitio definitionibus terminorum, intellectus determinatur ad alteram partem contradictionis, virtute primorum principiorum; et ista est dispositio scientis.

2) Quandoque vero intellectus... determinatur a voluntate, quae eligit assentire uni parti determinate et praecise propter aliquid quod est sufficiens ad movendum voluntatem, non autem ad movendum intellectum, utpote quod videtur bonum vel conveniens huic parti assentire; et ista est dispositio credentis..(1)

Therefore, from this it is clear that the cause of certitude in the intellect can be twofold: either the proper object of the intellect, which by evidence moves the intellect to assent, or the will, which, because it moves all the powers of the Soul to their respective acts, can move the intellect when the object is not seen per se ipsum or cannot be resolved to what is per se evident. Thus, a determination of the intellect is obtained not because of a motive proper to the intellect but because of a motive proper to the will, a bonum conveniens.

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(1) De Ver. q. 14, a. 1.

Thus faith and science agree in this, that they both determine the intellect totally to one part of a contradiction, but they differ in the cause of determining. In science the intellect is determined in virtue of the first principles, because in so far as the conclusion can be shown to depend on the truth of first principles, the intellect is compelled to assent to it. And, in assenting to conclusions as well as the first principles, the intellect is determined by the evidence of the thing. In matters of faith, however, the intellect is determined immediately, not by anything in the intellect, but by the will of the one believing which chooses to adhere decisively to one part of a contradiction because it judges it to be good and fitting to assent and adhere to the one revealing, in so far as the latter is worthy of belief and cannot err. In so far as it is known that to adhere to the thing proposed is good, this suffices to move the will and incline it to assent determinately, although such a motive would not suffice to move the intellect to assent, since there is no evidence. The will, however, moved by a bonum conveniens, commands the intellect to adhere firmly to a truth, for example

that God is one in essence, and triune in persons. (1)

With these definitions and distinctions in mind, it will be possible now to compare the certitude of natural scientific knowledge with the certitude of faith. The question forms itself thus: which of these two has a formal motive that will determine the intellect more perfectly and hence cause greater certitude in the knower?

At first glance, it would seem that the certitude of science is stronger than the certitude of faith for the reasons which follow.

From what has been said previously, formal certitude implies two notes: first, firmness of adhesion, whereby the intellect, moved by its cause, assents strongly, and secondly evidence of that to which assent is given. Now whatever has more modes of certitude is more certain, at least extensively. But science has both the certitude of adherence and the certitude of evidence; faith, on the other hand, has only the certitude of adherence, and is therefore less certain.

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(1) Cf: Sylvester Ferrara in Summa Contra Gentiles, Lib. III, cap. 40, n. 2.

St. Thomas says in the Sentences:

Certitudo enim scientiae consistit in duobus, scilicet in evidentia, et firmitate adhaesionis. Certitudo vero fidei consistit in uno tantum, scilicet in firmitate adhaesionis. (1)

He says the same in the De Veritate:

Certitudo duo potest importare, scilicet firmitatem adhaesionis, et quantum ad hoc fides est certior omni intellectu et scientia, quia prima veritas, quae causat fidei assensum, est fortior causa quam lumen rationis quod causat assensum intellectus vel scientiae; importat etiam evidentiam ejus cui assentitur, et sic fides non habet certitudinem sed scientia et intellectus; et exinde est quod intellectus cognitionem non habet.

Therefore, while faith may produce certitude as regards firmness of adherence, even a greater certitude than natural science, it produces less, considering both adherence and evidence. Since certitude implies both, as St. Thomas says, that which contains firm adherence and evidence, namely naturally

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(1) 3 Sent., dist. 23, q. 2, a. 2 ala 3, ad 1.