

continue subject to voluntary restraint. Man is encircled by the systems of natural law, limited by them in his original constitution, rewarded or punished by them in his repeated actions. So far his activity is like any other natural product ; but the question remains, whether it does not essentially imply something more.

The question, then, in reference to the freedom of volition is confined to those acts which alone are entitled to be called volitions,—those in which the agent consciously seeks to reach a certain end. Accordingly, it leaves out of account, and we may throw aside as a meaningless fiction, that sort of freedom which has been called the “liberty of indifference,” that is, a power to act free from the influence of any motive whatever. Whether such a freedom can be claimed for man or not, it is not worth claiming ; for a motiveless act cannot be an intelligent act, since it implies no intelligence of the end which the act is designed to accomplish. On the freedom of the will, then, as thus defined, there are two theories, or sets of theories.

I. One holds that, whatever distinction may be drawn between the actions, to which the term volition is restricted, and those that are done unreflectingly, there is no difference in so far as the law of causality is concerned. According to this law, every phenomenon is absolutely determined by some antecedent phenomenon or phenomena ; and consequently every action of man receives its definite character from the immediately antecedent circumstances in which it was done, it being understood that antecedent circumstances comprehend the condition of the agent himself as well as the condition of his environment. The manifold agencies in the physical world excite their multitudinous tremors in the nervous system : these are followed by appropriate