

ST. THOMAS AND THE HURDLES

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T. THOMAS' use of objections in the *Summa Theologiae* puzzles many modern readers. Is there real value in asking a question and then placing three difficulties to snare the guileless beginner? And then after reading the objections, should the answers be read before tackling the main response of the article?

A better understanding of the rôle objections play in the *Summa* would be of immense value in sustaining interest in and gaining a better comprehension of St. Thomas' systematic treatment of the Catholic faith.

IT'S MILITARY

Inspecting the terminology used in the *Summa*, one would conjecture that the Latin word for *objection* in the mind of the Angelic Doctor is not *obiectio*, a pure noun form, as might be a first guess, but *objectum*, the perfect passive participle neuter used as a noun.¹ Among

¹ In the *Prima Pars* the sentence "*et per hoc patet responsio ad obiecta*" or variations is found at least 23 times; cf. I, q. 1, art. 4; q. 16, art. 2; q. 78, art. 1; q. 102, art. 3. It is always used with the plural. For the singular we find nearly all responses to the objections introduced by "*ad primum, ad secundum, etc.*" (which refers to a masculine or neuter noun). The formula "*unde patet solutio (responsio) ad primum, secundum, tertium*" appears about 23 times. The word "*obiectio*" appears only in the singular; usually in the form "*Dicendum quod obiectio illa procedit. . .*" It was observed 20 times. Cf. I, q. 3, art. 5, ad 2; q. 9, art. 2, ad 1; q. 27, art. 1, ad 1; art. 2, ad 1; q. 76, art. 5, ad 1. Once was found the sentence "*argumentum illud tenet quod. . .*" Cf. q. 28, art. 3, ad 1. Often an objection is called a "*ratio*," e.g. "*ratio illa procederet.*" Cf. I, q. 10, art. 4, ad 1; q. 14, art. 14, ad 1; q. 53, art. 1, ad 1. Variations of this appear at least 29 times.

The "*sed contra*" is also part of the objections as is indicated when it is occasionally answered. We read "*ad id vero quod in contrarium obicitur*"; cf. q. 14, art. 16. Also q. 30, art. 3; q. 54, art. 5; q. 58, art. 5; q. 66, art. 1; q. 85, art. 6.

However, the most proper terminology appears to be "*dubitatio*," cf. III, q. 27, art. 4, ad 2; q. 30, art. 4, ad 2, and "*dubitabilia*," which is not used in the *Summa*. These words are used in the Latin translations of Aristotle and in St. Thomas' *Commentaries*. Cf. *Comm. in Meta.*, Bk. I, 1. 2; Bk. III, 1. 1; *Comm. in Nichom. Ethic.*, Bk. VII, 1. 2; In *Lib. de Caelo*, I, 1. 22.

its meanings we find "something having been thrown," "something held up," "something presented," or "exposed." It should be noted that this is the same word that St. Thomas uses to say that a colored body is the *object* of sight, and sound the *object* of hearing. Thus a colored object must be held up and presented to the eye; sound must be presented to or directed toward the ear. This is using the word in the sense of "held before." An objection must be *held before* the mind in order to have a better appreciation for the truth. More than this, an objection has the sense of "held opposite." The "pros" and "cons" must be held opposite each other before the true position can be reached.

In this twofold sense objections are something like the hurdles in the famous military obstacles courses. To attain the truth one has to run an intellectual race; if he cannot surmount the difficulties which lie before him and are opposed to him, he fails to win the prize of truth. What is more important, if one cannot see the obstacles to be overcome, he is not even in the race. St. Thomas has gone to the trouble of placing pertinent perplexities before the student's mind. As a rule the objections are not numerous, and nearly always there is only one counter-argument placed in the *Sed Contra* before the chief solution. Comparing the objections of Aquinas' *Summa* with those of other medieval theologians, we soon discover that he has eliminated a host of useless arguments; he has retained and solved weighty, traditional difficulties and has added, moreover, new counterevidence useful in the elucidation of truth to abet the progress of beginners.²

If then, the student is possessed of sufficient ingenuity, he can run the race alone. For in the objections lies the heart of the problem and its solution. So, for the most part, if the reader is able to seize the inner strength of the difficulty, he can anticipate the answer St. Thomas will give. If one fails at this, then he can follow carefully the intrepid skill of St. Thomas as he vaults the seemingly skyscraping hurdles of error.

IT'S WONDERFUL

So much for the nominal meaning of *objection*. We have for the nominal definition of the word "a difficulty held before the mind and opposed to the true view of reality." It must be faced and overcome

² Cf. Grabmann-Zyburá, *Introduction to the Theological Summa of St. Thomas*, St. Louis, Herder, 1933, p. 82.

before one can claim to have reached the truth.³ But if we stop with the notion of difficulty without proceeding any farther, we have not succeeded in discovering the full force of the effect which objections should produce on the mind. Objections are supposed to produce fear! And yet more than fear! Fear is caused from the fact that we love something. The object of fear is a future evil which is approaching and is difficult to overcome. This evil is opposed to the good object we love. The lover will have to strain his whole being toward the conquest of the evil obstacles which throw themselves in the way of the truth beloved.⁴ The particular type of fear produced in regard to knowledge is called *admiration* or *wonder*. "For the lovers of wisdom are moved by admiration to seek after the truth."⁵ Long before St. Thomas, Aristotle hammered this point home. "It is through wonder that men now begin and originally began to philosophize; wondering in the first place at obvious perplexities, and then by gradual progression raising questions about the greater matters too, e.g. about the changes of the moon and of the sun, about the stars and about the origin of the universe. Now he who wonders and is perplexed *feels* that he is ignorant (thus the myth-lover is in a sense a philosopher, since myths are composed of wonders); . . . it was to escape ignorance that men studied philosophy . . ."⁶

Hence St. Thomas, in explaining this wondering as a type of fear, teaches that one who is in a state of wonderment or admiration refuses at the present instant to give a verdict in regard to that about which he is fascinated, *fearing failure in his attempt but seeking the answer at some future moment*. If the answer is conceived as possible to reach, the intellect will not give way to a fear which stupefies and ends in despair, but will be stimulated by hope to attain the desired good of

³ It would be well to point out here some synonyms which St. Thomas used. *Procedere, arguere, argumentari, ponere vel inducere rationes, disputare ad, obviare, instare, resistere* are all interchangeable with *obūcere*. The key word is *procedere* because it refers to the use of all difficulties in the correct logical approach to attaining the truth. Thus we can see the importance of introducing every article with "*ad primum sic proceditur*." The objections both pro and con are essential to the discovery of the truth. Cf. F. A. Blanche, O.P., "*Le vocabulaire de l'argumentation et la structure de l'article dans les ouvrages de Saint Thomas*" in *Revue des sciences philos. et theol.* 14 (1925), p. 180. Also M. D. Chenu, O.P., *Introduction a l'étude de Saint Thomas D'Aquin*, Montreal, Institut D'Études Médiévales, 1950, pp. 78-81.

⁴ Cf. I-II, q. 43, art. 1.

⁵ I-II, q. 41, art. 4, obj. 5.

⁶ *Metaphysics*, 982 b 12-33. Translated by Hugh Tredennick, Loeb Classical Library, New York, Putnam, 1933, p. 13.

knowledge. Hence we can say that wonderment is the beginning of all philosophizing.⁷

Furthermore, this wonderment at the marvelous is a cause of delight, and since anticipation of pleasure attracts the beginner, the pleasure involved, as well as the striving to attain it, should not be overlooked because pleasure necessarily follows the attainment of all good things. The reason for this is that admiration involves, besides fear, a certain *desire* for knowing which arises in a man when he sees an effect and does not understand its cause. Thus it causes *delight* in so far as a man, at the same time as he acknowledges his ignorance by *fearing* to answer, has a *hope* of attaining the knowledge of the thing he desires to know.⁸ It is this mild fear, coupled with a simultaneous hope of having knowledge at some future date, along with the pleasure which knowledge will cause, that every teacher must strive to excite in his students upon their very first contact in the classroom. Otherwise, the inner psychological nature of man will have been violated, and all forced teaching, being against the natural law, will avail nothing.

In setting up his objections, St. Thomas had deep regard for this profound concept of knowledge and for the basic necessity of interesting the student. He knew well that desire for pleasure in the good that is knowledge must be stirred up; nor did he forget that an act of humility in acknowledging ignorance at the beginning of study must always be made before one can attain the truth. His purpose is clearly set forth in the quotation from Aristotle. The nature of man requires that his desire for knowledge be aroused by something great but knowable. Truth is knowable. All the truths of faith and of its wisdom, theology, are great, unusual, and rare. He attempts to give a whole psychological setup in a few lines: their greatness and their knowability. He loads the difficulties with emotional overtones to stir up a desire for truth. In three short syllogistic objections and one *Sed*

⁷ Cf. I-II, q. 41, art. 4, ad 5. The relation of wonder to thought is discussed in "The Philosophical Act," the second essay in Joseph Pieper's recent work *Leisure the Basis of Culture*, New York, Pantheon, 1952, pp. 89-166.

The second element of doubt, *cogitation*, is not discussed here along with the initial element of *admiration*. For a careful analysis of doubt as an instrument of philosophy and theology, see "The Portals of Doubt" by Paul Farrell, O.P., in *The Thomist*, Vol. VIII, 1945, pp. 293-368.

⁸ Cf. I-II, q. 32, art. 8. We must note that there is an admiration in the intellect and an admiration in the appetite. Admiration is in the appetite by redundancy. Therefore in the concrete considerations of the process of causing knowledge and love of knowledge in others, we cannot forget a consideration of the emotions. Even the "cold" light of reason has an emotional backdrop, to which we must appeal.

Contra he presents "the gradual progression of raising questions about the greater matters."

In brief, we can say that the real notion of objection is that of a difficulty which arouses wonder (not merely fear, but fear and hope) and which stimulates a desire for knowledge and its pleasure. The element of wonder is more important than that of difficulty. If difficulties are presented to a beginner which fail to cause wonder, the process will be useless. Those reading the *Summa* by themselves should strive to produce this sense of wonderment in their own private study.⁹

IT'S LOGICAL

The whole strength of any objection is that it must appear to be true. Any error can take on a great semblance of respectability if it is clothed in logical garb. The objections therefore are placed for the most part in syllogistic form: Major, Minor, Conclusion. Above and beyond the individual syllogism, the three objections are closely linked in a systematic way. This inner connection is one of the hidden beauties of the gradual progression which bares the heart of a problem.

This point can best be illustrated by considering the first few articles of the *Prima Secundae*. To bring the subject matter to mind we present first an outline of the eight articles of the first question:¹⁰

(1)

In the first article "whether it belongs to man to act for an end?" there are three important terms: "man," "to act," and "for an end." The sentence for the sake of brevity might be recast: "man's acts for an end?" The subject is "man"; the whole predicate is "acts for an end." The most important term is "for an end," which from the viewpoint of logic is the ultimate predicate. In the original sentence, "to act" is the proximate predicate (and, as it were, the immediate subject of "for an end"). The term "man" is only a subject, that is, that about which both predicates are said.

We know from logic that the predicate is the principal part of a

⁹ Objections can be divided into the "natural doubt of admiration" (*dubitatio admirationis*) and "methodical doubt" or the "doubt of discussion" (*dubitatio discussionis*). Cf. III, q. 27, art. 4. In this article we are treating of both in general. Briefly, we can say that all objections aim at the discovery of the proper middle term for the syllogism which will prove the true conclusion.

¹⁰ This division is borrowed from J. M. Ramirez, O.P., *De Hominis Beatitudine*, Vol. I, Salmanticae, Consejo Superior De Investigaciones Cientificas, 1942, pp. 163-166.

			art.	
Ultimate End in general	its existence	some end exists	in itself	formally 1
				materially 2
			in its effect	3
			the ultimate end exists	4
	its nature	for one man	in intention	5
			in execution	6
			for all men	7
			for inferior creatures	8

sentence because it is related to the subject as the soul is related to the body. Unless we have said something about the subject, we have not expressed a complete thought, and it is of the essence of thought and language to assert something definite. The predicate, to use a technical word, *determines* the subject.

In this article St. Thomas raises three objections: one for each important word, in order of its importance. The first objection insists that the very meaning of *end* is such that man cannot act for an end. Likewise, the second objection contends that, action being what it is, man cannot *act* for an end. Lastly, the third objection argues that *man*, in his very rationality, cannot act for an end. St. Thomas in three objections has attacked the position he wishes to hold from every possible angle. Any further difficulties would either repeat these in some other way, or else they would introduce extraneous matter.

We may wonder why St. Thomas, in proposing the three difficulties, begins with the hardest and then proceeds to the lesser objections. We say that the first is the hardest, at least in the sense that it attacks the most important word. In answering this, Father Ramirez, O.P., points out that, just as in teaching the truth, the correct pedagogical method is to begin with the more easily known truths which gradually lead to truths harder to grasp in an ascending process; so in attacking the truth, which is just the reverse of teaching, one should proceed in

reverse order from the most difficult objection to the easier, descending as it were, and being made to retreat step by step before the efficacious onslaught of the defender of truth. So in writing the article on whether man acts for an end, we see that St. Thomas truly acted as a man proceeding in a deliberate way for the end of giving and defending truth in a proper manner. Even the mode of procedure gives the lie to the conclusions of the objections!¹¹

(2)

In the first article we observed how the objections were aimed in a definite pattern against the subject and predicate. In the second article the standard English translation reads "whether it is proper to the rational nature to act for an end?" Here we have a problem in determining the true subject and predicate. The Latin reads literally "whether to act for an end is a property of a rational nature?" This literal version points out more clearly the true subject and predicate. The whole subject is "to act for an end" while the predicate is "a property of a rational nature." Notice that St. Thomas has taken the subject and predicate of the first article and has inverted them to propose the question of the second article. He does this to emphasize the only new word "property."

A strict property is that characteristic of a thing which belongs always and only to a species and to every individual in a species. The logical device of inverting the order of the sentence readily reveals whether or not a property is a strict one. For example, barring the freaks of nature, we can say that "every man is two-legged," but we can never say that "every two-legged creature is a man." Therefore, the characteristic of being two-legged is not a strict property of man. One strict property of man is his basic capacity to enjoy the incongruous: risibility. Thus every man is risible, everything risible is always a man, and only human beings are risible.

St. Thomas showed in the first article that man, in his human acts, acts for an end. Now he asks whether acting for an end is a strict property of man. Just as the first article had two elements in the predicate, so this article has two elements in the subject: "to act" and "for an end." St. Thomas again raises three objections, starting with the strongest against the predicate: "man"; then against "to act," since action is in the middle between the one who acts and the end toward which he is acting.

Reading the objections in context reveals the fact that these ob-

¹¹ Cf. Ramirez, *ibid.* pp. 181-186, 199-206.

jections are raised precisely because they seem to be the logical conclusions of the first article. It would seem that the position St. Thomas wishes to hold in the second article is contradictory to the conclusion of the first article. By using the objections of the second article to point out the absurdities that would follow from a misunderstanding of the first article, St. Thomas obtains a harmony and unity which is traceable through the whole *Summa*. This is one of the wonders which is designed to entice the student to seek more intently the pleasures of knowledge.

This linking is a necessary feature of a truly organized science because the conclusions and demonstrations of a science are to be arranged in order, so that one conclusion is a principle for the demonstration of the next.¹² So then, in reading article two, we should notice what might be used as objections in article three. St. Thomas rarely goes to outside sources for his difficulties; rather he brings up problems which are inherent in the very subject matter. With knowledge of this device we can go on to follow the Angelic Doctor with greater alertness and deeper penetration.¹³

(3)

We have already set a basic pattern for the procedure which will apply, with variations of course, to a great number of the objections in the *Summa*. Once again we find in article three, "whether human acts are specified by their end?" that there are three terms involved, against which there are three objections. The whole predicate is "are specified for an end." The first difficulty attacks the notion of *end* as end. The second objection is concerned with the term "are specified" from the special viewpoint of the tense of the verb: in the present time, here and now, actually. The third objection deals with the subject "human acts" since it seems that an *act* performed here and now can have several different ends in view. In regard to the first two objections note that the first deals with the *essence* of end as end while the second attacks the *condition* under which the end specifies.¹⁴

(4)

In article four "whether there is one last end of human life?" there are the usual three objections. In passing it should be noted that

¹² Cf. I-II, q. 54, art. 4, ad 3.

¹³ Cf. Ramirez, *op. cit.* pp. 246-251.

¹⁴ Cf. Ramirez, *ibid.*, pp. 269-278.

the standard English translation is not accurate. In the Latin, St. Thomas asks "whether there is *some* last end of human life?" This article is merely on the fact of the existence of *some* ultimate end. If he were to prove in every possible sense that only one existed, it would be foolish to ask in the next article whether one man can have *several* ultimate ends.

The three objections in this article attack only two notions. The notion of "end" is objected to twice in relation to the possibility of its existence, but only in one sense does it seem absurd to conceive of "human life" as having an ultimate end. The predicate in this argument is the verb "is," "to be," or "to exist." St. Thomas raises no objection against the predicate. Of course, the question could be rephrased "whether human life has some ultimate end?" This arrangement would indicate that the term "ultimate end" is the more formal element, and consequently, the part to be attacked first. For, if the notion of ultimate end contained some inherent contradiction, then human life could never have one. In the first two objections there is a certain gradation, as in the previous articles. The *essential* notion of end is attacked and then the *condition under which* the final cause would operate, in this case, knowledge. The third objection arises from the human life which would be influenced by the causality of the ultimate end.¹⁵

After proving that an ultimate end exists, there seems to be in this article an implication, or, at least, a possibility, that more than one ultimate end might exist for a particular individual. This is the basis for St. Thomas' development of the objections in article five. The connection is a little tenuous in this instance, but it is still there.

With this brief treatment of question one, the essential rôle objections play in the construction of an article should be clear. It is not an absolute rule, of course, that the first objection always carries the most weight. Nevertheless, it takes a great deal of thoughtful investigation to discover the exceptions to the rule. Certainly the generalization is warranted that there is a basic pattern in St. Thomas' difficulties. An attempt to find it is most rewarding. For by consciously studying the way in which the objections progressively attack the subject and/or predicate of the topical sentence, the reader will profit as Aquinas intended that he should. He will achieve the goal set by Aquinas in his *Commentary on Aristotle's De Anima*: "For in writing an Introduction one has three objects in view: first, *to gain the reader's good will*; secondly *to dispose him to learn*; thirdly, *to win his atten-*

¹⁵ Cf. Ramirez, *ibid.* pp. 295-305.

tion. The first object one achieves by showing the reader the value of the knowledge in question; the second by explaining the plan and divisions of the treatise; the third by warning him of its difficulties."¹⁶

IT'S DEFINITIVE

Well chosen objections can quickly win a reader's attention and gain his good will. But just how do they 'dispose him to learn'? They do so by unobtrusively providing him with the necessary pre-notes. St. Thomas uses the objections to focus the reader's thought on the *status quaestionis*. For here, in the preliminary objections, are found important opinions or distinctions. If a distinction or division is not actually made in the objection, the weight of the difficulty forces the one answering to make it. Frequently objections contain definitions which are essential to our understanding of the body of the article. In the first of the articles already cited, since the first objection attacks the very notion of "end," it ought to contain within its syllogistic terms the key words by which end is defined. This we find to be the case. The objection tries to show that an end is not a *cause* because it has the notion of *ultimate*. Furthermore, the cause of action is *that on account of which a man acts*. Trying to collect at least a working definition from this, we can say that an end is "some ultimate cause on account of which a man acts." Try to understand the article without this definition! To pass over this objection is to try to skip the first and second acts of the mind for the sake of the third. The harried beginner tries to reason without understanding the terms he must use. Since understanding is the beginning of all reasoning¹⁷, he gets nowhere.

An experienced philosopher might manage perhaps without reading the objections. On first seeing the title "whether a habit is a quality?"¹⁸ he might easily recall at least three different senses of the key word. But Aquinas has beginners in mind. For their benefit he employs the objections and the *Sed Contra* to reveal four different meanings of the word "habit." This adaptation of the logical device of division is used by him as a prelude to attaining the desired definition. It is only reasonable that we follow his method of development by reading the objections first. Like the athlete warming up before a contest, we must at least loosen up our mental muscles. But if we really desire to get into the spirit of the game and to see it through successfully, we would do well to include the answers to the objections in our prelimi-

¹⁶ Translated by Foster, O.P., and Humphries, O.P., New Haven, Yale University Press, 1951, p. 44, 2). Italics mine.

¹⁷ Cf. I, q. 79, art. 8.

¹⁸ Cf. I-II, q. 49, art. 1.

nary reading. The corpus, the vital core of the article, should be the final point of attack.

"Just as he," comments St. Thomas, "who wishes to break a corporal bond must first inspect the bond and the manner in which it has been forged, so too he who wishes to solve the difficulties must first examine all the difficulties and their causes. . . . And this is so, because as the end of the journey is that which is intended by the one traveling, so the exclusion of doubt is the end which is intended by the one seeking for the truth. But it is clear that he who does not know where he is going cannot directly get to any definite place except by chance. Likewise, neither can any one directly look for truth unless he has first examined the difficulties. . . . Just as from the fact that one does not know exactly where he is going, it follows that when he arrives at the place which he sought, he doesn't know whether he should sit down and take a rest or keep right on going, so likewise when someone does not know the difficulties, he cannot know when he discovers the truth, because he does not know the end of his inquisition, the solution of the difficulties. . . . For those who wish to investigate the truth it is necessary to doubt well before they go to work. . . . And this because the later investigation of the truth is nothing else than the solution of the prior doubts."¹⁹

IT'S HISTORICAL

Another important asset to be treasured in the objections is their historical value. Unfortunately at times this aspect cannot be detected easily without some knowledge of the history of theology. But a single case history might illustrate the point. In the early centuries of the Church there were many heresies in regard to the Trinity. The meanings of pertinent words were seriously debated as well as their proper translation from Greek to Latin. Towards the end of the Patristic Era, Boethius wrote several books in which his doctrine, owing to lack of precision in his terminology, seems obscure and perhaps heterodox to the average student. But properly interpreted and with his terminology clarified, his work is priceless. St. Thomas quotes from Boethius works in two objections and again in two arguments in the *Sed Contra*.²⁰ Thus a masterful summary of the principal difficulties of centuries of theological debate is found in a few short lines which give the necessary background for proper appreciation of the dogmatic decrees of the Councils of the Church.

¹⁹ Comment. in *Metaphysica*, Bk. III, 1. 1.

²⁰ I, q. 29, art. 2.

IT'S BRIEF

Early in the article we mentioned that St. Thomas chose to eliminate from the *Summa*, which he intended for beginners, a host of useless arguments. Rather than let this appear to be a mere assertion, it would be well to contrast another of his works as representative of the age to see whether he actually accomplished this end. The *Quaestiones Disputatae* represent summaries of debates which, as Master in Sacred Theology, St. Thomas conducted once every week from 1256 to 1259 and twice weekly from 1265 to 1272. They were part of the regular academic course of the times. Objections necessarily abounded. In the particular work *The Virtues*²¹ they vary from twelve to twenty-seven. The following question asked in article two: "Whether St. Augustine's definition of virtue is a good one?" is typical. St. Augustine defines virtue as: "A good quality of mind, by which we live righteously, of which no one can make bad use; which God works in us, without us."²² Against this definition St. Thomas advances twenty-one objections. These may be reduced to a few main points following the system outlined in the appendix of the translation already cited.

1. Objections: It would seem that it is not:
 - a. Against "good" in the definition.....obj. 1 to 10.
 - b. Against "mind" in the definition.....obj. 11 to 13.
 - c. Against "righteously" in the definition.....obj. 14.
 - d. Against "live" in the definition.....obj. 15.
 - e. Against "of which no one can make a bad use"
in the definition.....obj. 16 and 17.
 - f. Against "which God works in use, etc." in
the definition.....obj. 18 to 21.

In other words there are six main objections. Turning to the parallel article in the *Summa*, I-II, q. 55, art. 4, we notice immediately that there are six objections! Their order differs just slightly:

- Against "good".....obj. 1 and 2.
- Against "mind".....obj. 3.
- Against "righteously" and "live".....obj. 4.
- Against "of which no one can make a
bad use".....obj. 5.
- Against "which God works in us".....obj. 6.

²¹ *St. Thomas Aquinas on the Virtues (in general)*. Translated with introduction and Notes by John Patrick Reid, O.P., Providence, Providence College Press, 1951. Cf. pp. x, 125.

²² *De Libero Arbitrio*, II, 19 (PL 32, 1268).

Note also that these objections line up in logical order, attacking first the most generic word of the definition, then the more proximate genus down to the specific difference. By carefully examining the objections one should have the definition of virtue well in hand, with meaning attached to each word, before even reading the article itself. More important, the memory of the definition will come, not from a sheerly repetitious exercise, but from a realization of its genesis through the logical process of division.

IT'S EXPOSITIVE

Among the primary meanings we attached to the word "objection" in the beginning of our article was "something exposed." St. Thomas' use of objections does not gainsay this meaning of the word. An objection, a good objection, provided it is well understood, is an exposition of the problem at hand. The stumbling block at the heart of the problem is laid bare. If one can only see the objection, he is sure that he is on the road to truth. If one cannot see it, why go farther? The hurdles must be seen and cleared if the prize is to be won. For these *objects* of St. Thomas are the clearest, shortest, most logical barriers which lead the mind unerringly on in its quest for truth. If the road becomes easy to travel, one must beware of blind superficiality.

With greater assurance that St. Thomas meant what he wrote in his Prologue to the whole *Summa* about avoiding the multiplication of useless questions, articles, and arguments, we perhaps can avoid on our part the weariness and confusion of mind which comes from dull reading and reasoning without understanding. St. Thomas' desire was to have us all good soldiers, athletes, hurdling with ease, and not by-passing, the objects of error to win the prize of truth.

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