

THE  
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INHIBITION AND THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

THE confusion incident to the old controversy about freedom is due to a very simple error. The disputants fail to distinguish between the *proof* and the *conditions* of it. By the proof of it we mean either the testimony of consciousness, or those circumstances which, although not necessary to freedom, make any other supposition impossible. By the conditions of it, we mean the circumstances that are necessary to it or the characteristics that constitute it. It may be that in some cases the proof and the conditions will coincide or be identical. But this may be so infrequent that we do not require to take it into account. It is necessary, however, to avoid the confusion of the two, because of the fallacious tendency to deny the fact of freedom on the ground that the circumstances which would prove it do not exist. What we shall, therefore, endeavor to do in this article is to keep this *ratio cognoscendi* and the *ratio essendi* distinct, and to indicate the circumstances which interfere with the supposition of pure mechanical causation in volition. The former feature of our endeavor involves an analysis of our conception of freedom, its proof and its conditions, and the latter will be characterized by an explanation of what inhibition does to interrupt the causal nexus between external influences and volitional impulse.

Freedom is a much more complex conception than is usually supposed. It is made so by the implications connected with it, many of them wrongly connected with it by reason of the