

If one knows that a thing is without knowing what it is, then plainly one is not apprehending the thing.

Still it might be urged that the knowledge was the fruit of abstraction. One had an empirical apprehension, say in the sensible order. Next one abstracted from the sensible datum merely the fact that it was something with an essence, prescind^g entirely from what the essence was.

Now with regard to this view, I think we may admit that it cannot be demonstrated to be impossible. But there is this against it. *Entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem*. There is no ground for inventing a method of abstraction by which we can know that there is an essence without in any way knowing what the essence is, when we already possess the principle of sufficient reason that gives us the same result without any abstraction. Further, we shall need the concept of abstraction in an entirely different context, and one cannot help thinking that to obtrude abstraction into this issue is simply a blind traditionalism.

It follows that absolute being is not a being something, for we have shewn that being something involves not being.

Since then absolute being is, and is not something, it remains that it is simpliciter; its being is not being this or that, but being itself, the plenitude of being, ipsum esse.

Now with relation to limited being, we may note the following about absolute being.

First, it is all that they are in so far as they are, for it is the plenitude of being.

Second, it is not them, for if it were, then its being would be identical with theirs and so with theirs involve not being. But the absolute is what in no way involves not being.

Third, it is all that they are, not as they are what they are, this is, with their limitations and so with their implication of not being, but modo eminentiori, or modo illimitato. The infinite is not an aggregate of finites, a Noah's ark, nor a composite fusion of finites, like a hermaphrodite, but a transcendental synthesis of pure perfections.