

Objection 1. It would seem that the intellect cannot know contingent things: because, as the Philosopher says (*Ethic.* vi, 6), the objects of understanding, wisdom and knowledge are not contingent, but necessary things.

Objection 2. Further, as stated in *Phys.* iv, 12, “what sometimes is and sometimes is not, is measured by time.” Now the intellect abstracts from time, and from other material conditions. Therefore, as it is proper to a contingent thing sometime to be and sometime not to be, it seems that contingent things are not known by the intellect.

On the contrary, All knowledge is in the intellect. But some sciences are of the contingent things, as the moral sciences, the objects of which are human actions subject to free-will; and again, the natural sciences in as far as they relate to things generated and corruptible. Therefore the intellect knows contingent things.

I answer that, Contingent things can be considered in two ways; either as contingent, or as containing some element of necessity, since every contingent thing has in it something necessary: for example, that Socrates runs, is in itself contingent; but the relation of running

to motion is necessary, for it is necessary that Socrates move if he runs. Now contingency arises from matter, for contingency is a potentiality to be or not to be, and potentiality belongs to matter; whereas necessity results from form, because whatever is consequent on form is of necessity in the subject. But matter is the individualizing principle: whereas the universal comes from the abstraction of the form from the particular matter. Moreover it was laid down above (a. 1) that the intellect of itself and directly has the universal for its object; while the object of sense is the singular, which in a certain way is the indirect object of the intellect, as we have said above (a. 1). Therefore the contingent, considered as such, is known directly by sense and indirectly by the intellect; while the universal and necessary principles of contingent things are known only by the intellect. Hence if we consider the objects of science in their universal principles, then all science is of necessary things. But if we consider the things themselves, thus some sciences are of necessary things, some of contingent things.

From which the replies to the objections are clear.