

Fernando Pessoa

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Suppose a man to act wrongly. Now this man either has a moral sense or has not.

If he have not he acts wrongly only to other men, and in ignorance. Here, *peccatum ab errore*.

If he have, how is it that he commits a wrong deed? If he does — nay, rather, since he does, and since he has a moral sense, either that moral sense does not act, or, if it act, it is susceptible of being overruled.

The first hypothesis is false: a power that does not act is nothing at all, consists but in the supposition, in words void of sense.

As to the second hypothesis, it appears, since the first hypothesis is false, that either the moral sense varies in intensity from man to man, that, therefore, the moral sense is susceptible of degrees (material), or that it is present in some men and absent in others.

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