CHAPTER - III
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THE NATURE OF WILL

The concept of will is an important concept of philosophy and psychology. It almost includes all the criteria of mental life. Will or volition includes the activities like motives, desires, deliberations, decisions, choices, doing, striving and trying actions etc. Motive literally means what moves us to act in a particular way. A motive may mean an efficient cause of action or a final cause of action. Motive instructs us to move, incite and to act in a particular way. It is a spring of action or a feeling of want and it may be said to be a feeling of pleasure, pain, emotion of anger, fear or hatred. Thus motive is intimately related with will. The act of willing is known as volition.

Like motive, desire is a factor in the act of volition or will. First, there is a feeling of want. It is converted into a desire by the self. When a desire is chosen by the self after deliberation there is choice. Thus there can be no volitions without desires. An inefficient desire is simply a desire. A dominant desire is called a wish. But the universe of desire is called the will.

Will is a person's conscious determination to carry out a given action or actions. It is the natural desire for something or the tendency regarding an intellectually known object. Volition or will activity can be of many different kinds. Volition is desire if it regards an object absent and not possessed; it is called enjoyment if it regards the goal or end; it is called resolution if it regards means.
and interest. It is choice if it involves selection between various motives. Thus we see that the concept of will includes motives, desire, deliberation etc. Will therefore, indicates not only the chosen desire that is consistent with our universe of desire but also the one we intend to attain at any cost. A wish is a single dominant desire, while will depends on the dominance of a universe of desire.

Generally it is believed that the mind or soul has three parts, namely thoughts, feeling and will and the mind function in three different modes such as the cognitive mode, the emotive mode and the conative mode. Without will, mind cannot function properly. Again some philosophers think of a movement as being really two things causally connected. (i) a mental activity and (ii) Its effect, i.e. a bodily movement. Instances of the mental activity can be called as acts of willing. Volition or will is believed as a special act of mind. It is through this volitions that mind actualises its ideas and plans. It is believed that there exists two separate entities like mental and physical and there is no identity in their occurrences. The mental acts of volition are taken as cause and bodily act as effects.

Thus volition puts one’s muscles into action. It assumes that there are mental states and processes enjoying one sort of existence and bodily states and processes enjoying another. An occurrence on the one stage is never numerically identical with an occurrence in the other.

Traditionally it is believed that there is a causal relation between will and action. Any action is always related with a will. First, there is the will to do certain action i.e. there is the mental activity called willing and then the action follows.
Action is described as voluntary or involuntary, intentional or unintentional, successful or unsuccessful, moral or immoral as well as intelligent or stupid. But these distinctions apply only to that action as opposed to mechanical movement. By a voluntary or intentional action is meant an action performed by a rational agent not through any blind impulse, but knowingly and intelligently with prevision and free choice of the means and end. Voluntary actions are actions of moral judgement. On the otherhand, actions like inanimate, spontaneous, reflex, instinctive, ideo-motor, imitative, accidental, actions of children, insane persons and idiots are involuntary actions. They are non-moral actions. The three voluntary actions are attention, deliberation and fixed purpose or resolution. Every man knows that he can turn his attention for a longer or a shorter time, and with more or less intenseness, as he pleases. It is a voluntary act, and depends upon his will. But involuntary actions do not depend on will. They are spontaneous.

The problem of freedom of will has raised controversy among the philosophers. Some philosophers advocate the doctrine that there is no freedom of will which is known as determinism or necessarianism. Others advocate that there is freedom of will. According to determinism a volition which is not determined by antecedent circumstances or the so-called free volition would be an event without a cause i.e. a miracle, which is impossible. Life and mind being more complex forms of matter and mechanism are subject to the rigid laws of nature. Man cannot take initiative in any action. My muscles contract because of the inflow of nervous energy.
Thus the determinists deny any freedom of will. They hold the human will is bound by the iron grip of eternal and immutable laws. There is no freedom anywhere, only an unbending necessity. The psychology of voluntary action implies determinism. Our volitions are determined by our motives and desires. Volition is determined by the strength of motive. The strength of motive again, is determined by the physical and social environment and partly by the character of the individual. Character of the individual is again, determined partly by heredity and partly by the structure of the individual’s nervous system. Thus our volitions are rigidly determined. But the arguments advanced by determinism against freedom of will are not adequate. While we act, we are also conscious that we are doing it deliberately and intentionally. Freedom of will is a necessary postulate of our moral life. The terms ‘duty’ ‘obligation’ etc. would be meaningless without any reference to freedom of will. Freedom of will either means indeterminism or self-determinism. Indeterminism holds that the self can determine its own volition without any motive or reason. But freedom does not mean indeterminism. The self is free in the sense that it determines its own volition and course of action. We ourselves determine our volitions in the light of moral ideal. The self determines its own volitions according to the ideal of highest good. Therefore freedom means self-determinism. The concept of self-determinism reconciles a golden mean between extreme determinism and total indeterminism.

Thomas Reid offers the following definition of will:

"Every man is conscious of a power to determine, in things which he
conceives to depend upon his determination. To this power we give the name of will.44

According to Reid, the term will is often put to signify the act of determining, which is more properly called volition. Volition signifies the act of willing and determining, and will is put indifferently to signify either the power of willing or the act. But in the writings of some philosophers the term will has a more extensive meaning. In the general division of our faculties into understanding and will, passions, appetites, and affections are comprehended under the will; and so it is made to signify not only our determination to act or not to act, but every motive and incitement to action. Thus, desire, aversion, hope, fear, joy, sorrow, all our appetites, passions, and affections, etc. are modifications of the will. But the motives to action, and the determination to act or not to act, are things that have no common nature.

Reid makes some observations on the nature of will which are as follows:

The first observation is that every act of will must have an object. Anyone that wills must will something, and that which he wills is called the object of volition. As a man cannot think without thinking of something, nor remember without remembering of something, so neither can he will without willing something. Therefore, every act of will must have an object and the person who wills must have some conception of what he wills. Thus things done voluntarily are distinguished from things done merely from instinct or merely from habit. For example, a healthy child, some hours after its birth, feels the sensation of hunger.

44 Thomas, Reid • Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind, P. 57, 1969
and if applied to the breast, sucks and swallows its food very perfectly. But we cannot say any reason that the child has any conception of that complex operation. Thus one cannot say that the child wills to suck. We find numberless instances done by animals without any precious conception of what they are to do or without the intention of doing it. They act by some inward blind impulse. Other things are done by habit, which cannot properly be called voluntary.

The second observation of will is that the immediate object of will must be some action of our own. Here will is distinguished from two acts of the mind i.e. desire and command. But many later writers have represented desire as a modification of will. Both desire and command must have an object and therefore both must be accompanied with some degree of understanding. But they differ in several things.

The object of desire may be anything which appetite, passion or affection leads us to pursue; it may be any event which we think good for us or for those to whom we are well affected. For example, I may desire meat or drink or ease from pain; but to say that I will meat or will drink or will ease from pain, is not correct English. Therefore, there is a distinction of common language between desire and will. The distinction between them is that what we will must be an action and it is our own action. But what we desire may not be our own action, it may be no action at all. Desire is only an incitement to will, but it is not volition. The determination of the mind may be, not to do what we desire to do. But as desire is often accompanied by will, we are apt to overlook the distinction between them. The command of a
person is sometimes called his will, sometimes his desire. But when these words are used properly, they signify three different acts of the mind. The immediate object of will is some action of our own; the object of a command is some action of another person, over whom we claim authority; the object of desire may be no action at all. A command being a voluntary action, there must be a will to give command. Some desire is commonly the motive to that act or will, and the command is the effect of it. A command is the social act of the mind.

The third observation is that the object of our volition must be something which we believe to be in our power, and to depend upon desire to make a visit to the moon or to the planet Jupiter, but he cannot will or determine to do it because he knows it is not in his power. Therefore, it is evident that what we will must be believed to be in our power and to depend upon our will.

The fourth observation of will is that when we will to do a thing immediately, the volition is accompanied with an effort to execute that which we willed. For example, if a man wills to raise a great weight from the ground by strength of his arm, he makes an effort for that purpose. He determines to raise that weight. But we should remember the fact that a great weight requires a great effort and a small weight requires a less effort.

The last observation of Reid is that in all determinations of the mind, there must be something in the preceding state of the mind that disposes or inclines us to that determination. If the mind were always in a state of perfect indifference without any incitement, motive or reason, to act or not to act then our active power would
be gone in vain. We should either be altogether in active and never will to do any thing, or our volitions would be perfectly unmeaning and futile. But God has given everybody any degree of active power. God has given some principles of action suited to our state and situation. Thus the concept of will occupies an important place in Reid's observation.

In the western philosophy Rene Descartes is the most prominent philosopher to determine the nature of will. He says that we have two activities: (i) a mental activity and (ii) its effect, i.e., a bodily activity. The acts of willing or acts of volition can be called as mental activity. Descartes' theory of will lies in the fact that a person comprises two distinct substances, i.e., soul and body. Gilbert Ryle calls this theory as "the dogma of the ghost in the machine".

According to Descartes, the workings of the body are motions of matter in space. The causes of these motions must be either other motions of matter or in the privileged case of human beings. But the mental activities are not movements of matter in space. Mental activities can cause muscles to contract. For example, to describe a man as intentionally pulling the trigger is to state that such a mental thrust or activity did cause the contraction of the muscles of his finger. Descartes, in his treatise on "The Passions of the Soul", deals with the feelings like fear, anger, joy, love, admiration, respect, scorn, pride, humility, bravery, pity, sadness, etc. which signify will as mental phenomena.

Locke defines volition to be,"An act of the mind, knowingly exerting that dominion it takes itself to have over any part of the man by employing in it, or
withholding it from any particular action." Volition may more briefly be defined, the
determination of the mind to do, or not to do something which we concrete to be in
our power. Locke mainly held two propositions regarding the concept to will - (i)
We get the idea of active power through reflection (introspection) when we perform
some voluntary movement. (ii) We cannot comprehend "how our minds move or
stop our bodies by thought."

D M Armstrong's book "A Materialist Theory of the Mind" is an attempt to
give an account of all mental states as states of the person apt for the bringing
about of certain sorts of physical behaviour. Classical theories of mind saw it as an
inner arena. Behaviourism saw the mind as outward act.

Regarding the concept of will, Armstrong says -

"It is convenient to begin the account of the mental concepts with a discussion
of the will. When I speak of 'the will' I intend the phrase to be taken in the broadest
possible sense. It is intended to cover every sort of mental process that is of the
conative sort, as opposed to the cognitive sort, or any other sort there may be. It is
a label for a whole great department of mental activities."

Armstrong discusses the words 'to act purposively'. Purposive activity is
behaviour with a mental cause. But not all behaviour brought about by a mental
state is purposive activity. Anxiety may produce a rapid heart-beat, but the beating
of the heart is not a purposive activity. What makes off purposive activities. The
beating of the heart is merely a bodily happening, while striking somebody on

purpose is an action. But this is no more than the verbal satisfaction if we want to
uphold a 'causal' theory of purposive activity. For we cannot say what the difference is between mere bodily happenings and actions proper. But we can say that actions are physical events that are caused in a certain way. If somebody raises his arm with the intention of striking another, then he raises his arm with a purpose. But if he raises his arm without any mental action, but simply because it comes into his head to do so, we may not always wish to say that he has any purpose in raising his arm. But here the phrase 'acting purposefully' is intended to cover both these cases. It is a mistake to think that all purposive acting is a matter of physical as opposed to mental happenings. Working out a long division sum in one's head is as much a case of purposive activity as deliberately striking somebody.

Modern philosophy has shown a tendency to ignore the cases where the purposive train of events is purely mental. Thus will covers every sort of mental process that is conative, cognitive, emotive etc. It is a level for a whole great department of mental activities. The philosophy of the will has received a good deal of attention in recent years also. Will is an inner cause.

Wittgenstein has given us a classical formulation of the problem of purposive activity. To say that I raise my arm entails that my arm rises. But my arm can rise without my having raised it. What must be added to the rising of my arm to give the raising of my arm? The answer is the mere physical behaviour to give 'behaviour proper'. This problem was first introduced by Wittgenstein and following him it was raised by the modern analytic philosopher Gilbert Ryle. But before Wittgenstein it was unchallenged orthodoxy. Armstrong, further admits that having of purposes
and intentions are not events or processes, but are states of our mind. They are states with causal powers. They are the powers to initiate and sustain trains of physical or mental activity.

Thus some argument of recent philosophy designed to show that purposive activity cannot possibly be the effect of mental cause. Here we see the quite special power of an analysis of mental occurrences in terms of "states of the person apt for the bringing about of certain behaviour."

The logically central cases of 'behaviour proper' involve purpose. If there was no purposive behaviour there could be no 'behaviour proper'. An account of purposive behaviour will be discussed here. There are some arguments against the view that purposive activity is the effect of a mental cause. There seems to be some logical bond between intention and the occurrence of the thing. But there cannot be any bond between ordinary cause and effect.

Thus purposive activity is behaviour with a mental cause. But not all behaviour brought about by a mental state is purposive activity. Anxiety may produce a rapid heart-beat, but the beating of the heart is not a purposive activity. It may be said that the beating of the heart is merely a bodily happening, while striking somebody on purpose is an action. But this seems to give no more than verbal satisfaction if we want to uphold a causal theory of purposive activity.

The essential role of information in purposive action that enables us to understand a phenomenon very clearly brought out by Miss Anscombe.\(^46\) She maintains the fact that behaviour can be intentional behaviour under one description.

\(^{46}\) Anscombe · Intention (Blackwell, 1958)
and yet not be intentional behaviour under another description. Suppose that I am pumping water to a house and that the motion of my arm is throwing peculiar shadows on the ground. It may be true description of my action or physical event, that I am pumping water, and also that I am throwing peculiar shadows on the ground. But there my action is intentional under the first description and not intentional under the second description. Thus the notion of purposive activity involves operating with concepts. There must be something in the mental cause which is fit for the operation of information upon it so that the cause is then modified in some appropriate manner. But the statements that concepts are essentially involved in the operation of those mental causes which steer our purposive activities may lead to misunderstanding.

Regarding the immediate acts of will Armstrong says, "Since we have accepted the classical view that purposive action is action initiated and sustained by a mental cause, we are also committed to the view that the causal chain involved begins in the mind (whether or not this is identified with the brain), that impulses and travels along the nerve-pathes, changes occur in the muscles, then in other parts of the body and finally in objects outside the body."{ Armstrong, D.M. A Materialist Theory of the Mind PP- 144-45

Ryle discusses the traditional notion of 'Volition' or the 'Will'. He says that there is nothing like 'volition' or the 'will'. According to Ryle, volition is an artificial or technical term. Common people donot use it in everyday conversation. Volitions as thrusts, coming to physical body from the inner world of mind is a myth. Ryle
analyses the concept of freewill in the ordinary language. But he rejects its metaphysical reality in the sense of willed activities. Volitions or will do not have an entity of their own. These processes are not experienced in our everyday life. The traditional philosophers admit three classes of mental processes i.e. thought, feeling and will and it has three modes- the cognitive mode, the emotive mode and the conative mode. But Ryle says, “This traditional dogma is not only not self-evident, it is such a welter of confusions and false inferences that it is best to give up any attempt to re-fashion it. It should be treated as one of the curios of theory.”

Ryle cannot be considered either for or against the freedom of will. On the other hand, he admits that there are actions for which men are completely accountable or totally responsible. Ryle maintains that there are strong-willed persons and weak willed persons. But he admits that there are no inner processes or occult going on at a time when a man decides to act in a particular way. Thus Ryle does not deny the willed actions, but he denies the process implied in the action. That means the individuals choice to act in a certain way rather than another amounts to his acting that way. Of course, this is observable by others. Regarding the nature of will, Ryle says,

“The concept of volition is in a different case. We do not know in daily life how to use it, for we do not use it in daily life and do not consequently, learn by practice how to apply it, and how not to misapply it. It is an artificial concept. We have to study certain specialist theories in order to find out how it is to be manipulated. It does not, of course, follow from its being a technical concept that it

48 Ryle, G: The Concept of Mind. P - 61
is an illegitimate or useless concept. Although we have some attribute of voluntariness or intelligence to actions, we cannot for that reason suppose that there exists some inner, inscrutable process to cause the observable voluntary actions. Ryle says, “Volitions have been postulated as special acts, or operations, ‘in the mind’ by means of which a mind gets its ideas translated into facts.” Ryle admits that we perform a volition which put our muscles into action. Thus volition signifies an action, not any mental entity. We can say a volition as praise or blame, good or bad only when a bodily movement takes place from such a volition. Ryle rejects the will as an inevitable extension of the myth of the ghost in the machine. It assumes that there are mental states and processes enjoying one sort of existence and bodily states and processes enjoying another. An occurrence on the one stage is never numerically identical with an occurrence on the other.

It is said that when an action is done on purpose, two conjunction activities have taken place. One is the action itself and another is the purposing of the action. But according to Ryle, this kind of assumption is an extension of the myth of the ghost in the machine. Ryle explodes the para-mechanical hypothesis involved in the notion of volition by the following objections.

The first objection is to the doctrine that overt actions, to which we ascribe intelligence predicates, are results of counterpart hidden things that at 10 am he was occupied in willing this or that, or that he performed five quick and easy volitions.

49 Ibid. P - 61
50 Ibid. P - 62
and two slow and difficult volitions between midday and lunch-time. Novelists describe the actions, remarks, gestures and grimaces, the day dreams, deliberations qualms and embarrassments of their characters. But they never mention about their volitions. Some philosophers may say that the enactment of volitions is asserted by implication, and an overt act is described as intentional, voluntary, culpable or meritorious. They define volitions as a species of conscious process. But ordinary people fail to mention their volitions in their descriptions of their own behaviour.

The second objection follows that no judge, school master, or parent ever knows that the actions which he judges merit praise or blame, for he cannot do better than guess that the action was willed. The connection between volitions and movements is mysterious. Thus the pulling of the trigger may have had some other event for its cause.

Ryle says that if we cannot help willing to pull the trigger then it would be absurd to describe my pulling it as voluntary. But if my volition to pull the trigger is voluntary then it must issue from a prior volition and that from another ad infinitum. Thus volitions cannot be described as voluntary or involuntary. Volition is a term of the wrong type to accept either predicate.

In short the doctrine of volitions is a causal hypothesis adopted because it was wrongly supposed that the question, what makes a bodily movement voluntary? was a causal question. This supposition is only a special twist of the general supposition that the question, how are mental conduct concepts applicable to human
behaviour is a question about the causation of that behaviour.

Thus Ryle's first objection shows that "If there are such mental processes occurring in the inner process of the human mind, by what predicates should they be described?" His second objection shows that no individual can witness the volitions of another. Since an individual can never be sure about the volitions of another, he cannot really know where a particular action has followed the act of volition or not. Thus the absence of causal connection between the action and the willing of the action signifies the concept of willing as mysterious.

The traditionalists maintain that if the phenomenon of volition does not occur, the body cannot move to act. A bare decision to do something does not issue in action. To perform the actual action, a prior act of will has to be performed in the secret world of mind. According to the traditional theory, the physical act of doing something is the effect of the mental act of willing. But Ryle does not admit any similarity in the common talk of the people. Ryle opposes on the statement that volitions supply aid to make actions meritorious or wicked. As mental operations are themselves generally meitorious or wicked, the question of volition arises with regard to them. Discussing the nature of will, Ryle asks the questions what about volitions? Are they voluntary or involuntary? If voluntary (i.e. issuing from a prior volition), we cannot avoid infinite regress. If involuntary (i.e. not issuing from a prior volition), they cannot make the issuing act voluntary. So, if volitions are accepted ridiculous consequences follow from the same. Volitions are wrongly identified with certain quite familiar and authentic processes. People are frequently
in doubt what to do, having more attentive courses of action. This process of aping for one of the alternatives is sometimes said to be what is signified by 'volition'. But this identification will not do. It is notorious that a person may choose to do something but fail to do it for weakness of will. But the theory could not allow that volitions ever fail to result in action. The process of deliberating between alternatives and opting for one of them is itself subject to appraisal - predicates. The same objections forbid the identification with volitions of such other familiar process as that of making up our minds to do something.

Ryle does not refute the concepts, 'voluntary and involuntary'. He admits the difference between voluntary and involuntary acts but rejects free will as the philosophers myth. Ryle says that the mental conduct concepts such as the concepts of trying, concentrating or making an effort of will cannot be explained wholly in terms of publicly observed behaviour. These mental occurrences can occur but their occurrences are to be explained partly in terms of propensities or inclinations as well. Ryle says philosophers use the word 'voluntary' and 'involuntary' with a few minor elasticities, as adjectives applying to actions which ought not to be done. We discuss whether someones' action was voluntary or not only when the action seems to have been his fault. He is accused of making a noise if the action was voluntary like laughing. He has excused himself, if he satisfies us that it was involuntary, like a sneeze. In the same way in ordinary life we raise questions of responsibility only when someone is charged, with an offence. It makes sense to ask whether a boy was responsible for breaking a window, but not whether he
was responsible for finishing his homework in good time. Thus in this ordinary use, it is absurd to discuss whether correct or admirable performances are voluntary or involuntary.

Ryle says that the terms 'voluntary' and 'involuntary' are used in day-to-day life. They are not related to the mysterious phenomenon called 'volition'. These terms are not taken with reference to a private act of will. It is taken with reference to 'could have avoided' or 'could not have avoided'. If somebody could have avoided doing something, the action is called voluntary and if he could not have avoided it, the action is called involuntary. The question of guilt is related with these terms. For example, if somebody breaks a glass, the question at once arises whether he breaks it intentionally, that is, whether he could have avoided breaking it or not. If it is proved that he intentionally breaks the glass, he is condemned; if otherwise he is not condemned. Thus the terms 'voluntary' and 'involuntary' are used with reference to our faults. In the case of voluntary action a person knows the right thing but does not do that. For example, if somebody performs a praiseworthy act, his action will be called voluntary only if he could have avoided it. That is he knew the wrong thing but did not do that. Ryle holds that it is not proper to level both right and wrong actions as voluntary. Only that is voluntary which is our guilt or fault. In the ordinary use, to say that a sneeze is involuntary is to say that the agent could not help doing it and to say that a laugh is voluntary is to say that the agent could have helped doing it. But Ryle says that this is not to say that the laugh is intentional. We do not laugh on purpose. The boy could have got the sum right
which he actually got wrong; but he misbehaved; he was competent to tie a reef-knot, though what he unintentionally produced was a granny-knot. His failure or lapse was his fault. When we say that someone could have avoided committing a lapse or error, we mean that he knew how to do the right things or was competent to do so, but did not exercise his knowledge or competence. But when a person has done the right thing, we cannot then say that he knew how to do the wrong thing, or that he was competent to make mistakes. For making mistakes is not an exercise of competence. The problem of the Freedom of the will is derived from this unconsciously stretched use of voluntary and consequential misapplications of different senses of 'could' and 'could have helped'.

If a boy has tied a granny knot instead of a reef knot, we satisfy ourselves that it was his fault by first establishing that he knew how to tie a reef-knot, and then by establishing that his hand was not forced by external coercion and that there were no other agencies at work preventing him from tying the correct knot.

The two important points of voluntariness are -

First, we oppose things done voluntarily to things suffered under compulsion. Some soldiers are volunteers, others are conscripts; some yachtsman go out to see voluntarily, others are carried out to sea by the wind and tide. What is involuntary is not describable as an act. Being carried out to sea is something that happens to a person, not something which he does. This antithesis between voluntary and involuntary differs from the antithesis when we ask whether someone's tying of a granny knot.
Secondly, when a person does something voluntarily, in the sense that he does it on purpose, his action certainly reflects some quality or qualities of mind, since he is in some degree minding what he is doing. To frown intentionally is not to do one thing on one's forehead and another thing a second metaphorical place, nor is it to do one thing with one's brow-muscles and another thing with non-bodily organ. Thus Ryle says, 'He frowned intentionally' does not report the occurrence of two episodes. It reports the occurrence of one episode, but one of a very different character from that reported by 'he frowned involuntarily,' though he frowns might he photographically as similar as you please.

Ryle discusses some idioms of every day life which may refer to the mysterious element of volition. For example 'behaving resolutely,' 'strength of will', 'effort of will' etc. But these elements have no mysterious qualities. Behaving resolutely means not getting slack in efforts. Strength of will means sticking to a task. Effort of will means acting in face of other stronger temptations. There is, therefore, no room for bringing in the ghostly concept of volition in order to explain these concepts.

Ryle also discusses the philosopher's concept of the 'freedom of will.' It was believed that the physical sciences had established the things and events of the external world are rigidly governed by discoverable laws, not appraisal-words. All external happenings are confined within the iron grooves of mechanical causation. There are purposeless forces in the world. Volition and voluntariness being internal forces makes occurrences spiritual. Freedom of will was invented out of the fear

51 Ibid. P. 72
of mechanism. According to mechanism, the physical world is governed by rigid laws. The whole course of nature is strictly determined. There is no scope for freedom. Thus the question of morality could not raise with regard to actions done in such a world. Moralists and religious thinkers were shocked to hear it. The philosophers, in order to defend morality and religion, invented a peculiar world, called it mind and described its volitional part as the source of these ideas. According to the traditional philosophers, we have a mind whose one phase is volition or will and which by its nature is free. But Ryle argues that this concept of the freedom of will is totally imaginary. There is no truth in it.

Ryle’s another significant analysis of the concept of will is the section on “the Bogey of Mechanism”. The terms like ‘explanation’, ‘why’, ‘because’, ‘cause’, ‘law’, ‘rule’, ‘principle’, ‘reason’, ‘govern’, ‘necessitate’ etc. have a range of typically different senses. Mechanism seemed to be a menace because it was assumed that the use of these terms in mechanical theories is their sole use; that all ‘why’ questions are answerable in terms of laws of motion. Grammar tells the reader that the verb must be a plural verb, but not which verb it will be. Mechanism therefore, is a mere bogey and it elucidated in the special concepts of biology, anthropology, sociology, ethics, logic, aesthetics, politics, economics, history, geography etc. Thus Ryle says, “Man are not machines, not even ghost-ridden machines. They are men—a tautology which is sometimes worth remembering”.

But in spite of this rejection of freedom of will, Ryle does not believe that mechanism is wholly true. In some respect he also believes in freedom. Ryle only
prevents us to seek freedom in a ghostly world. For the sake of freedom, we need not go to any mysterious world of mind. Our physical world provides us with freedom. The physical world is full of necessity and freedom. In this regard, Ryle illustrates the following example,

In a game of chess, the bishops must move on the squares of the same colour, but on which particular square it will move at a certain juncture depends on us, the player. While writing, one has to obey the rules of grammar, but in what style one would write is not forced by the grammar. Therefore, we have freedom in our physical world. Physical laws govern everything but we have freedom to maintain it. Ryle asserts, "Not all questions are physical questions." Questions of morality are valid questions. So, even without the mysterious concept of mind and its will, moral concepts can be understood and explained. Ryle denies volition or will. But he does not deny morality because his theory is not incompatible with the concepts of freedom and morality.

Human beings are called responsible as much for the reason that they have acted well in the past as for the reason that they would make the right decision at the appointed time. Thus responsible means 'accountable'. But 'accountable' does not mean determination by the predisposed states alone. It means determination equally by what we have been and what we intend to be. The permanent disposition, known as character is constantly being supplemented by personal decisions of individuals by our pre-disposed states, since pre-disposed states are those that are never complete without the constant effort of the individual.
himself. In conclusion, it is perhaps worth while giving a warning against a very popular fallacy. But in fact there are very few machines in nature. The only machines that we find are the machines that human beings make such as clocks, windmills and turbines. There are a very few natural systems which somewhat resemble such machines, namely, such things as solar systems. The movements of the heavenly bodies provided one kind of 'clock'. It was the human pulse that provided the next. The games of billiards are subject to mechanical laws but it is not at all like the workings of machines.

Thus after careful philosophical analysis Ryle discovered that our mental terms such as mind, thought, will etc. are not words which describe an inner private world of faculties. Instead they are mostly to be analysed as dispositional terms whose attribution depends on the ordinary observation of ordinary human behaviour. For dispositions are nothing but an ability, propensity, liability or capacity to do things of a certain type in certain specifiable circumstances. To be intelligent is to be disposed to accomplish successfully such tasks as doing mathematical problems. It is not to provoke an inner Cartesian faculty, called the 'intelect' into producing its private and proprietary mental acts. Thus according to Ryle, volitions or will do not have an entity of their own.

Armstrong criticises Ryle's account of volition. He says that volition is the causal antecedent of our mind. Armstrong analyses the importance of purposive activity. He writes,

"It is simple and natural view that my raising my arm is distinguished from
the mere rising of my arm by the fact that, in the former case, my arm rises as a causal result of a certain sort of antecedent in my mind. When my arm merely rises this sort of causal antecedent is lacking."\(^53\) But Ryle rejects this kind of causal antecedent in case of will. Moreover, Armstrong admits that having of purposes and intentions are not events or processes, but are states of our mind. They are states with causal powers. They are the powers to initiate and sustain trains of physical or mental activity. Thomas Reid also admits will or volition as mental power. But Ryle rejects this kind of analysis regarding volition.

Ryle holds the infinite regress argument for rejecting the theory of purposive activity. Like all infinite regress arguments it has the form of a reductio ad absurdum. Let us suppose that purposive activity is activity caused by an act of the will. Now the question arises—Is an act of will itself a piece of purposive activity? If it is, the act requires to be caused by a further act of will and so ad infinitum. But this is absurd. The alternative is to say that the act of will is not itself a piece of purposive activity. This is equally absurd. Ryle uses an exactly parallel argument to prove that intelligent action is not action that is caused by intelligent mental activity.

But there is something that Ryle's argument proves incontrovertibly. It proves that not all purposive activity can be the effect of such things as deliberating. Deliberating what to do is itself purposive activity. Purposive mental activity that has as its object the forming of a purpose to undertake some further action. So, if deliberation is required for purposive action, prior deliberation will be required for deliberation, and so ad infinitum. But does the argument prove that purposive

\(^{53}\) Armstrong, D M. A Materialist Theory of the Mind. P. 132
activity is not activity with a mental cause? A causal theory of purposive activity can take the second horn of Ryle's dilemma. We must in the first place distinguish between acts of will and mere operations or motions of the will. An act is something that we do as opposed to something that merely happens. An act springs from our will. An act of the will is therefore, something that is itself brought into existence by the will. An intention formed as a result of deliberation would be an example. It follows that not all our acts can spring from acts of will, but that we must in the end come to acts that spring from mere operations of the will. Operations of the will are mere happenings. They have causes but these causes do not lie in the will.

Thus Armstrong remarks, "Actions are purposive in the sense that they are caused by the will. Operations of the will are purposive in the sense that they cause actions. Only acts of will are purposive in both senses. So, there is no regress involved in saying that actions are caused by the operations of the will."54

Thus volition or will cannot be rejected as a technical or mysterious term as Ryle does. As a conscious human being we must have to admit at least the presence of volition or will.

54 Ibid, P - 137