

Treatment of the responsibilities [Pflichten] to which we are bound by the recognition that there is no blind fate in the world, but that rather everything is governed by Divine Foresight.

Which won the prize presented by Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences and Liberal Arts in the year 1751,

Fata regunt homines, sed regit ipsa Deus.

Content of the Paper

That all occurrences which we, on account of the weakness of our understanding, ascribe to blind fate, are under divine governance, I assume to be unproven. From which I conclude that we leave the results of our endeavors [*Ausgang unserer Bemühungen*] over to divine foresight, and should not count ourselves as unlucky if turns out exactly opposite than we had hoped; and that we must have no other object than the just. Then, I show that upon which faith in God is based, and explain the concept of special [*besondern*] foresight and of divine grace. Finally I show what kind of influence the theorem has, with whose conception [*Betrachtung*] I was thoroughly occupied, in the preparation for our next life [*künftigen Leben*]. What is at the end of the essay, I could not refrain from adding, since the opportunity presented itself to me. Since I am writing for philosophers after all [*übrigens*], I have not found it necessary to spell out [*vorbuchstabieren*] all conclusions. If they have some force [*Stärke*], the judge will feel the very thing [??? *Wenn sie einige Stärke haben, so werden die Richter solche selbst empfinden.*]

I wanted to merit the praise that in our day is almost unique [*eigen*] to Frances authors: to have delivered profound and thorough considerations through a lively and elegant style of writing.

* * *

The Royal Academy has so couched the problem, which they have given to philosophers, in such a way that it maintains: *fortunate and unfortunate events, which we ascribe to luck, all happen by dint of divine permission, and the word "luck" is meaningless [ein leerer Ton] if it is not taken in this understanding.* It is required only to show: *Whether the recognition of this theorem binds man to certain responsibilities [Pflichten], and what sort of responsibilities these are.* I believe therefore [*daher*] that it does not demand the effort on our part to present a lengthy proof that there is actually a free and supreme foresight, and to refute the erroneous ideas of Spinoza and Epicurians.