

**ELEMENTS OF LOGIC: ON THE
BASIS OF
LECTURES; WITH LARGE
SUPPLEMENTARY ADDITIONS**

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WILLIAM BARRON & JAMES R. BOYD

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ELEMENTS OF LOGIC:

ON THE BASIS OF LECTURES

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ST. ANDREWS.

WITH

LARGE SUPPLEMENTARY ADDITIONS,

CHIEFLY FROM WATTS, ABERCROMBIE, BROWN, WHATELY, MILLS,
AND THOMSON.

EDITED AND COMPILED

BY REV. JAMES R. BOYD,

AUTHOR OF ELEMENTS OF RHETORIC, EDITOR OF KAMES' CRITICISM,
AND OF ENGLISH POETS WITH NOTES, ETC.

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INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

THE Lectures which constitute the basis of the present work were read by the learned author, during twenty-five sessions, in the University of St. Andrews, and may consequently be presumed to have been elaborated with great care, and to be worthy of the attentive study of all who desire to become acquainted with the science and the art of Reasoning.

As the Lectures are few and concise, there seemed to be occasion, in fitting them the better for a text-book in schools, or even for private perusal, to supplement them occasionally, from the works of distinguished writers on Logic, on points where, for practical utility, a more full discussion of the subject is needed; and also to introduce various important topics upon which Professor Barron had neglected to offer observations. As stated in the title-page, the works to which the compiler has had recourse for this purpose, are, chiefly, those of Dr. Isaac Watts, Dr. Abercrombie, Archbishop Whately, Dr. Thomas Brown, John Stuart-Mills, and William Thomson. The contributions gained from these standard sources will be found at least equal in value, and nearly also in amount, to the Lectures. It is hoped, therefore, that a work has thus been constructed which will be found to possess some advantages over the text-books now most generally used. One peculiar feature of it, is the omission of a great deal of perplexing and useless matter relating to the Syllogism; and yet it presents a full discussion of the value and functions of that ancient form of rea-

soning. The opinions and views of distinguished authors on this interesting branch of the subject are largely quoted, that the student may be led to a discovery of the true state of the case. He is not, moreover, here subjected to the irksome task of learning a huge mass of intricate and unprofitable details about syllogistic Moods and Figures, such as are found in most treatises on the science of Logic.

The author of "The Philosophy of Rhetoric," Dr. George Campbell, not a mean reasoner, nor an indifferent critic in matters of this kind, in that celebrated work observes: "It is long since I was convinced, by what Mr. Locke hath said on the subject, that the syllogistic art, with its figures and moods, serves more to display the ingenuity of the inventor, and to exercise the address and fluency of the learner, than to assist the diligent inquirer in his researches after truth. The method of proving by syllogism appears, even on a superficial review, both unnatural and prolix. The rules laid down for distinguishing the conclusive from the inconclusive forms of argument, the true syllogism from the various kinds of sophism, are at once cumbersome to the memory and unnecessary in practice. No person, one may venture to pronounce, will ever be made a reasoner who stands in need of them. In a word, the whole bears the manifest indications of an artful and ostentatious parade of learning, calculated for giving the appearance of great profundity to what in fact is very shallow. Such, I acknowledge, have been, of a long time, my sentiments on the subject. On a nearer inspection, I cannot say I have found reason to alter them, though I think I have seen a little further into the nature of the disputative science, and consequently into the grounds of its futility."

After a series of observations made in vindication of these criticisms upon what he calls the scholastic art of disputation, Dr. Campbell concludes in the following terms: "When all erudition consisted more in an acquaintance with words, and

address in using them, than in the knowledge of things, dexterity in this exertion conferred as much lustre on the scholar as agility in the tilts and tournaments added glory to the knight. In proportion as the attention of mankind has been drawn off to the study of Nature, the honors of this contentious art have faded, and it is now almost forgotten. There is no reason to wish its revival, as eloquence seems to have been very little benefited by it, and philosophy still less. Nay, there is but too good reason to affirm that there are two evils, at least, which it has gendered. These are, first, an itch of disputing on every subject, however incontrovertible; the other, a sort of philosophic pride, which will not permit us to think that we believe any thing, even a self-evident principle, without a previous reason or argument. In order to gratify this passion, we invariably recur to words, and are at immense pains to lose ourselves in clouds of our own raising. We imagine we are advancing and making wonderful progress, while the mist of words in which we have involved our intellect hinders us from discerning that we are moving in a circle all the time."—(*Philosophy of Rhetoric*, p. 92.)

Of the ancient Logic (which Archbishop Whately and others have endeavored to revive), the same views were entertained substantially by Dr. Thomas Reid and Dr. Adam Smith, Professors of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, and by Professor Dugald Stewart, of the University of Edinburgh. One of the pupils of Dr. Adam Smith, and who was ranked among his most valued friends during life, makes the following significant statement: "In the Professorship of Logic, to which Mr. Smith was appointed on his first introduction into the University of Glasgow, he soon saw the necessity of departing widely from the plan that had been followed by his predecessors, and of directing the attention of his pupils to studies of a more interesting and useful nature than the logic and metaphysics of the schools. Accordingly, after exhibiting a gen-

eral view of the powers of the mind, and explaining so much of the ancient logic as was requisite to gratify curiosity with respect to an artificial method of reasoning, which had once occupied the universal attention of the learned, he dedicated all the rest of his time to the delivery of a system of rhetoric and belles-lettres."—(*Dugald Stewart's Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith, Works*, vol. vii. pp. 8, 9.)

The same view of the subject was expressed by Lord Kames, in his "Progress of Reason:"—"Aristotle," he observes, "has done hurt to the reasoning faculty, by drawing it out of its natural course into devious paths. His artificial mode of reasoning is no less superficial than intricate. I say superficial; for in none of his logical works is a single truth attempted to be proved by syllogism that requires a proof. The propositions he undertakes to prove by syllogism, are all of them self-evident. Take, for instance, the following proposition: That man has a power of self-motion. To prove this, he assumes the following axiom, upon which, indeed, every one of his syllogisms is founded, viz.: That whatever is true of a number of particulars, holds true of every one separately; which is thus expressed in logical terms: Whatever is true of the genus, holds true of every species. Founding upon that axiom, he reasons thus: 'All animals have a power of self-motion; man is an animal: *ergo*, man has a power of self-motion.' Now, if all animals have a power of self-motion, it requires no argument to prove that man, an animal, has that power; and, therefore, what he gives as a conclusion, or a consequence, is not really so: it is not *inferred* from the fundamental proposition, but is *included* in it. At the same time, the self-motive power of man is more clearly ascertained by experience than that of any other animal; and, in attempting to prove man to be a self-motive animal, is it not absurd to found the argument on a proposition less certain than that undertaken to be demonstrated? What is here observed,

will be found applicable to the bulk, if not the whole, of his syllogisms."

The views of Dr. Thomas Brown, of the University of Edinburgh, correspond substantially with those above given, and will be found in the latter part of this volume. These are followed by a more profound discussion of the subject by Mr. Mills, who in part sustains, and in part dissents from, the statements and reasonings both of the writers just referred to and of our author. Yet on the whole, perhaps, he has presented the most satisfactory explanation of the exact value and limited functions of the famous Syllogistic Process. Other portions, also, of this work have been greatly enriched by contributions derived from the same author.

The method of treating the general subject, which Professor Barron has in the following Lectures pursued, seems to be philosophical, and well adapted to secure all the most valuable ends of Logic, in a large and popular sense of that term. He first discusses every topic *introductory* to the art of reasoning. He explains the manner in which we receive Ideas, the sources from which they are derived, and the methods we must employ to render them clear, adequate, and conclusive. He then explains the nature of the propositions into which they may be formed, and the judgments which we must pass on these propositions. He delineates the prejudices which pervert our judgments, and lays down some rules which we must follow, in order to form them with accuracy and justness. He then treats of Reasoning, or the method of ascertaining propositions by means of intermediate ideas, or proofs, whether demonstrative or probable. He explains the different methods, in common use, of distributing or arranging ideas in different processes of reasoning. The principal kinds of Sophistry, or False Reasoning, are subsequently brought to view (which, however, are more fully considered in the pages we have drawn from Dr. Abercrombie). The author concludes with an exposition of the