1969

**Thomas Reid's Communication Theory.**

William G. Kelley Jr  
*Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College*

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THOMAS REID'S COMMUNICATION THEORY.

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, Ph.D., 1969
Speech

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THOMAS REID'S COMMUNICATION THEORY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Speech

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to extract from his writing, to systematize, and to state Thomas Reid's communication theory, to investigate its philosophical sources, and to determine its influence upon the rhetoricians of his time. Reid (1710-1796), father of Scottish common sense thought, did not formulate a systematized theory of communication, but he treated the philosophical fundamentals crucial to communication and rhetorical theory. This study treats Reid's relation to his principal contemporaries: Campbell, Blair, Whately, Priestley, Kames, Adam Smith, Thomas Sheridan, and Edward T. Channing.

Reid was the product of the influences of the eighteenth century. He held that man knows the existence of the external world directly; this notion underlay his philosophy. Reid saw the origin of language in man's use of natural signs—bodily motions, facial expressions, and vocal modulations. For him, man augments natural language with artificial signs, or words, making covenants regarding their meanings. Language is an ever-improving tool of the common man. It reflects the operations of the mind and simultaneously influences thought by limiting its progress.

Reid likened common sense first principles to axioms or intuitive judgments. He divided logic into two categories: the demonstrative, characterized by the necessity of
its conclusions, and the probable, characterized by the probability of truth in its conclusions. To Reid, demonstrative logic was often an obstacle to truth. Thus he preferred probable logic.

In Reid's system, ethics is directly related to language, since artificial signs derive from man's ability to make and keep covenants regarding the meanings of words. There are three kinds of principles motivating men: mechanical, animal, and rational; the rational regulate the others. Man is naturally inclined to good; he is also free to will either good or evil and therefore responsible for his acts. Man should improve himself and his environment, ultimately creating utopia. Politics, a facet of Reid's ethics, draws on the available knowledge about what motivates men to goodness, obedience, and happiness. That government is moral which motivates its citizens by creating a favorable opinion of itself; its opposite, mechanical government, demands complete control of the governed and is therefore responsible for all their acts.

Natural language makes discourse more expressive and ought to be employed. Discussing aesthetics Reid treated novelty, grandeur, and beauty, a frequent triad in eighteenth-century aesthetics treatises. Reid maintained that some grammatical rules are common sense principles,
thus grounding grammar in common sense. By observing the way men employ language he discovered what he believed to be the nature of their minds. He observed, for example, that men have a notion of active power from their use of active verbs.

About memory Reid asserted that when we remember, we receive an immediate impression of the thing remembered, accompanied by a conviction that the event did occur and that it is not imagined. This conviction is strong enough to warrant its use as a kind of evidence.

Reid explored the oral cavity with interest in the sense of taste. He also discussed the phenomena of hearing, stammering, and dialect.

Similarities exist between Reid's thought and that of several of the prominent rhetoricians of his era, but causal influence between Reid and others is difficult to affirm. Campbell and Whately revealed knowledge of Reid's theory of common sense, but only Campbell incorporated it as a kind of evidence. Blair, Kames, Smith, and Sheridan discussed concepts similar to Reid's notion of natural language, but did not acknowledge indebtedness to Reid for their ideas. Channing's ideas on the nature and use of language are also strongly similar to Reid's.
THOMAS REID D.D.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Thomas Reid (1710-1796) was the chief spokesman of the Scottish common sense school of philosophy. Reid taught at the University of Aberdeen (1752-1763) and at the University of Glasgow (1763-1781). He was one of the founders and among the most productive members of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society, along with George Campbell, James Beattie, John Gregory, Alexander Gerard, and others.

Reid was born April 26, 1710, in Strachan, Scotland, a rural area about twenty miles from Aberdeen. He was the son of the Rev. Lewis Reid, a minister of the Church of Scotland. The love of letters was not alien to the Reid family, which had pursued scholarly and clerical occupations for generations. Thomas was imbued with the worth of learning from his childhood, and after two years in a parish school he was sent to Marischal College at the age of twelve. There he pursued classical studies with George Turnbull, and before ending his stay at Marischal he became librarian to the college. In 1736 he resigned this post to accompany one of his professors, John Stewart, to England, where he visited London, Oxford, and Cambridge. In 1737, after his return, he became a pastor at New-Malchor, and there he remained until 1752, when he was elected Professor of Philosophy at King's College, Aberdeen.
During the early part of his life at the University of Aberdeen he played a significant role in founding the Aberdeen Philosophical Society, which served as a breeding ground for many of the ideas which gave direction to the Scottish philosophical movement. Apparently the plans for several works by Reid and Campbell, as well as others, were spawned in dialogues which took place at meetings of this society. In 1763 Reid was invited to become Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow, succeeding Adam Smith in that position. At Glasgow he published much of the work which was evidently inspired at Aberdeen, but which never found its way into print. In 1781 he resigned his post at Glasgow to go into retirement, but he maintained his zeal for vigorous scholarship, publishing at this time two of his most important works, Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man (1785) and Essays on the Active Powers of Man (1788). Reid died in 1796 at the age of eighty-six.¹

Apparently Reid's interest in rhetoric was real. According to William Hamilton, editor of the 1863 collection of his works, Reid delivered several lectures on rhetoric while Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow. In his biographical essay on Reid Hamilton says:

A few lectures on rhetoric, which were read, at a separate hour [from the time of his other lectures at the University] to a more advanced class of students, formed a voluntary addition to the appropriate functions of his office, to which it is probable he was prompted, rather by a wish to supply what was then a deficiency in the established course of education, than by any predilection for a branch of study so foreign to his ordinary pursuits.2

The manuscripts of these lectures do not appear in Hamilton's edition of Reid's works, however, nor in lists of manuscripts in private collections. While Hamilton indicates that these lectures were read, he is not specific about whether they existed only as notes or in an expanded form. Perhaps because there were only a few lectures, incidental to Reid's other duties as Hamilton indicates, or because they were never written out in their entirety, or because they were lost, these lectures seem to have been overlooked by critics and historians of Reid's thought. In addition to these other possibilities Hamilton may be only reporting evidence which he gathered as a student of Reid's at the University of Glasgow. The fact that Reid devoted some thought to rhetorical theory, however, provides additional justification for a perusal of his work for the impetus of his communication theory.

Like such other philosophers as Francis Bacon, John Locke, and Jeremy Bentham, Reid dispersed a theory of communication throughout his systematic philosophy under such divergent topics as aesthetics, hearing, and the

2Ibid., p. 10.
origin and nature of language, although he never wrote a
rhetoric. Unlike most of the philosophical writing of this
century of enlightenment, Reid's philosophy stresses common
sense, a departure from the scepticism of John Locke,
George Berkeley, and David Hume. For that reason it is
more likely than the solipsistic philosophies to provide a
tenable theory for the pragmatic practice of public address.

The term communication theory as used in this study
will encompass all that is traditionally understood by the
term rhetoric, plus more general definitions of the origin,
nature, and use of language which eighteenth-century think­
ers were wont to ascribe to that term. By the time of
Reid's writing the view of rhetoric as dealing solely with
spoken discourse had virtually vanished, and the term had
come to include such disparate subjects as letter writing,
literary essays, and fiction, as well as the theory of
utilitarian spoken discourse, all under the term belles
lettres. Belles lettres was a considerable extension of
rhetorical theory from the older classical view of the
discipline. This paper will consider all Reid's statements
dealing with the principles of communication and rhetorical
theory, regardless of their form, as elements in his communi­
cation theory. Certainly of interest will be Reid's discus­sion of the origin, nature, and use of language, logic,
ethics and politics, style and aesthetics, memory, and sub­jects relating to the study of the speech and hearing mecha­nisms.
I. Purpose

Reid did not set forth a systematized theory of communication. He did treat such philosophical fundamentals as aesthetics, ethics and politics, logic, and epistemology, which are crucial to communication. The purpose of this study is to abstract from his writings, to systematize, and to state Thomas Reid's communication theory, to investigate its philosophical sources, and to determine its relation to that of his contemporaries who devoted their thought to rhetoric and communication theory.

II. Similar Studies

Several studies have been completed which deal with the communication theories of men who are known primarily as philosophers rather than as rhetoricians. A study similar in many ways to the present one was done by Karl R. Wallace, who researched the writing of Francis Bacon to organize and formulate that philosopher's rhetorical theory.1 Bacon, like Reid, was not primarily a rhetorician, yet Wallace analyzed the references to various elements of rhetoric which Bacon made throughout his writings. Wallace considered Bacon's general view of rhetoric and classified the philosopher's remarks under the ancient rhetorical categories of the three modes of proof, logical, ethical,

and emotional, and the five canons of rhetoric, invention, disposition, style, memory, and delivery. Wallace concluded his study by relating Bacon to other rhetoricians, primarily Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian, and then to the rhetoricians of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. He did not attempt to trace Bacon's influence beyond that point.4

In its aim and scope Wayne Elmer Brockriede's study, "Bentham's Philosophy of Rhetoric," is also like the one proposed. Brockriede's dissertation opens with the following:

Jeremy Bentham, an industrious, versatile, amiable, solitary, and somewhat petulant English philosopher, 1742-1832, was primarily a political, judicial, and legislative reformer. He also contributed his observations to a great many other fields, however, among which may be included language and rhetoric.5

Thus Brockriede undertook a study of the rhetorical theory of a philosopher not primarily known for his rhetorical and critical thought. He analyzed Bentham's theory of language, his criticism of rhetoric and rhetoricians, the influence of Bentham's utilitarian logic upon his system of rhetoric, and finally, Bentham's concepts of style and the use of persuasive language. Brockriede did not attempt to trace the influence of Bentham's rhetoric upon his contem-

4Ibid., pp. 232-44.

poraries, however, nor upon later rhetoricians.

In a study by Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Lively Idea: A Study of Hume's Influence on George Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric," the author undertook a task similar to one included in the following study: to investigate the influence of an eighteenth-century philosopher upon an eighteenth-century rhetorician, George Campbell. In this study of Reid, Campbell will be only one of several rhetoricians discussed in this relation. Bitzer attempted to trace the influence of the philosophical notion of "vivacity, or the liveliness of ideas," in Hume's thought upon Campbell's theory of discourse. Most interesting to the following study is Bitzer's comment that "of course, the whole of Campbell's theory of rhetoric was not derived from Hume. Campbell drew upon a tradition of rhetoric spreading from Aristotle to Lord Kames, [sic] he was influenced also by the philosophies of Locke and Thomas Reid." Part of the task of the following study will be to explore further Reid's influence upon Campbell, who was not only Reid's colleague at Aberdeen but who attended Reid's lectures at the Aberdeen Philosophical Society during the time Reid was formulating his common sense philosophy. Particular attention

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7 Ibid., p. 4. 8 Ibid., p. 5.
will also be given to the rhetoric of Hugh Blair, Richard Whately, and other lesser lights to determine the extent of Reid's influence there.

Donald Lee Torrence's study, "A Philosophy of Rhetoric Constructed from the Writing of Bertrand Russell," is also interesting in that Torrence studied a living philosopher. Though Russell has no work that can rightly be called a prescriptive rhetoric, Torrence set as his aim "... to report the philosophical inquiry which Bertrand Russell has conducted and the conclusions resulting from that inquiry in regard to the broad areas of presupposition which would compose a rationale or theory of rhetoric." 10

The titles and authors of other related studies are mentioned below with brief comments. "John Locke's Philosophy of Discourse" by John B. O'Hara 11 is another doctoral study of an eighteenth-century philosopher's rhetorical theory much in the form of the studies by Wallace and Brockriede. Like Wallace and Brockriede, O'Hara did not examine Locke's influence on later rhetoricians.

In a study by Vincent Michael Bevilacqua, "The

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10 Ibid., p. 2.

Rhetorical Theory of Henry Home, Lord Kames, the author studied not only the rhetorical works of Kames but also his non-rhetorical works. Bevilacqua also attempted to locate the position of Kames' work in the developing rhetorical theory of the eighteenth century by observing how he related to preceding and subsequent rhetoricians. The same method of examination will be applied to Reid's work in the final chapter of the following study.

"Stephen Toulmin's Functional Analysis of Logic and Ethics and Its Relation to Rhetoric" by H. V. Spicer dealt with a philosopher's treatment only of specific subjects (logic and ethics) and their relation to rhetoric. The study demonstrated another method of delimiting an investigation, though there is no indication of the necessity of fixing the boundaries of the study of Reid in such a manner.

Ross Stafford North's study, "Joseph Priestley on Language, Oratory, and Criticism," is another interesting dissertation on an eighteenth-century thinker done in the


field of speech which has bearing on the present study of Reid. Priestley, of course, is most widely known for his scientific and philosophical writing. North confined his study to Priestley's lectures on oratory and his grammatical writings rather than attempting to extract a rhetoric from his non-rhetorical writing.

Though rhetorical studies have been made of other eighteenth-century philosophers, and of philosophers before and after that century as well, no study of the rhetorical theory of Thomas Reid has been undertaken. Many of the works mentioned above are most helpful in formulating a study of Reid, not only because they suggest possible methodology, but also because several of them provide bibliographical information vital to a study of Reid. For instance Bitzer's study of Hume's influence on Campbell is of particular use in determining Reid's effect on Campbell, his colleague at the University of Aberdeen.

III. Plan of Investigation

The following chapter divisions are employed in this study. Chapter I, an introduction, discusses the purpose of the investigation, similar studies which contribute to this study of Reid, and the outline of the dissertation.

Chapter II, "Eighteenth-Century Sources of Reid's Thought," sketches the background in which Reid work is set, including a discussion of the social, economic, and
political temper of the era, and the major features in the thought of the principle thinkers of the era, including Francis Bacon, Isaac Newton, John Locke, George Berkeley, David Hume, Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, John Gay, and Adam Smith.

Chapter III, "Thomas Reid's Common Sense Philosophy," is an exploration of various ramifications of Reid's theory of common sense as it relates to epistemology and his view of the material world and causality, as well as his view of empiricism and philosophy of science. It also examines Reid's notion of God. In brief, this chapter provides the contextual perspective in which Reid's communication theory must be viewed.

Chapter IV, "Thomas Reid on Communication," comprises the heart of the study, delving into Reid's writing and recording his thought on various topics of communication theory. The chapter treats Reid's idea of the origin, nature, and use of language, his ideas on logic, ethics and politics, style and aesthetics, memory, and speech and hearing.

Chapter V, "Reid's Relation to His Contemporaries," is actually a logical conclusion to a study of this nature in that it places Reid's thought in the stream of ideas about rhetorical and communication theory being produced during Reid's life and subsequent to his writing. An attempt is made in this chapter to trace the threads of Reid's thought in the rhetorical fabric of the eighteenth
century and early nineteenth century. It undertakes an investigation of Reid's relation to the three major rhetoricians in the eighteenth century, Campbell, Blair, and Whately, and also several other makers of rhetorical theory: Priestley, Kames, Adam Smith, Thomas Sheridan, and Edward T. Channing.
CHAPTER II

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY SOURCES OF REID'S THOUGHT

Perhaps the most fertile source of Thomas Reid's thought was the eighteenth century itself. In the century of enlightenment significant and influential ideas flourished, and progress in many areas took place as it had in few ages before. To single out the thought of the most productive minds of the era is an expedient method of focusing on the prevailing notions of the century in which Reid lived and wrote. Tracing the sources of the thought of Thomas Reid is an inferential process relying on the assumption that a man of Reid's intellectual stature does not live in a void; he is affected by the cultural and social climate in which he lives. Therefore, an analysis of the sources of Reid's philosophy would be sketchy without at least a cursory understanding of the sociological and cultural matrix of the British Isles in which Reid lived and formulated his thought.

Scotland and England in the Eighteenth Century

The century in which Reid spent his life was, indeed, as Dickens said, the best and the worst of times. It was a century of paradox in many ways. Great intellectual advances were taking place. The industrial revolution was blossoming. With these, however, came the wide use of child labor. Children and pregnant women worked in
the mines, where women pulled coal cars like horses and gave birth in the dark caverns. Roving bands of poor agricultural workers sought employment at a wage of sixpence a day. Children helped keep the textile mills open around the clock by working in twelve-to fourteen-hour shifts and sleeping in grimy barracks provided by the owner.¹ Those who lived in the larger cities in Scotland had problems peculiar to urban life of the time. The water in large cities like Edinburgh was of notoriously poor quality and even in short supply at times. The water was drawn from public wells in most cases and often transported up many flights of stairs to be used. Overcrowding was common to city and town, and sanitation facilities were totally lacking. One historian writes, "That the filth of Edinburgh was jettisoned out of all the windows at the sound of the 10 o'clock bell from the High Kirk to the warning cries of 'Gardyloo' is well enough known."² The same practice was common throughout Britain, and laws failed to stop the practice until the mid-eighteenth century. Construction of housing was also poor in eighteenth-century Scotland because bricks were scarce, and walls were made of turf instead. All these factors, combined with widespread poverty and famine, raised the infant mortality


rate to as high as 75 per cent in the first year of life, and probably caused most of the numerous epidemics.\(^3\)

This description of the world of most of the people living in the eighteenth century resembles the condition described by Thomas Hobbes in his *Leviathan* (1651) as a "state of war," where there are "continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."\(^4\) But while the life of the majority was less than pleasant, the sciences and the world of arts and letters fared somewhat better, and it seems as if those involved had no knowledge of, or at least little concern for, the dismal plight of the many. Perhaps the progress evident in the intellectual community is one of the few bright spots in the century of enlightenment.

Certainly not all was gloomy in England and Scotland in the eighteenth century. The English and Scottish parliaments united in 1707, improving markets and breaking down the traditional provincialism. In England, William Pitt the Elder was minting a golden age of parliamentary oratory, and there were heard the first rumblings of the common man, who wanted freedom of the press, the right to choose his own representatives, and freedom from unjust imprisonment. Roads were being improved, and with them the mail services, mitigating the isolation of rural areas.

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Literacy was increasing, and the growing number of people who could read brought about a flourishing industry in journalism. Newspapers and periodicals of many descriptions appeared. By the end of the century some women enjoyed the privilege of education long reserved for men. In science, Joseph Priestley isolated oxygen and Henry Cavendish isolated argon, and broke down water into hydrogen and oxygen. Englishmen showed a great interest in electricity and hypnotism, and some ascribed curative powers to electrical shock. During this century gentlemen and scholars, and not the court, became the authorities on usage of the English language, and Dr. Samuel Johnson's dictionary was perhaps the most influential work on language to appear for many years.5

While England was exerting intellectual influence over Scotland, Scotsmen were gaining acclaim in their own right. Scotland was succeeding in creating a viable intellectual community where universities and scholars could flourish. R. H. Campbell points out:

The country's five universities, especially those of Glasgow and Edinburgh, were leading European institutions at a time when England's two were moribund. They attracted students from overseas, and from England came the nonconformists who found the doors of their own universities barred against them. The universities were among the active pioneers of a new society in Scotland. They transformed their own teaching methods when, following the example of Francis Hutcheson, Pro-

Admirable scientific investigations took place at the Scottish universities in the eighteenth century, and many of these had remarkable practical applications to the agricultural and industrial advancement of the country. Universities set up reciprocal communication between the scholar and the industrialist. In the universities at both Glasgow and Edinburgh, William Cullen made great advances in pharmacology and soil science, while Francis Home, who also taught at Edinburgh, provided scientific information about the bleaching of linen which greatly aided the textile industry. James Watt, who made mathematical instruments at the University of Glasgow, worked with others at the school to produce the steam engine, which became invaluable to the industrial revolution.

**Philosophy of Science and Epistemology**

In terms of its influence on subsequent years, the thought of the scholars and clergy in the sanctuaries of academe is perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the century of enlightenment. It became seminal in eighteenth-century Scotland, England, Ireland, and throughout the world for centuries to come. Possibly the most salient topics of eighteenth-century thought are those of the phil-

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6 Campbell, pp. 1-2. 7 Ibid., p. 2.
osophy of science and epistemology, both sharing a domi-
nant theme of rigid empiricism which does away with \textit{a
priori} conclusions about the world and advocates reliance
on the senses for drawing new conclusions. The eighteenth
century was outstanding because the learned men of this
century had great affinity for empirical experimentation,
though empirical research was only in its infancy and
hardly as rigorous as that of the twentieth century.
Bacon had died experimenting with refrigeration; he ate a
snow-stuffed water fowl which was in an advanced state of
putrefaction. George Berkeley, with equal devotion to the
empirical method, almost killed himself trying to discover
the course of ideas in a man being hanged; a friend waited
almost too long to cut him down.\footnote{Another eighteenth-cen-
tury man, Benjamin Franklin, surprisingly managed to sur-
vive his experiments with lightning.}

\textit{Francis Bacon}.—Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was the
advance guard for eighteenth-century empiricism and a fore-
runner in the philosophy of science. Though Bacon died in
the seventeenth century, his thoughts about science and
the theory of knowledge are crucial in any consideration
of the makeup of the empirical notions of later philoso-
phers. Bacon was troubled that \ldots\ Time is like a river,
which has brought down to us things light and puffed up, while those which are weighty and solid are sunk"\(^9\) that "... a way must be opened for the human understanding entirely different from any hitherto known,"\(^10\) and that the knowledge accruing from such an undertaking must be "for the benefit and use of life."\(^11\) To reclaim the weighty and solid things which have sunk in the river, Bacon thinks it necessary to destroy Aristotelian logic, which he calls the "ordinary logic,"\(^12\) and to set up a new logic in its place. Only by starting to change the very way in which he reasons can man recover what he has lost.

Bacon proceeds by noting that the old logic spent most of its time talking about the syllogism and virtually ignored induction. The syllogism is faulty because it "consists of propositions; propositions of words; and words are the tokens and signs of notions;" if these notions are in any way weak, "... the whole edifice tumbles."\(^13\) Whereas at one time thinkers hurried to general propositions, Bacon proposes a new logic in which we

\[ ... \text{proceed regularly and gradually from one axiom to another; so that the most general are not reached till the last; but when you do come to them you find them to be not empty notions, but well defined, and such as nature would recognize as her first principles, and such as lie at the heart and marrow of things.}^4 \]


\(^10\) Ibid., p. 6. \(^11\) Ibid., p. 13. \(^12\) Ibid., p. 15.

\(^13\) Ibid., pp. 15-16. \(^14\) Ibid., p. 16.
Noticeably, Bacon's whole logical scheme aims primarily to get to the realities of nature. Rather than relying on notions formed prior to experience, however, Bacon would have the scientist depend on his senses. Though they are deceptive at times, the senses can discover by further and more careful scrutiny the errors they themselves make. The scientist, in making judgments about the thing he is observing, must take care not to anticipate his conclusions. Bacon warns against hasty and prejudiced judgments in Novum Organum (1620): "We are wont, for the sake of distinction, to call that human reasoning which we apply to nature, the anticipation of nature, (as being rash and premature;) and that which is properly deduced from things, the interpretation of nature."^{15} Embedded in Bacon's philosophy are the roots of eighteenth-century empiricism. Particularly indicative of the epistemology to come in the century that followed Bacon's writings are two of his concepts, (1) the need to eliminate general preconceived notions inherent in deductive logic, and (2) the principle of careful observation and experimentation. The first principle foreshadows the rejection of a priori concepts by eighteenth-century empiricists, and the second is a prototype of the emphasis that later thinkers placed on the senses as the only means of experience.

Isaac Newton.—While Bacon's significance is not to be adumbrated, possibly the greatest contributor to the eighteenth-century view of nature and science was Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727). Drawing heavily upon the scientific advancement of the previous two centuries, Newton strongly influenced philosophical thought in the century of enlightenment. Newton, like Bacon, insisted upon experimentation. In his *Principia* he writes:

> For since the qualities of bodies are only known to us by experiments, we are to hold for universal all such as universally agree with experiments; and such as are not liable to diminution can never be quite taken away. We are certainly not to relinquish the evidence of experiments for the sake of dreams and vain fictions of our own devising; nor are we to recede from the analogy of Nature, which uses to be simple, and always consonant to itself. We no other way know the extensions of bodies than by our senses, nor do these reach it in all bodies; but because we perceive extension in all that are sensible, therefore we ascribe it universally to all others also.\(^\text{16}\)

This emphasis on direct observation of phenomena, experiment, and induction is not unlike Bacon's admonitions about the manner in which the scientist must draw his conclusions. Newton also stresses reliance upon sense data in observing natural phenomena. He presages eighteenth-century philosophers of science in his discontent with mere observation of natural phenomena; Newton and those who followed him considered nature lawful and wished to learn her laws, and by the use of these laws to manipulate her

for the benefit of man.

When Newton uses the term experiment he understands an inductive process which begins with the observation of phenomena. He makes measurements of such factors as weight, length, and size, for instance, to increase the precision of his observations and to allow him to reduce them to quantitative statements. He then notes any mathematical relations among his figures. By doing calculations he seeks to reduce his findings to mathematical principles of the operations of nature. In his experiments upon the effects of the resistance of a medium to a pendulum suspended in it, Newton compares to arc described by suspended globes composed of various materials, such as wood, lead, iron, etc., which vary in weight. He notes the variations of size of the globes and length of the thread or wire, and measures the length of the arc of each pendulum periodically during its motion. He repeats this procedure suspending the pendula in other media such as water and quicksilver, and in this way is able to discern the principles governing the resistance to the oscillations of the penduli in various media. Comparing mathematical data gathered from such experiments he derives the following principle: "The quantity of matter in funependulous bodies, whose centres of oscillation are equally distant from the centre of suspension, are in ratio compounded of the ratio of the weights and the duplicate
ratio of the times of the oscillations in vacuo." He considers this a philosophical principle, and "these principles are the laws and conditions of certain motions, and powers or forces which chiefly, have respect to philosophy. . . ." Newton intends to reduce natural occurrences to mathematical principles, making possible an understanding of the laws governing all phenomena and facilitating man's use of the laws for his own good. This intent to reduce natural occurrences to mathematical explanations of the cause eliminates the necessity of explaining them in religious terms and provides grist for the mills of clerical thinkers like Berkeley, who thought it his duty to refute the skeptics and atheists. Far from making him skeptical, Newton's mathematical explanations of universal principles led him to revere the vastness and order of the universe as a clear indication of the existence of a "Universal Ruler." Newton says "This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being." Nevertheless, the materialism that Newton took for granted presented problems for religiously oriented philosophers of the eighteenth century. The question of the existence of matter gave Newton no trouble. He apparently assumed its existence, an

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17Ibid., pp. 243-62.  
18Ibid., p. 323.  
19Ibid., p. 444.
assumption that later thinkers were not so prone to make. More importantly, Newton carried on the tradition of such men as Galileo, Kepler, and Copernicus, who considered nothing too sacred to be examined. No phenomena lay outside the grasp of the thinking man; this principle became almost a fetish with philosophers as they looked into the very workings of the universe. With Newton, the mechanics of nature became discoverable and reducible to laws.

John Locke.—Another significant figure who must be considered for his influence on the philosophy of science and epistemology is John Locke. Locke (1632-1704) lived almost all his life in the seventeenth century, but his work provided the primary inspiration for eighteenth-century epistemology. The course which English epistemology took at the beginning of the century of enlightenment was largely directed by Locke's philosophy. Locke's theory of knowledge begins by contending against the existence of any universally held innate principles and arguing against those most basic principles of Aristotelian logic, namely, that A is A and that nothing can be both A and not A. He maintains in his Essay Concerning Human Understanding that these are neither universally held principles nor innate ideas, for "... there are a great part of mankind to whom they are not as much as known." Some

of his arguments are that children and idiots have no thought of universal principles, and to maintain that innate truths are imprinted on the soul is self-contradictory, since to be imprinted is to be perceived, and no perception of innate truths exists in some persons.\textsuperscript{21} Having cleared the ground, Locke is ready to assert that the mind comes to nature as a \textit{tabula rasa}, a "white paper, void of all characters," which is "furnished" or filled by experience, which is the foundation of all knowledge and the source of all ideas.\textsuperscript{22} This description is reminiscent of Bacon's instruction that we rid our minds of preconceived ideas.

Sounds or words which man is equipped to produce become "signs of internal conceptions"; ". . . one word was made to mark a multitude of particular existences. . . ."\textsuperscript{23} Locke explains that we form abstract ideas by taking some attributes which several particulars have in common and ignoring those which they do not share. Words are thus made general by being signs of general ideas:

The senses at first let in particular ideas, and furnish the yet empty cabinet; and the mind by degrees growing familiar with some of them, they are lodged in the memory, and names got to them: afterwards, the mind, proceeding farther, abstracts them, and by degrees learns the use of general names. In this manner the mind comes to be furnished with ideas and language, the materials about which to exercise its discursive faculty; and the use of reason becomes more

\begin{footnotes}
\item[21]\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 14-15.
\item[22]\textit{Ibid.}, p. 82.
\item[23]\textit{Ibid.}, II, 158-59.
\end{footnotes}
visible, as these materials, that give it employment increase.\textsuperscript{24}

In simpler terms the mind receives ideas of particular cows, such as "Bessie," "Irma," and "Elsie." In time the mind can abstract similar features from the multitude of different cows by concluding that, in general, cows are large four-legged animals who give milk. To this abstract notion of this animal the mind assigns the name cow. Hence by abstracting similarities from the many particular cows, according to Locke's formula, we arrive at a general notion of cow.

Locke, like Newton, assumes the existence of the external world. When discussing the sensation of touch, for example, Locke says:

The idea of solidity we receive by touch, and it arises from the resistance which we find in body, to the entrance of any other body into the place it possesses, till it has left it. There is no idea which we receive more constantly from sensation than solidity. Whether we move or rest, in what posture soever we are, we always feel something under us that supports us, and hinders our farther sinking downwards; and the bodies which we daily handle make us perceive, that, whilst they remain between them, they do by an insurmountable force hinder the approach of the parts of our hand that press them. . . . This, [idea of solidity] of all other, seems the idea most intimately connected with the essential of body, so as nowhere else to be found or imagined, but only in matter.\textsuperscript{25}

Unlike some epistemologists in his era, Locke includes reflection as a source of knowledge, as well as experience. Reflection derives from the ability of the mind to consider

\textsuperscript{24}\textit{Ibid.}, I, 21. \textsuperscript{25}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 105-106.
its own operations. Speaking specifically of how the phenomenon of reflection works, Locke asserts:

The mind, receiving the ideas, mentioned in the foregoing chapters, [ideas from the senses, the idea of solidity, etc.] from without, when it turns its view inward upon itself, and observes its own actions about those ideas it has, takes from thence other ideas, which are as capable to be the objects of its contemplation as any of those it received from foreign things.

Locke's admission of reflection as a source of knowledge indicates reservations about complete reliance on experimentation and induction unaided by reflection, and shows his kinship to such earlier epistemologists as Hobbes and Descartes.

George Berkeley.—Berkeley (1685-1753) studied Locke's Essay as a text at Trinity College, Dublin, and was influenced by it in working out his own thought. At the base of Berkeley's epistemology is his contention that "... the existence of an idea consists in being perceived." While Berkeley may have had in mind only to set aright "those who are tainted with skepticism" and to offer "a demonstration of the existence and immateriality of God, or the natural immortality of the soul," as he

26 Ibid., p. 86, passim. 27 Ibid., p. 111.
28 Tsanoff, p. 364.
says in the preface to *Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710). Berkeley's influence went further than that, to say the least. He proceeds by saying, "A certain color, taste, smell, figure, and consistence, having been observed to go together, are accounted one distinct thing, signified by the name 'apple.' Other collections of ideas constitute a stone, a tree, a book, and the like sensible things."

Then there must be something to do the perceiving, and that Berkeley calls several things: "mind, spirit, soul, or myself." Without this perceiver, there is no idea. Berkeley argues in the following fashion:

That neither our thoughts, nor passions, nor ideas formed by the imagination, exist without the mind, is what everybody will allow. And it seems no less evident that the various sensations or ideas imprinted on the sense, however blended or combined together (that is, whatever objects they compose), cannot exist otherwise than in a mind perceiving them. I think an intuitive knowledge may be obtained of this by anyone that shall attend to what is meant by the term 'exist' when applied to sensible things. The table I write on I say exists—that is, I see and feel it; and if I were out of my study I should say it existed—meaning thereby that if I was in my study I might perceive it. There was an odour, that is, it was smelt; there was a sound, that is, it was heard; a color or figure, and it was perceived by sight or touch. This is all that I can understand by these and the like expressions. For as to what is said of the absolute existence of unthinking things without any relation to their being perceived, that seems perfectly unintelligible. Their esse is percipi, nor is it possible they should have any existence out of the minds or thinking things which perceive them.31

For Berkeley, abstraction as Locke understood it is not possible; he could not conceive of an object abstracted

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from his sensation of it, since this would be tantamount to dividing an object from itself; for example, he could not imagine motion apart from something moving.  

His argument here hinges on the difference between his definition of idea and Locke's; Locke defines idea rather broadly as "that which his [man's] mind is applied about whilst thinking," while Berkeley understands idea more particularly as perception. This controversy over abstraction, in which Berkeley revels, eventually clarified the terminology of the empiricist philosophers. But Bishop Berkeley was most interested in establishing the existence of God as a Great Perceiver who keeps all things in existence while man is not perceiving them. When man is not perceiving the world, Berkeley says, it "must either have no existence at all, or else subsist in the mind of some Eternal Spirit."  

Berkeley's philosophy of perception, regardless of the author's intent, seems unmistakably solipsistic. Statements in Principles of Human Knowledge must be construed as virtual denials of the certainty of the external world. Striking at materialism, Berkeley says:

> How great a friend material substance hath been to atheists in all ages were needless to relate. All their monstrous systems have so visible and necessary a dependence on it that, when this cornerstone is once removed, the whole fabric cannot choose but fall to

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32 Ibid., pp. 515, 523, 524, passim.
33 Locke, I, 82. 34 Berkeley, p. 525.
the ground, insomuch that it is no longer worth while to bestow a particular consideration on the absurdities of every wretched sect of atheists.\textsuperscript{35}

At one point he puts it more simply: "... for anyone to pretend to a notion of entity or existence, \textit{abstracted} from spirit and idea, from perceived and being perceived, is, I suspect, a downright repugnancy and trifling with words."\textsuperscript{36} While opposing the materialists, skeptics, and atheists by rejecting corporeal substance in favor of spiritual substance, Berkeley's philosophy clears the path for the most solipsistic theory of the century— that of David Hume.

\textbf{David Hume.}—Hume (1711–1776), a Scotsman, concluded, like Berkeley, that the existence of substance could not be logically supported. He held that the mind could have only two kinds of perceptions, (1) those of ideas and (2) those of impressions. Ideas are "less forcible and lively" than impressions, while impressions are the "more lively perceptions" which we entertain when we "hear, or see, or feel, or love, or hate, or desire, or will."

Hume understands impressions not necessarily as impressions of anything, but defines both ideas and impressions as processes going on in the mind. Ideas derive from reflections about such impressions as hearing, seeing, feeling, etc.,

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 555. \textsuperscript{36}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 550.
as he says in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. 37

Hume views the mental powers of man as extremely limited:

But though our thought seems to possess this unbounded liberty, we shall find, upon a nearer examination, that it is really confined within very narrow limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts to no more than the faculty of compounding, transposing, augmenting, or diminishing the materials afforded us by the senses and experience. When we think of a golden mountain, we only join two consistent ideas, gold and mountain, with which we were formerly acquainted. A virtuous horse we can conceive; because, from our own feeling, we can conceive virtue; and this we may unite to the figure and shape of a horse, which is an animal familiar to us. In short, all the materials of thinking are derived either from our outward or inward sentiment: the mixture and composition of these belongs alone to the mind and will. Or, to express myself in philosophical language, all our ideas or more feeble perceptions are copies of our impressions or more lively ones. 38

This philosopher turned eighteenth-century epistemology sharply away from such earlier thinkers as Locke and Hobbes, who thought reflection as valid a source of knowledge as sense experience.

Hume recognized only two "objects of human reason, relations of ideas, and matters of fact." Relations of ideas include the study of geometry, algebra, and arithmetic, or briefly, any science which makes affirmations "which [are] either intuitively or demonstrably certain." Matters of fact cannot be demonstrated; they contain state-

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merits like "The sun will rise tomorrow." We can reason about matters of fact, however, and our reasoning is based on the relation of cause to effect, although this reasoning goes beyond the evidence of the senses. Hume affirms that knowledge of cause and effect could not come from the senses or from memory. The mind, says Hume, can "never possibly find the effect in the supposed cause, by the most accurate scrutiny and examination"; for example, the motion in a billiard ball when struck by a second ball may as consistently be explained in other terms than by means of the causal relation. Hume concludes:

In a word, then every effect is a distinct event from its cause. It could not, therefore, be discovered in the cause, and the first invention or conception of it, a priori, must be entirely arbitrary. And even after it is suggested, the conjunction of it with the cause must appear equally arbitrary; since there are always many other effects, which, to reason, must tend to determine any single event, or infer any cause or effect, without the assistance of observation and experience.

Without reliance on causal arguments to prove the existence of corporeal substance, we are without any certainty of its being. We can never assume any cause from the fact that we perceive an effect, i.e., to perceive is not necessarily to perceive something. Hume argues further that "the non-existence of any being, without exception, is as clear and distinct an idea as its existence. The proposition, which

39 Ibid., p. 598. 40 Ibid., pp. 599-601. 41 Ibid., p. 601.
affirms it not to be, however false, is no less conceivable and intelligible, than that which affirms it to be.\textsuperscript{42}

In other words it is quite as logical to reason that the external world does not exist as to reason that it does. Thus Hume denies the materialistic philosophers' causal reasoning in substantiating their thought, and brings the certainty of the external world into serious question.

The whole of eighteenth-century scientific theory, and particularly Newtonian physics, became shrouded in uncertainty without reliance on the relation between cause and effect. Religion, too, had to re-evaluate much of its dogma in order to deal with Hume's novel presupposition. "The existence . . . of any being can only be proved by arguments from its cause or its effect," and when these are based on imagination, refusing to affirm the existence of matter is the only logical conclusion. Hume says in a footnote to the text of \textit{Concerning Human Understanding}:

That impious maxim of the ancient philosophy, \textit{Ex nihilo, nihil fit}, by which the creation of matter was excluded, ceases to be a maxim according to this philosophy. Not only the will of the supreme Being may create matter; but, for aught we know \textit{a priori}, the will of any other being might create it, or any other cause, that the most whimsical imagination can assign.\textsuperscript{43}

If the proposition that Caesar never existed, or that the sun will not rise tomorrow, is false; and if that false proposition is as "conceivable and intelligible" as any

\textsuperscript{42}Ibid., p. 688. \textsuperscript{43}Ibid., p. 689n.
other; then whatever "is" may also "not be." That is, either proposition is equally conceivable—that matter (both mental and corporeal) exists and that it does not. Thus Hume contrived the most solipsistic epistemology of the eighteenth century, denying that belief in the existence of substance was any more reasonable than non-belief in it.

**Shaftesbury and Hutcheson.**—The major figures of the eighteenth century, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, undoubtedly overshadowed the thinking of Reid on epistemology, but the influence had a greater negative effect than positive. Two lesser lights, Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713) and Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) perhaps provided Reid more direct inspiration in the formulation of his epistemological thought based on common sense.

In his *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711), Shaftesbury relates a narrative of a gentleman in court defining common sense. He writes:

"If by the word sense we were to understand opinion and judgment, and by the word common the generality or any considerable part of mankind, 'twould be hard, he said, to discover where the subject of common sense could lie. For that which was according to the sense of one part of mankind, was against the sense of another. And if the majority were to determine common sense, it would change as often as men changed. That which was according to common sense today, would be contrary to-morrow, or soon after."

But notwithstanding the different judgments of mankind in most subjects, there were some however in which 'twas supposed they all agreed, and had the same
thoughts in common.--The question was still, Where? 'For whatever was of any moment, 'twas supposed, might be reduced under the head of religion, policy, or morals.'"\(^{44}\)

While he recognizes some of the difficulties with the doctrine of common sense, Shaftesbury clearly understands common sense as a method of determining truth which solicits the judgments of all men on the matter in question. Those propositions on which all men have "the same thoughts in common" are said to be common sense truths. While recognizing the difficulties, he pledges his word to "try what certain knowledge or assurance of things may be recovered, in that very way, by which all certainty, you thought, was lost, and an endless skepticism introduced."\(^{45}\) By cutting the undergrowth of skepticism prevailing in the eighteenth century, Shaftesbury believes he can construct a stronger edifice upon the tenet of common sense, a base stronger than that of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, relying on the presupposition that the universal consent of men does not err.

Francis Hutcheson, Shaftesbury's disciple and one of Reid's predecessors as Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow,\(^{46}\) articulated a doctrine of common sense similar to his mentor's thought. It is not, however, so precisely

\(^{44}\)Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, ed. John M. Robertson (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1964), I, 55.

\(^{45}\)Ibid., pp. 56-57. \(^{46}\)Tsanoff, p. 392.
presented as Shaftesbury's or Reid's statements. He, like Shaftesbury, founds his ethical theory in principles which all men hold in common, universal maxims perceived immediately by all human beings. Hutcheson speaks in the following example, from An Inquiry Into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue (1725), of all men's agreement regarding the basis of their approval of certain moral actions; he writes:

To shew how far mankind agree in that which we have made the universal foundation of this moral sense, viz. benevolence, we have observed already, that when we are asked the reason for our approbation of any action, we universally alledge its usefulness to the public, and not to the actor himself. If we are vindicating a censured action, and maintaining it lawful, we generally make this one article of our defense, "That it injured no body, or did more good than harm." On the other hand, when we blame any piece of conduct, we shew it to be prejudicial to others, besides the actor; or to evidence at least a neglect of their interest, when it was in our power to serve them; or when gratitude, natural affection, or some other disinterested tie should have raised in us a study of their interest.47

According to Hutcheson men everywhere and in all ages concur in the reasons they give for approving or disapproving the actions of another. This appeal to common sense, the concurrence of men on all manner of proposition whether moral, logical, or epistemological, foreshadows the common sense thought of Reid. Shaftesbury's and Hutcheson's treatment of the notion of common sense at the beginning

of the century lights the way, as it were, for the more structured epistemologies of men like Thomas Reid.

Summary.—Empiricism and a driving impulse to investigate all natural phenomena and the mind of man pervaded the thought of the eighteenth century. Of special interest to the eighteenth-century thinker was the mind of man and the epistemological boundaries of that mind. Giving guidance to the passionate investigation being carried out in this century was the new stress given to the inductive method by Francis Bacon, and simultaneously, a virtual disdain for Aristotelian deduction. The discovery of laws governing natural phenomena was prized because it gave to man the ability to manipulate nature to his own ends, and to this noble purpose empirical investigations were dedicated. The predominant epistemological thought of the century of enlightenment conceived of the mind unable to make direct contact with the external material world. The mind was capable of receiving only experience, as Locke put it, which comes to the mind via the senses. Finally, this empiricism which relied so heavily upon the individual's own perception led Berkeley and Hume to denials of the knowability of the material world, committing the principal philosophical thought to a solipsism, and thus severely limiting the scope of the mind to a knowledge only of itself and its own operations. The same century, however, saw new epistemological horizons
revealed by men like Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, whose common sense theories gave man direct access to the external world and made it knowable.

The Existence of God and Ethics

Despite the emphasis on epistemology and scientific theory, of course, eighteenth-century thought also included other subjects. The British empiricists found it necessary for logical reasons or for expedience to discuss the existence of God, and they took up the topic of ethics as well, though the justification for the latter does not necessarily follow from the existence or nature of the former. The empirical method of dealing with these two topics had substantial influence on later utilitarians such as Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, and others in the nineteenth century, as well as upon lesser moralists in the eighteenth century.

John Locke.—Locke arrives at God's existence in a purely rational manner. His method of establishing the idea of God is the upshot of his discussion of the creation of complex ideas out of simple ones. We have the notions, he argues, of such things as existence and duration, knowledge and power. It is when we group these ideas together and augment them to infinity that we come up with the notion of God. In the same manner we arrive at ideas of God's omniscience by having first the notion of varying degrees of knowledge and enlarging this notion to infini-
ty, and so on with power, goodness, and all the perfections which God possesses as His attributes. Locke argues that God's existence is as sure as his own, and as certain as the proven truths of geometry.

In keeping with his view of God as a perfectly rational being, Locke also produced a sketchy concept of ethics operable on a rational plane. He sought a science of ethics which would proceed from self-evident propositions, as incontestable as any in mathematics, to determine right and wrong, and to determine the consequences of human acts. He says in establishing his ethics:

The idea of a Supreme Being, infinite in power, goodness, and wisdom, whose workmanship we are, and on whom we depend; and the idea of ourselves, as understanding rational beings, being such as are clear in us, would, I suppose, if duly considered and pursued, afford such foundations of our duty and rules of action, as might place morality amongst the sciences capable of demonstration: wherein I doubt not but from self-evident propositions, by necessary consequences, as incontestable as those in mathematics, the measures of right and wrong might be made out to anyone that will apply himself with the same indifference and attention to the one, as he does to the other of these sciences.

He offers the following example of how this system might work:

Where there is no property, there is no injustice, is a proposition as certain as any demonstration in Euclid; for the idea of property being a right to any thing, and the idea to which the name injustice is given, being the invasion or violation of that right, it is evident, that these ideas being thus established,

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48 Locke, II, 31-33. 49 Ibid., I, 76-77.
50 Ibid., II, 368-69.
By first setting forth the propositions which are known to be true, Locke can then proceed to draw conclusions from them and make ethics as logically sound as any mathematical science. All mathematical deductions on matters of ethics would proceed from the first principles of God's existence and His attributes, and from man's rational nature. Apparently from these principles Locke believes he is able to make various deductions about man's duty and the quality of his conduct. Such an attempt to place ethics on the plane with sciences, in which demonstration is employed, at once takes ethical problems out of the sole domain of theology, where a strong reliance on scriptural prescription is the only necessary authority on which the ethician need depend, and it opens the field to philosophical inquiry and speculation. Thus Locke's advocacy of a kind of ethical algebra presented new vistas which other eighteenth-century thinkers developed more fully.

**George Berkeley.**—Berkeley, however, produced the most novel approach to proving the existence of God. It was noted above that Berkeley understood God as the Great Perceiver of heaven and earth, without whom neither could be. Indeed, the very purpose of his treatise *Of the Prin*...
ciples of Human Knowledge is to proffer "a demonstration of the existence and immateriality of God."\(^{52}\)

Having established the immateriality of being, and hence the existence of God, he rejoices at the improvement of man's thought which follows the nullification of matter:

Matter being once expelled out of nature drags with it so many skeptical and impious notions, such an incredible number of disputes and puzzling questions, which have been thorns in the sides of divines as well as philosophers, and made so much fruitless work for mankind, that if the arguments we have produced against it are not found equal to demonstration (as to me they evidently seem), yet I am sure all friends to knowledge, and religion have reason to wish they were.\(^{53}\)

In his Commonplace Book Berkeley discusses Locke's philosophy with particular interest in Locke's ethics, and agrees with Locke that ethical propositions, like algebraic ones, are demonstrably true. He states in the brief discussion:

To demonstrate morality it seems one need only make a dictionary of words, and see which included which. At least, this is the greatest part and bulk of the work.

Locke's instances of demonstration in morality are, according to his own rule, trifling propositions.\(^{54}\)

Berkeley does not offer a detailed explanation of how his lexical approach might work.

\(^{52}\) Berkeley, p. 509.  
\(^{53}\) Ibid., p. 556.  
Though he shows interest in Locke's mathematical ethics, Berkeley talks of other ethical concepts in other writings. In the dialogue "Alciphron, or The Minute Philosopher," Berkeley seems to espouse utilitarian views; Lysicles at one point says:

Happiness is the end to which created beings naturally tend, but we find that all animals, whether men or brute, do naturally and principally pursue real pleasure of sense; which is therefore to be thought their supreme good, their true end and happiness. It is for this men live; and whoever understands life must allow that man to enjoy the top and flower of it who hath a quick sense of pleasure, and withal spirit, skill, and fortune sufficient to gratify every appetite and every taste. Niggards and fools will envy or traduce such a one because they cannot equal him. Hence all that sober trifling in disparagement of what every one would be master of if he could—a full freedom and unlimited scope of pleasure.

While Berkeley seems at times interested in a system of ethical algebra and at other times in a philosophy of pleasure, he never fully develops either. He tends to return to the mandates of religion when evaluating the conduct of man. Perhaps for this reason he is more often studied for the impact of his epistemological thought than for his ethics.

John Gay.--The most famous philosophers of the eighteenth century, however, did not produce the earliest important ethical statement. Rather, a minister named John Gay (1669-1745) distilled within a relatively few

pages the essence of eighteenth-century ethics, an ethical
theory expounded in more detail later by Jeremy Bentham and
James Mill. Gay’s system considers virtue as "the conform-
ity to a rule of life, directing the actions of all ration-
al creatures with respect to each other’s happiness; to
which conformity everyone in all cases is obliged: and
everyone that does so conform, is or ought to be approved
of, esteemed and loved for so doing." Gay explains the
obligation to conform to this rule of life when he defines
virtue, saying "Obligation is the necessity of doing or
omitting any action in order to be happy...."

Gay finds four ways in which obligation is induced:
(1) "from perceiving the natural consequences of things;"
(2) from perceiving their "merit or demerit, as producing
the esteem and favor of our fellow creatures;" (3) from
perceiving "the authority of the civil magistrate;" and
(4) from perceiving "the authority of God." Man may
find his duty inductively, then by observing how particu-
lar acts produce the same consequences and by deciding
either to perform or avoid such acts on that basis. He
may make similar decisions by observing how particular

\[56\] John Gay, Concerning the Fundamental Principle
of Virtue and Morality, in The English Philosophers from
Bacon to Mill, ed. Edwin A. Burtt (New York: Random

\[57\] Ibid., p. 774. \[58\] Ibid.
acts are viewed by other men, and in a manner perhaps similar to the preceding one, he may observe the decisions of judges of courts. Finally he may determine his duty by consulting the will of God. Of all these sources of finding one's duty, the will of God is most important, because God, in all situations, can "make one happy or miserable." Attempting to discover the obligations growing out of the will of God, Gay asserts that by observing the infinite happiness and goodness of God exemplified in His works, "... he could have no other design in creating mankind than their happiness; and therefore that my behavior, as far as it may be a means of happiness of mankind, should be such." Thus man's foremost obligation is happiness, his own and that of other men. For Gay, man is a creature, aware of pleasure and pain, who seeks the former and avoids the latter. Man approves the actions of others when those actions bring satisfaction; he also sets up principles of conduct which serve to simplify the tedious process of logically analyzing all the steps from the act to the consequent, though these principles are not innate. Men imagine that they have innate ideas of what is good or bad when actually they have merely forgotten that they arrived at the simplifying principles by observing the progression from act to consequent in the past. One other important factor in Gay's ethical scheme is his postulation

59 Ibid., p. 774.
that man associates pain and pleasure with the consequences of actions.\(^{60}\) By reliance on this principle of association of ideas and on the notion that men form general principles of conduct, Gay was able to avoid dependence on intuitive knowledge of good and evil and to give rise to deductive utilitarian methods of ethical theory which Locke had only hinted at.

Notwithstanding modification and expansion by Bentham and Mill, Gay's moral theory provided the impetus for eighteenth-century ethics. Like most of the great ideas of the century, however, his work owed its inspiration to John Locke, whose desire to create a system of ethics depending on deduction was carried out by the great ethicists of the century. From Gay's utilitarian thought sprang that of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill, both of whom had their greatest impact upon the nineteenth century rather than the eighteenth. Like Gay, Bentham sought to develop an ethical scheme which would produce the greatest amount of happiness for the individual and the community.\(^{61}\) Mill, more politically oriented, was interested in application of the ethical calculus to political philosophy; he did, however, outline an ethical system for individuals, in the belief "that the whole science of human nature must be ex-

\(^{60}\)Ibid., pp. 776-784.

explored, to lay a foundation for the science of government." Bentham and Mill may rightly be considered nineteenth-century philosophers and are mentioned only briefly here to point up the ultimate influence of Gay's ethical thought.

**Economic Theory: Adam Smith**

While John Gay's thought is a significant link in the evolution of ethical theory in the eighteenth century, the thought of Adam Smith (1723-1790) is also significant because it marks an expansion of the scope of philosophical inquiry.

The eighteenth century was the period which saw economics dignified as a legitimate area of philosophical speculation. A Scotsman, Adam Smith was probably the most significant economic philosopher of the century, just as his *Wealth of Nations* (1776) is a most important work in the history of economic theory. Influenced by the scientific philosophy of his day, Smith observed the workings of the economy and set forth principles of its operation. Understanding such principles as these puts these operations under the control of man rather than leaving him at the mercy of economic phenomena. Like the moralists of the century, Smith views man as a creature motivated by

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desire for his own selfish gain; but unlike the moralists, Smith specifies the goal of man's desire as wealth, rather than pleasure or happiness in general. The economist points out that we tend to measure men in terms of their possessions: "We say of a rich man that he is worth a great deal, and a poor man that he is worth very little money." Men, then, are driven to action by their desire for money. Important to Smith's economic system is his view of the market. He postulates an invisible force or law which causes the unhampered market to work:

The market price of every particular commodity is regulated by the proportion between the quantity which is actually brought to market, and the demand of those who are willing to pay the natural price of the commodity, or the whole value of the rent, labor, and profit, which must be paid in order to bring it thither.

Man's desire for gain is the dynamic element in the efficiency of this operation, but competition is the controlling agent which keeps these avaricious creatures from becoming ruthlessly destructive in seeking their goals.

Smith believed so strongly in the self-regulating operation of the market that he argued against the necessity for outside intervention. He talks about this laissez-faire economy in discussing the theory of balance of trade; "Upon every account, therefore," he says, the attention should be paid on the domestic market and the conditions of the production of goods is the key to the balance of trade.

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64 Ibid., p. 43.

65 Ibid.
tion of government never was so unnecessarily employed, as when directed to watch over the preservation or increase of the quantity of money in any country." While many of Smith's economic theories, like many of the epistemological theories of his time, may seem naive by twentieth-century standards, his undertaking to reduce the intricate and inscrutable workings of economics into mechanical principles which can be understood and manipulated is significant indeed. His work established economics as a reputable philosophical endeavor, and opened the field for such prophets as Thomas Malthus and David Ricardo, who warned the world of the dangers of an exploding population. 67

Political Thought

Perhaps not so great an innovation, but certainly as influential a work as Smith's Wealth of Nations, was John Locke's political thought. If any philosophical work of the century had an incontestable impact on the thinking of the time, it was Locke's Concerning Civil Government (1688). Some see a causal relation between this work and the inspiration of the American and French revolutions. 68

Concerning Civil Government begins with a description of man in his natural state, having perfect freedom and equality, but lacking "established, settled, known law," judi-

66 Ibid., p. 330. 67 Heilbroner, pp. 61, 77-78.
68 Tsanoff, p. 358.
cial authority "to determine all differences according to the established law," and "power to back or support the sentence when right and to give it due execution." Because of these undesirable conditions, man is driven into society.

Important in Locke's theory of politics is that government has not only the responsibility to protect life and liberty, but also property. Property arises from man's mixing his labor with the object of his labor. "... It is labor indeed," says Locke, "that puts the difference of value on everything, ..." i.e., it is one's labor, mixed with a thing, which creates property. This labor theory of value, alone, had notable impact on later economists and political philosophers such as Karl Marx. Perhaps Locke's greatest innovation, however, is his treatment of the legislative power of the king.

The people in a "state of nature" give their power to a legislative; hence the legislative derives its power from the people and must remain subordinate to them. "... These laws also ought to be designed for no other end ultimately but the good of the people." Locke's pro-


70 Ibid., pp. 404, 453, passim. 71 Ibid., p. 419.

72 Ibid., pp. 457-59. 73 Ibid., p. 461.
visions for the transfer of power of government to the
people, in case the legislative power miscarries its au­
thority, is significant in the light of the two revolutions
which erupted toward the end of the century. Revolution is
justifiable in Locke's scheme of politics, and possibly for
that reason his thought was popular in eighteenth-century
America. When England failed to serve the ultimate good of
the colonists in America and when she miscarried her au­
thority by becoming oppressive, the resistance and revolt
of the colonists was eminently warranted under the provi­sions of Locke's thought. The people justifiably could
effect a transfer of power from King George III to their
own colonial representatives. Locke writes that "... up­
on the forfeiture, or at the determination of the time set,
it [legislative power] reverts to the society and the peo­
ple have a right to act as supreme, and continue the legis­
lative in themselves, or place it in hands as they think
good." These closing lines of Locke's treatise make al­
lowance, in unmistakably logical terms, for revolution.

Psychology: Association of Ideas

The theory of association of ideas is another topic
discussed throughout the eighteenth century, and certainly
it plays a role in the creation of the intellectual melieu
of that era. David Hartley (1705-1757) articulated this
theory in its many ramifications in his Observations on Man.

\[74\] Ibid., p. 503.
His Frame. His Duty, and His Expectations (1749), but Hume gives the most concise definition to the all-important psychological and epistemological aspects of the doctrine in An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, published one year prior to Hartley's work.

Explicating the doctrine, Hume writes:

It is evident that there is a principle of connection between the different thoughts or ideas of the mind, and that, in their appearance to the memory or imagination, they introduce each other with a certain degree of method and regularity. In our more serious thinking or discourse this is so observable that any particular thought, which breaks in upon the regular tract or chain of ideas, is immediately remarked and rejected. And even in our wildest and most wandering reveries, nay in our very dreams, we shall find, if we reflect, that the imagination ran not altogether at adventures, but that there was still a connection upheld among the different ideas, which succeeded each other. Were the loosest and freest conversation to be transcribed, there would immediately be observed something which connected it in all its transitions. Or where this is wanting, the person who broke the thread of discourse might still inform you, that there had secretly revolved in his mind a succession of thought, which had gradually led him from the subject of conversation. Among different languages, even where we cannot suspect the least connection or communication, it is found, that the words, expressive of ideas, the most compounded, do yet nearly correspond to each other; a certain proof that the simple ideas, comprehended in the compound ones, were bound together by some universal principle, which has an equal influence on all mankind.

Thus Hume proceeds in a proof of the existence of some principle of association by appealing to premises he believes...
lieves commonly accepted, that there is a regular succes-
sion of ideas even in the most unstructured and informal
discourse, that an unrelated thought which interrupts the
regular stream of ideas is recognized and dismissed, and
that in all language there is a natural correspondence be-
tween simple ideas when combined to produce compound ones.
In his last argument Hume presumably attempts to observe
various words, not necessarily compound words, which ex-
press compound ideas, ideas comprised of several simple
ideas; from his observations of compound expressions in
all languages, he draws the conclusion that there exists a
universal principle which binds these ideas together. For
instance the idea of a centaur, compounding the ideas of
man and horse, is one in which "... we cannot suspect
the least connection or communication, ..." yet certainly
the ideas "nearly correspond to each other."

Hume observes further that there are "four prin-
ciples of connection among ideas, namely, resemblance, con-
tiguity in time or place, and cause or effect."77 He ex-
plains the ways in which these four principles might oper-
ate in the following manner:

That these principles serve to connect ideas will
not, I believe, be much doubted. A picture naturally
leads our thoughts to the original; the mention of one
apartment in a building naturally introduces an inquiry
or discourse concerning the others; and if we think of
a wound, we can scarcely forbear reflecting on the pain
which follows it.78

77 Ibid., p. 597. 78 Ibid.
In other words when we view a picture, our idea of the ori-
ginal which the picture resembles somehow comes before the
mind; this is the operation of the principle of resem-
bance. When one is confronted with the idea of other
apartments, the principle of contiguity of place is oper-
ative. Likewise the principle of cause or effect brings
before the mind the causes of a wound or the pain subse-
quent to a wound when the idea of the wound is entertained
by the mind.

In this brief discussion of association of ideas
Hume displays the important aspects of the theory prevalent
in the eighteenth century. Generally, the theory postu-
lates that ideas affect the mind in such a way as to in-
troduce, or bring about in some manner, other ideas related
to the first by some principle of association such as those
Hume mentions, "resemblance, contiguity in time or place,
and cause or effect."

Summary

The eighteenth century in which Thomas Reid lived
and took his inspiration was one of evident paradox.
While the conditions in which the vast majority of human
beings lived were only beginning to improve, there was
progress and admirable development in many areas. This
century saw outstanding advancement in science and experi-
mentation, as well as the blossoming of the industrial
revolution. Certainly, this century of enlightenment wit-
nessed a flourishing of scholarly speculation and of arts and letters. Scholars in this era were determined to subject to precise scrutiny everything from natural phenomena and the functions of the human mind to human conduct itself, and ultimately to distill their findings into formulae with which they could work. Much attention was given to bringing nature into the ken of man, to controlling and ordering her, and making her produce for mankind. Bacon, for example, dedicated his work to the improvement of life. Eighteenth-century thinkers were men of unlimited scope; they insisted that nothing lay beyond the reach of the thinker, and they expounded on an enormous range of topics in their writings. Whether the total of knowledge was still small enough to be grasped by a single man, or whether eighteenth-century thinkers were men of encyclopedic abilities is a moot point. Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations, for example, is a rambling tome which treats virtually every topic conceivably related to economic thought. The interest in meticulous observation manifested during this century is also remarkable. Thomas Reid's Inquiry Into the Human Mind requires him to give considerable attention to his observations of such seemingly miniscule topics as smelling and tasting, and to consider the functions of the membranes of the nose, saliva, and the pores
of the tongue and fauces. While some of the thought in
the century is naive and inapplicable in the twentieth cen-
tury, there is equally as much to commend it. Sir Isaiah
Berlin says of the eighteenth century:

The intellectual power, honesty, lucidity, courage,
and disinterested love of the truth of the most gifted
thinkers of the eighteenth century remain to this day
without parallel. Their age is one of the best and
most hopeful episodes in the life of mankind.

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79 Thomas Reid, An Inquiry Into the Human Mind, in
The Works of Thomas Reid, D.D., ed. Sir William Hamilton
(Edinburgh: Maclachian and Stewart, 1863), II, 104-15.

80 Isaiah Berlin, The Age of Enlightenment (New
CHAPTER III

THOMAS REID'S COMMON SENSE PHILOSOPHY

Probably the best known aspect of Reid's thought and the one which brought him the most acclaim in the eighteenth century is his notion of common sense. Reid's communication theory, like other areas of his thought, draws heavily upon his presuppositions about common sense, so that an understanding of his common sense philosophy is fundamental to any discussion of Reid's communication theory. It is necessary not only to clarify the meaning of common sense, but also to show how it relates to various aspects of Reid's non-rhetorical thought—his views about the external world, empiricism, philosophy of science, and the existence and nature of God. Other topics of Reid's philosophy, such as ethics and logic, will be considered under his treatment of communication.

Reid's philosophy of common sense is a turning point for the thought of the eighteenth century. By the end of this epoch the mainstream of philosophy had retreated deep into a solipsistic labyrinth, a maze created by conflict between scientific philosophies postulating the existence of an unseen entity called matter whose laws are discernible and increasingly extreme epistemological theories which questioned more and more insistently the existence of the external world. Reid, whose principal wri-
tings appeared at the end of the century, reviewed many philosophical systems in critical retrospect and located their more tenuous points, giving particular attention to the ideas of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. His common sense philosophy restored perspective not only to epistemology but to all aspects of philosophy by seeking to eliminate the skepticism which epistemologies had produced during the century of enlightenment.

Thomas Reid is the father of Scottish common sense philosophy, but as indicated in the previous chapter, two earlier thinkers, Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, developed similar theories prior to Reid. Neither treated the doctrine so extensively as Reid did, however. In addition to these precursors of Reid's thought on common sense, Father Buffier, a French Jesuit, treated various ramifications of the subject as early as 1732. Indeed, Reid drew on several sources in formulating his particular theory of common sense, and he acknowledges his indebtedness to Buffier for his influence on Reid's Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man. The direct influence of Buffier on Reid's earlier work, however, is dubious; William Hamilton, editor


of the 1863 edition of Reid’s *Works*, doubts that Reid was aware of Buffier’s work on first principles at the time he wrote *An Inquiry Into the Human Mind* (1763), though he makes repeated appeals to common sense in that work. By the time he published *A Brief Account of Aristotle’s Logic* (1774), however, Reid was aware of Buffier, whom he cites in this treatise.

Whether Reid actually innovated the doctrine of common sense is not important, however, because Reid himself is eager “to explain the meaning of common sense, that it may not be treated, as it has been by some, as a new principle, or as a word without any meaning.” He argues, in fact, that many philosophers, including his detractor George Berkeley, have consistently employed common sense to establish their philosophical premises and to refute their opponents. Reid argues that Berkeley “has laid as much stress upon common sense, in opposition to the doctrines of philosophers, as any philosopher that has come after him.” Reid regards common sense as an ancient

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6Ibid., p. 423.
principle. He revives it, drawing on the thought of several of his contemporaries, and articulates it in all his works in such a fashion as to gain for himself the distinction as the father of common sense philosophy.

I. Definition

Reid is aware that at the foundation of his thought lies the principle of common sense, and one of his most stringent criticisms of most of eighteenth-century philosophy is that it does not give common sense its proper importance. However, one of Reid's problems is determining precisely what he means by this important term common sense. Early in An Inquiry Into the Human Mind (1763) he offers a definition which identifies common sense with intrinsic principles deriving from the nature of the mind. He says:

If there are certain principles, as I think there are, which the constitution of our nature leads us to believe, and which we are under a necessity to take for granted in the common concerns of life, without being able to give a reason for them—these are what we call the principles of common sense; and what is manifestly contrary to them, is what we call absurd.  

In this passage Reid seems to intend common sense to mean principles which are assumed and undeniably true but which cannot be logically proven. These truths are agreed upon by all men everywhere.

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In his *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (1785) Reid reiterates this meaning of common sense, adding that common sense notions are presuppositions on which all other knowledge is based:

We ought likewise to take for granted, as first principles, things wherein we find an universal agreement, among the learned and unlearned, in the different nations and ages of the world. A consent of ages and nations, of the learned and vulgar, ought, at least, to have great authority, unless we can show some prejudice as universal as that consent is, which might be the cause of it. Truth is one, error is infinite. There are many truths so obvious to the human faculties, that it may be expected that men should universally agree in them.

Here as before, common sense consists of first principles which are taken for granted among all men everywhere, but Reid allows the possibility that all men can be misled by prejudice into believing propositions which are manifestly untrue. Furthermore, he acknowledges that these principles are not demonstrated but assumed by the vulgar and the educated alike. Hence, if common sense first principles are to be consistent with truth, they must be propounded by a sound reasoning mind which is not perverted by poor judgment.

Reid's insistence on this requisite of consensus for common sense precepts is most interesting in its observation that common judgments of whole nations of men cannot always be trusted. Apparently decisions about the correctness of common sense notions can be rather impressionistic.

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and subjective at times. In his discussion of aesthetics Reid points out that "Whole nations by force of prejudice are brought to believe the grossest absurdities; and why should it be thought that the taste is less capable of being perverted than the judgment?" As proof of this point, Reid cites incidents of the most outrageous customs among savages: "An esquimaux [eskimo]," he exclaims, "can regale himself with a draught of whale-oil, and a Canadian can feast upon a dog. A Kamschatkadale lives upon putrid fish, and is sometimes reduced to eat the bark of trees." If whole nations may be led astray in their reasoning and judgment, then Reid cannot rely on the strength of numbers to prove his argument for the validity of common sense principles. He does not acknowledge this weakness of his argument however; he seems quite content to believe that occasionally he alone, of all men everywhere, possesses the truth. Reid is then left with the formidable responsibility of determining which of men's judgments are, unlike his own, departures from common sense and the result of prejudice, and which are merely different. He does not explain how this difficulty is to be resolved; indeed he seems not to recognize its existence.

Nevertheless, and acquaintance with common sense principles is indispensable in determining truth. Reason and common sense go hand in hand, but they are not identi-

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cal. About their relationship Reid says: "It is absurd to conceive that there can be any opposition between reason and common sense. It is indeed the first-born of Reason; and, as they are commonly joined together in speech and writing, they are inseparable in their nature." He adds further that "A man who has common sense may be taught to reason. But, if he has not that gift, no teaching will make him able either to judge of first principles or reason from them." Common sense consists of self-evident principles which are universally taken for granted and which undergird true propositions. Perhaps inadvertently exposing his interest in rhetoric, Reid adds that "... the province of common sense is more extensive in refutation than in confirmation," and states further that "a conclusion drawn from true principles cannot possibly contradict any decision of common sense, because truth will always be consistent with itself." For instance Reid finds the conclusions of the skeptical philosophers inconsistent with common sense and, primarily for that reason, judges their conclusions about the external world untrue.

Common sense, sometimes called common judgment, is a God-given innate part of the individual mind; departure from its principles is lunacy. Reid implies that most

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philosophers of his time belong in a category with the mentally ill. The notion of common sense itself Reid envisions as belonging among those ideas which are taken for granted and God-given, requiring no explanation. At one point he even apologizes for defining the term at all; he says:

Indeed, it seems to me, that common sense is as unambiguous a word and as well understood as the county York. We find it in innumerable places in good writers; we hear it on innumerable occasions in conversation; and, as far as I am able to judge, always in the same meaning. And this is probably the reason why it is so seldom defined or explained.15

Though the term may need no definition for use in his discourse, Reid does admit that it is somewhat unusual to find the term employed in philosophical writing. "It is true that common sense is a popular and not a scholastic word;" he writes, "and by most of those who have treated systematically of the powers of understanding, it is only occasionally mentioned, as it is by other writers."16

Regardless of whether the term is frequently employed by philosophers, all of philosophical thought must be faithful to the principles of common sense. Reid insists that "Philosophy . . . has no other root but the principles of Common Sense; it grows out of them, and draws its nourishment from them. Severed from this root, its honours wither, its sap is dried up, and it dies and rots."17

15Ibid., p. 423. 16Ibid.
He may have had in mind the ideas of many of his contemporaries whose skepticism, separated from the nourishment of common sense, must wither and die. Indeed, he finds that most of the trouble with the philosophy of his time stems from its loss of contact with common sense principles and has become for that reason, in his estimation, contemptible and ridiculous.

Perhaps the clearest attempt to define common sense is one in which Reid presents the concept as a logical entity related to a major or minor premise of a syllogism. Reid also identifies common sense with terms used in disciplines other than philosophy and with some Ciceronian terms. He writes:

One of the most important distinctions of our judgments is, that some of them are intuitive, others grounded on argument.

It is not in our power to judge as we will. The judgment is carried along necessarily by the evidence, real or seeming, which appears to us at the time. But, in propositions that are submitted to our judgment, there is this great difference—some are of such a nature that a man of ripe understanding may apprehend them distinctly, and perfectly understand their meaning, without finding himself under any necessity of believing them to be true or false, probable or improbable. The judgment remains in suspense, until it is inclined to one side or another by reasons or arguments.

But there are other propositions which are no sooner understood than they are believed. The judgment follows the apprehension of them necessarily, and both are equally the work of nature, and the result of our original powers. There is no searching for evidence, no weighing of arguments; the proposition is not deduced or inferred from another; it has the light of truth in itself, and has no occasion to borrow it from another.

Propositions of the last kind, when they are used in matters of science, have commonly been called
axioms, and on whatever occasion they are used, they are called first principles, principles of common sense, common notions, self-evident truths. Cicero calls them naturae judicia, judicia communibus hominem sensibus infixa. Lord Shaftesbury expresses them by the words, natural knowledge, fundamental reason, and common sense.18

Any tautological proposition such as "A is A" or "a brother is a male sibling" would, undoubtedly, be considered true propositions without evidence or argument. Reid takes as an axiom the proposition that there is a material world which is knowable to man, and it is at this juncture that he engages in combat with Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. While Reid is probably correct in arguing that the unschooled man would immediately affirm the existence of the material world, there must be many propositions which some would consider common sense first principles while others would not view them as such. A renowned universal proposition such as "All men are mortal" might receive universal affirmation because mortality is understood in the term men. Another universal proposition, "All cows give milk," may depend on one's knowledge of cows for its affirmation.

Apparently, what Reid means by common sense is not unlike what Locke calls innate ideas. One of the grounds on which Locke denies the existence of innate ideas is that they cannot be shown to be universally held by all men; Reid on the contrary maintains that all men whose judgment is not impaired by prejudice or lunacy must certainly possess these

18Ibid., p. 434.
common sense first principles, which they take for granted and employ in conducting their lives. Clearly implied in Reid's concept of common sense is a denouncement of Locke's argument against innate ideas. In the passage which follows Reid offers a proof of the existence of the material world, and in doing so employs various terms which appear to be synonymous with Locke's term innate idea. Reid writes:

It is therefore acknowledged by this philosopher to be a natural instinct or prepossession, an universal and primary opinion of all men, a primary instinct of nature, that the objects which we immediately perceive by our senses, are not images in our minds, but external objects, and that their existence is independent of us and our perception.19

This declaration not only defies Bishop Berkeley, but subtly repudiates Locke's denial of what Reid calls natural instinct, prepossession, universal and primary opinion, and primary instinct of nature—in short, of such things as innate ideas. Locke's denial rested on the grounds that "... there are a great part of mankind to whom they [innate ideas] are not so much as known."20 Reid's affirmation rests on a belief that there are principles held even by the most vulgar of men which are undeniably true; this belief is the essence of common sense.

II. Epistemology: The Material World and Causality

It is not surprising to find that Reid employs the principle of common sense to help establish the existence of the material world. He states frankly that we can know real things in the external world. Reid's epistemology, then, is bound up with his consideration of the existence of the material world, and his most strenuous struggles are against those who would question its existence. His statements about the nature of the material world and our knowledge of it are rooted in common sense. Reid contends that he does not "dispute the existence of what the vulgar call the objects of perception. These, by all who acknowledge their existence, are called real things, not ideas," as some eighteenth-century thinkers would assert.

The crux of Reid's thought about the material world lies in the first principles which he sets forth in Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man. He announces that he will establish as presuppositions several metaphysical principles which David Hume had questioned. He writes:

The first is, That the qualities which we perceive by our senses must have a subject, which we call body, and that the thoughts we are conscious of must have a subject, which we call mind.

It is not more evident that two and two make four, than it is that figure cannot exist, unless there be something that is figured, nor motion without something that is moved. I not only perceive figure and motion,

\[21\] Reid, Intellectual Powers, p. 298.
but I perceive them to be qualities. They have a necessary relation to something in which they exist as their subject. The difficulty which some philosophers have found in admitting this, is entirely owing to the theory of ideas. A subject of the sensible qualities which we perceive by our senses, is not an idea either of sensation or of consciousness; therefore, they say, we have no such idea. Or, in the style of Mr. Hume, from what impression is the idea of substance derived? It is not a copy of any impression; therefore there is no such idea.

The distinction between sensible qualities, and the substance to which they belong, and between thought and the mind that thinks, is not the invention of philosophers; it is found in the structure of all languages, and therefore must be common to all men who speak with understanding.22

Thus while Berkeley argued that to be is to be perceived, Reid argues that to perceive is to perceive something, and to think presupposes the existence of the thinker. He believes he has established, in one fell swoop, the existence of the external world and of mind, and he finds he is confirmed in his judgment by the manner in which mankind everywhere use language, a confirmation which Reid cherishes and one which will be treated in more depth in the following chapter. Reid considers the existence of a material world and of mind important enough to justify their being treated as first principles.

Reid acknowledges, however, that not all scholars agree with him on the subject of material existence. He reviews what he calls the various "theories of ideas" of his three major philosophical antagonists in the following passage, in which a common man asks each of the three,

22Ibid., p. 454.
"... Pray, sir, are there then no substantial and permanent beings called the sun, and moon, which continue to exist whether we think of them or not?" Reid then hypothesizes the probable answers:

Mr. Locke, and those that were before him, will answer to this question, that it is very true there are substantial and permanent beings called the sun and moon; but they never appear to us in their own person, but by their representatives, the ideas in our own minds, and we know nothing of them but what we can gather from those ideas.

Bishop Berkeley and Mr. Hume would give a different answer to the question proposed. They would assure the querist that it is a vulgar error, a mere prejudice of the ignorant and unlearned, to think that there are any permanent and substantial beings called the sun and moon; that the heavenly bodies, our own bodies, and all bodies whatsoever, are nothing but ideas in our minds; and that there can be nothing like the ideas of one mind, but the ideas of another mind. There is nothing in nature but minds and ideas, says the Bishop;—nay, says Mr. Hume, there is nothing in nature but ideas only; for what we call a mind is nothing but a train of ideas connected by certain relations between themselves.23

Reid believes that he has quite accurately summarized the views of these three major spokesmen of the eighteenth century, and he seems convinced that their philosophies are obviously untenable. He declares each "theory of ideas" to be "extravagant and visionary," and for that reason wholly unacceptable. Needless to say, Reid disagrees absolutely with the arguments he relates. To him, it is patently absurd to hold such views; it is "... directly contrary to the universal sense of men who have not been instructed in philosophy. When we see the sun or

23Ibid., p. 299.
moon, we have no doubt that the very objects which we immediately see are very far distant from us, and from one another.\(^{24}\) Being undeniably distant from us, they cannot have their sole existence in our own minds. Reid finds it equally absurd to maintain that these heavenly bodies cease to exist when we stop perceiving them.

In this kind of *reductio ad absurdum* argument, Reid consistently turns to the unschooled common man for the proof of his argument that skeptical epistemologies are unsound. He applies the irrefutable maxim that he who knows, knows. This first principle of all mystical thought is incontestable when applied in this context. To proffer a theory of knowledge which tells the unlearned man that he cannot be certain of what he knows is obviously ridiculous in Reid's view. The skeptical epistemologies of Berkeley and Hume ultimately make the existence of the external world questionable, a condition which Reid cannot tolerate:

Thus, the wisdom of *philosophy* is set in opposition to the *common sense* of mankind. The first pretends to demonstrate, *a priori*, that there can be no such thing as a material world; the sun, moon, stars, and earth, vegetable and animal bodies, are, and can be nothing else, but sensations in the mind, or images of those sensations in the memory and imagination; that, like pain and joy, they can have no existence when they are not thought of.\(^{25}\)

We have already seen that when there is a discrepancy between any proposition and common sense, the fault is with

the proposition. Certainly referring to Berkeley, Reid declares that for philosophy to oppose common sense and call into question the existence of the material world is "a kind of metaphysical lunacy," and furthermore, the fact that men seriously propound such notions gives weight to the maxim that "... too much learning is apt to make men mad. ..." Sounding like a confirmed anti-intellectual, Reid goes on to blame philosophy for causing irreparable damage to its own reputation as a seeker of truth by advocating such idiocies. He questions the sagacity of such philosophers and declares: "If this be wisdom, let me be deluded with the vulgar," an association which Reid, with all his devotion to the academic pursuits, never fails to relish.

Reid seeks to weaken the arguments of the sceptical philosophers and at the same time to make more tenable a belief in common sense. His principal argument against Locke, Berkeley, and Hume follows:

... in all this debate about the existence of the material world, it hath been taken for granted on both sides, that this same material world, if any such there be, must be the express image of our sensations; that we can have no conception of any material thing which is not like some sensation in our minds; and particularly that the sensations of touch are images of extension, hardness, figure, and motion. Every argument brought against the existence of a material world, either by the Bishop of Cloyne, or by the author of the "Treatise of Human Nature," supposeth this. If this is true, their arguments are conclusive and unanswerable; but, on the other hand, if it is not true, there is no shadow of argument left. Have those philosophers,
then, given any solid proof of this hypothesis, upon which the whole weight of so strange a system rests. No. They have not so much as attempted to do it. But, because ancient and modern philosophers have agreed in this opinion, they have taken it for granted. But let us, as becomes philosophers, lay aside authority; we need not, surely, consult Aristotle or Locke, to know whether pain be like the point of a sword. I have as clear a conception of extension, hardness, and motion, as I have of the point of a sword; and, with some pains and practice, I can form as clear a notion of the other sensations of touch as I have of pain. When I do so, and compare them together, it appears to me clear as daylight, that the former are not of kin to the latter, nor resemble them in any one feature.27

Here Reid charges the skeptics with maintaining certain mistaken notions about man's ability to know the external world, and contends that when these fragile cornerstones of the skeptical philosophies are shown to be weak the entire edifice will topple. Reid says that Berkeley and Hume have held that our concepts of the material world are derived from sensations or perceptions of that world, and that these concepts are like the material things about which we hold these conceptions. They maintain also that we can know of nothing that is unlike sensations in the mind, and that "images of extension, hardness, figure, and motion" comprise the sensation of touch.

To bring down the skeptical epistemological systems, Reid argues that when he touches an object he has a sensation of things in the external world which is nothing like "extension, hardness, figure, and motion." Rather, he has the sensation of pain. Comparing his sensation of pain

with sensations of the four qualities which Berkeley and Hume predicted, Reid declares:

They are as unlike, yea as certainly and manifestly unlike, as pain is to the point of a sword. It may be true, that those sensations first introduced the material world to our acquaintance; it may be true, that it seldom or never appears without their company; but, for all that, they are as unlike as the passion of anger is to those figures of the countenance which attend it.28

Once Reid has established the validity of his contention that he does indeed have a sensation of something in the external world which does not resemble extension, hardness, figure, and motion, he believes he can claim that the skeptical philosophers have mistakenly denied the existence of the wrong thing. "Their proof touches not matter or any of its qualities; but strikes directly against an idol of their own imagination, a material world made of ideas and sensations, which never had, nor can have an existence."29 Because the arguments and proofs of Berkeley and Hume do not deal with matter but with sensation or perception in the mind, the arguments are irrelevant to the conclusions which they draw, and further, the conclusions are invalid and untenable. In summing up his criticism of the epistemologies of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, which he calls the "ideal system," Reid reiterates his conclusions by proposing to test the ultimate worth of such a system. He writes:

... Extension, figure, motion, may, any one, or all

28Ibid., p. 128. 29Ibid.
of them, be taken for the subject of this experiment. Either they are ideas of sensation, or they are not. If any one of them can be shewn to be an idea of sensation, or to have the least resemblance to any sensation, I lay my hand upon my mouth, and give up all pretense to common sense in this matter, and must suffer the ideal skepticism to triumph. But if, on the other hand, they are not ideas of sensation, nor like to any sensation, then the ideal system is a rope of sand, and all the laboured arguments of the skeptical philosophy against a material world, and against the existence of every thing but impressions and ideas, proceed upon a false hypothesis.30

Reid, of course, believes that he has indeed reconciled reason to common sense by showing that the material world is not in the image of our sensations, as the skeptics have held; the sword in the material world is nothing like the pain which he receives as a sensation by touching it, nor does it resemble any of the sensations of touch which the skeptics allow. Reid judges the reason of the skeptical philosophers weak, and without considering their skepticism further, he adopts the non-skeptical common sense notions of the man unschooled in philosophy.

Nevertheless, the Scottish philosopher offers yet another proof for the existence of the external world, one reminiscent of Samuel Johnson’s kicking a stone to refute Hume. Reid observes that when he presses his hand against a table he senses pain and hardness. Pain is a sensation of the mind; it does not exist in the table. Conversely, hardness abides in the table, in the material world, for nothing like it exists in the mind.31 By touching an ob-

ject the common man and the philosopher alike receive sev-

eral sensations, and also "a conception and an immediate

natural conviction of external objects."\textsuperscript{32} If we all re-

ceive an immediate conviction of the existence of matter,

then nothing could weaken this conviction unless it im-

paired our perception or our judgment.

In Reid's logical arguments against skepticism, he

has not demonstrated the existence of the external world,

nor has he claimed to do so. He has simply demonstrated

the weakness of the skeptical arguments which call the

material world into question. Relying heavily upon what

Reid believes to be the incredibility and absurdity of

skeptical epistemology to bring about its destruction,

Reid grounds his own constructive arguments in rather

shaky arguments based on appeals to the popularity of

belief in the material world, and very little else. As the

last "test" of the material world shows, men need not be

convinced by argument of its existence; they are convicted

of it by their own experiences. If there were a rare in-

stance in which a man were not convinced of the existence

of the material world by experience, the fault lies with

him, in his prejudices or in the condition of his mind, and

not in the common sense proposition that the world exists.

Not only does Reid's epistemology seek to negate

the effect of the skeptics' view of material existence, it

\textsuperscript{32}Ibid., p. 313.
also attempts a refutation of Hume's argument against causality. Just as he regards the existence of matter as a first principle, Reid postulates that causal relations are knowable first principles, and that to deny their existence is absurd. He holds as a metaphysical principle "That whatever begins to exist, must have a cause which produced it," and gives reasons for postulating this. First, Reid says, underlying this principle is

The universal consent of mankind, not of philosophers only, but of the rude and unlearned vulgar.

Indeed, with regard to first principles there is no reason why the opinion of a philosopher should have more authority than that of another man of common sense, who has been accustomed to judge in such cases. The illiterate vulgar are competent judges; and the philosopher has no prerogative in matters of this kind; but he is more liable than they to be misled by a favourite system, especially if it is his own. The uneducated masses may mistakenly give credence to all manner of beliefs about the origin of the world, but they always understand some cause. Second, Reid affirms the self-evident principle of causation because all men act upon the principle in the marketplace of life even when they may have reason to doubt it.

In establishing the knowability of the principle of causation, as in verifying the existence of the material world, Reid relies heavily upon common sense, on the universal certainty men have of such a principle, and on their consistent reliance upon it in conducting their lives.

33 Ibid., p. 455. 34 Ibid., p. 456.
Reid's use of his common sense maxims in this case serves to point to the manner in which common sense pervades his thought and forms its basic logical structure.

III. Empiricism and Philosophy of Science

Another feature of Reid's non-rhetorical thought is his consideration of empiricism and the philosophy of science. There can be no doubt of Reid's devotion to the empiricism which pervaded the thought of most learned men of the eighteenth century. He is convinced of the reliability of the empirical method of investigation and attributes man's natural affinity for it to some intrinsic factor in human composition. Like common sense, the tendency to empiricism is a natural inclination of man. In the following excerpt Reid reveals his admiration for the empirical method of investigation; Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum* is no longer new as Reid views empiricism in his *Inquiry Into the Human Mind*. He states that

Wise men now agree, or ought to agree, in this, that there is but one way to the knowledge of nature's works—the way of observation and experiment. By our constitution, we have a strong propensity to trace particular facts and observations to general rules, and to apply such general rules to account for other effects, or to direct us in the production of them. This procedure of the understanding is familiar to every human creature in the common affairs of life, and it is the only one by which any real discovery in philosophy can be made.  

Here Reid reveals his understanding of the empirical method,

an inductive process of tracing "particular facts and observations to general rules," and applying these "general rules to account for other effects," or to use these general rules to produce desired effects. He reveals his relation to Isaac Newton when he discusses the manner in which Newton derived his philosophical laws of nature, saying that "His regulae philosophandi [principles governing the occurrence of phenomena] are maxims of common sense, and are practiced every day in common life; and he who philosophizes by other rules, either concerning the material system or concerning the mind, mistakes his aim." Thus Reid declares his dependence upon the principles of common sense in all the ramifications of philosophy and science. Even those principles governing the movements of bodies and the workings of the material system of the universe are maxims which are reliable in "common life," and for Reid apparently they do not have the foreboding aura that some philosophers would ascribe to them.

Echoing Bacon, Reid is careful to admonish against seeking knowledge of natural phenomena in the wrong way:

If we would know the works of God, we must consult themselves with attention and humility, without daring to add anything of ours to what they declare. A just interpretation of nature is the only sound and orthodox philosophy; whatever we add of our own is apocryphal, and of no authority.  

Certainly it is with devotion to the severest scrutiny that

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36 Ibid.  37 Ibid.
he undertakes his Inquiry, Reid regards nothing so sacred as to forbid his probing. He expresses this dedication to the precepts of empiricism when he states at the beginning of the Inquiry that "All we know of the body, is owing to anatomical dissection and observation, and it must be by an anatomy of the mind that we can discover its powers and principles."

In Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man Reid again praises the virtues of careful scrutiny, saying:

Of all the discoveries that have been made concerning the inward structure of the human body, never one was made by conjecture. Accurate observations of anatomists have brought to light innumerable artifices of Nature in the contrivance of this machine of the human body, which we cannot but admire as excellently adapted to their several purposes. But the most sagacious physiologist never dreamed of them till they were discovered. On the other hand, innumerable conjectures, formed in different ages, with regard to the structure of the body, have been refuted by observation, and never confirmed.

What we have said of the internal structure of the human body, may be said, with justice, of every other part of the works of God, wherein any real discovery has been made. Such discoveries have always been made by patient observation, but accurate experiment, or by conclusions drawn by strict reasoning from observations and experiments; and such discoveries have always tended to refute, but not to confirm, the theories and hypotheses which ingenious men have invented.

As this is a fact confirmed by the history of philosophy in all past ages, it ought to have taught men, long ago, to treat with just contempt hypotheses in every branch of philosophy, and to despair of ever advancing real knowledge in that way. The Indian philosopher, being at a lost to know how the earth was supported, invented the hypothesis of a huge elephant; and this elephant he supposed to stand upon the back of a huge tortoise. This hypothesis, however ridiculous it appears to us, might seem very reasonable to other In-

38 Ibid., p. 98.
diants, who knew no more than the inventor of it; and the same will be the fate of all hypotheses invented by men to account for the works of God. They may have a decent and plausible appearance to those who are not more knowing than the inventor; but, when men come to be more enlightened, they will always appear ridiculous and childish.

This scientific method, though it advocates the use of experiment, does not admit the necessity of hypothesis even if the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis is contingent upon results of experimentation. When Reid advocates drawing conclusions upon "strict reasoning from observations and experiments" he seems to stress the necessity of induction, but unfortunately he does not spell out a system in full. Rather than attempting to provide a detailed methodology of science, Reid is more interested in admonishing against the pitfalls of conjecture and reliance upon a priori assumptions about nature.

The scientist must make some fine distinctions if he is to follow Reid's advice about doing scientific investigation; he must take care not to reject common sense first principles in refusing to be guided by conjecture. Reid presents a dilemma for the philosophy of common sense when he introduces the example of the Indian philosopher, with his elephant and tortoise supporting the earth. If the Indian philosopher and millions of Indians like him maintain that such a basis of natural philosophy is in keeping with their common sense first principles, who is to

attempt to prove their assertion about nature "ridiculous," as Reid says it is? Reid does not make clear exactly what he means by "enlightenment," but he implies that the Indian philosopher and his followers are not enlightened, and that when they become so they will recognize the scientific error of their supposition. He seems here to regard instruction or education as a requisite of good judgment, but he discounts the fact that centuries of education in Europe did not deter scholars from hypothesizing a universe which admitted a belief in the material existence of angels and the considerable physical influence of spirits and witches.

It is apparent also that enlightenment does not always make absurd hypotheses about the nature of the world appear "ridiculous and childish." Only a relatively short time before Reid's writings, for example, protectors of the church hindered Copernican scholars, notably Galileo, from pursuing their investigations, in the name of the supposedly enlightened hypotheses of common sense first principles of learned theology deeply grounded in Aristotelean principles. Quite possibly the Indian philosopher may find as many educated and enlightened Indians, furthermore, who would uphold his extraordinary notions about the universe as Reid could find who would not. Educational enlightenment, therefore, seems of little consequence in determining which hypotheses are and which are not valid.
Nevertheless, Reid's strong attraction for meticulous firsthand observation of phenomena commends itself to anyone interested in scientific investigation, and it is this attribute of many of the scholars of this era which distinguishes the eighteenth century as a period of considerable empirical and scientific advancement. An outstanding example of Reid's empiricism is his remarkable and lengthy essay "Of Seeing," in which he not only reviews existing theories on the subject and makes observations but relates his own conclusions in great detail, including treatises on such physiological subjects as the parallel motion of the eyes, squinting, double vision, and the optical phenomenon in which images striking the retina inverted appear in an upright position. The essay also serves as an example of Reid's own methods of scientific examination, particularly the portion devoted to the phenomenon whereby the mind ignores a sign and immediately notices the thing signified by it. Though Reid addresses himself principally to sight, he relates his observations briefly to signs and the things they signify in speech, indicating both his tendency to generalize and his continuing interest in language. He writes:

When I see a man at the distance of ten yards, and afterwards see him at the distance of a hundred yards, his visible appearance, in its length, breadth, and all its linear proportions, is ten times less in the last case than it is in the first; yet I do not conceive him one inch diminished by this diminution of his visible

40Reid, Inquiry, pp. 132-201.
Nay, I do not in the least attend to this diminution, even when I draw from it the conclusion of his being at a greater distance. For such is the subtlety of the mind's operation in this case, that we draw the conclusion, without perceiving that ever the premises entered into the mind. A thousand such instances might be produced, in order to shew that the visible appearances of objects are intended by nature only as signs or indications, and that the mind passes instantly to the things signified, without making the least reflection upon the sign, or even perceiving that there is any such thing. It is in a way somewhat similar, that the sounds of a language, after it is become familiar, are overlooked, and we attend only to the things signified by them.\textsuperscript{41}

Noticeably, Reid does not cite statistics gathered by any experimentation, and there is lacking any structured presentation of fact that the twentieth-century theorist often employs. In the passage Reid announces that "A thousand such instances might be produced, . . ." but he does not produce any of them in his writing to shore up his inductive reasoning. Even if he did produce some of the extant thousand examples, if they are like the one cited, they would be examples merely of observations which tend to bear out the truth of his conclusions, rather than reports of any actual experimentation which Reid may have carried out.

In brief, perhaps the one aspect of Reid's concept of the scientific methodology which differs most markedly from a modern view is his lack of control. He does not confine his observations in time, for example, an omission which allows his reader to speculate that the additional examples he speaks of might be noted at any time with the

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 135.
same results. Furthermore, he leaves the reader to assume that all thousand examples are drawn from his own observations; if they are not all drawn from his own observations it is possible that the observations are those of a more myopic man, and therefore need to be afforded less credence. Though Reid's conclusions rely heavily on induction, his presentation is like that of a philosopher arguing for a conclusion already reached or for a hypothesis which needs defense, and not like that of a philosopher who claims to have cast off all prejudiced hypotheses.

Despite some unresolved difficulties in Reid's methodology, he remains a thinker unflaggingly devoted to the empirical scientific method, an inductive process deriving general principles of nature from careful observation of particular phenomena. Reid finds that with these universal laws he can account for the occurrence of other phenomena and can bring about the occurrence of phenomena by applying these laws. Regardless of the procedure for arriving at these laws of nature or the ways of using them, Reid cannot comprehend there being any discrepancy between natural laws and common sense. He maintains that the best procedure for deriving these common sense natural laws is an empirical one, and praises the method of accurate and careful observation of nature. Heaping contempt upon the use of conjecture in scientific undertakings, Reid himself relies on conjectural propositions, which he calls first principles, to establish his common sense philosophy.
IV. Of God

Reid's devotion to empiricism and the scientific method is as avid as that of his contemporaries, and his treatment of the topic is interesting; his discussion of the existence and nature of God, by contrast, is rather colorless. Some of the most interesting ideas during the century of enlightenment were those about the existence and nature of God, Berkeley's being the most novel. Reid, however, seems only slightly interested in the subject. He discusses the existence of God incidentally as it is founded on a necessary truth, and relates the argument from final causes in syllogistic form: "First, That design and intelligence in the cause, may, with certainty, be inferred from marks or signs of it in the effect." Reid observes that atheistic thinkers seem to concede this first premise of the teleological argument but deny the second premise, "... That the works of nature are the effects of a wise and intelligent Cause."^42 Reid is convinced that recent discoveries about the human body provide the "clearest marks or signs" of "design and intelligence." More recent philosophers, Reid claims, find the first premise the weakest one; they maintain that signs of a grand intelligence are not perceptible in phenomena, and only signs of physical causes may be seen. They claim that the ancient atheists had confused final causes with physical ones and that

final causes lie outside the domain of the philosopher. "Des Cartes seems to have led the way in this," Reid says, "though he was no atheist."43

The existence of a Supreme Being is a necessary truth much like a common sense first principle, according to Reid. He says that it "is the only necessary truth I know of regarding existence." In Reid's philosophy there are two classes of truths, necessary and contingent. Necessary truths have been called "eternal truths," because "... it is impossible they should not be true at all times and in all places." Contingent truths depend for their truth upon truths outside themselves and apply to all notions we have about the existence of everything excepting God and the attributes of God.44 Reid argues further that

All other beings that exist depend for their existence, and all that belongs to it, upon the will and power of the first cause; therefore, neither their existence, nor their nature, nor anything that befalls them, is necessary, but contingent.

But, although the existence of the Deity be necessary, I apprehend we can only deduce it from contingent truths. The only arguments for the existence of a Deity which I am able to comprehend, are grounded upon the knowledge of my own existence, and the existence of other finite beings. But these are contingent truths.45

To reiterate, the existence of God is a necessary truth which may be derived logically from the contingent truths of the existence of other beings. However, in treating the

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43 Ibid., p. 461. 44 Ibid., p. 430. 45 Ibid.
existence of God, Reid never departs from his belief that God's existence is in keeping with the first principles of common sense. Although he does devote some attention to the Deity, Reid seems virtually to have divorced theology from his considerations, possibly because he has no professional interest in establishing God's existence, as did philosophers like Berkeley.

V. Analysis and Conclusions

It appears that Reid's common sense philosophy reduces to a kind of philosophical mysticism in which the knower knows, and whoever does not see the obvious truth is unenlightened because of prejudice or poor judgment. In religious mysticism the unenlightened might be considered not of the chosen few, or spiritually unclean, but in philosophical mysticism the sins of those who do not subscribe to the first principles of Scottish philosophy are intellectual transgressions. Whether Reid is talking about empiricism and the material world, causality, empiricism, philosophy of science, aesthetics, or the existence of God, his thought enters an irrefutable circular pattern which inevitably returns to the credibility of the one who professes to see the common sense truth. His principles are virtually invulnerable to reason in that Reid does not rely on reasoning to establish them; they are presuppositions and nothing more.
Though Reid frequently maintains that men universally believe the truth of his common sense notions, there is no actual inductive attempt to investigate the beliefs of all men. The reader is asked to accept on the basis of common sense the proposition that all men believe, for example, in the existence of the material world. Seeming to recognize this strong reliance on a priori assumptions, Reid offers many appeals designed to win the reader's approval but not always directed at his appreciation for reason. Reid assumes the existence of the external world, for instance, and directs his vehement arguments and accusations against those who would bring the material world into question. These arguments do not effectively demonstrate the existence of matter, but rather the absurdity of believing otherwise. His arguments against the skeptics and the proponents of theories of ideas are largely a series of reductio ad absurdum and ad hominem appeals and not logical proofs. In an almost defiant anti-intellectualism he decides to stand with the vulgar in their insistent belief in corporeal existence because their judgment is as valid as any other man's. Reid believes that the educated are no less prone to prejudice and poor judgment than the unschooled, and perhaps are even more likely to be misled because of infatuation with their own erroneous ideas. This is a strange assumption for a scholar and man of letters. The possibility that Reid's philosophy is itself prejudiced becomes apparent when he
reveals his opinion of the "esquimaux" who smears himself with whale oil and the Canadian who eats dogs. Common sense here is provincialism, and condemns a difference of custom as the result of misguided judgment.

Of course Reid recognizes that common sense first principles are presuppositions, but defends them as having a respectable precedent in ancient and modern philosophies. He must, however, admit that many of the first principles of ancient philosophy are erroneous, and in the following passage from his analysis of Aristotellean logic he attempts to deal with the problem of specious presuppositions:

Although first principles do not admit of direct proof, yet there must be certain marks and characters by which those that are truly such may be distinguished from counterfeits. These marks ought to be described and applied to distinguish the genuine from the spurious.

In the ancient philosophy, there is a redundance, rather than a defect, of first principles. Many things are assumed under that character without a just title. That nature abhors a vacuum; that bodies do not gravitate in their proper place; that the heavenly bodies undergo no change; that they move in perfect circles, and with an equable motion; such principles as these were assumed in the Peripatetic philosophy without proof, as if they were self-evident.46

Reid is aware of the problem of determining objectively which propositions are and which are not true first principles; he reveals the nature of the "marks or characters" which belie a counterfeit in Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man. Reid maintains that the marks or characteristics which distinguish the true from the false first

46 Reid, Aristotle's Logic, p. 713.
principles are as well determined by the judgment of the vulgar as well as the educated, and that false first principles will appear absurd in the mature judgment of all men when their minds are unencumbered by prejudice, and when they have a clear understanding of the proposition.\textsuperscript{47} Though Reid would doubtless give equal credence to the wisdom of Aristotle and that of a Greek sheep herder, he would have to admit that the "spurious" nature of the first principles he mentions above was certainly not apparent to the keenest minds of the era in which they were spawned, nor to the keenest minds for many centuries after. He would also have to admit that they appeared to be completely obvious and common sensical to men of many nations and many times who knew of them. These principles were, indeed, common sense notions for the time in which they held sway. One can only observe that Reid's declaration of their spuriousness shows his preference for the common sense of one age over that of another, and demands an account of the improvement of common sense from the fifth century B.C. to the eighteenth century A.D. The improvement could not be attributed to more widespread education, for common sense is not dependent upon learning to dispel prejudice and poor judgment, and may in some cases actually be hindered by it.

\textsuperscript{47}Reid, Intellectual Powers, p. 434. The distinguishing marks of true first principles are discussed more thoroughly below, pp. 128-39.
Though he relies on the persuasiveness of his reasons for accepting common sense first principles, Reid's reasoning is not as persuasive as it needs to be. For example, it is difficult to assume that all men take certain principles for granted, and it is unreasonable to do so without polling men on the question. Locke maintains that children and idiots have never heard and do not understand some of the principles he called innate ideas, and for this reason we cannot declare such ideas universal. Reid dismissed the opinions of these persons as being of poor judgment, just as he dismisses peculiar beliefs and customs of Eskimos and Canadians, and believes he has refuted Locke. In Reid's scheme the correctness and incorrectness of common sense presuppositions seem based directly upon Reid's opinion of the one making the common sense judgment, and whether such a proposition is correct must therefore depend upon how much credibility the speaker can muster. When those who hold with Aristotle that the heavenly bodies move in perfect circles are in ascendance, then that belief will be a common sense principle; and when those holding with Heraclitus that all is in flux are more popular and credible, then that view will be a first principle. The fickle nature of absolute truth in such a system of philosophy is an untenable premise from which to conclude the existence of universal and knowable truth.

Another weakness in the theory of common sense lies
in Reid's insistence that when there is a discrepancy between a proposition and common sense, the proposition is at fault. Reid says that "A conclusion drawn from true first principles cannot possibly contradict any decision of common sense, because truth will always be consistent with itself."\footnote{Ibid., p. 425.} Reid argues at length that the common man's knowledge of the existence of the external world and of causality is obviously valid and that to believe otherwise is absurd lunacy, but he does not adequately explain the apparent difficulty over the fact that at times not only the vulgar and illiterate but the learned men have been universally misled into believing false propositions about the nature of the world. A lack of right reasoning or a universal prejudice is hardly sufficient to explain the erroneous ideas about the workings of the universe or of the human body prevailing among laborers in the marketplace as well as among scholars in universities only a short time before and even during the time of his writing. At one time, the proposition that the planets revolve around the sun was to most people contrary to common sense. In this case, at least, it is not the proposition which is at fault but common sense, however Reid must argue for the contrary.

Were it possible by the most meticulous inductive process to determine that all of the illiterate and vulgar
masses throughout the world in the eighteenth century retained a belief in the geocentric universe, Reid would be faced with a dilemma. All men, in such a hypothesis, would retain this erroneous notion about the world as a common sense first principle, forcing the learned Scottish philosopher either to reject the opinion of those whose judgment is as valid as his own, by his own admission, or to accept a conclusion he knows to be spurious. We can only conclude that Reid's principle of common sense rests on tenuous presuppositions, i.e. that man's constitution causes him universally to assume certain first principles to be true, and that any propositions contrary to these are false. The untenability of the idea of universal common sense becomes apparent when Reid applies it to aesthetics and maintains that the African finds certain facial features which are native to his race attractive only because "Whole nations by force of prejudice are brought to believe the grossest absurdities..." 49 If whole nations can be misled, we may justifiably assume that the whole world might come to believe things grossly absurd to Reid. When such is the case, two questions arise, neither of which Reid considers. First, are there times when the entire world lies in the darkness of its own prejudice and poor judgment? And second, is it possible that Reid is the only person who sees without prejudice the transgressions and

49 Ibid., pp. 491-92.
folly of us all? When Reid declares the African's admiration of Negroid facial features is the result of prejudiced acceptance of the "grossetest absurdities," it becomes apparent that the African is not alone in prejudice. The reader may justly wonder where exactly the poorer judgment abides.

Reason cannot penetrate the fortress of Reid's common sense first principles, in which the entirety of Scottish philosophy rests secure, any more than it can destroy the assertions of a man who declares *ad hoc* that he knows of the existence of centaurs and unicorns. But neither does a wise man buy centaurs from this man. Critically analyzing Reid's thought one finds himself indulging in the same *ad hominem* arguments of which Reid is guilty. The most to be expected from an unfavorable critique of Reid's common sense philosophy is revelation of its unpersuasiveness and demonstration of the weakness of Reid's reasons for adopting it.

While the presuppositions upon which rests the superstructure of Reid's philosophy are untenable, the influence of Scottish philosophy is undeniable; it became the fulcrum on which the full force of eighteenth-century philosophy, particularly epistemology, turned to change its emphasis. Francis Bacon and John Locke set the century of enlightenment upon its journey into the caverns of solipsistic skepticism, finally bringing about the denial of the existence of matter and mind; Thomas Reid pointed the way
out. With Reid, eighteenth-century epistemological theory came almost full circle, returning in some senses to its point of origin in the innate ideas of men like René Descartes. Reid reasserted the existence of universally held principles, similar in nature to the innate ideas that Locke felt it necessary to deny, and made philosophy comfortable again with corporeal existence, which Berkeley and Hume had questioned.
CHAPTER IV

THOMAS REID ON COMMUNICATION

Communication theory relies on a foundation laid deep in philosophical principles. The rhetorician must grapple with the philosophical problems of ethics, aesthetics, and logic while seeking a sound ideological substratum for his thought about communication. It is not surprising, therefore, to find a thinker primarily known for his philosophical thought to be interested also in communication theory. Thomas Reid's writings show an overt interest in the origin, nature, and use of language, and his remarks in references throughout his philosophical works point toward a theory of communication. Certainly important to any system of thought about communication is the author's consideration of logic and ethics, because these aspects of any philosophical system are two of the bases of classical and modern rhetorical theory. Reid also demonstrates interest in style and aesthetics, and in his discourses he specifically treats memory; all of these are topics of interest as rhetorical canons, and have been since ancient times. Because of his empiricistic inclination to probe the unknown, Reid explored the various parts of the oral cavity and speculated about their functions. He also discussed the faculty of hearing, thus making two important early investigations of fundamental factors in human communication. This chapter will include discussion of Reid's ideas about the
The Origin of Language

In common sense.—In his discussion of the origin of language, Reid remains consistent with his philosophy of common sense, in that the basis of language, to him, lies in universally comprehended "natural signs." Reid perceives natural signs as those which men understand by virtue of their constitution, without being taught and without previously agreeing upon a meaning. He says, more explicitly, that natural signs consist of bodily motions, facial expressions, and vocal modulations.¹ For example, one may infer that Reid believed a nodding of the head to convey affirmation the world over, and so on with other bodily motions. A discussion of the fuller ramifications of Reid's theory of natural signs appears in Section IV of this chapter, but this brief definition is required for any further discussion of the origin of language.

common sense. Language has its origin in commonly understood principles not unlike universally accepted common sense notions (cf. Chapter III above). In a letter to Dr. James Gregory Reid envisions language as having definite organic characteristics. He says:

Language is like a tree, which, from a small seed, grows imperceptibly, till the fowls of the air lodge in its branches, and the beasts of the earth rest under its shadow. The seed of language is the natural signs of our thoughts, which nature has taught all men to use, and all men to understand. But its growth is the effect of the united energy of all who do or ever did use it. One man pushes out a branch, another a leaf, one smooths a rough part, another lops off an excrescence. Grammarians have, without doubt, contributed much to its regularity and beauty; and philosophers, by increasing our knowledge, have added many a fair branch to it; but it would have been a tree without the aid of either.²

Reid's declaration that language would have grown quite well without the help of those who make a study of it is in keeping with his distrust of scholarly pursuits, though he does not malign the efforts of those who would serve as husbandmen to the health and growth of language. Also important in this passage is Reid's acknowledgment that it is the combined effect "of all who do or ever did use it," rather than the efforts or customs of any particular group, which brings about the maturation of language. Seemingly language is not corrupted by the vulgar, who disregard its "regularity and beauty" but is developed and assisted in its

evolution by the vulgar and the educated alike.

Even more significant here is Reid's declaration that the basis of language is natural signs. Language develops inevitably and irrepressibly as a projection of man's constitution; it is instilled by nature. "Had language in general been a human invention, as much as writing or printing," Reid argues, "we should find whole nations as mute as the brutes." 3

In man's ethical nature.—While natural signs give rise to language, language does not always result from natural signs. Only man makes language from natural signs, and he does so by virtue of an ethical characteristic of his nature. Reid says:

Indeed, even the brutes have some natural signs by which they express their own thoughts, affections, and desires, and understand those of others. A chick, as soon as hatched, understands the different sounds whereby its dam calls it to food, or gives the alarm of danger. A dog or a horse understands, by nature, when the human voice caresses, and when in threatens him. But brutes, as far as we know, have no notion of contracts or covenants, or of moral obligation to perform them. If nature had given them these notions, she would probably have given them natural signs to express them. And where nature has denied these notions, it is as impossible to acquire them by art, as it is for a blind man to acquire the notions of colours. Some brutes are sensible of honour or disgrace; they have resentment and gratitude; but none of them, as far as we know, can make a promise or plight their faith, having no such notions from their constitution. And if mankind had not these notions by nature, and natural signs to express them by, with all their wit and ingenuity they would never have invented language." 4

3 Reid, Inquiry, p. 118. 4 Ibid.
Thus because of his notion of "moral obligation" man is driven to fulfil his duty to keep his contracts and covenants regarding the use of the signs of language; he is able to sustain language as a usable and reliable tool. Only if contracts are kept can man add to his natural language an "artificial" language in the form of words. Precisely how far Reid means for the ramifications of this moral basis of language to extend is uncertain, but at least Reid believes that the very foundation of language lies in a moral substrata, man's ability to make and maintain binding contracts. Perhaps the implications of Reid's theory of the moral basis of language go even deeper than a simple repudiation of such transgressions as neologisms, barbarisms, and obscurity, extending into more intricate forms of discourse.

*In the origin of the sentence.*—Reid also believes that language began not with single words or parts of speech but with the sentence. He says that "In speech, the true natural unit is a sentence. No man intends less when he speaks; what is less than a compleat sentence is not speech, but a part or parts of speech...." Reid finds it unbelievable that parts of speech were conceived before speech was used. He argues in the following manner:

That the parts of speech should be conceived before

5Reid, Letter XI to Gregory, p. 71.
speech was in use, and that speech should at first be formed by putting together parts of speech, which before had got names, seems to be altogether incredible; no less incredible than if it should be said, they first formed the conception of matter, then the conception of form, and, putting these two together they got the conception of body, which is made up of matter and form.

Reid seems to find it probable that men at one time conveyed in a single sound or word what we might employ an entire sentence to convey. One word may have meant "Give me bread," for instance, while another meant "Take bread," and still another, "Eat bread." By noting the commonality existing in each of the three terms (the sound bread) a word for bread can be abstracted from the three original expressions to become a unit of speech. Thus language did not evolve from simple parts into a complicated whole. Rather the sentence was the primary building block of all language, though a sentence may be expressed by a single word or phrase. Reid cites examples which he believes bring out this phenomenon. In Latin and Greek verbs, "... besides the radical signification of the verb, its voice, mood, tense, person, and number are all expressed in one word." Reid also cites the work of Charlevoix on languages in Canada to demonstrate that one word can signify what the English language may take several words to express. For example, a single "... verb very often expresses the whole

6 Ibid.
sentence."7 For Reid, then, the sentence is the primary unit of all languages, and it is the smallest unit of speech. Only after the sentence was in use did men abstract the parts of speech which comprise sentences.

Summary.—Reid conceives language as having its origin in the natural constitution of man, in his propensity to understand and use natural signs which amount to bodily motions, facial expressions, and vocal modulations. Man has improved on language by altering its natural growth, but language would have grown and matured without the assistance of those who altered it. One might imagine that Reid has in mind a comparison of language to a plant in a fine garden, flourishing under the care of the gardener but never depending on him for maturity or health. The beauty and utility of language are augmented with the accretion of artificial signs on which men must agree and make compacts to establish meaning. Other animals are incapable of inventing language more complex than natural signs because they do not possess a moral sense by which to make the durable compacts and agreements necessary to create artificial signs and language. Evolving out of the natural constitution of man, language comes into use first as primi-

tive natural signs and then as more complicated artificial signs. Men first use the signs of language to mean complete sentences; later these sentences are differentiated into words and phrases which possess individual grammatical meanings (parts of speech). Reid declares it reasonable that the sentence is "the true natural unit" of speech and proclaims that the sentence appeared on the scene full-blown, though he admits that it may not have been composed of several words but rather of only one complicated connected utterance. In brief, language is an inevitable natural phenomenon growing out of man's original comprehension of natural signs; his sense of moral obligation opens the way for his use of artificial signs, a symbol system relying on compacts and agreements with other men in order to ascribe meanings to signs.

The Nature of Language

Constant change in language. In discussing the origin of language in natural signs Reid employed a metaphor comparing language to a tree; in the same letter to Dr. James Gregory he constructs another metaphor, this time likening language to a machine continually undergoing changes in design to increase its utility. He writes:

I rather consider it [language] a huge and complicated machine, which was very imperfect at first, but gradually received improvements from the judgment and invention of all who used it in the course of many ages. It is a machine which every man must use, and which he finds of such utility and importance, that, if he has
any genius, he has sufficient inducement to employ it in making language more subservient to his purpose.

So fond are ingenious men to invent such improvements in language, and so prone the multitude to adopt them, when they please the public taste, that all languages are perpetually changing, according to the beautiful simile of Horace—Ut silvae foliis pronos mutantur in annos, &c. In a rude language it is easy to make improvements; and changes that are found useful and important, though invented by one man, will soon be adopted by the multitude.

Thus the inventions of thousands of ingenious men, in the succession of ages, all employed upon this one machine, bring it by insensible degrees to its perfection; as knowledge grows, language grows along with it, till it arrive at that stately form which we contemplate with admiration. 8

A primary improvement to come to language was the artificial sign, the assignment of meanings to symbols, a process which continues to change language. Reid's view of language as being in constant flux is most interesting in that he does not believe that the process of change inevitably brings about the corruption of language. On the contrary, rather than viewing language as a perfect structure which change can only corrupt, he sees it as a relatively crude instrument which is refined and improved by use. Natural signs comprise language in its earliest form, and the invention of artificial signs made additions and distinctions which gave, and continue to give, precision to language, making possible ever more complex communication. By virtue of man's continuing efforts, language is improved; its improvement is closely associated with the advancement of

8 Ibid., p. 70.
Knowledge about the world, as Reid was undoubtedly aware, was rapidly expanding in the eighteenth century. Such accretions in knowledge bring a new abundance of terms which deal more precisely with newly discovered phenomena or new inventions. While scholarly pursuits require language to increase in quantity and accuracy of terms in order to accommodate its more critical needs, advances in knowledge contribute to and change language at the same time. Obviously when experiments with steam led to discoveries of its use as a means of propulsion, there was a need for a new term, steam engine, to facilitate communication about the invention. In this case the pursuit of knowledge presented the need for a new term, and language responded in this case with the fusion of two older words to form a term with new meaning. In another instance, and change in the semantic quality of a term might make possible a new direction in the pursuit of knowledge, e.g. if the terms cosmos and universe had retained their medieval Christian connotations, it is difficult to believe that information about the advances made in astronomy and physics during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries would ever have been widely disseminated. Thus changes in the use of language can facilitate the advancement of knowledge.

Reid seems to regard language and the scholarly pursuits as inextricably associated, each contributing to the mutual quality and maturity of the other. Although the
philosopher has a place of importance in the evolution of a more perfect language, it is not the philosopher's efforts alone, but the "inventions of thousands of ingenious men" which move language toward a state of perfection.

Interestingly, Reid does not talk of the tendency of language to become sullied as the masses use it to their own ends. Many men have used the machine of language, and in using it, have altered it perhaps only infinitesimally to better accommodate their own purposes; but in altering the machine none has necessarily transgressed on a sacred trust. The majority of the signs in language are artificial ones, and therefore are not God-given but man-made, and hence subject to the improvements which man can make upon them.

Language as the rightful property of the masses.--Far from suggesting that language is corrupted as it is used by the common man, Reid's entire philosophical position regarding common sense rests on the validity of the way in which the unschooled man uses his terms. The vulgar understand perfectly well that the material world exists, and to say the contrary is absurd. In other words, they understand the term to exist as meaning to have material being, and of course it is for this reason principally that Reid holds the philosophy of the skeptics in such utter contempt. Reid's confidence in the common man's proper use of language leads him to maintain that language is improved,
not corrupted, by the unschooled masses. At one point, in
his discussion of the relation of sensations to percep­
tions, Reid defines the rightful province of language as
servant to the majority of mankind, who are unschooled in
the subtleties of philosophy. He argues that we ought not

... expect that the sensation, and its corresponding
perception, should be distinguished in common language,
because the purposes of common life do not require it.
Language is made to serve the purposes of ordinary con­
versation; and we have no reason to expect that it
should make distinctions that are not of common use.⁹

Philosophical discourse is not "ordinary conversation,"
and therefore "common language" presents the philosopher
with problems.

Philosophers deal with an imperfect tool, ill-adap­
ted to the task to which they put it when they employ the
language of the vulgar in making minutely precise distinc­
tions sometimes required by their discipline. If language
is the tool of the philosopher, then the tool must be im­
proved to facilitate the advancement of knowledge. Like an
astronomer who attributes long-standing errors about the
universe to the lack of precision in his crude instruments,
Reid attributes errors about the functions of human under­
standing to a crude instrument, language, which not only
conveys the philosopher's observations but also provides
the intellectual matrix from which new thought comes into

⁹Thomas Reid, Essays on the Intellectual Powers of
Man, in The Works of Thomas Reid, D.D., ed. Sir William
Hamilton (Edinburgh: Maclachlan and Stewart, 1863), I, 310.
being. Just as the telescope and the sextant improve the sciences of astronomy and navigation, so improvements in language as a tool of observation and evaluation facilitate the advancement of knowledge. For example, language was improved as an instrument of observation when the term universe lost its connotation of forbidding holiness; removal of the religious aura surrounding the term made possible more accurate evaluations of cosmic phenomena.

Regardless of whose purposes language is made to serve, philosophers and other un-common men continuously employ it for purposes other than those of "ordinary conversation." Therefore when language is put to unusual tasks a frequent problem is ambiguity of terms, about which Reid says that "... distinguishing its [a term's] different meanings removes all perplexity, and enables us to give clear and distinct answers to questions about which philosophers have held much dispute."¹⁰ In order to adapt language to uncommon purposes, precision must be the principal aim. To extend Reid's metaphor of the machine, the perfection of language in this manner is comparable to designing a complicated machine to progressively more exacting standards to increase its efficiency of performance.

Language as related to thought.--Another aspect of the nature of language which Reid treats is the relation

¹⁰Ibid.
between language and thought. His reliance here on linguis-
tistic principles to determine the nature and functions of
the mind is possibly one of the best demonstrations in all
his work of the Scottish philosopher's interest in language.
His common sense philosophy hangs upon the way in which
common men use language; their use of a term clearly indi-
cates that they believe the thing which the term signifies
exists as a material entity. If Reid's conclusions about
the mind are valid, then there must be a viable relation
between the mind and language. Reid affirms:

Language is the express image and picture of human
thoughts; and, from the picture, we may often draw
very certain conclusions with regard to the original.
We find in all languages the same parts of speech—
nouns substantive and adjective, verbs active and pas-
sive, varied according to the tenses of past present,
and future; we find adverbs, prepositions, and con-
junctions. There are general rules of syntax common
to all languages. This uniformity in the structure of
language shows a certain degree of uniformity in those
notions upon which the structure of language is ground-
ed.

We find, in the structure of all languages, the
distinction of acting and being acted upon, the distinc-
tion of action and agent, of quality and subject, and
many others of the like kind, which shews that these
distinctions are founded in the universal sense of man-
kind. We shall have frequent occasion to argue from
the sense of mankind expressed in the structure of lang-


guage; and therefore it was proper here to take notice
of the force of arguments drawn from this topic.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 233.}

Whether Reid's observations about language are indeed fac-
tual is of little or no importance to an analysis of his
thought, though some of his proclamations are perplexing
and questionable. The more important consideration is that
Reid believed them to be accurate. Of course, the reader likely has a difficult problem overlooking an observation such as the one that all languages have three tenses, especially when Reid provides no evidence of such a fact and seems to believe that none is necessary. Reid's critic can more profitably make an ad hoc assumption of the validity of his assertions and work from that assumption.

Reid's argument is that if all languages have similar rules governing their syntax, then there must also be a commonality in the minds of men which brings about this similarity. He believes that language can provide an accurate picture of the human understanding, and this is why language abides at the crux of Reid's major works. Man's linguistic structures reveal his understanding, and Reid employs these linguistic structures like a microscope to peer into the mind of man. For instance in Essays on the Active Powers of Man Reid concludes that all men have a notion of the active powers, since they employ active as well as passive verbs and comprehend by them acting and being acted upon. The philosopher does not relate how he arrived at the conclusion that all languages have similar rules of syntax, nor does he offer proof. Though he did know Latin, Greek, and French, as is evidenced in his writings, and despite his information on American Indian

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languages gathered from Charlevoix's travelogue, there is no evidence in his writings that his linguistic knowledge went far enough beyond this to warrant such an assertion. From Clarlevoix Reid seems to derive the idea that the rules of usage governing the languages of the savages are the same as those regulating the use of other languages. He comments on the similarity between the number of moods and tenses of the Greek verbs and those of the Indians, and points out that in the language of some Canadian tribes the object of the verb and the verb itself are fused.\textsuperscript{13} Reid never reveals any concern over whether he might be superimposing a classical grammatical and syntactic structure on languages like those of American Indians which possibly have no necessary relation to such a grammar or syntax. Modern linguists might question Reid's first premises regarding the relation of language to thought, but the important fact is Reid's belief that there abides a clear relationship between man's language and his thought and that he could draw conclusions about the latter by observing the former.

Reid resolves that language is the image of thought and that the nature of thought can be known by understanding the nature of language. He also judges the converse to be true, that thought is influenced by the nature of language. In \textit{Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man} Reid discusses

\textsuperscript{13}Reid, Letter XI to Gregory, p. 71.
Francis Bacon's idols of the mind, and in discussing the idols of the forum he writes:

The *idola fori* are the *fallacies arising from the imperfections and the abuse of language*, which is an instrument of thought as well as of the communication of our thoughts. Whether it be the effect of constitution or of habit, I will not take upon me to determine; but, from one or both of these causes, it happens that no man can pursue a train of thought or reasoning without the use of language. Words are the signs of our thoughts; and the sign is so associated with the thing signified, that the last can hardly present itself to the imagination, without drawing the other along with it.

A man who would compose in any language must think in that language. If he thinks in one language what he would express in another, he thereby doubles his labour; and, after all, his expressions will have more the air of a translation than of an original.

This shews that our thoughts take their colour in some degree from the language we use; and that, although language ought always to be subservient to thought, yet thought must be, at some times and in some degree, subservient to language.

As a servant that is extremely useful and necessary to his master, by degrees acquires an authority over him, so that the master must often yield to the servant, such is the case with regard to language. Its intention is to be a servant to the understanding; but it is so useful and so necessary that we cannot avoid being sometimes led by it when it ought to follow. We cannot shake off this impediment—we must drag it along with us; and, therefore, must direct our course, and regulate our pace, as it permits.14

Unfortunately Reid invites speculation on this matter by offering no examples to clarify his meaning. If, because of his constitution, man cannot think without using language, then thought is dependent on language. If, on the other hand, it is only by habit that man's thinking is dependent on his use of language, then were he suddenly

deprived of language he would not be long in developing (or re-developing) the skill of thinking without the use of language. Though Reid recognizes that words are the signs of thought, he sees that the thought and the sign are indistinguishably fused, making thought inextricably associated with the use of language and allowing language to have its great effect upon thought.

One way in which language affects thought, and thereby our view of the world, is seen in the restrictions which linguistic practices can place upon thought. In entire sections of society the semantic content of a term frequently alters and restricts thought, reshaping the world in the image of a term; examples of such alteration of thought occur with regard to terms associated with racial prejudice. When the racially prejudiced person understands the term nigger invariably to include such undesirable qualities as slovenliness, inferiority, ignorance, and violence he can never reconcile such a statement as "Black is beautiful." Reid regards this alliance of language and thought as a weakness of language which must be painfully tolerated and which brings about such fallacies as the one described above. In the preceding passage from his writing Reid calls the relationship an "impediment" and laments that we are doomed to "drag it along with us," but the alternative would be a rather vague and impossible kind of pure thought, perhaps a most appealing ideal to the philo-
As the racially prejudiced person creates his own myopia about the state of matters, so do all men create and sustain the lenses through which they view existence, and in this way determine whether their world view will be naively sanguine or painfully gloomy. Supposedly there is some point at which a clear and accurate view of existence is possible.

Reid himself offers only brief examples of how language and thought mutually affect one another, and these are less concrete and explicit than one might wish. Continuing his discussion of Bacon's idols of the forum he speculates:

In the early periods of society, rude and ignorant men use certain forms of speech, to express their wants, their desires, and their transactions with one another. Their language can reach no farther than their speculations and notions; and, if their notions be vague and ill-defined, the words by which they express them must be so likewise.\[15\]

His example is consistent with his view of language as an impediment, a servant which has usurped the rightful dominance of thought and become the master. Thought can occasionally but infrequently recapture its place of power.

Though in this example Reid speaks of the way primitive men employed language, he does not imagine that matters have improved a great deal by the eighteenth century. There is little probability of making language totally sub-

\[15\] Ibid.
servient to thought or divorcing one from the other, but in order to facilitate the use of language in more demanding tasks such as those put to it by philosophy, the attempt must be made. Reid suggests that the language of the philosopher be improved by augmenting its store of terms and by making their meanings clearer, "... and that improvements in knowledge and in language may go hand in hand to facilitate each other. But I fear the imperfections of language can never be perfectly remedied while our knowledge is imperfect."\(^{16}\) Hence while language hinders the accuracy and facility of thought, and while immature and imperfect thought hinders the use of language, it is not imperative that such an undesirable situation perpetually exist. Knowledgeable men must put forth appropriate efforts to overcome the difficulties of language first by overcoming impediments which exist in thought, and then by creating terms to accommodate such disciplines as philosophy and by being more discriminate in the use of these terms, continually insisting on precise definitions.

Reid affirms his belief that the deficiencies of language are not irreparable, and that it is not doomed to become ever more corrupt with use. On the contrary, Reid seems to envision language with definite organic characteristics; when it stops growing and changing, it begins to waste away.

\(^{16}\)Ibid.
Summary.—In Reid's philosophy, language is in constant flux brought about by man's desires to improve the linguistic tools which serve his purposes. At one point Reid chooses the metaphor of a tree to illustrate the maturation of language; at another time he illustrates the effect of the alterations man brings to language with a metaphor of a machine to signify the increasing perfection which man affords language. This emphasis upon the improvements which man brings to his language is consistent with Reid's view of language as rightfully belonging to the vulgar and the unlearned. The learned disciplines must refine language to perform the unusual tasks of philosophy and science. Along with the assertion that language is the rightful property of the common man, Reid claims a ratio between language and thought, making possible analysis of the constitution of common men by examination of their use of language. The existence of the material world is established linguistically, and language provides the basic principles of much of Reid's thought. The relation between language and thought is reciprocal; while thought influences and reveals itself in language, language influences and defines the limits of thought. Reid finds that objects in the external world hardly appear to the imagination before the words used to signify the objects also appear. This fusion of language with thought makes it impossible for man to consider one without the other. Briefly, language is the ever-
improving tool of the common man, used only incidentally for philosophical and scholarly purposes. Because language mirrors the mind, it can reveal the nature and function of the understanding and increase knowledge of the constitution of man. At the same time that language is made in the image of thought, thought is affected by language, thus making language a tool created by an artisan, man, whose behaviour and nature are subsequently altered by his creation.

The Use of Language

The utilitarian and rhetorical properties of language.—In his philosophy Reid also made observations relevant to the use of language. He considered its utilitarian and rhetorical nature, its adaptation to the ordinary tasks for which men use it, and its ability to motivate others and thereby to promote the aims of those who employ it. The constant emphasis in Reid's thought is on usefulness of language in accomplishing ordinary tasks. Again and again where his writing touches on language Reid insists that it serves the common man in mundane endeavors. "Language is made to serve the purposes of ordinary conversation," he says, "and we have no reason to expect that it should make distinctions not of common use."\(^ {17}\) Reid's insistence that philosophical inquiries make frequent mistakes by attempting

to make extraordinary semantic distinctions which are not in keeping with the normal demands placed on language by the unlearned masses has already been discussed in this chapter. Just as the butcher's utensils cannot adequately perform the functions of a surgeon's equipment, so language as it is employed by most men does not suit the critical demands of the philosopher. Though he demands that better and more careful distinctions be made among words to make them useful to philosophy, Reid deplores the distinction made between perceptions and sensations by his eighteenth-century philosophical antagonists. Always, stressing the common uses of language, Reid admonishes devotees of his own discipline to perfect the tools of language borrowed from the unlearned if they are to be used for the impractical purposes of philosophy.

The noble use of language.—Though Reid regards the use of language as primarily the province of the common man, language is nonetheless noble. In Reid's philosophy, language in oratory is among the noblest of arts but not an art for its own sake. As in many arts, the purpose of using language is to motivate, to bring the full weight of language to bear upon the minds of the auditors. About the nobility of the art of oratory, the Scottish philosopher writes:

\[18\] \textit{Ibid.}
But in the noblest arts, the mind is also the subject upon which we operate. The painter, the orator, the moralist, and the statesman, attempt to operate upon the mind in different ways, and for different ends; and they succeed according as they touch properly the strings of the human frame. Nor can their several arts ever stand on a solid foundation, or rise to the dignity of science, until they are built on the principles of the human constitution.¹⁹

Reid seems to understand all the arts as rhetorical in function, in the sense that they seek to achieve an end and to affect the mind which they encounter. But Reid does not believe the rhetorical arts can attain the greatness of which they are capable until they learn all they can about the human being through careful empirical scrutiny. Here again Reid is less explicit than his readers could desire, but in expanding his idea he advocates observing, experimenting, and drawing generalizations about the human constitution from the individual facts observed.²⁰

Reid likely means that the artist interested in dignifying the oratorical use of language might reflect on how the minds of men have responded to a particular appeal, and he might further observe the effect of this appeal upon audiences. The artist might then generalize from his observations that all men respond in a certain fashion to the appeal which he has observed in use. Seemingly, Reid would commend experimental research in rhetorical theory, but his prescription is less than adequate for this kind of research in the twentieth century primarily

¹⁹Reid, Inquiry, p. 97. ²⁰Ibid.
because he is not explicit about controls of time and the quantity of subjects to be studied. He has no aversion to relying on memory as a store of observations from which to draw needed information, either in his own writing or in his prescriptions.

Interestingly, the use of language to "touch properly the strings of the human frame" ranks among graphics, ethics, and statecraft in its worth as an art. Reid does conceive language as a tool to "operate upon the mind," seemingly bending it by persuasion to suit the ends of the artist. There is apparently no diminution of the dignity of the art of oratory due to its function of influencing the minds of auditors with persuasive ploys. In fact, Reid suggests a way to improve the art and raise it to the dignity of a science.

The use of language to reveal the human constitution.--In order for the art of oratory to become a science, thorough investigations must be made into the nature of the mind, and Reid reveals one method by which such undertakings may be accomplished. The relation of language to thought was treated in the discussion of the nature of language in this chapter, but a reiteration of some of Reid's considerations of this matter is appropriate here in discussing the improvement of oratory and other arts. In A Brief Account of Aristotle's Logic Reid once again refers to the topic of the relation of thought to language, this
time in connection with the use of language to probe the intricacies of the mind and to discover the places where the skills of the artist, whether orator, painter, moral­ist, or statesman, can apply his appeals to achieve the desired effect. Reid writes that "language being the express image of human thought, the analysis of the one must correspond to that of the other," and he adds regarding matters of concern to the rhetorician:

Things that are distinguished in all languages, such as substance and quality, action and passion, cause and effect, must be distinguished by the natural powers of the human mind. The philosophy of grammar, and that of human understanding, are more nearly allied than is commonly imagined.21

Thus discovery of the principles governing mental conceptions of "action and passion, cause and effect," are linked with grammatical principles which must be scrutinized in order to gain knowledge of the intricacies of the mind. One who would move men's minds must first understand those minds by studying the manner in which men employ language.

He further observes that though some have examined the nature of language, as Aristotle did, much more careful and copious scrutiny is demanded in investigation of such utterances as propositions, prayers, wishes, questions, commands, promises, contracts, and others. About these investigations Reid says:

I apprehend that an analysis of such speeches, and of the operations of mind which they express, would be of real use, and perhaps would discover how imperfect an enumeration the logicians have given of the powers of human understanding, when they reduce them to Simple Apprehension, Judgment, and Reasoning."

Thus Reid broadens the scope of the philosophers' task to include the study of all aspects of language with the aim of increasing knowledge of the functions of the mind. Even with this additional explanation, however, the exact procedure for drawing conclusions about the understanding remains nebulous. Because he believes that active and passive verbs appear universally in language, Reid concludes that men have a notion of being active and of being passive, and because they use terms in a fashion which implies their firm belief in a material world, he is able to declare it a common sense belief, thereby reinforcing its credibility. Following Reid's procedure, an orator might observe that in all languages men have terms for good and evil, and that they avoid the latter and seek the former. He might reason further that if his proposals are to be heeded, they must appeal to the common sense principle that men recognize and seek the good.

The logical process from the observation of particular phenomena to the final generalization and application does not seem solely inductive, however. Certainly

\[22\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 692.}\]
the artist might generalize from isolated instances in which audiences have sought the good and rejected the proposal that there is a principle underlying the behavior of all men which demands that they respond in this manner. The procedure for employing language to discover the nature of the mind, and to make the proper appeals to that mind, is only partly inductive. An inductive procedure can carry the artist only to a generalization about the world, and from that point he must rely on some judgment about what he ought to do in his discourse.

If analyzing language to determine the composition of the mind means that we should employ inductive and deductive reasoning, then his proposal is not novel in the least; but this is not the entirety of his proposal. The main point Reid presses upon his reader is that a man's notions can be inferred from the way he uses language. The procedure presupposes two things: that the orator can know how all men use language or can generalize about it, supposedly from an ample universe of subjects; and that the use of language is a clear indication of the notions in the minds of all men. The worth of Reid's proposal that the artist and the scholar analyze language, however, does not abide in its novelty but in its utility to the artist, particularly the orator. Inevitably, the thoughtful person makes judgments based on the manner in which language is used by others. The most sophisticated modern psychological tests
must make judgments about the mind of the subject while relying upon responses to language or on verbal or written responses to stimuli. This modern method of analyzing language to determine the nature of the mind is, doubtless, an extreme refinement of Reid's proposed method, but Reid's proposal contains the seed of a most interesting and potentially rewarding psychological methodology.

**Summary.**—Language is a serviceable tool of man, who developed and improved and now applies it to his purposes. Though language is used primarily to carry out the common tasks of unlearned men, Reid imbues it with no less nobility and dignity than any art; it is the tool of the orator and the statesman as well as the butcher and the mechanic. Reid wishes the arts, including oratory, to have a more respectable (**i.e.** scientific) basis, and believes that arts can be dignified only when the artist discovers the mysterious sensitivities of the human constitution which he somehow touches when his art affects those who perceive his work in the form of speech, painting, or written discourse. By having such knowledge of the human makeup, responses can be more exactly elicited and more predictable, and for these reasons Reid apparently would consider the noble arts more scientific and more useful in serving the purposes for which they are employed.
II. Logic

There seems to be some agreement, spoken or unspoken, about the manner in which we will talk about our thinking in order to communicate with our auditors; the study of the nature and operations of this agreement is the sphere of logic. Because of its reputation as a tool to demonstrate truth, change opinions, and motivate, logic is of interest to the rhetorician and the critic of communication, and it is appropriately considered in this discussion of Reid's communication theory. A conscientious professional philosopher, Reid pays his respects to the topic of logic, although he regards it with somewhat less reverence than might other philosophers because of his commitment to common sense. Logic is mentioned in several places in his writing; one of these is his critical treatise on Aristotellean logic; another is an essay on reasoning in Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man. There are other references to the topic scattered through sundry of his other works as well.

The Nature of Logic

Definition of terms.--In the various places where he takes up logic Reid falls victim to a vicissitude in the definitions of his terms, despite his frequent acknowledgments of the virtue in consistent and precise definitions. Part of the difficulty arises from the relationship which
Reid draws between common sense and logic, and part from the ambiguity of Reid's use of the term reason. In Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man he divides reason into two functions, common sense and formal logic, a division which will be discussed later in this chapter. In this distinction common sense is understood to be closely related to its counterpart, logic. Reid discusses the difficulty of defining common sense apart from logic when he declares that "the power of reasoning is very nearly allied to that of judging [the function of common sense]; and it is of little consequence in the common affairs of life to distinguish them nicely. On this account, the same name is often given to both." He does not clearly distinguish common sense, or judgment, from logic here, and for that reason it becomes necessary to attempt a clarification in this chapter.

Judgment, Reid believes, is the work of common sense (also called common judgment), and is "the assent we give to a proposition . . . whether the proposition be self-evident, or derive its evidence by reasoning from other propositions." "Reasoning," on the other hand, "is the process by which we pass from one judgment to another, which is the consequence of it." Here Reid employs the term reasoning when perhaps formal logic would have specified his meaning more clearly. In the opening paragraphs

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23 Reid, Intellectual Powers, p. 475. 24 Ibid.
of his essay on reasoning he uses the term reasoning to apply exclusively to deduction, which is part of the second office of reason, formal logic. This is his usage of the term in the following passage from the essay:

In all reasoning, therefore, there must be a proposition inferred, and one or more from which it is inferred. And this power of inferring, or drawing a conclusion, is only another name for reasoning; the proposition inferred being called the conclusion, and the proposition or propositions from which it is inferred, the premises.

Reasoning may consist of many steps; the first conclusion being a premise of a second, that to a third, and so on, till we come to the last conclusion. A process consisting of many steps of this kind, is so easily distinguished from judgment, that it is never called by that name. 25

In this excerpt the philosopher clearly employs the term reason to include induction and deduction. While at one point Reid insists that there is no "opposition between reason and common sense" and that the two offices of reason are common sense and formal logic, 26 he speaks elsewhere of reasoning as having the two offices of induction and deduction. Thus despite his admonitions of the necessity for accurate definitions, Reid again neglects to apply this dictum to his own work. For the sake of clarity, this chapter will distinguish to two parts of reason as (1) common sense or judgment and (2) logic.

The definition and use of the term common sense does not change from the manner in which Reid has previously used it, and the definition of logic will include

25 Ibid. 26 Ibid., p. 425.
the more formal processes of induction and deduction. A distinction between common sense and formal logic is maintained in this chapter, although Reid disregards it at times. A clear designation of these two categories of reason will better illuminate Reid's thought and eliminate difficulties arising from lack of distinctions.

First principles.—Crucial to much of Reid's thought, and certainly to his writing on logic, is his discussion of first principles, which he likens to "axioms," "principles of common sense," "common notions," "self-evident truths," and "intuitive judgments." First principles are not derived through deduction or induction but are believed immediately upon being understood, and hence require no proof. Indeed, first principles serve as the foundation upon which logical arguments are constructed, and the strength of such arguments is directly reliant upon the strength of the first principles on which they rest. Reasoning by deduction is like an art, Reid declares:

But the power of judging in self-evident propositions, which are clearly understood, may be compared to the power of swallowing our food. It is purely natural, and therefore common to the learned and the unlearned, to the trained and the untrained. It requires ripeness of understanding, and freedom from prejudice, but nothing else.27

Some of the terms of Reid's definition of first principles are not clear, of course. He never specifies what a ripe

27Ibid., p. 434.
understanding is, or how one frees himself from prejudice. But if we concede his definitions there yet remains the problem of how such a theoretically conceived notion of first principles is adapted to practice.

Reid admits that there is quite a difference of opinion among philosophers about first principles. Since ancient times men have taken the existence of the sun, moon, and stars as a first principle, but now their existence is questionable to some, explains Reid, who doubtless has in mind here his antagonists, Berkeley and Hume. When a question arises over the truth of a first principle there appear only two courses of action open to the philosopher. He may discontinue discussion altogether, or he may attempt to discover some method whereby the validity of first principles may be determined.

Reid takes the latter course. Faced with the problem of determining what is a legitimate first principle and what is not, Reid is forced to discuss a fundamental question: "Is there no mark or criterion, whereby first principles that are truly such, may be distinguished from those that assume the character without a just title?" Reid's answer to this question is, briefly, that there is indeed a mark of a true first principle which allows us to distinguish it from a false one: "... Nature hath not left us destitute of means whereby the candid and honest part

28 Ibid. 29 Ibid., p. 435.
of mankind may be brought to unanimity when they happen to differ about first principles." When an impasse is reached over first principles the parties to the controversy "must be convinced that there is a defect or perversion of judgment on the one side or the other."30

Possibly imagining men, and particularly philosophers, to be somewhat more yielding than they often are in reality, Reid explains further that

A man of candour and humility will, in such a case, very naturally suspect his own judgment, so far as to be desirous to enter into a serious examination, even of what he has long held as a first principle. He will think it not impossible, that, although his heart be upright, his judgment may have been perverted, by education, by authority, by party zeal, or by some other of the common causes of error, from the influence of which neither parts nor integrity exempt the human understanding.

In such a state of mind, so amiable, and so becoming every good man, has Nature left him destitute of any rational means by which he may be enabled, either to correct his judgment if it be wrong, or to confirm it if it be right?

I hope it is not so. I hope that, by the means which nature has furnished, controversies about first principles may be brought to an issue, and that the real lovers of truth may come to unanimity with regard to them.31

Reid may here have presented a problem as knotty as the one he proposed to solve; distinguishing the "real lovers of truth" from those who are not real may prove as frustrating as distinguishing the true from the false first principles. Both Reid and Hume would have considered themselves "real lovers of truth," and each would have charitably regarded the other as such, but they disagreed, for example, on the

very basic first principle that the external material world can be known to have existence. Reid's first suggestion for resolving differences of opinion over first principles is to have each party put away prejudices and approach the proposition with a sound mind, but when the first tack proves futile, and when the opposing views still prevail, then the parties must seek the marks or characteristics of an illegitimate first principle.

The outstanding mark of false propositions is "that they are not only false but absurd; and to discountenance absurdity, Nature hath given us a particular emotion—to with, that of ridicule—which seems intended for this very purpose of putting out of countenance what is absurd, either in opinion or in practice." Thus Reid advocates the use of one of his favorite ploys, ridicule, to discredit a suspect first principle. Rather than regarding it as a poor appeal, much less as a fallacious argument, he declares:

This weapon, when properly applied, cuts with as keen an edge as argument. Nature hath furnished us with the first to expose absurdity; as with the last to refute error. Both are well fitted for their several offices, and are equally friendly to truth when properly used.

He admits that ridicule can be abused, but insists that a good judgment can as easily detect this abuse.

Reid finds Zeno's philosophy a good example of how absurd thought falls away and is not heard of again. Zeno's

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32 Ibid. 33 Ibid.
arguments against motion fell by their heavy weight of absurdity; the very idea "was an insult to the common sense of mankind, [and] it died away of itself...." It might prove interesting to discover how Reid would deal with the Atomists, whose theories were taken as absurd by the vulgar and the learned alike until modern times. He does not deal with the difficulty of first principles which vacillate from popularity to absurdity in the general opinion. This characteristic of absurdity inherent in false first principles makes it appear that truth is a transient entity subject to the whims of men, a situation contrary to Reid's high regard for the permanence of truth. True propositions, he declares, will not fall to the weight of arguments attempting to show their absurdity; on the contrary, they "will always, from the constitution of human nature, support themselves, and gain rather than lose ground among mankind."\textsuperscript{34}

While the spurious first principle is in continual danger of being shown absurd by Reid's methods, the legitimate one is bound to gain in popularity.

Reid mentions five methods by which first principles may be shown absurd. Discussing the first of these Reid says that ". . . it is a good argument ad hominem, if it can be shewn that a first principle which a man rejects, stands upon the same footing with others which he admits; for, when this is the case, he must be guilty of an inconsistency who holds

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid., p. 439.
the one and rejects the other.\textsuperscript{35} Apparently when a man is shown to be inconsistent in his reasoning, Reid feels justified in dismissing the man's first principles. Secondly, one may never know by this method which of the two principles held by the inconsistent man is true; each is equally inconsistent with the other. Reid's argument in this case attacks what he calls the "footing" of a first principle.

The second method by which men may test first principles is one which Reid terms \textit{ad absurdum}. He outlines what he means by the term as follows:

In this kind of proof, which is very common in mathematics, we suppose the contradictory proposition to be true. We trace the consequences of that supposition in a train of reasoning; and, if we find any of its necessary consequences to be manifestly absurd, we conclude the supposition from which it followed to be false; and, therefore its contradictory to be true.

There is hardly any proposition, especially of those that may claim the character of first principles, that stands alone and unconnected. It draws many along with it in a chain that cannot be broken. He that takes it up must bear the burden of all its consequences; and, if that is too heavy for him to bear, he must not pretend to take it up.\textsuperscript{36}

Reid treats this method in only two brief paragraphs and does not offer an example of its use. He claims that propositions of the nature of first principles do not stand by themselves but carry their consequences along with them. If the consequences of a first principle are absurd, then the first principle itself must be rejected. Though Reid seems to see some relation between the consequences drawn

\textsuperscript{35}ibid. \textsuperscript{36}ibid.
from first principles and the truth of the first principle itself, he does not point out what that relation is. Seemingly a first principle needs no reason to exist. By definition its truth is self-evident and is not predicated on the lack of absurdity in its consequences. Presumably however Reid would deny the validity of this reasoning.

Reid might well have in mind the consequences drawn by such skeptical philosophers as Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, who, postulating that the world is known only through our ideas or perceptions, finally come to a denial of the knowability of the world. Reid does not indicate that he has these specific thinkers in mind, but his common sense approach to epistemology is based on a denial of skeptical philosophy on the grounds of the commonly acknowledged absurdity of its conclusions.

Serious questions arise regarding the utility of Reid's method of reductio ad absurdum to test first principles. Referring again to the Atomists' theory of the universe, we are forced to admit that the existence of such an entity as an atom has appeared at times to be absurd, but this fact does not alter the truth of the proposition that atoms exist. Therefore, perhaps the fact that a first principle appears absurd is no indictment of it, no matter by what method that absurdity is shown. Reid insists, however, that the absurdity of a first principle shows its falseness by some innate principle which causes the mind to dismiss propositions it sees as absurd.
A third method of reasoning about first principles Reid calls authority. He says: ". . . I conceive that the consent of ages and nations, of the learned and unlearned, ought to have great authority with regard to first principles, where every man is a competent judge." He advocates that the parties in a dispute over first principles consult authority, though he recognizes the potential fallacy hidden in such an appeal. He writes that "Authority, though a very tyrannical mistress to private judgment, may yet, on some occasions, be a useful handmaid. This is all she is entitled to, and this is all I plead in her behalf." When the truth of a proposition is found to be popularly believed the parties to a dispute must, according to Reid, acquiesce to the judgment of men of all nations and of all times. As an example of how this popularity serves Reid in his philosophy, he asks the following questions:

Who can doubt whether men have universally believed the existence of a material world? Who can doubt whether men have universally believed that every change that happens in nature must have a cause? Who can doubt whether men have universally believed, that there is a right and a wrong in human conduct; some things that merit blame, and others that are entitled to approbation?

Though Reid offers these examples of how he employs argument from the authority of popular belief in his thought, Reid never answers a persistent question: if one is to consult the authority of "ages and nations, of the learned and the unlearned," in settling disputes over first principles,

37 Ibid. 38 Ibid., p. 440. 39 Ibid.
which times and nations are to have greater authority when
men of various ages and nations disagree in their acceptance
of first principles? In a dispute over the shape of the
earth, for example, one party might justifiably cite the
opinions of whole nations of men living in an age which
generally considered the earth flat. Apparently with equal
justification one might cite the opinions of millions of
Indians who accepted as axiomatic that the earth was sup­
ported by an elephant on the back of a turtle. Of course
Reid regards such opinions as absurd and resulting from
poor judgment, but this does not solve the problem. He
omits any mention of such difficulties, and the omission
underscores the weakness of this method of judging the
truth or falseness of first principles.

Reid's fourth method of testing first principles is
brief enough to allow its enclosure in full. He writes:

Fourthly, Opinions that appear so early in the minds
of men that they cannot be the effect of education or of
false reasoning, have a good claim to be considered as
first principles. Thus, the belief we have, that the
persons about us are living and intelligent beings, is
a belief for which, perhaps we can give some reason,
when we are able to reason; but we had this belief before
we could reason, and before we could learn it by instruc­
tion. It seems, therefore, to be an immediate effect of
our constitution. 40

There are also some problems with this method. It may prove
difficult to know which opinions were known before we are
able to reason about them. Furthermore, children, without

40 Ibid., p. 441.
reasoning on such matters, may acquire various notions which are false and fantastic. Reid presumably would not admit all his early opinions as first principles, but he is not at all explicit about how to determine which of these early beliefs are to be allowed and which are to be omitted.

The fifth mark of a true first principle is that it is indispensable to the conduct of life. Reid explains that "...when an opinion is so necessary in the conduct of life, that, without a belief of it, a man must be led into a thousand absurdities in practice, such an opinion, when we can give no other reason for it, may safely be taken for a first principle." This method of distinguishing true from false first principles is redundant in that the second method, ad absurdum, employs essentially the same criterion for rejecting a false first principle; that is, if Reid can show that the consequences following from a first principle, in this case the conduct of men who hold the axiom, are absurd, then he is justified in rejecting it.

In enunciating this method Reid seems to refer to what he considers the absurdity of thinking that the existence of the material world is questionable or the absurdity of doubting causality, but he does not show how Hume and others who doubt such phenomena have difficulty conducting their lives, or how life is more easily conducted by believing in the existence of the material world or causal-

41Ibid.
ity. The single paragraph in which Reid mentions this method is too brief to include any enumeration of the difficulties he has in mind, but the assumption that men universally believe in the existence of the material world and causality and that to doubt these first principles leads to absurdities is an integral part of Reid's common sense thought.

Basic to his discussion of the methods by which first principles may be distinguished true or false by their marks is Reid's notion that men, by some original power of their constitutions, ridicule what they find absurd and in this dismiss it from their minds. This assertion, in itself, seems to be a first principle in Reid's thought, and it assumes some relation between reality and the emotions of those who observe reality. Reid writes of the "natural emotion of ridicule" which exerts itself to assist man in putting out of favor a first principle which appears absurd. Aside from the fact that this first principle seems to beg the question, it is faulty on the grounds that it assumes a relation between the common opinions of men about a proposition and the reality which the proposition embodies. This relationship is not only hard to prove but it is also contrary to Reid's own notion of truth as an unalterable and permanent entity. But truth, in all of Reid's thought, is subject to the scrutiny and judgment of men both unlearned and learned, and the basic first principles of all logic are constantly subject to changes demanded
by the degree of their popularity at various times and in various places. Though Reid attempts to help his reader in one of the most difficult problems of logic, determining the truth of first principles, he often does little more than clarify the insoluble problems connected with first principles.

Perhaps Reid's discussion of first principles stresses the rhetorical nature of logic at its most fundamental point, and it could be that Reid makes the only reasonable appeal in such matters when he relies on the popular acceptability of a proposition to establish its truth. While the fickle nature of popular opinion is most inconsistent with the idea of permanent truth, it is probably the most frequently applied criterion of the truth of first principles in the practice of arguing. In framing arguments, the writer and the orator carefully select as first premises those propositions about which there can be little question in the minds of readers and auditors. Thus in rooting the concept of the acceptability of first principles in their popularity, Reid likely comes very close to describing the criterion used to distinguish true first principles from false ones in the actual practice of argumentation, however imperfect that criterion may be.

The branches of reason.--While the topic and main interest of this chapter is Reid's concept of logic, it is impossible to consider logic outside its relation to its
counterpart, common sense. Logic is yet another part of Reid's thought which is affected by his devotion to the doctrine of common sense. Chapter three above contains a brief reference to the influence of common sense on logic, but the topic deserves specific treatment here. Reid regards reason and common sense as so closely allied that they are inextricable. In his discussion of common sense he writes:

'It is absurd to conceive that there can be any opposition between reason and common sense. It is indeed the first-born of Reason; and, as they are commonly joined together in speech and in writing, they are inseparable in their nature.

We ascribe to reason two offices, or two degrees. The first is to judge of things self-evident; the second to draw conclusions that are not self-evident from those that are. The first of these is the province, and the sole province, of common sense; and, therefore, it coincides with reason in its whole extent, and is only another name for one branch or degree of reason."

In this definition of the branches of reason Reid's insistence upon the respect he feels should be afforded common sense is obvious. Like a prince in a royal family common sense is the "first-born of Reason."

Reid finds that the terms reason and common sense are often employed synonymously in common discourse, and he is not willing to relinquish any dignity of the position of common sense to that of reason. The first province of reason is common sense, while the second is what is usually called logic. Logic and common sense hold at least equal

\[42\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 425.\]
rank in the family of reason, but Reid has more reverence for common sense, of course, than for logic. As for their differing functions, Reid declares that logic

... is the process by which we pass from one judgment to another, which is the consequence of it. Accordingly our judgments are distinguished into intuitive, which are not grounded upon any preceding judgment, and discursive, which are deduced from some preceding judgment by reasoning.  

Judgment, the function of common sense, is also an integral part of the most formal logic; therefore, in a deductive argument the individual propositions are judgments. It is the process of logic that allows the logician to deduce from two preceding judgments a third statement which is itself a judgment. In this argument as well as in others Reid draws common sense or common judgment and logic ever closer together. In this case they are linked by the function of judgment common to both.

Though common sense determines by its function as the first office of reason whether propositions are self-evident, this is not its only function. Common sense also measures the truth of propositions, i.e., no proposition can be true if it is inconsistent with common sense, regardless of whether it is drawn through the most valid process of syllogistic reasoning. Reid insists:

A conclusion drawn by a train of just reasoning from true principles cannot possibly contradict any decision of common sense, because truth will always be consistent with itself. Neither can such a conclusion receive any

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43 Ibid., p. 475.
confirmation from common sense, because it is not within its jurisdiction.

But it is possible that, by setting out from false propositions, or by an error in reasoning, a man may be led to a conclusion that contradicts the decisions of common sense. In this case, the conclusion is within the jurisdiction of common sense, though the reasoning on which it was grounded be not; and a man of common sense may fairly reject the conclusion without being able to shew the error of the reasoning that led to it.

Thus, if a mathematician, by a process of intricate demonstration, in which some false step was made, should be brought to the conclusion, that two quantities, which are both equal to the third, are not equal to each other, a man of common sense, without pretending to be a judge of the demonstration is well entitled to reject the conclusion, and to pronounce it absurd.\(^4\)

Here Reid insists that common sense cannot confirm the conclusion drawn "by a train of just reasoning," supposedly because the conclusion is drawn by a process comprising the second office of reason and lying outside the province of common sense. The conclusion is drawn from propositions which are not self-evident, and common sense cannot adjudicate on the method by which the conclusion is drawn or the validity of the argument.

Nevertheless, a true conclusion cannot contradict common sense principles; therefore common sense can declare a conclusion false only if it does not delve into the process by which it was drawn. This train of thought leads Reid to remark "that the province of common sense is more extensive in refutation than in confirmation,"\(^5\) a statement which does not entirely preclude the possibility, at least, that common sense can confirm the truth of a conclu-

sion drawn from logic, but which appears to make a simple observation of the infrequency of its use for this purpose.

Unfortunately Reid does not make clear exactly why common sense is "more extensive in refutation than in confirmation," and not involved in refutation entirely. There appears to be a contradiction between the two statements about the use of common sense in confirmation and refutation. In the first Reid categorically excludes the use of common sense in confirming conclusions drawn logically, and in the second he lays open the possibility that it can indeed be employed in confirmation. It seems consistent with Reid's concept of common sense to suppose that by relying on common sense, the mathematician might immediately confirm the truth of the maxim that two quantities equal to a third quantity are also equal to each other, and there would appear to be no need for any assessment of arguments from which the conclusion is drawn or any analysis of the process which would violate the province of the second part of reason. In fact, it appears that when a common sense proposition makes its self-evident truth known, some natural and irrepressible principle confirms the truth of the proposition. We may only assume that Reid means to admonish the reader against attempting to employ common sense to analyze the argumentative process used to arrive at a conclusion, but he leaves the possibility of refuting a conclusion drawn by such a procedure, and perhaps even of forming such
a conclusion, open, provided the critic makes no judgment bearing on the logic process. Regrettably this is but another point of Reid's thought in which expansion and clarification would be welcome. While speculation is perhaps helpful and inevitable in analyzing Reid's notion of the relation of common sense to reason, it only partially succeeds in untangling the enigmatic knot.

The enthymeme.—Much that Reid says about the relation of common sense to logic is in defense of common sense as a means of discovering truth. As part of this defense he introduces the topic of the enthymeme to show that the distinction between common sense and logic is one which logicians have not successfully dealt with and which has presented frequent confusion. He argues in the following fashion:

We are taught in logic, that judgment is expressed by one proposition, but that reasoning requires two or three. But so various are the modes of speech, that what in one mode is expressed by two or three propositions, may in another mode, be expressed by one. Thus I may say, God is good, therefore good men shall be happy. This is reasoning of that kind which logicians call an enthymeme, consisting of an antecedent proposition, and a conclusion drawn from it. But this reasoning may be expressed by one proposition, thus:—Because God is good, good men shall be happy. This is what they call a causal proposition, and therefore expresses judgment; yet the enthymeme, which is reasoning, expresses no more.46

Thus Reid has submitted a logical statement which conforms to the logician's definition of a judgment, demonstrating a

46 Ibid., pp. 475-76.
flaw in the logician's definition and showing the sharp distinction between logic and common sense to be a dubious one. He believes he has framed a logical proposition in a fashion which makes it a judgment by adding the word “because” before the former statement, “God is good,” inverting the order of the two parts, and separating them with a comma rather than a semicolon. The resulting causal proposition is a judgment as is the enthymeme, Reid argues. When the definition of a logical statement breaks down, even as to the number of terms necessary to distinguish a logical statement from a judgment, then the distinction between judgment and logic begins to disappear, and the relation between common sense and logic becomes a closer one. Common sense principles, such as the one affirming the existence of material substance, are not necessarily enthymematically in nature, but they cannot be denied a distinguished place in the realm of reason because of the number of terms they possess or because they express judgment.

Apparently Reid believes that logicians determine an enthymeme by the number of propositions which comprise it. This is the interpretation which he gives to Aristotle's logic; for example, he interprets Aristotle's concept of the enthymeme as meaning one of the "imperfect syllogisms ... in which one of the premises is not expressed, but understood." Other kinds of imperfect syllogisms are "induction, wherein we collect an universal from a full enumera-
ation of particulars; and Example; which is an imperfect induction." Because Reid makes only scanty mention of the enthymeme, an extended discussion of the topic in this study would be inappropriate. The editor of the 1863 edition of Reid's works, William Hamilton, takes issue with Reid's interpretation of the nature of the enthymeme in both places where Reid mentions the topic however. Hamilton, in a note to Reid's discussion in the essay on reasoning, writes: "The enthymeme is a mere abbreviation of expression; in the mental process there is no ellipsis. By enthymeme, Aristotle also meant something very different from what is vulgarly supposed." On the other occasion, when Reid defines the enthymeme as a syllogism from which a premise has been deleted, Hamilton points out in a note the erroneousness of this popular conception. Whether Reid recognized the rhetorical nature of the enthymeme is not clear; he gives no indication that he believes that the unstated portion of the syllogism, whether one or more propositions, is provided by the audience. Neither does he acknowledge the importance of probability in treating the enthymeme. Hamilton states in his note that while abbrevi-

47Reid, Aristotle's Logic, p. 704.
ation of the logical expression occurs there is no abbrevi-
ation in the mind, and the implication is strong that Hamil-
ton believes that Reid is overlooking this important aspect
of the enthymeme's nature. Nevertheless, because of the
brevity and incidental nature of Reid's discussion, further
speculation would be patently conjectural.

True perspective must not be lost in considering the
importance of the enthymeme however. Reid discusses it in
his essay on reasoning because he believes it provides a
link between the two provinces of reason, common sense or
judgment and formal logic. His argument that judgment is
as much a part of logic as of common sense bridges the gulf
between the two offices of reason and provides the basis of
Reid's thought, common sense, with a dignity it would not
enjoy were to dichotomy to persist.

The kinds of logic.--The categories of logic comprise
another important part of Reid's conception of the nature of
logic. Reid divides logical statements into two large cate-
gories, the demonstrative and the probable. Demonstration
is characterized by its employment of inference in drawing
conclusions and the necessity of the conclusion to follow
from the premises; no such necessity exists between probable
evidence and the conclusions drawn from it. It is impossi-
bile in demonstrative reasoning for the premises to be true
and the conclusion false, but in probable reasoning the pre-
mises may be true and the conclusion quite false. One dem-
onstrative logical statement is as strong as any other; there are no degrees of strength in demonstrative arguments because demonstration deals with necessary truth.\textsuperscript{50} Probability, on the other hand, deals with contingent truth, "not what necessarily must be at all times, but what is, or was, or shall be."\textsuperscript{51} Reid holds that "demonstrative evidence has no degrees; but probable evidence taken in the philosophical sense, has all degrees, from the very least to the greatest, which we call certainty."\textsuperscript{52} Further explicating the difference between demonstrative and probable reasoning, Reid observes:

These two kinds of reasoning differ in other respects. In demonstrative reasoning, one argument is as good as a thousand. One demonstration may be more elegant than another; it may be more easily comprehended, or it may be more subservient to some purpose beyond the present. On any of these accounts it may deserve a preference; but then it is sufficient by itself; it needs no aid from another; it can receive none. To add more demonstrations of the same conclusion, would be a kind of tautology in reasoning; because one demonstration, clearly comprehended, gives all the evidence we are capable of receiving.

The strength of probable reasoning, for the most part, depends not upon any one argument, but upon many, which unite their force, and lead to the same conclusion. Any one of them by itself would be insufficient to convince; but the whole taken together may have a force that is irresistible, so that to desire more evidence would be absurd. Would any man seek new arguments to prove that there were such persons as King Charles I or Oliver Cromwell?

Such evidences may be compared to a rope made up of many slender filaments twisted together. The rope has strength more than sufficient to bear the stress laid upon it, though no one of the filaments of which it is composed would be sufficient for that purpose.\textsuperscript{53}

\textsuperscript{50}Reid, \textit{Intellectual Powers}, pp. 476-77.
\textsuperscript{51}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 481. \textsuperscript{52}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 482. \textsuperscript{53}\textit{Ibid.}
In his essay on reasoning, as in other places, Reid fails to provide the much needed examples of demonstrative and probable reasoning. We are justified, for this reason, in looking for them elsewhere in his works. In his essay on Aristotelean logic Reid provides several syllogisms which might be analyzed with respect to his statements about demonstrative logic. One such syllogism follows:

All Africans are black.
Some men are Africans.
Therefore, some men are black.  

Such a syllogism is an example of demonstrative logic. The conclusion is drawn necessarily from the premises, and given that the premises are true, the conclusion cannot be false. Further, in keeping with Reid's definition of demonstrative reasoning, we must concede that the arguer may present more and different syllogisms reaching the same conclusion, but he would not strengthen it by doing so. For instance, Reid himself in the same section of the treatise on Aristotelean logic alters this syllogism, making the minor premise universal in the following manner:

All Africans are black;
All Africans are men;
Therefore, some men are black.  

One might contest the truth of Reid's major premise but once it is granted, the conclusion is necessarily true. Such syllogistic logic conforms to Reid's assertions about the nature of demonstrative reasoning. In another place Reid

54Reid, *Aristotle's Logic*, p. 699.  55Ibid.
provides an example of probable reasoning. He discusses analogy in *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, saying:

Thus, we may observe a very great similitude between this earth which we inhabit, and the other planets, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury. They all revolve around the sun, as the earth does, although at different distances and in different periods. They borrow all their light from the sun, as the earth does. Several of them are known to revolve round their axis like the earth, and, by that means, must have a like succession of day and night. Some of them have moons, that serve to give them light in the absense of the sun, as our moon does to us. They are all, in their motions, subject to the same law of gravitation, as the earth is. From all this similitude, it is not unreasonable to think, that those planets may, like our earth, be the habitation of various orders of living creatures. There is some probability in this conclusion from analogy.56

As the syllogism conforms to Reid's prescription for demonstrative reasoning, this argument by analogy conforms to his requisites for probable reasoning. There cannot be any absolute certainty about the conclusion, but only a degree of certainty. Presenting more instances of similarity between the earth and the other planets would serve to increase the degree of certainty and strengthen the probability of the conclusion that living beings abide in other parts of the solar system. Interestingly, from this same list of similitudes, other conclusions might be drawn that would not have nearly so much credibility as the one Reid selects to draw. We might conclude for example that because all the planets, like the earth, share a common sun, similarly revolve on their respective axes, have moons, and are

subject to the laws of gravitation, they probably have atmospheres composed largely of oxygen. This observation points out the fact that all the propositions of such a logical construction may be true and the conclusion false.

While auditors may see great probability of truth in one conclusion drawn inductively from a set of premises, they may see very little in a second conclusion drawn from the same set. About the necessity of induction to convince auditors Reid writes:

The process of induction is more arduous being an ascent from the particular premises to a general conclusion. The evidence of such general conclusions is probable only, not demonstrative; but when the induction is sufficiently copious, and carried on according to the rules of art, it forces conviction no less than demonstration itself does.57

Here Reid recognizes the necessity of probable argument to convince the auditor by the peculiar and unexplained relationship between the set of premises and the conclusion drawn from them. To explain this phenomenon Reid resorts to saying that the power of induction to convince the auditor is based upon a principle of man's nature, the principle of induction, which amounts to a belief in the constancy of nature that man cannot repress.58 Seeing that a certain similitude exists in the solar system, the auditor is prone to accept an extension of the similitude to things not certain, the existence of life on other planets for example.

He assents to this probability because of a natural belief in the constancy of the laws of nature. Reid lays the rules of the use of probable reasoning with a brevity analogous to that with which he treats the entire topic of demonstrative and probable reasoning.

The economy of Reid's remarks about the facet of logic and the lack of examples is due possibly to the fact that he is revealing nothing novel and is aware of that fact. The following excerpt indicates that Reid knew well that he was merely summarizing what was known. Comparing Francis Bacon's work to Aristotle's, he says:

Lord Bacon has displayed no less force of genius in reducing to rules this method of [probable or inductive] reasoning, than Aristotle did in the method of the syllogism. His "Novum Organum" ought therefore to be held as a most important addition to the ancient logic.59

In praising Bacon's work Reid acknowledges his indebtedness to that philosopher as well as to the Aristotelian tradition.

The Utility of Logic

The imperfect tool.--In the last chapter of his treatise on Aristotelian logic Reid considers the utility of logic: "... let us consider," he says, "whether logic is, or may be made, subservient to any good purpose. Its professed end is, to teach men to think, to judge, and to reason with precision and accuracy."60 Reid doubts whether

59Reid, Aristotle's Logic, p. 712. 60Ibid., p. 709.
syllogistic logic alone is able to teach these skills, and proposes the possibility that the same ends might be served without resorting to the study of logic. "Good sense, good examples, and assiduous exercise," Reid insists, "may bring a man to reason justly and acutely in his own profession, without rules." He might learn to reason as well by the study of mathematics, mechanics, jurisprudence, politics, "or in any other science." While Reid hesitates to condemn the study of Aristotelian logic as totally sterile, he points out that it is a mistake to assume that because one may learn to reason well by studying the rules of logic, there is no other way to learn the same thing. To state that there is no way to learn to reason well except to study syllogistic logic is tantamount to stating "... that because a man may go from Edinburgh to London by the way of Paris, therefore any other road is useless." Other ways of learning to reason are equally as productive, and perhaps more closely related to the daily pursuits of man, and thus are more applicable to his aims than the formal rules of syllogistic reasoning.

A large portion of Reid's disdain for strict reliance upon formal logic falls upon the syllogistic systems of Aristotle, which Reid considers for the most part impotent. Judging the utility of the syllogism he writes:

The slow progress of useful knowledge, during the

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61 Ibid., p. 710. 62 Ibid.
many ages in which the syllogistic art was most highly cultivated as the only guide to science, and its quick progress since that art was disused, suggest a presumption against it; and this presumption is strengthened by the puerility of the examples which have always been brought to illustrate its rules.

The ancients seem to have had too high notions, both of the force of the reasoning power in man, and of the art of syllogism as its guide. Mere reasoning can carry us but a very little way in most subjects. By observation, and experiments properly conducted, the stock of human knowledge may be enlarged without end; but the power of reasoning alone, applied with vigour and through a long life, would only carry man round like a horse in a mill, who labours hard but makes no progress. There is indeed an exception to this observation in the mathematical sciences. The relations of quantity are so various, and so susceptible of exact mensuration, that long trains of accurate reasoning on that subject may be formed, and conclusions drawn very remote from the first principles. It is in this science, and those which depend upon it, that the power of reasoning triumphs; in other matters, its trophies are inconsiderable.

To the exception that logic is useful in mathematics Reid adds, paradoxically, that

... it does not appear that Euclid, or Apollonius, or Archimedes, or Huygens, or Newton, ever made the least use of this art; and I am even of the opinion that no use can be made of it in mathematics. I would not wish to advance this rashly, since Aristotle has said, that mathematicians reason for the most part of the first figure. What led him to think so was, that the first figure only yields conclusions that are universal and affirmative, and the conclusions of mathematicians are commonly of that kind. But it is to be observed, that the propositions of mathematics are not categorical propositions, consisting of one subject and one predicate. They express some relation which one quantity bears to another, and on that account have three terms. The quantities compared make two, and the relation between them is a third. Now, to such propositions we can neither apply the rules concerning the conversions of propositions, nor can they enter into a syllogism of any of the figures or modes.

63 Ibid., p. 701. 64 Ibid., pp. 701-2.
Thus arguing, Reid eliminates the possibility that the syllogistic art can be of use in mathematics because, as he believes, mathematical reasoning such as "A is equal to B, and B to C, therefore A is equal to C" will not convert to syllogistic form.  

It would be negligent to fail to mention at this point that Reid's editor, William Hamilton, takes frequent exception to Reid's pronouncements on Aristotellean logic. Referring to the above argument Hamilton points out that the mathematical statement can, indeed, be converted into syllogistic form:

What are equal to the same, are equal to each other;  
A and C are equal to the same (B);  
Therefore, A and C are equal to each other.

He observes further that "A reasoning is not the less syllogistic, because not formally enunciated in two orderly premises and a conclusion. This, however, is the notion that many of those who have written about and against logic, seem to have entertained." However incorrect and prejudiced Reid's belief about the use of syllogistic logic, it leads him to conclude that the utility of Aristotle's logic is virtually nonexistent, and this conclusion, after all, is the important fact of this discussion.  

Though Reid casts doubts on the vitality of the syllogism in discovering new knowledge, he excludes induction from this condemnation and offers it as an alternative to

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65 Ibid., pp. 701-2.  
66 Ibid., p. 702n.
the problems of the syllogism. He admires the inductive method for its productivity and discusses the topic in this excerpt:

The art of syllogism produced numberless disputes, and numberless sects who fought against each other with much animosity, without gaining or losing ground, but did nothing considerable for the benefit of human life. The art of induction, first delineated by Lord Bacon, produced numberless laboratories and observatories, in which nature has been put to question by thousands of experiments, and forced to confess many of her secrets that before were hid from mortals, and, by these, arts have been improved, and human knowledge wonderfully increased.  

The pragmatic scale upon which Reid weighs induction against deduction shows deduction to be wanting. Not only has deduction failed to contribute as it ought to human life and to knowledge, but it has actively prohibited the progress of man by creating warring factions. In this discussion, Reid seems to believe that Bacon's inductive method avoids such factioning and brings about agreement on the issues of science, a rather questionable belief. He also attributes the lack of progress to the controversy arising out of deductive methodology, a judgment which Reid may find quite controversial in itself. For Reid to condemn deductive methodology for creating controversy he must believe conflict and dispute to be intrinsically fruitless, even destrictive. He must also think that an inductive method would be less prone to encourage conflicting opinions. Of course we must understand Reid to be condemning fruitless conflict arising from

67 Ibid., p. 712.
the deductive method, and not conflict per se.

Reid condemns slavish devotion to syllogistic deduction as an imperfect implement of science primarily on the historical basis that science made little progress during the time when this method was in ascendance. He also finds an indication of the sterility of syllogistic logic in the examples which logicians have employed as illustrations, which Reid sees as trivial. He maintains that the ancients held an exaggerated opinion of the rationality of man, and offers inductive empirical investigation as an alternative to the syllogism as a tool of science. Observation and experiment have taken man off the logical treadmill and have made possible the progress of knowledge and science which Reid observes around him. When Reid condemns reason as feeble he excludes induction because he sees evidence of its value, and thus reaffirms his faith in empiricism as a means of discovering new knowledge.

Of evidence.---Though he writes that the ancients have overestimated the rational nature of man, Reid's own philosophy relies heavily on man's rationality. In the first place Reid must concede that even the vulgar man's rational capacity is considerable, since he insists that the unlearned man will assent to a common sense first principle naturally, as soon as it is presented to him. Reid also argues that the inductive method of reasoning convinces hearers as forcefully as a deductive one, implying a rather
large degree of rationality on the part of an audience.

Reid again reveals a strong belief in man's rationality in discussing evidence. He defines evidence as "whatever is a ground of belief," and further describes the function of evidence in the following passage:

To believe without evidence is a weakness which every man is concerned to avoid, and which every man wishes to avoid. Nor is it in a man's power to believe anything longer than he thinks he has evidence.

What this evidence is, is more easily felt than described. Those who never reflected upon its nature, feel its influence in governing their belief. It is the business of the logician to explain its nature, and to distinguish its various kinds and degrees; but every man of understanding can judge of it, and commonly judges right, when the evidence is fairly laid before him, and his mind is free from prejudices. A man who knows nothing of the theory of vision may have a good eye; and a man who never speculated about evidence in the abstract may have a good judgment. 68

Reid enumerates six kinds of evidence: "evidence of sense, the evidence of memory, the evidence of consciousness, the evidence of testimony, the evidence of axioms, [and] the evidence of reasoning." He adds "that they are all fitted by Nature to produce belief in the human mind, some of them in the highest degree, which we call certainty, others in various degrees according to circumstances." 69

The evidence of sense is related to common sense, bringing belief of the existence of what one sees, hears, feels, etc., without the benefit of reasoning. Of the evidence of memory Reid states that when he remembers a past event he is convicted by it as well as he is by axioms.

68Reid, Intellectual Powers, p. 328. 69Ibid.
At one point Reid defines consciousness and sheds some light on its classification as a kind of evidence. He writes:

Consciousness is a word used by philosophers, to signify that immediate knowledge which we have of our present thoughts and purposes, and, in general, of all the present operations of our minds. Whence we may observe, that consciousness is only of things present. To apply consciousness to things past, which sometimes is done in popular discourse, is to confound consciousness with memory; and all such confusion of words ought to be avoided in philosophical discourse. It is likewise to be observed, that consciousness is only of things in the mind, and not of external things. Evidence of consciousness, therefore, is that which convicts us of the immediate processes of the mind; we are convinced by consciousness that we think, for example. The evidence of consciousness is distinguished from evidence of sense in that evidence of sense deals with things present but external to the mind, such as the corporeal world. Evidence of consciousness differs from evidence of memory in that memory deals with things past while consciousness is concerned with the present. In the above passage Reid seems to think the evidence of testimony quite clear, since he says of it only that it relies on "the authority of the person who testifies." 71

In Inquiry Into the Human Mind Reid discusses the tendency to believe in the authority of another human being. Reid explains that in the human constitution there exists "an early anticipation, neither derived from experience, nor

70 Ibid., pp. 222-23. 71 Ibid., p. 329.
from reason, nor from any compact or premise, that our fellow-creatures will use the same signs, when they have the same sentiments." When a communicator speaks in an attitude of good will, we understand that he will use the same language he has used on previous occasions when his attitude has been similar. Reid adds:

This is, in reality, a kind of prescience of human actions; and it seems to me to be an original principle of the human constitution, without which we should be incapable of language, and consequently incapable of instruction.

The wise and beneficent Author of Nature, who intended that we should be social creatures, and that we should receive the greatest and most important part of our knowledge by the information of others, hath, for these purposes, implanted in our natures two principles that tally with each other.

The first of these principles is, a propensity to speak truth, and to use the signs of language so as to convey our real sentiments. This principle has a powerful operation, even in the greatest liars; for where they lie once, they speak truth a hundred times. Truth is always uppermost, and is the natural issue of the mind. It requires no art of training, no inducement or temptation, but only that we yield to a natural impulse. Lying, on the contrary, is doing violence to our nature; and is never practiced, even by the worst men, without some temptation.

By this instinct, a real connection is formed between our words and our thoughts, and thereby the former become fit to be signs of the latter, which they could not otherwise be. And although this connection is broken in every instance of lying and equivocation, yet these instances being comparatively few, the authority of human testimony is only weakened by them, but not destroyed.

Another original principle implanted in us by the Supreme Being, is a disposition to confide in the veracity of others, and to believe what they tell us. This is the counterpart to the former; and, as that may be called the principle of veracity, we shall, for want of a more proper name call this the principle of credulity. 72

72 Reid, Inquiry, p. 196.
The evidence of testimony, like all the other types of evidence, brings about belief naturally and inevitably.

The next kind of evidence which Reid mentions is the evidence of axioms. He defines axioms as truths which are immediately apparent. Supposedly the evidence of axioms differs from the evidence of sense, which is also known to be true immediately, in that the evidence of sense, as the name implies, conveys truth to us by way of the senses, and might convict us of the existence of external bodies, for example. The following statements are examples of axioms: all men are mortals; the whole is greater than the parts. Like all other axioms these inform of their own truth and need no assistance in the performance of this task.

Reid also lists the evidence of reason as a means of producing belief, but he insists that while reason can lead to certainty about some matters, it has its limits. Without the aid of logic, for example, man is brought to know what exists, but he "is led to it [knowing what exists] in the dark, and knows not how he came by it." Logic does not assist him here. Reid seems again to be censuring the use of deduction, perhaps by Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, and to be attempting to prove the existence and universal knowability of the material world by man's innate common sense.

The nature of logic has been discussed extensively above, and deserves mention here only because Reid includes

it in his list of types of evidence. The evidence of reason apparently means here the evidence of deductive logic, but, as in almost every case where he mentions deduction, Reid insists upon limiting the power afforded this kind of evidence.

Apparently because Reid believes that common men employ evidence adroitly every day, he does not offer so detailed a treatment of the subject as we might desire. Reference must be made to several places in Reid's writing for amplification of his meaning. He treats the topic of evidence succinctly despite his admission that the logician should analyze it minutely. Importantly, Reid considers man's capacity to use and weigh evidence quite appreciable, on the condition that his judgment is not prejudiced by evidence unfairly presented or in any other way hampere d. Of course the question arises as to how often one is presented with totally unbiased evidence and how often one's mind is unencumbered by prejudicial beliefs and attitudes. Here again a limitation of reason appears, and it is one which Reid does not treat.

The improvement of logic.—While Reid repeatedly insists upon the limitations of logic, he also offers suggestions for improving it and making it more useful. In A Brief Account of Aristotle's Logic he makes several such suggestions about the reparation of logic. He suggests that a large part of the criticism of formal logic has been
perpetuated because logic has commonly been taught to students long before they are able to comprehend its purpose. "One may as well expect to understand grammar before he can speak as to understand logic before he can reason," Reid says. Teaching logic too early makes it merely an exercise of memory, requiring little understanding of the subject. Though he objects to the practice of teaching logic to immature students, he concedes:

There may be an elementary logic, level to the capacity of those who have been but little exercised in reasoning; but the most important parts of this science require a ripe understanding, capable of reflecting upon its own operations. Therefore, to make logic the first branch of science that is to be taught, is an old error that ought to be corrected.

Although the exact age at which logic might be effectively taught is not clear from Reid's writing, it is clear that logic should not be taught to six- and seven-year-old children. Perhaps by "ripe understanding" Reid has in mind to teach logic only to the wise and aged, but certainly in terms of today's academic world Reid would reserve the study of more advanced formal logic until the college years at the earliest.

In addition to teaching logic at a later age than was customary at the time, Reid wishes to make the subject more easily comprehended when it is finally studied. He wishes to illustrate the abstract rules of logic with examples from the best writing, much as one might illustrate examples of

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Reid, Aristotle's Logic, p. 711. Ibid.
good composition by studying the best writing of literary artists. Not only does Reid wish to have examples of the best and most correct logic, but also of the poorest and most incorrect. "Nor are the faults of such writers less instructive or less powerful monitors," Reid advises. "A wreck left upon a shoal, or upon a rock, is not more useful to the sailor than the faults of good writers, when set up to view, are to those who come after them." When all the best and the worst examples of the use of logic are collected and compiled, Reid envisions that man would have a catalogue of the most outstanding products of human reasoning as well as a beacon to warn off those who are unaware of the pitfalls which await the uninitiated.

Another means of making logic a better tool is to give greater attention to induction, the new engine of science and discovery. Great advances have been made through the application of the inductive principle in empirical investigations, and great discoveries of new knowledge promise to be forthcoming. For its contribution to the study of logic, Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum* should "be held as a most important addition to ancient logic," Reid proclaims. When Bacon's teachings are incorporated into the curriculum of logic many of the old errors can be eliminated. Reid claims that

Those who understand it [*Novum Organum*], and enter into

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76Ibid.  77Ibid., p. 712.
its spirit, will be able to distinguish the chaff from the wheat in philosophical disquisitions into the works of God. They will learn to hold in due contempt all hypotheses and theories, the creatures of human imagination, and to respect nothing but facts sufficiently vouched, or conclusions drawn from them by a fair and chaste interpretation of nature.

Reid advocates further that the idols of the mind be given a more extensive treatment and that they "be illustrated by real examples," supposedly from the writings of philosophers and literarians, much as good and bad deductive arguments should be illustrated by examples.

In order to facilitate the improvement of logic, Reid also advocates that a bold line be drawn between first principles and those requiring proof. The self-evident first principles should then be reduced to general axioms. Arguing for the feasibility of such an undertaking, Reid states:

This has been done in mathematics from the beginning, and has tended greatly to the emolument of that science. It has lately been done in natural philosophy; and by this means that science has advanced more in an hundred and fifty years, than it had done before in two thousand. Every science is in an unformed state until its first principles are ascertained; after which it advances regularly, and secures the ground it has gained.

Although first principles do not admit of direct proof, yet there must be certain marks and characters by which those that are truly such may be distinguished from counterfeits. These marks ought to be described and applied to distinguish the genuine from the spurious.

Perhaps Reid's own work would not appear so tenuously constructed on the basis of self-evident truths had Reid satis-

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78 Ibid. 79 Ibid. 80 Ibid., pp. 712-13.
factorily solved this problem of first principles.

**Application and Analysis**

Reid finds logic wanting primarily because of the impotence of Aristotelean deduction, but he cannot censure the entirety of logic for the defect of a part. Reid's condemnation of demonstrative logic is based on its tendency to produce little or no new knowledge. He does not condemn deduction as a tool of the orator and the writer; indeed, he points out its characteristic of producing conclusions which necessarily convict the auditor or reader of their truth. Logic as a tool of the philosopher and the scientist is an instrument of discovery, and Reid believes that deduction does not serve this purpose nearly so well as induction. But logic as the tool of the orator and the writer is often a vehicle of information and persuasion; however on this topic Reid has little to say. Therefore, logic as applied to the undertakings of the communicator remains relatively unscathed by Reid's attack on syllogistic reasoning. The emphasis placed on common sense as opposed to logic as an implement for discovering new truth and for persuading auditors is pervasive throughout Reid's works.

Reid's notion that a major office of reason consists of common sense judgments or self-evident conclusions holds decided implications for the rhetorician. If common sense propositions are immediately and intrinsically persuasive, then the rhetor has little else to do in his discourse than
enunciate common sense propositions to make his audience immediately aware of the truth of his assertions and acquiesce to them. He need not present arguments or infer the truth of his statements from other truths; common sense truths are contingent upon nothing; they inform audiences of their own truth and require no supporting statements. Any evidence offered in their support is, in fact, superfluous and, in Reid's opinion, in violation of the second office of reason, which includes the use of arguments to deduce the truth of statements.

There are propositions which do not immediately inform of their own truth, and when the rhetor employs such propositions he must make inferences, show evidence, and weigh arguments to demonstrate how he deduces the truth of such statements in order to win his audience's acceptance. In practical application, common sense serves also as an ultimate test of truth to which all conclusions must conform. Finding that a conclusion is not amenable to common sense, the rhetor might do well to re-evaluate his reasoning. If his discourse involves refutation, the communicator's task is uncomplicated; he has only to show that his antagonist's conclusion is inconsistent with common sense. He is not obligated to analyze the process by which it was drawn; to do so in fact would be to transgress on the territory of the second province of reason.

There is often a dearth of examples in Reid's works,
but at one point he does illustrate the manner in which common sense can refute a conclusion deduced by the mathematician from many careful logical steps. The example of the mathematical statement, however, is not consistent with the manner in which arguments often appear in philosophical discourse or in deliberative and forensic oratory. Arguments of the latter types are often less meticulously organized than mathematical demonstrations, and of course they tend to conform more closely to the pragmatic dictates of the art of persuasion than to the prescriptions of syllogistic logic. In many cases of this kind it is difficult to determine precisely which propositions are conclusions and which are the terms in an argument, and if the critic is able to isolate the terms of an argument, he must chance a guess about whether they are themselves inferred by some unstated syllogistic process or whether they are known immediately by common sense.

Previous chapters contain discussions of rather dubious conclusions which Reid believes are self-evident and which he assumes his readers will immediately recognize as true on the basis of common sense. For example when he speaks of the relation of language to thought he says:

The language of mankind is expressive of their thoughts, and of the various operations of their minds. The various operations of the understanding, will, and passions, which are common to mankind, have various forms of speech corresponding to them in all languages, which are the signs of them, and by which they are expressed; and a due attention to the signs may, in many cases, give considerable light to the things signified by them.
There are in all languages modes of speech, by which men signify their judgment, or give their testimony; by which they accept or refuse; by which they ask information or advice; by which they command, or threaten, or supplicate; by which they plight their faith in promises or contracts. If such operations were not common to mankind, we should not find in all languages forms of speech, by which they are expressed.

This passage is an example of an argument which does not easily fit into a convenient syllogistic mold. It is, however, typical and appropriate in a philosophical essay of this kind. Such a redundancy of assertions seems frequently demanded in an oratorical setting as well. Nevertheless, this sort of argument presents the difficulty of determining precisely which are the supporting terms of the argument and which is the conclusion.

One might assume from the opening sentence of the first paragraph quoted above that this is the conclusion Reid seeks to establish, and because it is universal in nature one might assume that he goes about establishing it inductively. Such is not the case, however; Reid never indicates that he has examined all languages or that he believes it necessary to do so. The quandary remains, and the passage invites further attempts to analyze its logic. One may assume the opening sentence of the second paragraph to be the first premise of a categorical syllogism in the following fashion: All language contains forms of speech which men employ to signify certain operations universal among men. There can, however, be no second term to accom-

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pany this proposition, for the second term must be a statement about a particular in order to allow the inference of a particular conclusion. As stated, the conclusion in this case seems clearly to be that all languages signify operations common to all men. The critic of Reid's thought might make another attempt at casting a syllogism from the fragments in this argument, which might appear in the following form:

If we find in all languages forms of speech by which the operations of men are expressed, then these operations are common to all mankind.

We do indeed find in all languages forms of speech by which the operations of men are expressed.

Therefore, these operations are common to all mankind.

But this hypothetical syllogism does not establish that the operations of language do, in fact, signify the operations of mankind; it concludes only that such operations are common to all men. In addition, of course, the knottiest problem has not yet been solved—i.e., the problem of establishing that all languages actually have the forms of speech which Reid says they have. The most likely solution to the enigma is Reid's belief in the self-evidence of the assertion that all languages contain forms of speech which express the operations of man, a belief which obviously needs to be established more firmly before it can be accepted by his readers. The proposition is different from the one stating that two entities equal to a third are equal to each other in that the former proposition need not be immediately
believed by the one who perceives it. Using Reid's prescription, we need do nothing more in refuting this conclusion about the nature of language than to point out that it is inconsistent with common sense. Of course the proposition itself is a common sense assertion and is not drawn by careful logical process. Supposedly, then, it lies outside the purview of common sense, since Reid gives no indication that common sense can refute a common sense judgment; this situation would appear to be the reductio ad absurdum of Reid's contention. But because Reid seems to assume it as a common sense principle, we find ourselves simply denying Reid's assertion by making an opposing judgment when we do no more than point out that Reid's proposition is not in keeping with common sense. The point is clear that except in the most meticulously prepared logical discourse, it is often impossible to distinguish the propositions intended as common sense judgments, propositions of a larger argument, and conclusions.

Arguments in oratorical and literary discourses are often loosely constructed, as is evidenced by Reid's own writings. This not only makes strict logical analysis difficult or impossible and leaves it open to broad interpretation, but it makes it equally impossible to determine which statements might be refuted simply as inconsistent with common sense. Apparently for these reasons Reid's suggestions are somewhat impractical when applied to the daily discourse
of man.

The use of common sense in refutation is of possible value to the rhetor, but it relies as much upon the prejudices of an individual audience as it does upon the universal assent of mankind which Reid assumes. Martin Luther would have been foolish to assume that because he held as a first principle his right and obligation to interpret holy scripture his inquisitors at the Diet of Worms held a similar belief. Nor would Martin Luther King, Jr. have been wise to assume that his common sense belief in the equality of men was held by all, or even most, members of his audiences. One man's common sense is another man's absurdity, but Reid insists that common sense notions are known to be true as soon as they are apprehended.

Attempting to make some use of Reid's concept of the first province of reason is difficult for the rhetorician he accepts Reid's assertion that the validity of common sense truths is universally recognized. When Reid runs upon a contradiction to a notion which he assumes to be universal, he dismisses it as a prejudice or poor judgment. In like manner Martin Luther might dismiss the contrary doctrinal beliefs of his inquisitors as a prejudice, and Martin Luther King might do the same. Nevertheless, neither of these men, nor any wise orator, would simply utter a proposition regarding the interpretation of holy writ or the universal equality of men and expect it to convince hearers of its own truth.

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82 Cf. below, p. 261.
Yet Reid insists that "... there are ... propositions which are no sooner understood than they are believed. The judgment follows the apprehension of them necessarily, and both are equally the work of nature, and the result of our original power." The critic who would make practical use of this doctrine can only grant that this is the case, but he must recognize that some of the propositions which Reid holds to be immediately believed upon apprehension are dubious. This is the basic objection to this common sense doctrine, as discussed in Chapter III above, but it becomes apparent again in this discussion the applications of Reid's discourse on reason.

Unfortunately Reid does not treat the enthymeme extensively, making it difficult and presumptuous to draw inferences from his statements for the benefit of the communicator. He regards the enthymeme as a structural phenomenon in logic, relying on the grammatical structure in which the logical process is cast, and neglects the role of the auditor in mentally supplying the parts of the logical process which are missing in the formal construction. He thereby offers further reason for hesitating to speculate about the implications of his ideas on logic for communication and rhetorical theory.

Reid's discussion of demonstrative logic and probable logic serves to remind the communicator of the necessity of

83 Reid, Intellectual Powers, p. 434.
skill in the use of logic. Much of the logic employed by the rhetor will be of the inductive variety, requiring him to enumerate many examples to establish a general principle. It is reassuring for that reason to remember that probable reasoning is equally as convincing as demonstration, though induction requires an abundance of evidence while deduction is unaided by such additional argument.

Reid implies that the persuasive speaker or writer would do well to select carefully his propositions in constructing an inductive argument. Reid employs the figure of a rope spun of many filaments to illustrate the nature of the probable argument and implies that the quantity of fibers and their quality are equally important factors. That is, the inductive argument must be constructed with attention to the appropriateness of the propositions to the intended conclusion. Likewise, demonstrative arguments vary in their appropriateness to their purpose. One may be more elegant than others, for example, or easier to understand. Of course the skillful speaker or writer will note these differences and make his choices accordingly. Primarily, however, Reid speaks of the relative strength of demonstration and probable reasoning and finds the probable argument no less effective or persuasive than the demonstrative one, though the probable argument is more demanding of the talents of the rhetor.

Considering Reid's evaluation of the utility of logic one must concede that Aristotellean logic appears weak, a
conclusion that the practitioner of the rhetorical art would likely affirm. Regarding the propensity of logic to teach precision in judgment and reasoning, Reid concludes that syllogistic logic is never more capable of the task than other pursuits may be, specifically mathematics, mechanics, jurisprudence, and politics, but he leaves the way open for other studies which would serve the purpose of teaching skill and accuracy in reasoning. The critic of public speaking and of literature would likely confirm the fact that skillful use of persuasive and valid argument, both deductive and inductive, is possible where the one employing the argument has never studied formal logic. Evidently skill and precision in thinking and arguing can be acquired with practice, by imitation, and perhaps by trial and error. Reid advocates imitation as a method of learning to reason well. He suggests the inclusion of examples of valid and invalid logic in teaching the skill. The student learning to reason should note the necessity of using examples which are not trivial. Seeing how logic is employed in literature and oratory is of apparent value; so is the clear labelling of examples as good or bad logically, so that the student can learn to recognize and so avoid fallacious reasoning. The lack of labels as logic is used in the daily pursuits of life, in oratory and in literature, presents a potential difficulty in learning to reason by imitation alone.

Reid condemns deduction because it does not equal induction in the amount of new knowledge produced, because
it is of less assistance in science, and because it has led to factioning of the scholarly community which has resulted in lack of cooperation. Whether this objection is valid is itself doubtful, particularly when it is considered in the light of the relative value of deduction and induction in writing and speaking. In these two most practical arts, both deduction and induction seem indispensible and inevitable. It is difficult to imagine the practice of rhetoric without the use of both these varieties of argument, and if we accept Reid's thought on this matter, it appears unnecessary to eliminate deduction altogether. Certainly, however, the rhetor could hardly condemn conflict and dispute per se, as Reid appears to do, because the clash of opinion and advocacy are the very essence of forensic and deliberative discourse. It is the function of effective communication to break the deadlock of inactivity with which Reid finds fault, and undoubtedly Reid implies his approval of this function in his criticism of the deadening effect of unyielding animosity.

Reid's theory of evidence contains great interest for the critic of communication. According to Reid evidence convicts the auditor of its truth because of the auditor's own nature. The common man, without having studied the rules of logic or given attention to the nature and use of evidence, is a qualified judge of evidence when it is presented to him fairly and truthfully, and when his mind is unprejudiced. This concept of the effect of evidence con-
tains implications for the user of evidence as well as for the auditor. The communicator is obliged to employ evidence truthfully and fairly, and the auditor is equally obligated to unshackle his mind of encumbering biases about the matter upon which he would judge. In amplifying his notion of the evidence of testimony, Reid reiterates these ethical implications for the use of all language. Man is naturally inclined to use language truthfully, to reveal his true opinions and sentiments and also to believe that others do the same. To use language untruthfully, presenting unfair, false, or prejudicial evidence, is a violation of the very nature of man as well as a threat to human society, which is based on and possibly even created in reliance on veracity in the use of language.

Reid, as has been discussed, regards language as a contract to use signs in a given manner. When this contract is violated by unethical use of those signs, all other contracts and agreements among men are challenged, since they are grounded in the truthful use of language. While it may be possible to test the truth and fairness of the speaker or writer's testimony, or his use of evidence at large, it is no easy matter to verify that the auditor has cleared his mind of prejudice, and in this respect a prescriptive application of Reid's theory of evidence is impractical. Reid seems, however, to be offering a purely descriptive analysis of the working of evidence, and his observation commends itself to the practitioner of the art of communication.
The rhetorician's training would likely do well to incorporate all of Reid's advice about improving logic. A knowledge of induction as well as deduction is indispensable, though this is not the issue today that it was at the time of Reid's writing. Reid's suggestion about the age at which formal logic should be taught is little disputed today and for the same reason Reid offers, that the true value of the study of logic would be little understood and unnecessarily boring at too early an age. Reid's suggestion that textbooks on logic offer examples of good and bad logic from various writers, philosophical and otherwise, has been widely accepted, apparently with good results. It is doubtful that logic textbooks have become the repositories of the most commendable achievements of man, as Reid envisioned, but they supposedly achieve the purpose for which they are intended, to teach logic interestingly and with the greatest possible ease of comprehension.

This chapter contains discussion of Reid's problematic suggestion regarding the determination of first principles in order to improve logic. For the rhetor, of course, this suggestion bears as much importance as for the logician, but it is not easily carried out by either. Self-evident first principles are as frequently employed by speakers and writers as they are by Reid in his works, and the adequate solution of the problem of the identification of first principles is one which plagues the philosopher and the rhetorician alike.
The criterion which Reid often applies to determine a first principle is to judge of its universal acceptance, though it appears to be a criterion strongly affected by the prejudices and mistaken beliefs of the one who uses it. Regardless of the difficulty with this criterion, it seems to be the one most frequently employed in the most practical matters of life. In constructing an argument, the speaker must make many judgments about what his immediate audience, if not all mankind, accepts as self-evident first principles. He need provide little or no proof for these. Indeed, self-evident truths are the basis of the enthymeme, which makes use of propositions which the auditors will provide without their being stated. Doubtlessly, however, Reid has in mind more universal truths than those of an immediate audience; he conceives of discerning truths which are accepted by all mankind, and this task is not only the most problematic suggestion Reid makes regarding the reparation of logic, but it remains the chief difficulty with his entire philosophical system as well as with the pragmatic use of logic.

III. Ethics and Politics

Man's conduct as an individual and in groups has long been associated with the study of communication, and ethics and politics have bearing on the orator and the writer, the content and the end of discourse, and the auditors of the discourse. Aristotle commends the study of ethics and poli-
tics to the orator as a means of improving his ability to discover arguments. He writes:

Knowing where a particular game (or argument) is to be found, he will hunt for it there, and not in some other place or places. But if he is to know these places, he must have a thorough and detailed knowledge of the special sciences which mainly concern the art of rhetoric—that is, ethics and politics, above all, since they have to do with the conduct of men as individuals, and with men in groups.84

The orator knowledgeable in the conduct of men in particular and in groups has at his disposal a special place to seek arguments; he is equipped to "analyze the types of human character . . . along with the virtues."85 Knowing the character of men would, of course, provide the rhetor with invaluable aid in effecting persuasion. In addition to this advantage of studying the conduct of men, Aristotle recognized:

The character . . . of the speaker is a cause of persuasion when the speech is so uttered as to make him worthy of belief; for as a rule we trust men of probity more, and more quickly, about things in general, while on points outside the realm of exact knowledge, where opinion is divided, we trust them absolutely. This trust, however, should be created by the speech itself, and not left to depend upon an antecedent impression that the speaker is this or that kind of man.86

Thus ethics and politics, as Aristotle sees them, have bearing on communication from two directions: in the first place as they enhance the speaker's knowledge of men in general and of his specific audience, and secondly as they


85 Ibid., i. 2. 1356a. 9. 86 Ibid., pp. 8-9.
relate to his own ethical nature and make his discourse more credible and his persuasion more effective.

A. Craig Baird declares a relation between ethics, rhetoric, politics, and logic, all four topics being elements of philosophy. He writes in his *Rhetoric: A Philosophical Inquiry*:

These four components of philosophy, politics, ethics, logic, and rhetoric, are so closely interwoven and are so mutually dependent as to constitute an entity. Politics largely records the experiences and subjects about which citizens debate. Logic and dialectic help to organize and test these ideas and their specific supports. Ethics provides the proper motives and goals in the selection and shaping of the oral or written document. Rhetoric welds together these logical, political and ethical elements into a purposive communicative unit. 

Here Baird stresses the role of ethics in communication as one of directing the mind of the communicator to the best purposes to which he can put his discourse; he implies the necessity for the orator, the writer, and the critic of oral and written discourse to give attention to ethics. Politics has the lesser role of recording significant areas of controversy which relate to men in groups. This seems an appropriate role for this discipline in that politics may be considered a division of ethics dealing with the conduct of men in groups rather than as individuals.

Aside from these other considerations, Reid himself perceives an extraordinarily strong bond between ethics and communication. Section I of this chapter contains a discus-

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sion of how the use of artificial signs grows out of man's ethical nature. Man's ability to make and keep contracts about the use of artificial signs requires a reliance on his moral nature. A brief mention of the ethical nature of language is in order here also as it serves to stress the strong relation between communication and ethics in Reid's thought. It has already been noted that Reid, in An Inquiry Into the Human Mind, believes man to have as a part of his constitution the notions of a contract or a covenant, and "of moral obligation to perform them," and that if it were not for these notions man could never have made the agreements necessary to affix meaning to artificial signs. This ability to assign meanings to words and to keep such agreements is peculiar to man, and distinguishes him from the brutes. The fact that men effectively employ words, or artificial signs, implies that they have agreed at some time to affix a meaning to them which all will understand when the sign is used. Conversely, if the pact with mankind is broken at this very fundamental level, if words are used without regard for the meaning which all men have affixed to them, then the failure of all communication involving words is imminent. Hence in Reid's philosophy ethics is basically related to communication in that man's ability to develop and employ artificial signs, all his use of words, derives

88Above, pp. 99-100. 89Reid, Inquiry, p. 118.
immediately from his sense of the moral obligation to keep covenants and contracts. Furthermore, whether language prevails depends primarily upon the viability of these covenants and contracts. For these reasons, then, a consideration of ethics is relevant to any study of communication, and particularly to Reid's understanding of it.

Ethics and the Faculties of the Mind

Reid takes up the topic of ethics in *Essays on the Active Powers of Man*, where his first concern is the division of the faculties of the mind into the understanding and the will. From the understanding derive all the speculative powers of man; from the will come all the active powers. Reid declares:

It is evidently the intention of our Maker, that man should be an active and not merely a speculative being. For this purpose, certain active powers have been given him, limited indeed in many respects, but suited to his rank and place in the creation.

Our business is to manage these powers, by proposing to ourselves the best ends, planning the most proper system of conduct that is in our power, and executing it with industry and zeal. This is true wisdom; this the very intention of our being.

Everything virtuous and praiseworthy must lie in the right use of our power; everything vicious and blameable in the abuse of it. What is not within the sphere of our power cannot be imputed to us either for blame or praise. These are self-evident truths, to which every unprejudiced mind yields an immediate and invincible assent.

Reid's first assertions about the ethical nature of man are based on self-evident first principles of the right and

wrong use of man's active powers, his power to will and to carry out his will. Herein also lies a justification for philosophizing about ethical matters; apparently Reid takes it as a first principle that we are to devise the "most proper system of conduct" and to guide our actions accordingly.

Notably there is no absolute reliance on theology to provide a system of ethics, though Reid thinks it evident that God created man to be an active being as well as a speculative one. Rather Reid sets out to use his speculative powers to devise the "most proper system of conduct." It is man's application of his intellectual ability which guides the use of his will. Reid writes:

Knowledge derives its value from this, that it enlarges our power, and directs us in the application of it. For, in the right employment of our active power consists all the honour, dignity, and worth, of a man, and, in the abuse and perversion of it, all vice, corruption, and depravity.

We are distinguished from the brute animals, not less by our active than by our speculative powers.

Man is capable of acting from motives of a higher nature. He perceives a dignity and worth in one course of conduct, a demerit and turpitude in another, which brutes have not the capacity to discern.

He perceives it to be his duty to act the worthy and the honourable part, whether his appetites and passions incite him to it or to the contrary. When he sacrifices the gratification of the strongest appetites or passions to duty, this is so far from diminishing the merit of his conduct, that it greatly increases it, and affords, upon reflection, an inward satisfaction and triumph, of which brute-animals are not susceptible. When he acts a contrary part, he has a consciousness of demerit, to which they are no less strangers. 91

Thus the understanding plays an important role in man's

91 Ibid.
effort to determine the right use of his active powers and, thereby, to distinguish him from the brutes, who cannot in Reid's view act from the higher motives directed by a rational consideration of the consequences of their conduct. Knowledge allows man to forego action based on his immediate desires and gives him a feeling of satisfaction for having suppressed his passions and acted according to his duty as he sees it.

Though the role of the understanding is important to man, it is subordinate to that of the will, because, as Reid says, "... Every man must acknowledge, that to act properly is much more valuable than to think justly or reason acutely." A consideration of ethics has supreme justification in Reid's philosophy, then, perhaps greater than that of logic. Logic is subordinate to ethics, though man's rational powers help to direct him in discerning right conduct from wrong.

Principles of Action

Also of great interest to the rhetorician is Reid's discussion of the principles of action, which include "everything which incites us to act" or the motives or reasons behind our actions. These are, of course, of concern to the rhetorician because of his interest in inciting action on the part of his auditors and in motivating changes in

92Ibid. 93Reid, Active Powers, p. 543.
attitude and opinion. Reid's discussion of the principles of action partially answers a question which he himself raises in *Essays on the Active Powers of Man* concerning the inexplicable nature of communication. He writes:

> Even upon the minds of others, great effects may be produced by means within the compass of human power; by means of good education, example, and by the discipline of laws and government.

That these have often had great and good effects on the civilization and improvement of individuals and of nations, cannot be doubted. But what happy effects they might have if applied universally with the skill and address that it within the reach of human wisdom and power, is not easily conceived, or to what pitch the happiness of human society, and the improvement of the species, might be carried.

> The power of man over his own and other minds, when we trace it to its origin, is involved in darkness no less than his power to move his own and other bodies.

We know that habit produces great changes in the mind; but how it does so, we know not. We know that example has a powerful, and, in the early period of life, almost an irresistible effect; but we know not how it produces this effect. The communication of thought, sentiment, and passion, from one mind to another, has something in it as mysterious as the communication of motion from one body to another.94

Reid speaks of the power of one human being to affect another in various ways, but unmistakable is his interest in the power of persuasive communication to affect changes of opinion, attitudes, and conduct in other beings.

Interestingly, in the foregoing excerpt all the means that Reid mentions by which we have power over the minds of others are related to communication and rhetoric. The public speaker and the writer are interested in affecting the

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minds of their auditors by education, instruction, and persuasion.

When Reid speaks of the power of "good example" he seems to understand the example of a good character a father might set for a child, but he is not explicit on this point. This kind of influence, however, is related to ethical appeal, which Aristotle calls *ethos*, the influence of one held in high esteem by those who know him.

The "discipline of laws and government" evolves from the deliberative discourse of lawmakers to influence the conduct of their fellow men. Thus all the means by which men affect the thoughts and actions of others are actually rhetorical in character and directly related to what Reid calls "the communication of thought, sentiment, and passion, from one mind to another."

Reid, then raises the question about the nature of this process of communication, a question of primary significance to communication and rhetorical theory; he provides at least a partial answer in his discussion of the principles of action.

Reid recognizes the practical importance of knowing how men may be brought to act in a desired manner. He declares:

A man of sagacity, who has had occasion to deal in interesting matters, with a great variety of persons of different age, sex, rank, and profession, learns to judge what may be expected from men in given circumstances; and how they may be most effectually induced to act the part which he desires. To know this is of so great importance to men in active life, that it is called knowing men, and
knowing human nature.⁹⁵

Reid seems to see all men as in a rhetorical situation in the daily pursuits of their interests, and in dealing with human beings they tend to devise rules which allow them to have some degree of power over other men, regardless of whether they devise these rules consciously. Essentially Reid sets out to investigate that which causes men to act, with the aim of assisting the "man of the world" in affecting his purposes when he plies persuasion, offers instruction or example, and invokes the law to gain his ends.⁹⁶

Reid designates three classifications of principles of action which he calls mechanical, animal, and rational. He derives these names from a concept of man as a creature of evolution whose "body, by which his mind is greatly affected," is "part of the material system, [and] is subject to all the laws of inanimate matter."⁹⁷ The principles of action affecting man on the mechanical level, therefore, are called mechanical principles. "During some part of his existence," Reid continues, "his state is very like that of a vegetable. He rises, by imperceptible degrees, to the animal, and at last, to the rational life, and has the principles that belong to all."⁹⁸ For some unstated reason Reid does not include in his scheme a classification called vegetable principles, possibly because he does not imagine vege-

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 543. ⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 543-44.
⁹⁷Ibid., p. 544. ⁹⁸Ibid.
tables as being affected to any perceptible degree. Never­
theless he does include a category of principles of action
called animal, "as they seem common to man with other ani­
mals," and rational, "being proper to man as a rational
creature."99

Mechanical principles of action.--The first category,
mechanical principles of action, are divided into two spe­
cies which Reid designates as instinct and habit. He de­
fines instinct as "a natural blind impulse to certain ac­
tions, without having any end in view, without deliberation,
and very often without any conception of what we do."100
Instincts have a "natural" origin; that is, they are innate.
Habits, on the other hand, proceed from a different source;
they are acquired. Both habits and instincts affect the
conduct of man without his will, intention, or thought of
them.101

Reid describes and offers examples of several in­
stincts, including the breathing and sucking instincts of
the infant, who carries out these functions without know­
ledge of their purpose. Reid declares that

By a like principle it is that infants cry when they
are pained or hurt; that they are afraid when left alone,
especially in the dark; that they start when in danger of
falling; that they are terrified by an angry countenance,
or an angry tone of voice and are soothed and comforted
by a placid countenance, and by soft and gentle tones of
voice.102

99 Ibid., p. 545. 100 Ibid. 101 Ibid., p. 550.
102 Ibid., p. 545.
Instincts such as the above operate to protect us from danger when we are too young to reason a course of action or when a protective procedure is required on such short notice that we would be unable to provide it without such a device as instinct. For example, we wink our eyes by instinct when an object threatens to strike our face. Also certain kinds of imitation are instinctive; often when a man does not will to imitate a dialect unlike his own he finds himself nevertheless acquiring the intonation patterns of the "words and phrases of those he converses with." Reason is another capability which man acquires by imitation. Reid says that "man would never acquire the use of reason if he were not brought up in the society of reasonable creatures."\(^\text{103}\)

Habit is the second mechanical principle of action. Reid believes that habits are acquired, at least in part, by the instinct of imitation. When an action is done at first by imitation and then repeated several times, we acquire a facility in doing it and in addition we acquire a tendency to do it on like occasions. Reid is particularly interested in the manner in which habit affects speech, and he writes:

> Every art furnishes examples both of the power of habits and of their utility; not one more than the most common of all arts, the art of speaking. Articulate language is spoken, not by nature, but by art. It is no easy matter to children to learn the simple sounds of language; I mean, to learn to pronounce the vowels and consonants. It would be much more difficult, if they were not led by instinct to imitate the

\(^{103}\text{Ibid., p. 549.}\)
sounds they hear; for the difficulty is vastly greater of teaching the deaf to pronounce the letters and words, though experience shews that can be done.

What is it that makes this pronunciation so easy at last which was so difficult at first? It is habit.

But from what cause does it happen, that a good speaker no sooner conceives what he would express, than the letters, syllables, and words arrange themselves according to innumerable rules of speech, while he never thinks of these rules? He means to express certain sentiments; in order to do this properly, a selection must be made of the materials, out of many thousands. He makes this selection without any expense of time or thought. The materials selected must be arranged in a particular order, according to innumerable rules of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and accompanied with a particular tone and emphasis. He does all this as it were by inspiration, without thinking of any of these rules, and without breaking one of them.

This art, if it were not more common, would appear more wonderful than that a man should dance blindfold amidst a thousand burning ploughshares, without being burnt; yet all this may be done by habit.¹⁰⁴

Thus the child learns to speak just as he learns to reason, by imitation. After imitating what he hears, he repeats his imitations until they become habit. Habit makes the complicated process of using language manageable by those who are not instructed in the rules of grammatical usage and syntax.

Reid commits a seeming oversight in placing reasoning in the category of instinct rather than in the category of habit; the rules pertaining to reasoning, like those of the use of language, seem to become habitual with repeated use and the rules need never be considered in order for one to reason correctly. Reid does not seem to recognize this oversight, however, nor does he explain in detail exactly why he considers reasoning an instinct rather than a habit.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 550.
Possibly he means to illustrate that we acquire the ability to speak by this instinct. Only after we imitate others instinctively do we reason or speak by habit.

In concluding his discussion of the mechanical principles of action, Reid summarizes the importance of instinct and habit to man, saying

It appears evident, that as, without instinct, the infant could not live to become a man, so, without habit man would remain an infant through life, and would be as helpless, as unhandy, as speechless, and as much a child in understanding at threescore as at three.

I see no reason to think that we shall ever be able to assign the physical cause, either of instinct, or of the power of habit.

Both seem to be parts of our original constitution. Their end and use is evident; but we can assign no cause of them, but the will of Him who made us.

This seems an unscientific assertion for a man who avows interest in empirical investigation, but it points up the lack of knowledge about this very fundamental level of the mind's operation and the difficulty of investigating the phenomena of this kind. Clearly, however, Reid regards instinct and habit as principles of action important to man's survival and to the ease with which he conducts his life.

Animal principles of action.—The second category of animal principles includes appetites, desires, benevolent affections, malevolent affections, passions, dispositions, and opinions, all of which influence the intentions and the

\[\text{105} \text{ibid.}, \text{pp. 550-51.}\]
will of brutes and men alike, but none of which operate on the judgment or reason of man.

Reid observes that "every appetite is accompanied with an uneasy sensation proper to it, which is strong or weak, in proportion to the desire we have of the object," and that appetites are periodical, being satisfied for the time that the desire is met but returning later. Reid mentions three appetites in man: hunger, thirst, and lust. He deals in detail only with hunger, and proceeds from this to a discussion of appetite in general. Concerning the morality of action motivated by appetite, Reid declares that

To act merely from appetite, is neither good nor ill in a moral view. It is neither an object of praise nor of blame. No man claims any praise because he eats when he is hungry, or rests when he is weary. On the other hand, he is no object of blame, if he obeys the call of appetite when there is no reason to hinder him. In this he acts agreeably to his nature.

At times, however, man is restrained in acting as his appetite dictates; other motives, such as the rational motives of "duty, decency, or even interest," may keep him from acting according to his appetites.

Reid understands a moral priority which makes the rational motives, like duty, "higher" and more to be heeded than others. But in the hierarchy of motives others besides rational motives may take priority in given situations. Reid says:

When appetite is opposed by some principle drawing a

106Ibid., p. 551. 107Ibid., p. 552.
contrary way, there must be a determination of the will, which shall prevail, and this determination may be, in a moral sense, right or wrong.

Appetite, even in a brute-animal, may be restrained by a stronger principle opposed to it. A dog, when he is hungry and has meat set before him, may be kept from touching it by the fear of immediate punishment. In this case his fear operates more strongly than his desire.¹⁰⁸

We attribute no virtue to the dog restraining his appetite by the motivation of fear, nor to the man acting from the same motive. Reid considers the impulse of fear stronger than the impulse of appetite, and there is no virtue in merely following the strongest inclination.¹⁰⁹ Reid does advocate, however, that man should will to perform those acts dictated by his rational powers; the ability to do so, indeed, makes man a moral agent.

The animal principle of desire is much like appetite except that the "uneasy sensation" accompanying desire is constant instead of temporary like that accompanying appetite. Reid envisions three kinds of desire: "the desire for power, the desire of esteem, and the desire of knowledge." He observes the desire for power in brutes as well as men, and it manifests itself in their tendency to assert their superiority over their fellows. Of the other desires Reid says, "The desires of esteem and knowledge are highly useful to society, as well as the desire of power, and, at the same time, are less dangerous in their excesses."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 554. ¹⁰⁹Ibid. ¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 556.
Like the appetites, desires are neither good nor bad in themselves, but are judged so on the basis of their conflict with "more important principles," such as duty and decency.

Other kinds of animal principles of action are benevolent and malevolent affections which cause us to wish to do good or ill "to some person, or, at least, to some animated being." Benevolent affections are intended by God to be useful to us for our preservation; Reid explains:

We are placed in this world by the Author of our being, surrounded with many objects that are necessary or useful to us, and with many that may hurt us. We are led, not by reason and self-love only, but by many instincts, and appetites, and natural desires, to seek the former and avoid the latter.

Benevolent and malevolent affections assist man in discerning that which does him good and that which harms him; they preserve man and his society by causing him to serve those who do him and society good and to avoid those who do not. Reid enumerates several benevolent and malevolent affections, some of which he sees in insects and birds as they care for their eggs, as well as among men as they care for their children. Other benevolent affections manifest themselves in the form of "gratitude to benefactors," "pity and compassion toward the distressed," "esteem of the wise and good," "friendship," "love between the sexes," and "an affection to

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111 Ibid., pp. 554-55.  
112 Ibid., p. 558.  
113 Ibid., p. 560.  
114 Ibid.
any community to which we belong."  

Malevolent affections are of two kinds, emulation and resentment. By emulation, Reid means "a desire of superiority to our rivals in any pursuit, accompanied with an uneasiness at being surpassed." Emulation here seems closely related to envy, and Reid makes no distinction between the two terms. Resentment is the sentiment which we have "when we are hurt, to resist and retaliate." Reid continues that "besides the bodily pain occasioned by the hurt, the mind is ruffled, and a desire raised to retaliate upon the author of the hurt or injury. This, in general, is what we call anger or resentment." Neither emulation nor resentment is evil in itself, but both of course may be corrupted by improper indulgence. In his conclusion Reid admonishes that while benevolent affections are "health to the soul" and "the chief ingredient of beauty in the human face divine," malevolent affections, even in slight degrees, are "a nauseous medicine which is never to be taken without necessity; and even then in no greater quantity than the necessity requires." Man cannot avoid being motivated by benevolent and malevolent affections, and both contribute to the good of the individual and of society; but malevolent affections may be destructive to the mental health of the individual who falls

\[\text{115} \text{Ibid., pp. 560-66.} \quad \text{116} \text{Ibid., p. 566.} \]
\[\text{117} \text{Ibid., p. 568.} \quad \text{118} \text{Ibid., p. 570.} \]
their victim even in slight degrees.

One of the most interesting animal principles of action is that of passion, by which Reid means a vehement agitation of the mind "which is opposed to that state of tranquillity and composure in which a man is most master of himself." He describes the effects of passion upon man, saying that

Passion commonly produces sensible effects even upon the body. It changes the voice, the features, and the gesture. The external signs of passion have, in some cases, a great resemblance to those of madness; in others, to those of melancholy. It gives often a degree of muscular force and agility to the body, far beyond what it possesses in calm moments.

The effects of passion upon the mind are not less remarkable. It turns the thoughts involuntarily to the objects related to it, so that a man can hardly think of anything else. It gives often a strange bias to the judgment, making a man quick-sighted in everything that tends to inflame his passion, and to justify it, but blind to everything that tends to moderate and allay it. Like a magic lanthorn, it raises up spectres and apparitions that have no reality, and throws false colours upon every object. It can turn deformity into beauty, vice into virtue, and virtue into vice.

Despite these rather violent effects upon the body and the mind, however, Reid regards passion, like the other principles which motivate man to act, as neither good nor bad in itself. He considers the biblical story of Adam and Eve as historical evidence that the understanding of "our first parents" was blinded by a passion which perverted their wills, but he also cites examples of the good wrought by

\[119\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 571. \ \text{120Ibid.} \ \text{121Ibid.}, \ pp. \ 572-73.\]
passion. Among these benefits of passion are the patriotic fervor of the soldier which "makes him despise every danger," and the willingness of other men to undertake the tasks of government. 122

In discussing the passions, Reid again brings up the subject of natural signs, saying:

The involuntary signs of the passions and dispositions of the mind, in the voice, features, and actions, are a part of the human constitution which deserves admiration. The signification of those signs is known to all men by nature, and previous to all experience. They are so many openings into the soul of our fellow-men, by which their sentiments become visible to the eye. They are a natural language common to mankind, without which it would have been impossible to have invented artificial language.

It is from the natural signs of the passions and dispositions of the mind that the human form derives its beauty; that painting, poetry, and music derive their expression; that eloquence derives its greatest force, and conversation its greatest charm. 123

Here he gives no more specific example of what he intends by natural signs than he does in other places, but Reid implies his admiration for forceful eloquence and charming conversation which are achieved when the passions and dispositions of the mind are applied to the matter of the discourse. Of course, the terms force and charm need amplification to make them clear, but Reid disregards this necessity.

Further, Reid does not explain how an artist, whether painter, poet, musician, or orator, can avoid being accomplished at his undertaking if the signs of passions and dispositions are indeed involuntary. He seems to believe that,

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122 Ibid., pp. 574-75. 123 Ibid., p. 574.
in public speaking for instance, the force of the natural
signs of passions and dispositions of the mind may be sup­
pressed by too great a reliance upon the artificial signs,
words, to carry out the task of communication. This is an
assumption which Reid does not clarify, nor is it clear how
the painter and the musician could suppress natural signs or
fail to make full use of them, since they would not neces­
sarily employ words in their art. Of course, the vocalist
does use words, and would suppress natural signs as the
orator would in this respect. Apparent again is the fact
that though Reid's idea of natural and artificial language
makes possible some interesting insights into communication,
it is not fully developed.

Another animal principle is disposition,

... a state of mind which, while it lasts, gives a ten­
dency, or proneness, to be moved by certain animal prin­
ciples, rather than others; while, at another time, ano­
ther state of mind, in the same person, may give the
ascendant to other animal principles.\textsuperscript{124}

For example, the mind may at some time show "everything in
the most agreeable light. Then a man is prone to benevo­
ience, compassion, and every kind of affection; unsuspicious,
not easily provoked." Revealing his awareness of the rhetor­
ician's interests, Reid points out that ". . . artful men
watch these occasions [when others are in such good humor],
and know how to improve them to promote their ends.\textsuperscript{125} Cer­
tainly this watchfulness is a most important activity to the

\textsuperscript{124}Ibid., p. 575. \textsuperscript{125}Ibid.
orator who would adapt his speech to the dispositions of his audience.

Opinion is the last animal principle which Reid mentions, and it provides a logical transition into his discussion of the rational principles, because opinion has influence in the animal as well as the rational principles of action. Like disposition, opinion is able to intensify other animal principles and is a necessary ingredient in certain sentiments:

Gratitude supposes the opinion of a favour done or intended; resentment the opinion of an injury; esteem the opinion of merit; the passion of love supposes the opinion of uncommon merit and perfection in its object. Although natural affections to parents, children, and near relatives is not grounded on the opinion of their merit, it is much increased by that consideration. So is every benevolent affection. On the contrary, real malevolence can hardly exist without the opinion of demerit in the object.126

Opinion also serves to motivate man in restraining certain passions. "Thus, if a man were a-thirst, and had a strong desire to drink, the opinion there was poison in the cup would make him forbear," Reid explains.127 Regarding the ability of opinion to motivate or restrain actions in brute animals, Reid relates a rather interesting story. He says:

I have been credibly informed, that a monkey, having once been intoxicated with strong drink, in consequence of which it burnt its foot in the fire, and had a severe fit of sickness, could never after be induced to drink anything but pure water. I believe this is the utmost

pitches which the faculties of brutes can reach.\textsuperscript{128} Reid does not consider the fact that a similar experience involving a man might cause no restraint in the use of alcohol whatsoever.

Reid believes mankind to be motivated extensively by opinion, particularly in their obedience to government. A man of the opinion that government exists justifiably and who gives his allegiance on that basis is truly free, while one who obeys out of fear is a slave. A wise government, therefore, spends its resources on the education of the governed and attempts thereby to create an understanding of the value of government and law.\textsuperscript{129} This topic is also discussed later as it relates to Reid's notion of politics.

With no higher principle to motivate him than the animal principles, man would still be "capable of considering the distant consequences of his actions, and of restraining or indulging his appetites, desires, and affections, from the consideration of distant good or evil."\textsuperscript{130} He is able to make choices based on the inclinations given to him by his passions, dispositions, and opinions which intensify and allay the other animal principles. With the aid of these three animal principles, passions, dispositions, and opinions, man would also be able to choose some goal for his life, and plan his conduct toward attaining that goal.

\textsuperscript{128}\textit{Ibid.}  \textsuperscript{129}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 577-78.  \textsuperscript{130}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 578.
Reid imagines that man may accomplish these rather noble achievements without having any sense of conscience or duty. He thinks also that a large portion of humanity are motivated by no higher principles than the mechanical and animal. Reid apparently refers to the ignorant and suppressed people of all times and all nations, those people who are most easily led and subjugated by demagogues and tyrants.

One interested in communication should take note here of the implication in Reid's writing that those motivated by principles other than the rational are at a disadvantage compared to those who are motivated additionally by the rational principles of action. While they are possibly led more easily than other men, they may be unable to respond to appeals made specifically to motivate them by rational means. They may be unable to employ rational appeals in their attempts to motivate others. If those who are not guided by rational principles are to be protected from tyranny, those who lead them must themselves be motivated by the highest principles of conscience and duty. Of course, this necessity for morality among politicians and leaders of society is always a difficult one to guarantee, and for that reason tyranny is best suppressed in those nations where government takes care to educate its citizens and to improve their ability to apply the rational principles of motivation in

\[131\text{Ibid.}\]
such activities as selecting their leaders and choosing their political allegiances.

The rational principles of action.—The third major category of principles which motivate man is composed of the rational principles of action which abide in beings with reason or intelligence. Judgment is a part of the ability of man to reason; it causes men to believe or disbelieve certain propositions and to have opinions about them. Reason serves another function important to ethics in that it has dominion over action and can cause man to refrain from some acts and to perform others.\(^{132}\) The good man obeys his reason and judgment before the dictates of other motivating principles. It is reason, in Reid's ethics, which makes man know "what is good for us on the whole, and, what appears to be our duty." He adds that "whatever makes a man more happy or more perfect, is good, and is the object of desire as soon as we are capable of forming the conception of it. The contrary is ill, and is an object of aversion." Consequently, Reid declares, "that which, taken with all its discoverable connections and consequences, brings more good than ill, I call good upon the whole."\(^{133}\)

By taking notice of what is the good upon the whole, men may refuse to indulge their appetites or desires at present for greater good in the future. They may do the lesser evil now

\(^{132}\)Ibid., pp. 579-80.  \(^{133}\)Ibid., pp. 580-81.
to avoid a greater evil in the future; this kind of action Reid calls "wise and reasonable conduct."\(^{134}\)

Most interesting is the fact that Reid in defining the term good takes an epicurean stance, accounting what makes man happy as a factor to be considered. Clearly it is not the sole consideration, because he immediately adjoins to man's happiness the stipulation that good must also make man more perfect, though he does not define perfection. The addition of this requirement dilutes the purely epicurean consideration of happiness. Not only a sense of "good upon the whole" but also a sense of duty allows man to direct his conduct. Indeed it is the rational principle of duty, in Reid's opinion, which makes man a moral agent and makes possible his acting virtuously.\(^{135}\)

Reid defines duty in various ways; first, he offers the following series of synonyms: duty is "what we ought to do—what is fair and honest—what is approvable—what every man professes to be the rule of his conduct—what all men praise—and, what is in itself laudable, though no man should praise it." He also calls duty "a moral obligation which obliges a man to do certain things because they are right, and not to do other things because they are wrong."\(^{136}\) Despite the synonyms and the description of how duty works, Reid admits that he cannot define duty because it is unique.

\(^{134}\)Ibid., p. 581.  \(^{135}\)Ibid., p. 586.  \\
\(^{136}\)Ibid., p. 587.
"a relation of its own kind," "too simple to admit of logical definition." \(^{137}\)

In addition to duty, man's moral sense or conscience is a rational principle of action; it is not arrived at by logic but somehow comes to man when his mental powers are mature. Reid writes that "by an original power of the mind, when we come to years of understanding and reflection, we not only have the notions of right and wrong in conduct, but we perceive certain things to be right, and others to be wrong." The moral sense is strengthened by instruction and education, but it comes into being inevitably. \(^{138}\) Reid does not specifically account for the fact that some men fail to acquire any sense of duty or knowledge of right or wrong, but he implies that these men simply have not "come to years of understanding and reflection."

In Reid's ethics man can reason about matters of morals, and, as in all logic, ethical reasoning is based on self-evident first principles of morals. As an example of how reasoning about morals works, Reid considers the question of whether polygamy is moral, and says that

We reason upon this question, by balancing the advantages and disadvantages to the family, and to society in general, that are naturally consequent both upon monogamy and polygamy. And, if it can be shewn that the advantages are greatly upon the side of monogamy, we think the point is determined.

But, if a man does not perceive that he ought to regard the good of society, and the good of his wife and children, the reasoning can have no effect upon him, because he denies the first principle upon which it is

\(^{137}\) Ibid., p. 589.  
\(^{138}\) Ibid., pp. 589, 595.
Suppose, again, that we reason for monogamy from the intention of nature, discovered by the proportion of males and of females that are born—a proportion which corresponds perfectly with monogamy—this argument can have no weight with a man who does not perceive that he ought to have a regard to the intention of nature.

Thus we shall find that all moral reasonings rest upon one or more first principles of morals, whose truth is immediately perceived without reasoning, by all men come to years of understanding.

And this indeed is common to every branch of human knowledge that deserves the name of science. There must be first principles proper to that science, by which the whole superstructure is supported.\[^{139}\]

The first principles of morals are propositions containing the term *ought* and specifying man's obligation, and these self-evident propositions are recognized as true immediately upon being understood by a man of mature understanding. How to determine whether a man is of mature understanding remains unanswered, however, and forces Reid to beg the question, insisting that one of mature understanding is one who recognizes his moral obligation. Distinguishing the man of mature understanding from one of immature understanding might be important when a dispute arises over first principles, and all parties in the dispute consider themselves of mature understanding and are so considered by all who observe the dispute. Of course, this is a ramification of a similar problem in all of Reid's philosophy of common sense; throughout, it relies for the truth of self-evident first principles upon the rather nebulous concept of the unprejudiced judgment of man.

\[^{139}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 591}.\]
Equally as knotty as the problem of distinguishing the man of mature understanding from one who is not is the problem which arises when Reid argues that the morality of monogamy is supported by the fact that the ratio of male to female children is equal. Would the morality of polygamy be supported by the fact that wars considerably diminish the male population from time to time, or, in the case of the Mormon trek to Utah, that the female population is considerably larger than the male by a quirk of circumstance in an isolated situation? Seemingly these considerations are equally as important as the proportion of male babies to females. The fact that the ratio of male births to female is not controlled by man presumably gives Reid justification in believing that it is the intent of nature that man be monogamous. These are interesting questions which arise out of Reid's reasoning about morals, but the most important point of his discussion is that in reasoning about morals, as in reasoning about any matter, arguments must rest upon self-evident propositions known to be true immediately upon understanding them. Reid clarifies his point, adding that

The first principles of morals are the immediate dictates of the moral faculty. They shew us, not what man is, but what he ought to be. Whatever is immediately perceived to be just, honest, and honourable, in human conduct, carries moral obligation along with it, and the contrary carries demerit and blame; and, from these moral obligations must be deduced by reason.140

Hence, in Reid's scheme, man recognizes that he should
take note of the intention of nature; he may set about to
discover through reason what that intention is. Likewise,
once a man knows of his obligation to the good of society,
he may seek to discover what best benefits society.

The next topic Reid takes up corresponds to the
ancient mode of persuasion, ethos. Reid treats it in his
discussion "Of Moral Approbation and Disapprobation." He
observes that men often make moral judgments about the con­
duct of their fellow men; we judge the actions of others as
either good or bad. Furthermore, our approbation or dis­
approbation "appears to include, not only a moral judgment
of the action, but some affection, favourable or unfavour­
able, towards to agent, and some feeling in ourselves." We
award one whose action we judge to be good our esteem and
good will, and "... esteem and benevolent regard, not only
accompany real worth by the constitution of our nature, but
are perceived to be really and properly due to it; and that,
on the contrary unworthy conduct really merits dislike and
indignation."\(^{141}\)

By some original principle within him, man is brought
to give "esteem and benevolent regard" to one of "real
worth." This principle, which Reid regards as natural and
inevitable in man, has long been of value to the rhetori­
cian because of his interest in the relation between such
esteem and the credibility and persuasiveness of the orator

\(^{141}\)Ibid., p. 592.
and writer. Reid does not discuss esteem and moral approbation with specific regard to rhetoric, but he does attempt to describe the manner in which contemplation of "a noble character" affects man. He writes:

... like a beautiful object, it gives a lively and pleasant emotion to the spirits. It warms the heart, and invigorates the whole frame. Like the beams of the sun, it enlivens the face of nature, and diffuses heat and light all around.

We feel a sympathy with every noble and worthy character that is represented to us. We rejoice in his prosperity, we are afflicted in his distress. We even catch some sparks of that celestial fire that animated his conduct, and feel the glow of his virtue and magnanimity.

This sympathy is the necessary effect of our judgment of his conduct, and of the approbation and esteem due to it; for real sympathy is always the effect of some benevolent affection, such as esteem, love, pity, or humanity.

But, when there is a high degree of depravity in any person connected with us, we are deeply humbled and depressed by it. The sympathetic feeling has some resemblance to that of guilt, though it be free from all guilt. We are ashamed to see our acquaintance; we would, if possible, disclaim all connection with the guilty person. We wish to tear him from our hearts, and blot him out of our remembrance.\(^{142}\)

Thus, in language perhaps more akin to poetry than to descriptive prose, Reid describes the original inclination of man to be affected by the character of other men, and his description of this apparently inevitable approval awarded to the man of good character commends morality to the orator.

Reid specifically commends high character to the rhetor in closing his discussion of the rational principles

\(^{142}\)Ibid., pp. 593-94.
of action. He says:

The wise man of the Stoics, like the perfect orator of the rhetoricians, was an ideal character, and was, in some respects, carried beyond nature; yet it was perhaps the most perfect model of virtue that ever was exhibited to the heathen world; and some of those who copied after it, were ornaments to human nature.

In Reid's opinion, an orator of impeccable character enjoys the empathetic response of his auditors to the sentiments he conveys. Such empathy on the part of an audience could do nothing but insure the communicator's increased credibility and persuasiveness, and, conversely, the speaker regarded by his audience as morally depraved is assured of failure in moving his audience, who seek to "disclaim all connection with the guilty person." The ethical character of the communicator has great significance, indeed, in the success or failure of the communication, and Reid considers the esteem in which observers hold a man as an extremely important factor to his effectiveness in motivating others.

The Ethical Man

The principle that men are affected by the approval or disapproval they award the man of good character has been given either explicit or implicit acceptance by those interested in the theory of rhetoric and communication since ancient times. Reid's interest in how men are motivated by the esteem and approbation they give to the man of good character is justification for considering Reid's concept of the good man in more detail.

\[143^{143}\text{Ibid.}, p. 598.\]
His natural inclination to be good.—Though Reid sees man as corrupt, his depravity is apparently not innate. Signifying his departure from Calvinism Reid declares man more inclined to good than to ill. He argues in the following fashion:

The meanest of mankind has considerable power to do good, and more to hurt himself and others.

From this I think we may conclude, that, although the degeneracy of mankind be great, and justly to be lamented, yet men, in general, are more disposed to employ their power in doing good, than in doing hurt, to their fellow men. The last is much more in their power than the first; and, if they were as much disposed to it, human society could not subsist, and the species must soon perish from the earth.\(^{144}\)

By the term *good* in this passage Reid understands that which does not harm other human beings, and by using the term in this manner he presents the second dimension in his definition of *good*. Not only is the good man to do that which is good for him or that which serves his interests, but he is also to do that which serves the interests of the rest of society.

Reid's argument that men are inclined to do good is grounded principally in his belief that man's power to destroy is greater than his power to create, but that society continues to exist. Except for man's inclination to good it would have been destroyed long ago. These observations are remarkably pre-twentieth-century, and Reid might today find many who would doubt the premises on which his conclusion about the nature of man is based.

\(^{144}\)Ibid., p. 529.
Any judgment about man's inclination toward the good seems necessarily prejudiced by the judge's particular world view. What undoubtedly appeared to Reid as an objective judgment in the relatively well-ordered and sedate society of eighteenth-century Scotland might seem blatantly absurd to a citizen of Detroit or Los Angeles in the latter 1960's.

Important here is the fact that Reid's assertion is no more than a judgment based, of course, on his observations. Despite the periodical destructive lunacy of man, society does persist, and this persistence tends to indicate that men are more frequently interested in the good of society than they are in its destruction. This entire argument presupposes that men are directly responsible for the creation and destruction of society, and that it is within man's power to create and destroy at will. This assumption places a large responsibility on all men for the welfare of their fellows, but particularly upon such men as political and spiritual leaders who wield an uncommon amount of power. Notably, one principal way in which these leaders wield their power is through communication in the form of oratory and writing. Thus Reid suggests an extraordinary amount of responsibility for those who would lead their fellow men because it is within their power, more than in other men's, to create, order, or destroy society through their communication.

His innate moral knowledge.--Not only is man inclined to do good rather than evil, but he also has instinctive
knowledge of right and wrong. In Essays on the Intellectual
Powers of Man Reid asks the following rhetorical questions:

Who can doubt whether mankind have been universally per-
suaded that there is a right and a wrong in human con-
duct?—some things which, in certain circumstances, they
ought to do, and other things which they ought not to do?
The universality of these opinions, and of many such that
might be named, is sufficiently evident, from the whole
tenor of men's conduct, as far as our acquaintance reach-
es, and from the records of history, in all ages and
nations, that are transmitted to us.145

Reid indicates that he draws his conclusions about the uni-
versality of man's knowledge of duty and right and wrong
from his observations and from historical evidence, but he
does not elaborate on this point in his discussion. Parti-
cularly unclear is how the "tenor of men's conduct" indi-
cates the universality of their moral knowledge.

The philosopher gives some amplification to his con-
cept of the innate moral knowledge of man in Essays on the
Active Powers of Man. Here he discusses the function of
conscience in giving man his ability to discern between
right and wrong conduct. Conscience is an original faculty
of the mind, and "... like all our other powers, it comes
to maturity by insensible degrees, and may be much aided in
its strength and vigour by proper culture."146 All the fac-
culties mature at various times, first the ones which we have
in common with beasts and later those which belong solely to
the human being, such as reason and judgment. Men's "... 
judgment of moral conduct, as well as their judgment of

146Reid, Active Powers, p. 595.
truth, advances by insensible degrees, like the corn and the grass and comes to maturity with the proper care:

... they may be greatly assisted or retarded, improved or corrupted, by education, instruction, example, exercise, and by the society and conversation of men, which, like soil and culture in plants, may produce great changes to the better or to the worse. 147

Reid explains.

Like a delicate seed "planted in the mind by him that made us," the conscience is cultivated and nourished until it can function on its own. Reid also likens the development of the conscience to the innate ability of the athlete who, although he performs many physical feats with ease, also seeks to develop his skill in swimming, dancing, fencing, and riding. 148 Moral truths concerning right and wrong conduct are like truths of other kinds; a man left to discover them by himself might never do so.

... yet when they are fairly laid before him, he owns and adopts them, not barely upon the authority of his teacher, but upon their own intrinsic evidence, and perhaps wonders that he could be so blind as not to see them before. 149

Thus Reid removes the moral instruction of which he speaks from the realm of pure indoctrination by asserting that moral truths are evident when understood properly. If moral propositions are not self-evident, they are derived from self-evident first principles. 150

While conscience provides man with a knowledge of

\(^{147}\text{Ibid.}\quad ^{148}\text{Ibid.}\quad ^{149}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 596.\quad ^{150}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 591.\)
right and wrong and of his duty to do right and avoid wrong, it also has authority over the other motivating principles within man. Reid writes about this point, saying:

The authority of conscience over the other active principles of the mind, I do not consider as a point that requires proof by argument, but as self evident. For it implies no more than this--That in all cases a man ought to do his duty. He only who does in all cases what he ought to do, is the perfect man. 151

The assertion that "man ought to do his duty," of course, begs the question, since in Reid's philosophy duty is defined as that which one ought to do. Nevertheless, conscience calls man's attention to what he ought to do and helps him restrain the other motivating principles such as desire or appetite which may be in conflict with duty.

The good man is assisted greatly in his pursuit of moral conduct by the fact that God has planted in his mind the seed of conscience, and, given the proper care, nourishment, and guidance, it will serve him as a sextant and compass serve the sailor, to plot his course in the right to which he is already inclined. Though Reid implies that the guidance which the immature conscience should receive is to be given by instructors who are themselves moral men, he is not clear on exactly how the conscience is corrupted or about the circumstances under which corruption of the conscience might occur. Reid presumably believes that the con-

151 Ibid., p. 595.
science does not have the proper nurturing when it is instructed by those whose lives and thought do not exemplify the goodness of which man is capable.

A problem with Reid's theory of conscience is that it implies that at some point in the history of man there were humans whose conscience had no instruction, education, example, or exercise, because Reid believes in the historical creation of man as related in the Book of Genesis. Reid does not specifically discuss how the conscience of the two original humans came to maturity, but he does say that man is able to discover moral truth without the aid of instruction. He explains that just as "truth has an affinity with the human understanding, which error hath not," so "... right principles of conduct have an affinity with a candid mind, which wrong principles have not." He further explains that "when they [right principles of conduct] are set before it [the mind] in a just light, a well disposed mind recognises this affinity, feels their authority, and perceives them to be genuine." A man who is deprived of moral instruction or who receives instruction by immoral teachers may yet find the right path. Apparently men have come to know the "right principles of conduct" through the ages by discovering them a few at a time and always passing their discoveries to the new generation.

His liberty.—In Reid's scheme of ethics another

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152 Ibid., p. 596.
important fact about man is that he is free; he has a "power over the determination of his own will."\textsuperscript{153} In other words man can decide what it is that he wills to will; therefore, his acts are undetermined. Reid believes that man has moral liberty for three major reasons: "first, because he has a natural conviction or belief, that, in many cases, he acts freely; secondly, because he is accountable; and, thirdly, because he is able to prosecute an end by a long series of means adapted to it."\textsuperscript{154} Just as Reid's assertion that the external world exists is based on man's universal and irrepressible conviction of it, so his assertion of the existence of man's liberty is based on man's universal and irrepressible conviction that he acts freely and not out of necessity. Both the principle of the existence of the material world and of man's moral freedom are common sense first principles in Reid's thought. Reid also takes for granted that man is "capable of acting right and wrong, and [is] answerable for his conduct to Him who made him."\textsuperscript{155}

Man's judgment determines one action "to be preferable to another, either in itself or for some purpose which he intends," and without this ability to make judgments right and wrong would have no meaning. In other words, Reid holds that if man's freedom to will is encumbered, then he could not be responsible or accountable for his actions; and he cannot be held in blame or praise, because he did not

\textsuperscript{153}Ibid., p. 599. \textsuperscript{154}Ibid., p. 616. 
\textsuperscript{155}Ibid., p. 620.
control the choices of conduct which he made.  

Men clearly do praise and blame others for their conduct, and all men do indeed have a concept of right and wrong; thus, this second argument for the existence of man's moral liberty is ultimately based in common sense principles which are held universally by men. Reid's third argument is a simple one consisting of the fact that man is able to lay plans for his conduct long in advance of carrying them out, and he can execute his plans to accomplish an end. Another argument for the moral freedom of man appears in Reid's writing about ethics. He asserts that "nature gives no power in vain..." nature has given man the power to reason and judge, therefore man must be free to judge and reason of what he shall will. Thus Reid establishes that man has moral liberty and that he is, for that reason, accountable on the basis of the conduct he chooses.

The fact that man is worthy of praise or blame is of interest to the rhetorician because of its relation to the ethical mode of persuasion. Man's moral freedom is the origin and justification of our esteem for men of good character. Reid writes about men's tendency to give their approval and disapproval to others in the following passage:

The effect of moral liberty is, That it is in the power of the agent to do well or ill. This power, like every gift of God, may be abused. The right use of this gift of God is to do well and wisely, as far as his best judgment can direct him, and thereby merit esteem and

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156 Ibid., pp. 599-600.  
157 Ibid., pp. 622-23.  
158 Ibid., pp. 599-600.
approbation. The abuse of it is to act contrary to what he knows or suspects to be his duty and his wisdom, and thereby justly merit disapprobation and blame.\textsuperscript{159}

It is man's freedom to will certain actions over others which makes him worthy of praise or blame, and if man's actions were wholly determined, as some believe, man could not, at least not justly, hold their fellow men in high or low esteem. Indeed no one could rightly claim responsibility for his actions, nor, simultaneously, his right to the esteem of his fellows for his good character.

\textbf{His improvement.}—Another consideration Reid gives to the subject of the ethical man concerns the necessity of man's improvement and the manner in which it is carried out. In \textit{Essays on the Active Powers of Man} Reid reveals his belief that man is intended by his maker to be an active rather than a passive creature, to work, and to make the earth yield a livelihood for him. About man's need to be actively about changing the world to accommodate his own desires, Reid writes:

If we compare the city of Venice, the province of Holland, the empire of China, with those places of the earth which never felt the hand of industry, we may form some conception of the extent of human power upon the material system, in changing the face of the earth, and furnishing the accommodations of human life. But, in order to produce those happy changes, man himself must be improved. His animal faculties are sufficient for the preservation of the species; they grow up of themselves, like the trees of the forest, which require only the force of nature and the influences of Heaven. His rational and moral faculties, like the earth

\textsuperscript{159}Ibid., p. 600.
itself, are rude and barren by nature, but capable of a high degree of culture; and this culture he must receive from parents, from instructors, from those with whom he lives in society, joined with his own industry.160

Reid, then, perceives the entire earth as created to serve the ends of man, if man will only turn his efforts to the noble task of improving it. But this task can be accomplished, in Reid's opinion, only when man himself is improved,

Reid suggests that man must improve his rational powers, "acquiring the treasures of useful knowledge, the habits of skill in the arts, the habits of wisdom, prudence, self-command, and every other virtue," and he explains that "it is the constitution of nature, that such qualities as exalt and dignify human nature are to be acquired by proper exertions. . . ." A man may improve his fellow men by educating and instructing them in right conduct, by persuading them, by showing the example of his own conduct, and by forming governments to legislate right conduct. In addition, these means of improving oneself and others must be applied on a universal scale in order to insure the success of man's efforts in "changing the face of the earth."161

Far from corrupting the earth, man's efforts are capable of creating a paradise. For Reid the improvement of man is not only a noble aim in and of itself, but it makes possible an ideal world which he regards as an even nobler dream. The improvement of all the virtues of man makes possible the creation of a utopia which Reid apparently

considers entirely possible. His style changes to that of the poet when he considers "to what pitch the happiness of human society, and the improvement of the species, might be carried." He writes:

What a noble, what a divine employment of human power is here assigned us! How ought it to rouse the ambition of parents, of instructors, of lawgivers, of magistrates, of every man in his station, to contribute his part towards the accomplishment of so glorious an end!162

To create utopia is the end to which man is put on earth and made an active rather than a passive being. He is to learn the laws of nature in order to control natural phenomena for his own purposes; this involves his rational powers. But man must also discover the principles which govern his own behavior and then use these principles to perfect his own conduct. Only after the conduct of men is made right can a utopia created by men come to be.

In Reid's notion of man's task of improving the world by first improving himself abides the explicit responsibility of the communicator, whether he is parent, teacher, legislator, or magistrate. All men are responsible for communicating "the principles of right conduct" to their fellow men in some manner, and in order to do this they must first be of good character themselves. Thus whether man is creating utopia or undertaking the more practical purpose of making good government, Reid's concept of man's responsibility to his fellow men is of interest to those who theorize

162 Ibid.
about communication and rhetoric.

Political Theory

Reid considers political theory as a facet of his ethics, and it is directly relevant to the conduct of men because our knowledge of the conduct of groups of men in society is derived from our knowledge of their conduct as individuals. Reid considers this concept when he writes that

The science of politics borrows its principles from what we know by experience of the character and conduct of man. We consider not what man ought to be, but what he is, and thence conclude what part he will act in different situations and circumstances. From such principles we reason concerning the causes and effects of different forms of government, laws, customs, and manners. If man were either a more perfect or a more imperfect, a better or a worse, creature than he is, politics would be a different science from what it is.\[163\]

Because he finds it important to understand the nature of man, Reid takes up the topic of the principles of action which were discussed earlier. These motivate man to perform some acts and help him to discern those which he should not perform. Understanding how man is motivated gives Reid the ability to predict how he will act in a given circumstance. With this knowledge about what motivates man to certain actions we can consider how government and laws may appeal to these motivating principles and cause man to perform certain actions and to refrain from others.

Reid's discussion of politics is sparse and occurs

\[163\] Ibid., p. 591.
only incidentally as it relates to the major topic in his ethics, i.e., the moral liberty of man. Because his treatment of political theory grows out of his ethical thought and because of its relevance to rhetoric and communication, in ancient rhetorical writings and in Reid's thought, the inclusion of it in this study is imperative.

The best means of governing.--As mentioned before, when Reid discusses the animal principle of action called opinion, he brings up the manner in which government employs opinion as an instrument in motivating man to value and support the government. He says:

Of all instruments of government, opinion is the sweetest, and the most agreeable to the nature of man. Obedience that flows from opinion is real freedom, which every man desires. That which is extorted by fear of punishment is slavery, a yoke which is always galling, and which every man will shake off when it is in his power.

The opinions of the bulk of mankind have always been, and will always be, what they are taught by those whom they esteem to be wise and good; and, therefore, in a considerable degree, are in the power of those who govern them.

Man, uncorrupted by bad habits and bad opinions, is of all animals the most tractable; corrupted by these, he is of all animals the most untractable.164

The government which plies the opinions of citizens governs best, according to Reid, but government must also be certain that the opinions which it attempts to imbue are good opinions which leave the citizens "uncorrupted." Reid does not specify which opinions are bad and which are good, but we might assume that those are good which are motivated

164 Ibid., pp. 577-78.
by the rational principles of action, such as duty and the knowledge of right conduct. When citizens of a country think their government right and good they are more prone to give their approval to the opinions proferred by that government, and presumably a government acquires the approval or disapproval of the governed when it performs consistently in the behalf and to the benefit of its citizens.

Because the governed must admire the wisdom and goodness of their government in order to accept readily the opinions offered to them, Reid thinks it important that the purposes of government be to the people's benefit. He states:

The most useful part of medicine is that which strengthens the constitution, and prevents diseases by good regimen; the rest is somewhat like propping a ruinous fabric at great expense, and to little purpose. The art of government is the medicine of the mind, and the most useful part of it is that which prevents crimes and bad habits, and trains men to virtue and good habits by proper education and discipline.

The end of government is to make the society happy, which can only be done by making it good and virtuous.

That men in general will be good or bad members of society, according to the education and discipline by which they have been trained, experience may convince us.

The present age has made great advances in the art of training men to military duty. It will not be said that those who enter into that service are more tractable than their fellow-subjects of other professions. And I know not why it should be thought impossible to train men to equal perfection in the other duties of good citizens.

What an immense difference is there, for the purpose of war, between an army properly trained, and a militia hastily drawn out of the multitude? What should hinder us from thinking that, for every purpose of civil government, there may be a like difference between a civil society properly trained to virtue, good habits, and right sentiments, and those civil societies which we now hold? But I fear I shall be thought to digress from my subject.
What might appear to some as Reid's advocacy of a kind of Platonic military state in which citizens are reared from childhood to the rhythm of martial drums, when fairly considered does not have such repugnant intimations after all. Reid seems to refer to military training only as an analogy to amplify his advocacy of education, but it should be conceded that his notion may have been expanded further to provide his reader with a clearer idea of what he has in mind. He seems to be saying that if such great success can be had by intensive training of soldiers for war, similar success may be enjoyed by educating the governed to make them good and virtuous citizens. If the government were truly good, then, in Reid's system of philosophy, it follows that education could do nothing but reveal that goodness to the governed, because of the affinity which truth has with the mind. For example, when citizens are educated to the need and purposes of the income tax, they could only come to the opinion that the tax is justified and good, provided of course that it is truly so. Without telling his reader how, Reid arrives at the conclusion that the educated are better citizens than the uneducated; supposedly he simply means to reiterate his points that education brings a man to see the virtue and wisdom of his government and that it should be provided for citizens by the government.

165Ibid., p. 578.
At the outset of the above excerpt Reid draws an interesting analogy between medicine and politics, declaring the latter the "medicine of the mind." From the analogy Reid reveals his opinion that government should spend its greatest efforts in strengthening the constitution of society by preventing "crimes and bad habits." When government, by design or by necessity for survival, foregoes this primary function for some other, it is merely "propping up a ruinous fabric at great expense, and to little purpose." When governments fail in their practice of preventive medicine, when the proper regimen of education no longer suffices to keep the government in the high esteem of the governed, the fabric of society is in need of extensive repairs. Reid is pessimistic about the possibilities of success in such a case. When crimes against society and subversion against the government become widespread Reid would probably declare the government's educational endeavors a failure, perhaps because of a moral fault of the instructor or because the government does not function in behalf of the people.

According to Reid's philosophy, if the character of the instructor is poor, the people may still discover the truth by their own efforts. If the government itself becomes corrupt, no longer carrying out its obligation of making the society happy, the knowledge of that corruption will destroy the people's good opinion of their government. One might logically expect revolution in a society where
esteem of the government is so low, but Reid does not discuss the possibilities of revolution nor the situations, if any, under which it is justified. This omission is strange in light of the fact that Reid's own age saw two violent revolutions.

The kinds of government.—Reid does, however, discuss two kinds of government, and makes comparisons as to how well they perform the functions of governing. The two are mechanical government and moral government. Reid declares that "the first is the government of beings which have no active power, but are merely passive and acted upon; the second of intelligent and active beings." Clearly the first kind of government is not meant for human beings, whom Reid considers intelligent and active.

Indeed it seems that Reid cannot imagine human beings under a mechanical kind of government. He first offers an instance of a ship under the command of a commander to illustrate mechanical government, and then of puppets which "in all their diverting gesticulations, do not move, but are moved by an impulse secretly conveyed, which they cannot resist." He writes of the moral responsibility of the puppet as if it were human, saying:

If they do not play their parts properly, the fault is only in the maker or manager of the machinery. Too much or too little force was applied, or it was wrong directed. No reasonable man imputes either praise or blame to the puppets, but solely to their maker or the governor.

166 Ibid., p. 613.
If we suppose for a moment, the puppets to be endowed with understanding and will, but without any degree of active power, this will make no change in the nature of their government; for understanding and will, without some degree of active power, can produce no effect. They might, therefore, be called intelligent machines, but they would be machines still as much subject to the laws of motion as inanimate matter, and, therefore, incapable of any other than mechanical government.

Whether Reid has in mind some particular military dictatorship he does not explain, but it is quite clear that he does not find mechanical government admirable in the least. Under such a government the people are not to be held responsible for their conduct; they can be neither praised nor blamed, because they act totally at the whim of the governor and never of their own volition. Undoubtedly under such a tyranny the tyrant would hold the people responsible for their misconduct, but Reid argues that like the puppet their misconduct is caused by the governor who did not motivate them properly. Perhaps he applied force in the wrong quantity, or perhaps his strategy in its application was ill planned or timed. Presumably, according to Reid, revolution under a mechanical government, like all conduct of the governed, is brought about by the governor, and the revolutionary is not to praise or to blame for the disruption of society resulting from his activities.

Moral government, of course, is the kind to which Reid gives his approval, not only because it accommodates man's nature as an active and rational creature, but also

167 Ibid.
because under moral government "... obedience is obedience in the proper sense..." That is, under moral government, obedience to the government emanates from the volition of the governed, who understand and approve of the reasons for laws "prescribed to them for their conduct by the legislator." The governed readily assent to obedience because of the "just authority" of the legislator and because he prescribes laws with impartiality and fairness.

Whether the legislator comes to his power by election, by a claim of divine right, or by other means does not seem important to Reid. The important matter seems to be that the legislator's authority is actually just and that the people consider his authority just in order to give obedience to his laws of their own volition. The second requisite of the good legislator is that he legislate with equity, a task which in itself must often prove complicated. Reid explains that

When the laws are equitable, and prescribed by just authority, they produce moral obligation in those that are subject to them, and disobedience is a crime deserving punishment. But, if the obedience be impossible—if the transgression be necessary—it is self-evident that there can be no crime in yielding to necessity, and that there can be no justice in punishing a person for what it was not in his power to avoid.

Given that the legislator's authority is accepted by the people and that his laws are fair, the people then assent to their moral obligation to obey the laws, and to the punishment of those who do not obey. The wise and fair

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168 Ibid. 169 Ibid., pp. 613-14.
legislator would not give legislation which requires conduct impossible for his people. For instance he would not tax the citizens beyond their means to pay or require actions such as those contrary to the teachings of the religions of the people.

Moral government depends fundamentally upon the people's opinion of the prudence, equity, benevolence, and good judgment of the legislator, and this fact places a heavy burden upon government to communicate its good intent to the governed. The legislator must be a good man in every respect in order to succeed; the people must be persuaded of his benevolence, morality, and wisdom in order to obey the law of their own volition, and, of course, the primary way in which people know the goodness of the legislator is by the effect upon them of the laws he gives. The survival of a moral government hinges on its ability to persuade the governed of its value, and when persuasion fails to motivate man by appealing to his rational principles of action, such as duty and decency, it has no reason to expect willful obedience to the laws it sets down. Thus in a moral government clear and persuasive communication is indispensable to the existence of government, and without it the whole edifice topples.

Summary

The foundation of Reid's ethical and political thought lies in his notion of man as an active rather than
a passive being; man's good conduct is the right use of his power. The will of man is the seat of his active power, and is the faculty which makes possible man's reason and judgment about various avenues of conduct. Without the will man would act out of necessity alone. He could never be held responsible for his acts, for he would do nothing except that which he must do. For Reid man is responsible, and is therefore moral. He is at liberty to do that which he wills, and his acts are not determined but are motivated by certain principles of action. It behooves those interested in man's nature and particularly those interested in motivating their fellow men to know the principles of action and how they work on man's will.

The mechanical and animal principles of action are common to beasts as well as to man, but the rational principles of action belong to man alone and make possible his morality. Man is motivated by all the principles of action, but some of the rational principles and three of the animal principles influence the other principles of action. The animal principles of passion, disposition, and opinion may cause man to willfully suppress or assent to other motivating principles; for instance, opinion of the necessity for a law may cause a man to restrain the animal principle of appetite when it motivates him to steal bread. He suppresses this appetite by a "higher" principle, opinion that stealing is contrary to the law which he regards as good for himself and society. Of course he may be equally and simul-
taneously moved by the rational principles of duty or conscience, which are also "higher" motives. In Reid's discussion of the principles by which man is motivated to action, the philosopher repeatedly asserts the importance of a thorough knowledge of the principles of action to those interested in effective communication. For instance Reid's treatment of the manner in which men are motivated by the approbation or disapprobation with which they regard other men serves to remind his reader of the necessity of the communicator's good character to the effectiveness of his communication.

In treating the rational principles of action, Reid discusses the topic of moral first principles, demonstrating again his devotion to the universal common sense of man. Moral first principles are similar to logical first principles; they require only that the one considering their truth be of mature understanding and unprejudiced judgment in order to ascertain their legitimacy. This is perhaps one of the knottiest problems in all of Reid's thought, and it is no less so in his ethics. Despite his apparent conviction that he has solved the problem of how men discern first principles, whether moral or logical, the point is weak and invites careful scrutiny. Because first principles lie at the basis of Reid's ethical thought, the critical reader must often willfully suspend his disbelief in order to consider equally important aspects of his ethics without undue prejudice.
In various places in his works Reid takes up the topic of the moral man. Interestingly, Reid believes man to be corrupt, but he also regards man as more inclined to good than to evil; were this not so, society, which is the creation of man, would have crumbled long ago. More often than not, man acts in a manner which benefits his society and himself. Reiterating his assertion of the existence of moral first principles, Reid insists upon his belief that men universally have a knowledge of right and wrong conduct and of what they ought and ought not to do. Reid's evidence for the existence of universal moral knowledge comes from his observation and judgment of man's conduct present and past, an extremely vague source. Man's knowledge of right and wrong conduct comes to maturity gradually, but it is also guided in its growth by others in the society, supposedly by those who have already achieved maturity in their moral knowledge. Regardless of man's innate knowledge of right and wrong conduct and of his duty to do right and avoid wrong, he is a free moral agent capable of choosing to will any action. Because he does not act out of necessity, man is responsible for his conduct; herein lies his morality, which would not exist were man's actions determined. Man may be praised or blamed for his actions because since he wills to do what he does, he is responsible for them.

Reid is also concerned that man be improved. But man is only a part of society and the world, and improve-
ment of society and the world follows logically, according to Reid, from the improvement of man. Paradise on the earth seems altogether possible to Reid, and it is man's duty to create it. The undertaking must, however, begin with the improvement of man. He must become knowledgeable, wise, skilled in the arts, disciplined, and virtuous in all ways, in Reid's opinion. The good man is innately inclined toward the good that he does, though he is at liberty to do either good or ill as he wills.

In addition to considering the conduct of men as individuals, Reid takes up their conduct in groups, the philosophical topic of politics. He declares that of all the means of governing, that government which appeals to the opinions of the people governs best. Those who obey the laws of government from opinion of their fairness are truly free, while those who obey out of fear and coercion are slaves. This presupposes that government must be moral because of Reid's principle that truth and morality have greater attraction to the mind than their opposites. The successful government, therefore, must operate in the interest of the governed. The kind of government which does this best is, of course, moral government. Mechanical government, the converse of moral government, makes the governed puppets and slaves, acting in accord with the whims of the government and never responsible for their actions, since they have no choice of action. Moral government brings about the people's obedience to law by their own
volition. The legislator gives laws fairly and impartially, and authority is derived justly, apparently by election or divine right. Reid's political theory, like virtually every aspect of his ethics, reflects a fundamental necessity of effective communication without which the citizens could be convinced of the integrity neither of the legislator nor of the government, nor persuaded to act of their own volition in obedience with the laws.

One problem arising from Reid's reasoning about ethics and from his presuppositions about man's nature concerns his assertion that men are innately inclined toward the good. He draws this conclusion from the argument that men have power to do more harm than good, and that if they selected to do harm more often than good they would long ago have destroyed society. Society exists, therefore men are more inclined to good than to evil. The first premise of this argument is either a supposition or a self-evident first principle, and it is the weakest link in the argument. Apparently, according to Reid, although man is corrupt and capable of more evil than good, some higher principle of action restrains him from acting destructively and causes him to act in accordance with good more often than with evil. If men act more often in accordance with good, however, how can Reid, by observation, conclude that they are more capable of evil than good? On the contrary, they would appear to be more capable of good than of evil, since they do it more consistently. This difficulty is possibly
one of definition and lack of clarity, but Reid seems under the strong influence of the prevailing theological thought which postulates man's inherent corruption; he does not state this, however.

Another similar problem lies in the difficulty of ultimately determining the truth of a moral proposition. Reid does not mention a final authority to which man can appeal for an answer. Philosophers with a strong theological bent might, for instance, refer to the authority of scripture or of God. Reid's reference to the morality of monogamy reveals the problem of where to go for authority in matters of morals. In demonstrating that we can reason about matters of morals he looks at the effects of monogamy and polygamy upon the family and society and declares that monogamy is of greater benefit to both, but in doing so Reid does not examine cultures where monogamy is the exception and the family and society thrive. Because he does not explain the specific inductive process required to draw such a conclusion about the virtue of monogamy, the critic must assume that the ultimate standard in this case was the continuance and good health of the Scottish family, quite a limited sample of the world's population. Implied also is Reid's reliance on the authority of his own opinion which might cause him to regard the polygamous customs of other lands, like their aesthetic views, as the result of perverted judgment or immature understanding. He does not seem to recognize that the opinions of the philosopher may prove an
unstable basis on which to construct an ethical system. Reid also states that man ought to conduct himself in accord with the intentions of nature, but discovering those intentions must necessarily be a difficult procedure, forcing the ethician to resort to his own opinion and interpretation of ethical matters.

Reid's ethical theory, however, is significant in that it embodies an endorsement of Locke's proposal of an ethical algebra as reliable as any mathematical science. He reasons about ethics, approaching the topic inductively and without a slavish adherence to the presuppositions of Judeo-Christian theology, though the premises he supposes to be true are at times inadvertently colored by the prevailing theological thought. In addition to these outstanding attributes of Reid's ethical theory is his discussion of the principles of action, with its remarkable rhetorical emphasis on knowing the principles by which man is motivated in order to move him to action more effectively. For these reasons Reid's ethical theory is important to an understanding of the current of thought in the eighteenth century and particularly to communication and rhetorical theory.

IV. Style and Aesthetics

Though not all of his remarks are aimed at providing rules of thumb for the orator and the writer, Thomas Reid wrote on several divergent subjects which have implications for the rhetorical canon of style and the related topic of
aesthetics. Style has always been a rather nebulous and inclusive canon. Definitions of style frequently vary with the orientation of the man who examines it. Aristotle's definition in his *Rhetoric*, for instance, is rather loose and broad; style is the second of three "provinces of the study which concern the making of the speech." These provinces are "(1) the means of effecting persuasion; (2) the style; [and] (3) the right ordering of the several divisions of the whole."\(^{170}\) Aristotle points out that "since it is not enough to know what to say— one must also know how to say it," and that "... success in delivery is of the utmost importance to the effect of the speech."\(^{171}\) Actually, many considerations comprise Aristotle's treatment of style, including discussions of the voice as it affects delivery and the language of prose and poetry.

Modern critics have recognized the amorphous nature of style; Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird point out the controversy over the term *style*:

> With the possible exception of invention, no part of rhetoric is more complex than style. Its ramifications are elaborate, extending, as has been suggested, deeply into the fundamentals of invention and disposition and losing themselves in them, so that what we arbitrarily call style becomes indistinguishable from the other elements.\(^{172}\)

Recognizing the difficulty of drawing sharp definitive lines

\(^{170}\)Aristotle, iii, 1. 1403\(^{b}\). 182.

\(^{171}\)Ibid., pp. 182-83.

around the topic of style, and wishing to allow Thomas Reid to "speak for himself," this section deals with several disparate topics having bearing on the canon of style. This discussion begins with Reid's concepts of natural and artificial language, then takes up his treatment of aesthetics and his notion of grammar as it affects style. Finally, it looks into Reid's suggestions for improving the use of language. The division on natural language includes a discussion of the subject of gesture, which some critics may argue belongs more appropriately under a separate heading. Gesture, however, is an indispensable part of Reid's idea of natural language, and to treat it in a separate category would sacrifice clarity in understanding natural language and gesture.

**Natural and Artificial Language**

An understanding of the two kinds of language is central to any discussion of the implications of Reid's thought for the canon of style. By language he means "all those signs which mankind use in order to communicate to others their thoughts and intentions, their purposes and desires."\(^{173}\) He divides these signs into two categories: (1) those "such as have no meaning but what is affixed to them by compact or agreement among those who use them," and (2) those "such as, previous to all compact or agreement, have a meaning which every man understands by the principles

\(^{173}\)Reid, *Inquiry*, p. 117.
of his nature."\textsuperscript{174} The former category Reid calls "artificial" and the latter, "natural."

Natural language includes voice modulations, gestures, features of the face, and attitudes of the body whose meanings are known immediately upon their perception and without previous agreement.\textsuperscript{175} Artificial language, on the other hand, includes words and supposedly any voice modulations, gestures, features of the face, and attitudes of the body whose meaning is placed upon them by compact with other men. Reid is not at all specific about what bodily activities comprise natural language, but his writing implies that he believes changes of pitch and stress in grunts and groans, and perhaps even whistling, to contain meaning. He provides no evidence to this effect however. In natural language, the voice modulations cannot logically apply to words and to sentences because words and sentences fall clearly into the category of artificial language; hence, voice modulations in conjunction with the use of words must be artificial signs.

To speculate further about what makes up natural language, we might understand gestures to include such things as a shrug of the shoulders to mean "I don't know," a vigorous extension of the arm with forefinger pointed to mean "go" or "Get out," and a clenched fist to convey a threat. A frown and a general slumping might indicate sadness or mourning on the part of the one employing such signs.

\textsuperscript{174} Ibid. \textsuperscript{175} Ibid., p. 118.
while a smile may mean assent, satisfaction, or general happiness; all these examples, however, are of necessity conjectural, since Reid is not at all explicit as to what he means to include in natural language.

Reid believes that animals as well as men employ a natural language, but men, "... having a superior degree of invention and reason, have been able to contrive artificial signs of their thoughts and purposes, and to establish them by common consent."  

Reid apparently doubts that animals are capable of the latter achievement; hence the use of artificial signs is one of the distinctions between men and beasts. Reid's recognition of the distinction between men and beasts is reminiscent of Cicero's similar recognition in his De Oratore. Cicero writes:

For the one point in which we have our very greatest advantage over the brute creation is that we hold converse one with another, and can reproduce our thought in word. Who therefore would not rightly admire this faculty, and deem it his duty to exert himself to the utmost in this field, that by so doing he may surpass men themselves in that particular respect wherein chiefly men are superior to animals? To come, however, at length to the highest achievements of eloquence, what other power could have been strong enough either to gather scattered humanity into one place, or to lead it out of its brutish existence in the wilderness up to our present condition of civilization as men and as citizens, or, after the establishment of social communities, to give shape to laws, tribunals, and civic rights? 

Apparently Reid's observations about man's exclusive ability

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176 Ibid., pp. 117-18.

to communicate by using words is not novel, but his delega-
tion of the use of natural language to both men and beasts
and the use of artificial language exclusively to man is
seemingly Reid's.

Somewhere in man's development to a more civilized
state he evolved artificial language, but Reid believes that
he employed natural language to achieve the agreements and
compacts about the meanings he would assign to words; thus
the basis of the use of words and sentences, whether verbal
or written, lies in natural language, the prerequisite for
artificial language, since logically some form of communi-
cation must have been required to establish and perpetuate
the use and meanings of artificial signs. Man could not
have compacted to affix meanings to signs unless he could
already communicate by some means, i.e., a natural language,
consisting of intonations of the voice in grunts, groans,
growls, laughter, and like noises; changes in facial fea-
tures (frowns, smiles, etc.); and postures of the body.

Reid's assertions about the historical evolution of
man's use of artificial language must, of course, be spec-
ulative. He offers no evidence which he might have gathered
from observing primitive tribes, although this could streng-
then his arguments and lend clarity and weight to his asser-
tions. The dearth of examples, common throughout Reid's
works, presents no less a problem with his concepts of natu-
ral and artificial language, and justifies some doubt about
the existence of natural signs which are understood without
learning or prior agreement. Reid does not offer an argument in favor of his assertion but seems to recognize that children, without learning the meaning of voice modulations, respond to such natural signs as growls of animals, and to soothing parental voices. He does not, however, explain the inescapable tendency of humans to comprehend such natural signs. In brief, Reid simply states these premises on which his argument rests with the apparent assumption that they are self-evident.

Another interesting aspect of Reid's theory of natural and artificial signs is his understanding of the relation between the signs and the things for which they stand. Although both natural and artificial signs signify things, Reid sees no necessary connection between either sort of sign and the thing it signifies. Though he does not use the word symbol, he more clearly understands the particular signs as symbols of the things they represent. For example the word gold is an artificial sign used to signify the yellow metallic substance, but it has no "similitude to the substance." Through learning and custom the word has become associated with the substance, so that in some way we receive a suggestion of the substance, gold, from the word.

By way of explaining the relation between the symbol and the thing signified by it, Reid offers the example of the sense of touch; he writes that there is no necessary connection between symbols and the things they symbolize.

178 Reid, Inquiry, pp. 117-22.
and that "in like manner, a sensation of touch suggests hardness, although it hath neither similitude to hardness, nor, as far as we can perceive, any necessary connection with it." The sensation of hardness which we receive from touching the substance gold, for example, "is not the effect of habit, but of the original constitution of our minds," an inexplicable and inescapable phenomenon which causes us not only to receive the sensation of hardness upon touching a hard object, but also to receive the appropriate suggestion of meaning from a natural or artificial sign. When Reid insists that no necessary connection can be perceived between either natural or artificial signs and the things they signify, he seems to mean that no logical necessity exists between them. That is, there is no perceivable logical connection between the term gold and the substance which makes that particular term suggest the substance more appropriately than any other word. Nor is there any perceivable logical connection between a natural sign, such as a shrug of the shoulders, and its meaning of uncertainty or lack of knowledge. The natural sign, however, suggests its meaning to us in some unexplained manner, a phenomenon which Reid attributes to the "original constitution of our minds."

Classes of natural signs.--Further, Reid distinguishes three classes of natural signs; in all three, the connection of the sign to the thing signified by the sign is not a

179 Ibid., p. 121.
necessary one but one which inexplicably derives from the makeup of the mind of man. In the first class are those natural signs whose connection to the thing signified is discovered only by experience. Philosophy's business is to discover the connections by observation of facts and to reduce the resulting information to general laws. Reid declares that

What we commonly call natural causes might, with more propriety, be called natural signs, and what we call effects, the things signified. The causes have no proper efficiency or causality, as far as we know; and all we can certainly affirm is, that nature hath given to mankind a disposition to observe those connections, to confide in their continuance, and to make use of them for improvement of our knowledge, and increase of our power.  

The fact that causes of phenomena are signs belonging to the first classification make them of interest to the scientist whether he is involved in the discipline of mechanics, astronomy, optics, agriculture, gardening, chemistry, or medicine. The physician, for example, attempts to find the causes of illness and understand the relation of the cause to the symptoms he observes. By observing many cases of a similar cause, a virus in the blood, for instance, he can formulate a general principle on which the relation between cause and effect operates; he would determine how the virus brings about certain symptoms in his patients.

In a similar manner, presumably, the rhetorician may seek the causes of particular effects in the facial expressions, voice modulations, and bodily motions and attitudes.

180 Ibid., p. 122. 181 Ibid., p. 121.
of the orator and reduce these to laws, with the ultimate interest being that these laws might be applied in producing effective speeches. Discovering the laws governing the effectiveness of discourse is the essence of rhetorical theory since ancient times; with regard to style, the rhetorician is in search of the gesture, whether a facial expression or a movement of some part of the body, and particular vocal modulation which expresses his meaning in the most effective manner. Of course, he often does this in hope of discovering ways to stimulate a desired effect in his auditors. More concretely, the rhetor may seek a particular emotion which is the cause of a pitch or stress pattern conveying enthusiasm for an idea in the hope of infecting his audience with a similar enthusiasm. This first variety of natural signs might be most significant in the work of the rhetorician.

The second class of natural signs, however, is the most pertinent to a discussion of Reid's intimations about style. In this class Reid places "the natural signs of human thoughts, purposes and desires, which have already been mentioned as the natural language of mankind," and which man discovers via some "natural principle, without reason or experience." Trying to provide examples of cases in which the things signified by natural signs are known without any possibility of being learned by prior experience or by reason, Reid speaks of children who, with-
out learning the meaning of particular natural signs, respond to them; he writes:

An infant may be put into a fright by an angry countenance, and soothed again by smiles and blandishments. A child that has a good musical ear, may be put to sleep or to dance, may be made merry or sorrowful, but the modulation of musical sounds. The principles of all the fine arts, and of what we call a fine taste, may be improved by reasoning and experience; but if the first principles of it were not planted in our minds by nature, it could never be acquired. Nay, we have already made it appear, that a great part of this knowledge which we have by nature, is lost by the disuse of natural signs, and the substitution of artificial in their place.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}

This natural principle of which Reid speaks is an innate part of the constitution of all men, and Reid believes that this unexplained propensity which we originally possess for using and understanding natural signs tends to dwindle as we mature. Rather than our presenting an "angry countenance," for example, we are more prone to employ words, artificial signs, to express anger and emotions of all kinds. Reid also asserts that a fine taste can be improved by reason and experience, provided that this innate knowledge of natural signs is present at the outset. This assertion implies that not only may fine taste be improved in this manner, but also that skills requiring good taste, such as communication and public address, may also be improved by the reason and experience of the communicator and the orator. It follows, then, that reasoning about rhetoric and communication, combined with the experience of the initiated orator, might assist another in acquiring a fine taste.
Hence Reid reveals the possibility that rhetorical skill can be taught.

The third class of natural signs includes those which somehow suggest the things of which they are signs even when the observer has never before had any concept of the thing signified. Reid writes of this category of natural signs in the following excerpt:

A third class of natural signs comprehends those which, though we never before had any notion or conception of the thing signified, do suggest it, or conjure it up, as it were, by a natural kind of magic, and at once give us a conception and create a belief of it.

I shewed formerly, that our sensations suggest to us a sentient being or mind to which they belong—a being which hath a permanent existence, although the sensations are transient and of short duration—a being which is still the same, while its sensations and other operations are varied ten thousand ways—a being which hath the same relation to all that infinite variety of thoughts, purposes, actions, affections, enjoyments, and sufferings, which we are conscious of, or can remember.

Further, Reid refers to the sensation of hardness for an example of this particular kind of natural sign. He writes:

The notion of hardness in bodies, as well as the belief of it, are got in a similar manner [as the notion of a sentient being to which sensations belong]; being, by an original principle of our nature, annexed to that sensation which we have when we feel a hard body. And so naturally and necessarily does the sensation convey the notion and belief of hardness, that hitherto they have been confounded by the most acute inquirers into the principles of human nature, although they appear, upon accurate reflection, not only to be different things, but as unlike as pain is to the point of a sword.

This third category of natural signs differs from the first two categories epistemologically; the relation of each kind

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\[\text{ibid.} \quad \text{ibid.}\]
of sign to the thing signified is discovered in a different manner. Secondly, the things signified by each are different. The third variety of natural sign conjures up the thing signified in some mysterious way, and the thing signified by it need not have been known before. One need never before have had a conception of mind or sentient being to be convicted of the existence of mind upon knowing the existence of sensations. Similarly, man inescapably acquires a "belief of hardness" upon touching a body possessing that quality, even though he may not have had such a concept before.

In summary, Reid writes that

It may be observed, that, as the first class of natural signs I have mentioned is the foundation of true philosophy, and the second the foundation of the fine arts, or of taste—so the last is the foundation of common sense—a part of human nature which hath never been explained. 186

The first category of natural signs serves the sciences as they seek to discover the connections between phenomena and their causes and then to reduce these to general principles which apply to the workings of the universe. Undoubtedly, Newton’s work, as much as that of many scientists, makes thorough use of this first kind of natural sign. Inasmuch as the rhetorician seeks to find the general principles of human nature, his work is akin to that of the psychologist and the philosopher, and he too would make use of the first category of natural signs. The rhetorician, of

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186 Ibid.
course, would likely find the second classification of natural signs as helpful as the first, because into this group Reid places the signs of vocal modulations, facial features, gestures, and bodily attitudes accruing to the natural language of man. Unlike the first category, however, these signs are not discovered by experience or reason, but known and understood immediately, perhaps by some magic similar to that which reveals the thing signified by the third kind of natural sign. The third kind of natural sign, like the second, requires no reason or experience in order to know the relation of the sign to the thing signified; it is known by some magical original capacity of our constitution. But the thing signified by the third kind of sign is not like that signified by the second category. The second category of signs signify "human thoughts, purposes, and desires," while the third category of natural signs signify and make us believe the existence of such things as a sentient being to whom sensations belong and hard objects to which the sensation of hardness belongs. That is, the third variety of natural signs serves as the basis of common sense; Reid employs the argument that such signs as sensation of hardness immediately and irrevocably convict us of the existence of the material world.

One difficulty appears in Reid's discussion of the first class of natural signs when an apparent contradiction arises concerning his insistence that no necessary connec-
tion exists between the sign and the thing signified. On the one hand Reid writes that there is no perceptible "necessary connection" between a sign and the thing it signifies, but declares only a few sentences later that "... without a natural knowledge of the connection between these signs and the things signified by them, language could never have been invented and established among men; and that the fine arts are all founded upon this connection, which we may call the natural language of mankind." Seemingly, Reid has said at first that no necessary connection exists between signs and the things they signify, and later that there is indeed a connection. Wary of attempting to make \textit{ad hoc} reason out of blatant chaos, we may yet salvage some sense from this confusion.

Hume's influence must be alluded to here to clarify what Reid must have had in mind, since Reid appears to use the word \textit{connection} to mean \textit{causal relationship} when he denies a "necessary connection" between the sign and the thing signified. Reid, then, following Hume's denial of causality, must mean in the first instance that when the thing signified suggests itself to our minds, the suggestion appears coincidentally but not necessarily as an effect of the thing signified. In the second instance, when Reid implies that a connection does after all exist, he seems to be using the term \textit{connection} to mean correlation or coincidence rather than \textit{causal relationship}, as in his first state-

\footnote{188 \textit{Ibid.}, p. 121.}
ment. Another possibility is that when Reid denies any necessary connection between signs and the things they signify he means to deny any discoverable causal connection, although he cannot deny that some sort of connection exists. In the case of artificial signs the connection is not necessary but purely arbitrary; and in the case of natural signs the connection is not logically necessary, but the natural sign is inextricably related to the suggestion it calls up in the mind. Regardless of how this difficulty is solved, Reid cannot be excused for his lack of attention to the use of the term *connection* without a clarifying definition.

**Uses of natural and artificial language.**—In further explaining the notion of natural language, Reid says:

The elements of this natural language of mankind, or the signs that are naturally expressive of our thoughts, may, I think, be reduced to these three kinds: modulations of the voice, gestures, and features. By means of these, two savages who have no common artificial language, can converse together; can communicate their thoughts in some tolerable manner; can traffic, enter into covenants, and plight their faith.¹⁸⁹

In this passage Reid incorporates some elements of natural language, arriving at only three, supposedly by considering gesture to be inclusive of the previously mentioned bodily attitudes. The "features" which Reid mentions apparently refer to features of the face, which, along with the other elements of natural language, make rather extensive communication possible with the use of natural language alone. Reid does not specify the exact manner in which all these

¹⁸⁹Ibid., p. 118.
complicated transactions become possible through the use of voice changes, motions of the body and limbs, and expressions of the face, but quite possibly he had studied the sign languages used by the "savage" American Indians. The only concrete indication of his knowledge of the language of savages is a brief mention of his interest in the work of Pierre Francois Xavier de Charlevoix, who wrote of American Indian tribes in the eighteenth century. At any rate, this example of communication between savages is supposedly intended to clarify the concept of natural language. But once again Reid leaves himself open to the charge of ambiguity, possibly because he does not develop his example fully.

If a savage employs a sign language, certainly the sign language amounts to a bodily motion, or gesture, and as such deserves to be called natural language. But, as mentioned before, it is conceivable that some of the gestures in such a language may have meanings which are agreed upon in advance, and/or may be arrived at by custom and usage in the same way as in the case of an artificial sign, such as gold. The manner and time of the agreement may be long forgotten. In such a case the gestures, facial features, attitudes of the body, or vocal modulations must be artificial rather than natural signs, because they lack one requirement of the natural sign; their meanings are agreed upon in advance. Reid, however, does not apparently con-

190 Above, pp. 101-2.
ceive of such a possibility and does not mention it in his discourse on natural language.

Reid affirms, however, that the language of nature has an important place in the sophisticated discourse of civilized man as well as in that of the savage. This common language of all mankind is "scanty," Reid concedes, but it is nevertheless powerful. Even though man can communicate by using only his natural language, he ingeniously "improves" it by augmenting it with artificial signs. Reid thinks that man should avoid the use of neither artificial nor natural language, but that he should instead repair the defects in natural language by using artificial signs, since natural language may be "scanty."\textsuperscript{191} Unfortunately Reid does not explain fully what he means by "scanty"; a possible explanation is that he is referring to the lack of well-used modulation and gesture in the public speaking he observed. Men have become increasingly proficient in the use of artificial language to the point of creating a deficiency in their skill of using natural language, Reid believes. "A man who rides always in a chariot, by degrees loses the use of his legs;" Reid explains, "and one who uses artificial signs only, loses both the knowledge and the use of the natural."\textsuperscript{192} The orator who increases his power in the skillful use of words and who otherwise develops an appropriate and effective style might lose his skill in the use of gesture through negligence.

\textsuperscript{191}Reid, \textit{Inquiry}, p. 118. \textsuperscript{192}Ibid.
Reid himself offers some advice about how the orator might maintain the potency of his ability to communicate in the following passage:

It is by natural signs chiefly that we give force and energy to language; and the less language has of them, it is the less expressive. Thus, writing is less expressive than reading, and reading less expressive than speaking without book; speaking without the proper and natural modulation, force, and variations of the voice, is a frigid and dead language, compared with that which is attended with them; it is still more expressive when we add the language of the eyes and features; and is then only in its perfect and natural state, and attended with its proper energy, when to all these we superadd the force of action.  

In *Essays on the Active Powers of Man*, Reid further discusses the orator’s use of natural language. "All that we call action and pronunciation, in the most perfect orator, and the most admired actor," he says, "is nothing else but superadding the language of nature to the language of articulate sounds." In these passages Reid makes it clear that he perceives the best discourse as one which employs artificial language in tandem with the natural, the natural lending force and vigor to the artificial. While natural language requires practice for proficiency, it is understood readily by the one who perceives it, as if the power to comprehend it is intrinsic in the mind of man. Reid here gives examples of how natural language affects meaning: "... an open countenance and a placid eye is [sic] a sign of amity;... a contracted brow and a fierce look is a sign of

anger. It is not from reason that we learn to know the natural signs of consenting and refusing, or affirming and denying, of threatening and supplicating." 195

Thus, for Reid, not only does the use of natural language, with its elements—"modulations of the voice, gestures, and features"—provide discourse with a dynamic quality, but lacking this natural aspect, our use of language, our style, becomes "frigid and dead." He seems also to advocate speaking without manuscript to assure an expressive style, since he finds "reading less expressive than speaking without book." Further, "where speech is natural, it will be an exercise, not of the voice and lungs only, but of all the muscles of the body." Natural speech would seem to be necessarily animated and lively, the antithesis of what Reid finds in the language of "civilized life," which he regards as "dull and lifeless articulation of unmeaning sounds, or the scrawling of insignificant characters." 196

Reid strongly suggests that if we would use speech to persuade, we must incline ourselves to natural language in conjunction with the artificial, since artificial signs "... signify, but they do not express; they speak to the understanding, as algebraical characters may do, but the passions, the affections, and the will, hear them not; these continue dormant and inactive, till we speak to them in the

language of nature, to which they are all attention and obedience."\(^{197}\) Natural language is not only more forceful and energetic but also more adept at eliciting the desired behavior from auditors. If the orator would do more than inform his hearers, which he could do by using only artificial signs, he must employ natural language.

We do not learn natural language however; we re-learn it. In Reid's view, men come into the world with a propensity for the language of nature, and in the process of becoming civilized, they forget it "by disuse, and so find the greatest difficulty in recovering it."\(^{198}\) Perhaps Reid tends to oversimplify when he declares "that the fine arts of the musician, the painter, the actor, and the orator, so far as they are expressive . . . are nothing else but the language of nature."\(^{199}\) He argues further that if we could "abolish the use of articulate sounds and writing among mankind for a century, . . . then every man would be a painter, an actor, and an orator."\(^{200}\) No matter how impossible to prove these assertions may be, they point up the fact that without the conventions of language, the artificial signs, man would be forced to make full use of the elements of natural language--modulations of the voice, gestures, features of the face, and the motions and attitudes of the body--ultimately becoming quite capable of communicating by

\(^{197}\)Ibid.  \(^{198}\)Ibid.  \(^{199}\)Ibid.  \(^{200}\)Ibid., pp. 118-19.
these means alone.

Earlier in this section it was noted that Reid believes man's use of artificial signs to be one of his distinctions over the brutes; here, on the other hand, he warns against the effect of too much use of artificial language at the expense of natural language—the extraction of life and animation from discourse. When this happens, man must revitalize language by animating his own body and facial features to express the purpose of his discourse. To Reid, discourse so enlivened can speak not merely to the understanding but also to the emotions. The painter, the actor, and the orator are artists who address themselves to the passions, in Reid's view, and only as they learn to employ natural language can they perform their art well.

While Reid's interest in language and in many other topics is generally descriptive rather than normative, his interest in prescribing the use of natural language suggests more than a detached interest in the subject; his entire approach is, in fact, normative rather than descriptive. He has no interest in accurately reporting the linguistic practices of primitives carrying on a complicated discourse without the benefit of artificial language. The philosopher's speculative approach does not uphold the weight of severe critical analysis for that reason, but neither are his speculations about natural language to be dismissed without careful consideration of the value they contain.
Aesthetics

Reid augments the foregoing treatment of style and gesture in *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* with his discussion "Of Taste." Here he determines to undertake an investigation of aesthetics, though he laments, "a philosophical analysis of the objects of taste is like applying the anatomical knife to a fine face." His treatment of aesthetics contains implication for the rhetorical canon of style. In the essay Reid defines taste as "That power of the mind by which we are capable of discerning and relishing the beauties of Nature, and whatever is excellent in the arts..."

When we view a beautiful object there are two elements which form our response to it: the emotion it creates in us and the quality in the object which brings about the emotion. The excellence in a piece of music is not in the music, but in the hearer; it is contrary to the very constitution of the language and to the common belief of mankind to think otherwise. The manner in which we employ language is Reid's indication that beauty in anything is in the object rather than in the beholder; in addition he is convinced that men everywhere regard beauty as external to themselves. This external excellence which appeals to the "internal taste" is discernible by means of some inexplicable original ability of the mind.

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In the same manner, persuasiveness, force, or eloquence must be qualities abiding in an oration. As the sense of taste relishes those things which are nourishing and finds disgusting those things which are not, so the "internal taste" is most nearly perfect when it finds pleasure in those things which are most excellent and displeasure with those which are not. Reid recognizes that people in other lands have various notions about what is beautiful, but he admonishes the reader not to be surprised "that the African should esteem thick lips and a flat nose, that other nations should draw out their ears, till they hang over their shoulders; and in one nation ladies should paint their faces, and in another should make them shine with grease."204 These facts indicate to Reid not that there could be more than one standard by which to make aesthetic judgments, but rather that "whole nations by the force of prejudice are brought to believe the grossest absurdities; and why should it be thought that the taste is any less capable of being perverted than the judgment?"205 The difficulty with Reid's insistence upon a single standard of taste arises here. If the mind possesses an ability to discern that which is excellent in works of art, for instance, and if there is but one standard of taste, there should necessarily be universal agreement on matters of aesthetics. On few matters, however, is their more diversity of opinion. The critic of Reid's

204 Ibid., p. 491. 205 Ibid., p. 492.
thought is left to assume that the ultimate authority on whose aesthetic judgment is and whose is not perverted "by force of prejudice" is Thomas Reid himself. He could not maintain that those skilled in making aesthetic judgments or those educated in the fine arts would have better judgment, for this would be contrary to his premise that the vulgar and uneducated are equally qualified to judge on such matters as are the educated and cultured. Insisting that aesthetic taste is not a subjective matter and that there is a single standard of beauty, Reid's aesthetic theory declares that all questions on matters of this kind must ultimately come before Reid for adjudication.

**Novelty.**—Reid can insist that entire nations can be corrupted in their appreciation of beauty because of his belief that beautiful things are suited by nature inevitably to "please a good taste." He apparently is not bothered by the circular nature of such a proposition, and further points out that objects of taste are comprised of three qualities: novelty, grandeur, and beauty. If a new object is not "disagreeable," it generally gives pleasure on the basis that it is new. Man is not a creature who can be satisfied with the sameness of sensations; "he is made for action and progress, and cannot be happy without it." In assessing the value of novelty in art, Reid says of the writer:

206Ibid., p. 493.
In some things novelty is due, and the want of it is a real imperfection. Thus, if an author adds to the number of books with which the public is already over­
loaded, we expect from him something new; and if he says nothing but what has already been said before in as agreeable a manner, we are justly disgusted. But things that have nothing to recommend them but novelty, are fit only to entertain children, or those who are distressed from the vacuity of thought.207

The reason that novelty is appealing and indispensible in effective discourse, then, lies in the very nature of man. But while novelty is worthwhile and desirable, it is not an admirable quality of style when unaccompanied by grandeur or beauty; it may be, on the contrary, actually insulting.

Grandeur.—The contemplation of things that are grand inspires man to serious thought, elevates his mind to enthusiasm, inspires his nobility, and causes him to disdain what is mean. That grandeur which evokes all these emotions in man "seems to be nothing else but such a degree of excellence, in one kind or another, as merits our admiration."208

Reid comments on grandeur as it appears in speech, saying:

What we call sublime in description, or in speech of any kind, is a proper expression of the admiration and enthusiasm which the subject produces in the mind of the speaker. If this admiration and enthusiasm appears to be just, it carries the hearer along with it involuntarily, and by a kind of violence rather than by cool conviction: for no passions are so infectious as those which hold enthusiasm.

But, on the other hand, if the passion of the speaker appears to be in no degree justified by the subject or the occasion, it produces in the judicious hearer no other emotion but ridicule and contempt.

The true sublime cannot be produced solely by art in the composition; it must take its rise from grandeur in the subject, and a corresponding emotion raised in the

207 Ibid., p. 494. 208 Ibid., pp. 494-95.
mind of the speaker. A proper exhibition of these, though it should be artless, is irresistible, like fire thrown into the midst of combustible matter.\textsuperscript{209}

Reid here fully recognizes the contagious nature of the speaker's enthusiasm and the empathy with which the audience meets such involvement. At the same time, however, he sees the necessity of sincerity in the speaker. Clearly, for Reid, there is potential for inspiration in grandeur of style.

Grandeur for the rhetor lies in a grand subject combined with the sincere vigor of the orator who can properly express his enthusiasm; it cannot be manufactured by the artful manipulation of words. Demosthenes provides an appropriate example in the phillipics of an orator who, taking as his cause the defense of Athens, experiences a flowering of his oratory as was seldom seen in Greece. Winston Churchill provides yet another example of one whose speaking drew heavily on the grandeur of the moment of history in which he rose to speak. Churchill's oratory thrived in the fertile soil of the war years, a time when England needed his leadership. Reid would likely approve of these examples of men whose eloquence was like "fire thrown into the midst of combustible matter."

Reid is concerned not only with the grandeur of the orator's topic but with his character and its bearing upon his art as well. He notes that we commonly ascribe such

\textsuperscript{209}\textit{i}bid., p. 496.
terms as power, wisdom, and goodness to works of art when they are rightfully attributes of the artist. Thus the word grandeur denotes an attribute of the mind that made the speech or created the work.  The man does not merely influence the grandeur and beauty of the style; his character is the ground from which these qualities spring. Reid says that

When we consider the "Iliad" as the work of the poet, its sublimity was in the mind of Homer. He conceived great characters, great actions, and great events in a manner suitable to their nature, and with those emotions which they are naturally fitted to produce; and he conveys his conceptions and his emotions by the most proper signs. The grandeur of his thoughts is reflected to our eye by his work, and, therefore, it is justly called a grand work.

When we consider the things presented to our mind in the "Iliad" without regard to the poet, the grandeur is properly in Hector and Achilles, and the other great personages, human and divine, brought upon the stage.

Next to the Deity and his works, we admire great talents and heroic virtue in men, whether represented in history or in fiction. The virtues of Cato, Aristedes, Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, are truly grand. Extraordinary talents and genius, whether in poets, orators, philosophers, or lawgivers, are objects of admiration, and therefore grand. What a grand idea does Virgil give of the power of eloquence, when he compares the tempest of the sea, suddenly calmed by the command of Neptune, to a furious sedition in a great city, quelled by a man of authority and eloquence.

In these passages Reid makes evident his belief that great men undertake great causes; their utterances are enhanced by the grandeur of their causes, as well as the grandeur of their characters. Reid would direct the attention of the critic of public speaking and literature to the excellence of the man who creates the work, as well as the excellence

\[210\] Ibid. \[211\] Ibid., pp. 496-97.
in the work itself. He points to the power of the artist's mind and personality, to his wisdom, and to his moral character generally, considerations which the thoughtful critic would readily assent to if he would explore every influence converging on his topic.

Of course, figurative language is an element of grandeur which Reid cannot avoid discussing. Metaphor derives from the connection we make in our imagination between things which are different in fact, and from our ability to attribute to one thing "what properly belongs to the other." He adds that

... a very great part of language, which we now account proper, was originally metaphorical; for the metaphorical meaning becomes the proper, as soon as it becomes the most usual; much more when that which was at first the proper meaning falls into disuse. The poverty of language, no doubt, contributes in part to the use of metaphor; and, therefore, we find the most barren and uncultivated languages the most metaphorical. But the most copious language may be called barren, compared with the fertility of human conceptions, and can never, without the use of figures, keep pace with the variety of their delicate modifications.

Reid does not explain which languages are poverty-stricken, nor does he disclose which ones he has in mind when he declares that the most barren contain more metaphors than others. The point, however, is clear: figurative language assists man in conveying the fecundity of his conceptions. In addition to the necessity of metaphor to express what otherwise would be impossible, we employ this tool of expres-

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212 Ibid., p. 497. 213 Ibid.
sion, Reid believes, because "... we find pleasure in discovering relations, similitudes, analogies, and even contrasts, that are not obvious to every eye."214 The orator and the writer might be well advised to understand this aspect of man's makeup when seeking ways to make discourse more appealing; the metaphor is not only pleasing to devise, but it must be equally pleasing to observe when used well.

By way of further explanation, Reid says of the nature of the figure that it "... gives a body ... to things intellectual, and clothes them with visible qualities; or ... gives intellectual qualities to the objects of sense."215 The words grand, mean, and low are examples of how language ascribes physical dimensions to things which have no such dimensions in the real world. Such terms as sweetness, simplicity, and crookedness ascribe "names common to certain qualities of mind, and to qualities of body to which they have some analogy."

As figurative expressions become more commonly employed in a language, they are often no longer thought to be figurative; thus "the sea rages, the sky lowers, the meadows smile, the rivulets murmur, the breezes whisper, the soil is grateful or ungrateful, ..."216 and no thought is given to these expressions being figurative. Thus Reid in his theory of figurative language speculates that the creation of the figure is attributable to the facility of

214 Ibid. 215 Ibid. 216 Ibid.
the mind to imagine associations. Strangely, the author seems to view the use of metaphor as a symptom of a language deficiency, apparently meaning a deficiency of artificial language. Because a language is insufficient, metaphors develop to increase its utility. The speaker wishing to augment the effectiveness of his communication might remember Reid's assurance that figurative language illuminates rather than obscures the mental conception being communicated.

Beauty.---Reid examines beauty from two standpoints, the "sense of beauty" and "beauty itself." The "sense of beauty" quickens within the individual when he perceives a beautiful thing. It consists of "... an agreeable feeling or emotion, accompanied with an opinion or judgment of some excellence in the object, which is fitted by Nature to produce that feeling."217 "Beauty itself," on the other hand, exists in an object intrinsically, apart from any person's perception of it. Beauty is the term we assign to excellence in an object; "... we find beauty in colour, in sound, in form, in motion. There are beauties of speech, and beauties of thought; beauties in the arts, and in the sciences; beauties in actions, in affections, and in characters."218

Reid further divides the "sense of beauty" into two types, the "instinctive and the rational." The "instinctive"
sense of beauty is activated in the individual without reflection and on first sight; children, for instance, find beauty in colorful shells, feathers, and other objects, but cannot show any reason for their finding those objects beautiful. When the individual can point out the agreeable quality in an object which causes him to think it "beautiful" Reid would say that the individual's "rational" sense of beauty is aroused. 219

"Beauty itself," like the "sense of beauty," is also of two types, "original" and "derived." While some things possess beauty in and of themselves, others derive it from some other object, perhaps as the moon reflects the light of the sun. All languages, Reid assures his reader, are comprised of words "borrowed from one thing, and applied to something supposed to have some relation or analogy to their first signification;" we ascribe an attitude of life to inanimate objects, as in the figure "raging sea," for example. Here again Reid is commenting on the metaphor; figurative language is beautiful because it leads us to the discovery of relationships and analogies in which our minds delight.

It might be well at this point to state that the division of the objects of taste into the three categories of novelty, grandeur, and beauty is obviously not Reid's innovation. This trinity is observed as early as Joseph Addi- 219Ibid., pp. 500-501.
son’s writing in 1712, many years prior to the appearance of Reid’s *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (1785). In keeping with the apparent tradition of the era, Reid apparently does not think it necessary to cite Addison’s contribution to his theory.

Reid’s aesthetic theory provides some lessons for the student of communication. As Reid points out, beauty affects its perceiver. It stirs his emotions in some mysterious way, and for that reason it interests the man who would move others via language. For this philosopher, beauty is not a subjective matter to be dismissed as a preference of the perceiver. In accordance with his common sense philosophy, beauty becomes for Reid excellence abiding in the thing itself, clearly perceptible to the observer. His insistence on the “instinctive” sense of beauty is reminiscent of his reliance on the common man’s “instinctive” knowledge of what exists in the world. An individual does not have to cultivate the ability to recognize and appreciate beauty; it is his instinctively. To exercise his rational sense of beauty, one need only reflect on the reasons which cause him to find a thing beautiful. Of course, Reid would qualify his assertion that the common man can recognize and judge of beauty by insisting that his judg-
ment be free of prejudice.

Of particular interest to our consideration of Reid's views on style are his comments on the beauty in sound and motion. "In a single note, sounded by a very fine voice," he says, "there is a beauty which we do not perceive in the same note, sounded by a bad voice or an imperfect instrument." In keeping with his entire discussion of aesthetics, Reid declares that this perception of beauty in sound derives from the perfection in the human voice or the instrument which produces the sound. Hence he commends development of the beautiful aspects of the voice to the rhetor.

Reid declares grace to be the "noblest part of beauty," but admits that he cannot define it. He observes, however, that grace involves motion—"some genteel or pleasing motion, either of the whole body or of some limb, or at least some feature." Dealing with what the rhetorician may call gesture, Reid takes up the movement of the face, saying, "... in the face, grace appears only on those features that are moveable, and change with the various emotions and sentiments of the mind, such as the eyes and eyebrows, the mouth and parts adjacent." Reid would find particularly admirable the eyes and the mouth, since these two are the most mobile of the facial features. Certainly the movement of these two features serves to give expression to the emotions, possibly more frequently than any other

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222 Ibid., p. 507.
223 Ibid.
part of the body. Importantly, Reid observes, "... there can be no grace with impropriety, ... [and] nothing can be graceful that is not adapted to the character and situation of the person." By definition, then, grace is at once adapted to the "character and situation of the person." Reid's comments on the graceful movement of the entire body, "of some limb," and of the features of the face are reminiscent of his earlier treatment of natural language, and serve to underscore the significance of beauty and appropriateness in effective communication.

Grammar

Grammar, of course, is indispensable to the use of language and therefore to style as a rhetorical canon, and Reid gives it due attention. He understands grammar simply as the rules governing the structure of language and relations among the parts of speech. In his scattered references to matters of grammar Reid treats the nature of verbs as they relate to his philosophical concept of active power, general words, and the use of sentences. Unfortunately, Reid's consideration of aspects of grammar are not extensive; he tends to refer to the topic only when it suits the purposes of some other interest he has, and not as a subject of interest per se.

Though his treatment of grammar is more sparse than could be desired, grammar is nevertheless significant in

\[\text{Ibid.}\]
Reid's philosophy. There are, for example, certain first principles, necessarily true, of which some are grammatical. Reid believes he can deduce from such grammatical first principles certain truths about the nature of man and the world. Some of these grammatical first principles are "that every adjective in a sentence must belong to some substantive expressed or understood;" and "that every complete sentence must have a verb." 225 In Reid's view, "Those who have attended to the structure of language, and formed distinct notions of the nature and use of the various parts of speech, perceive without reasoning, that these, and many other such principles, are necessarily true." 226 Hence Reid grounds grammar deeply in common sense, where the rules of grammar are undeniably and universally valid to anyone who considers the matter.

This notion of the "correctness" of grammatical rules presupposes the appropriateness of the manner in which we use language, but it does not explain to what standard our usage is appropriate. Reid does not propose a scholarly academy to pass judgment on matters of grammar any more than he advocates one to do the same on matters of aesthetics, because the unschooled common man must have judgment equally as sound as that of the scholar. In an earlier section of this chapter it is noted that Reid views language as a mirror of the mind. 227 Grammatical rules are then but another

225 Ibid., p. 452.  
226 Ibid.  
227 Above, p. 109.
reflection of the universal common sense of man; rules
governing the use of parts of speech and the organization of
words in sentences appropriately conform to the nature of
the mind and appear valid to the mind of anyone who makes a
study of such things.

The active power of language.--In keeping with his
understanding of grammatical rules as first principles,
Reid deduces certain of his philosophical propositions which
are fundamental to his writing by attending to the grammati­
cal structure of language. For example, Reid establishes
that men have a concept of active power from the fact that
they employ active verbs, and active verbs are contrived to
express active power. 228 "It is evidently the intention of
our Maker, that man should be an active and not merely a
speculative being. For this purpose, certain active powers
have been given him, limited indeed in many respects, but
suited to his rank and place in the creation." 229 Reid
explains his notion of active power in Essays on the Intel­
lectual Powers of Man, saying:

Those who have lively conceptions, commonly express
them in a lively manner—that is, in a manner as to raise
lively conceptions and emotions in others. Such persons
are the most agreeable companions in conversation, and
the most acceptable in their writing.

Abstract and general conceptions are never lively,
though they may be distinct; and, therefore, however
necessary in philosophy, seldom enter into poetical des­
cRIPTION, without being particularised or clothed in some
visible dress. 230

228 Reid, Active Powers, p. 515.  229 Ibid., p. 511.
This passage demonstrates the influence of Hume upon Reid; Hume bemoans the lack of liveliness in "abstract and general conceptions" in An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding. But notably, it is Reid, the advocate of common sense, who finds a practical application for Hume's speculative philosophy.

Reid extols the wisdom of expressing lively concepts in a lively way because they carry out most efficiently the aim of the communicator who wishes to arouse the emotions. Showing a clear interest in rhetorical and poetical implication of the use of liveliness, Reid writes:

Some objects, from their nature, or from accidental associations, are apt to raise strong emotions in the mind. Joy and hope, ambition, zeal and resentment, tend to enliven our conceptions; disappointment, disgrace, grief, and envy tend to flatten them. Men of keen passions are commonly lively and agreeable in conversation; and dispassionate men often make dull companions. There is in some men a natural strength and vigour of mind which gives strength to their conceptions on all subjects, and in all the occasional variations of temper.

It seems easier to form a lively conception of objects that are familiar, than of those that are not; our conceptions of visible objects are commonly the most lively, when other circumstances are equal. Hence, poets not only delight in the description of visible objects, but find means, by metaphor, analogy, and allusion, to clothe every object they describe with visible qualities. The lively conception of these makes the object appear, as it were, before our eyes. Lord Kames, in his Elements of Criticism, has shewn of what importance it is in works of taste, to give to objects described, what he calls ideal presence. To produce this in the mind, is, indeed, the capital aim of poetical and rhetorical description. It carries the man, as it were, out of himself, and makes him a spectator of the scene described. This ideal pre-

sence seems to me, to be nothing else but a lively conception of the appearance which the object would make if really present to the eye. \(^{232}\)

The ability to express oneself in a lively manner in order to infect others with lively concepts and emotions is possessed by those who have "keen passions," supposedly meaning those who can strongly feel emotions such as joy and hope, and who are at times ambitious, zealous, and resentful.

Reid finds this principle of liveliness particularly applicable to descriptive discourse and believes the lively description capable of making the conceptions appear vividly to the auditor. It is not clear from Reid's discussions of the lively conception how the communicator would acquire the ability to "raise lively conceptions and emotions in others" if he happened to be dispassionate, but this detached and rather descriptive approach is one Reid employs often, as if he thinks it more appropriate to the philosopher. Also, of course, the purpose of his *Essay on the Intellectual Powers of Man* is perhaps more strongly descriptive than prescriptive.

The economy of forms.—Taking up various parts of speech in somewhat more detail, Reid considers what he calls the problem of frugality in the use of language. He expresses the rule that variations in form which indicate modifications in case, mood, and tense must be frugal enough to accommodate the memory of man; if they are too extensive the

speaker will not be able to manipulate them with facility.\textsuperscript{233} Reid's belief that language is primarily for use by the common man and only secondarily for use by philosophers is basic to his concept of style, and the belief reappears here in his principle of economy of forms. The reason for parsimony, however, is purely to accommodate the speaker; Reid does not consider the difficulty of an audience in comprehending a particularly complicated style with many variations in case, mood, and voice. He does not indicate that there is a problem of multiplicity of forms in English, nor in his discussion of Greek and Latin cases is there any indication that any Greek or Roman ever had difficulty in remembering or using the various forms in any way whatsoever. Seemingly, Reid's interest in prescribing frugality of forms is purely theoretical. His interest in prescribing parsimony, however, warrants its mention here. In this connection we may say that while Reid warns that "the forms of language, once established by custom, are not so easily changed, . . . "\textsuperscript{234} he does encourage the speaker to experiment with and research the various elements of language. In a letter to Dr. James Gregory he writes:

\begin{quote}
I believe the principles of the art of language are to be found in a just analysis of the various species of sentences. Aristotle and the logicians have analysed one species—to wit, the proposition. To enumerate and analyse the other species, must, I think, be the foundation of a just theory of language.\textsuperscript{235}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{233}Reid, Active Powers, p. 516. \textsuperscript{234}Ibid., p. 606. \\
\textsuperscript{235}Reid, Letter XI to Gregory, p. 72.
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certain attributes are thrown in to one parcel, and have a general name given them, which belongs equally to every individual in that parcel. This common name must therefore signify those attributes which have been observed to be common to every individual in that parcel, and nothing else.237

Hence man employs general words because of the law of parsimony, or economy, mentioned before; he cannot communicate with facility all the proper names necessary without general words. For example, the word tree is a general word signifying all the attributes common to every individual tree, and the verb to run signifies all the attributes common to all running.

The obligation of the communicator to see that all his words "signify those attributes which have been observed to be common to every individual in that parcel, and nothing else" points up the importance of precise definition, which Reid discusses in the following excerpt:

If all the general words of a language had a precise meaning, and were perfectly understood, as mathematical terms are, all verbal disputes would be at an end, and men would never seem to differ in opinion, but when they differ in reality; but this is far from being the case. The meaning of most general words is not learned, like that of mathematical terms, by an accurate definition, but by the experience we happen to have, by hearing them used in conversation. From such experience, we collect their meaning by a kind of induction; and, as this induction is, for the most part, lame and imperfect, it happens that different persons join different conceptions to the same general word; and, though we intend to give them the meaning which use, the arbiter of language, has put upon them, this is difficult to find, and apt to be mistaken, even by the candid and attentive. Hence, in innumerable disputes, men do not really differ in their judgments, but in their way of expressing them.238

237 Ibid. 238 Ibid., p. 365.
Reid believes that use dictates the meaning of words, and that it is the obligation of the one who would communicate clearly to discover the task which use gives to a word and to employ it for no other purpose. Though he does not say so, Reid would no doubt consult the uneducated and the vulgar on the uses to which they put various words as frequently as he would consult the scholar, since this approach would be consistent with his belief in the validity of the judgment of the vulgar. Though conscious of the necessity of thorough definition, as mentioned often before, Reid causes confusion in his own writing by neglecting to make such precise definitions. The ambiguity caused by his failure to specify a meaning for the word connection, discussed above, is a notable example of Reid's own laxity.

Reid is not always so careless, however; he often does define his terms, even when they are commonly used words, probably well understood by the common men who employ them readily and frequently. On occasion he seems to regret the necessity for defining common words, such as active power, about which he says:

... an attempt to explain a word so well understood and to shew that it has meaning, requires an apology. The apology is, that this term, so well understood by the vulgar, has been darkened by philosophers, who, in this as in many other instances, have found great difficulties about a thing which, to the rest of mankind, seems perfectly clear.\footnote{Reid, \textit{Active Powers}, p. 512.}
Here Reid brings to attention that if the speaker is to avoid misunderstandings and disputes he must take care to define controversial terms, while at the same time taking pains not to bog down the discourse with definitions of terms which require little or no definition. It also behooves the speaker to avoid the errors of philosophers who unnecessarily darken the otherwise clear meanings of terms.

The Improvement of the Utility of Language

Reid, of course, insists that language best serves the purposes of common usage and that philosophers have strained the proper use of language in their discourses by requiring it to perform tasks for which it was not intended. He is especially concerned in this regard with the solipsistic condition of some epistemology in the eighteenth century, arguing vehemently against the use of language to propound theories directly contrary to common sense truths. For example, Hume, the empiricist, argues that the external world is not knowable, and Reid counters by saying that the world does indeed exist, and furthermore, that it is knowable. Much of Reid's argument about the existence of the material world and many of the principles of common sense, as we have already seen, are drawn from the nature and use of language; the manner in which men use language indicates that they assume the existence of a material world. In this manner Reid's admonitions about the use of language permeate his entire philosophy, and, to a large degree, provide the
very foundations for his arguments regarding common sense.

Reid says, "Language is made to serve the purposes of ordinary conversation; and we have no reason to expect that it should make distinctions that are not of common use." That is, it is not the office of language to undertake tasks not ordinarily put upon it in everyday life. This emphasis on the use of language as it is employed by the ordinary man seems to be in keeping with the concept of natural language which consists of voice modulations, gestures, features of the face, and attitudes of the body, which even the savage adroitly manipulates to attain his own goals. Reid laments the inability of language to carry out adequately the tasks which philosophy gives it, and stresses the point that language must be improved. Philosophy is more exacting than the endeavors of the vulgar and uneducated; it includes discussions of topics in more precise and intricate ways than do other disciplines. For instance, we would not expect the carpenter and the butcher to demand as much accuracy from their language as would the logician or the metaphysician; the philosopher requires more precision in his language than do other people, and for that reason Reid proposes that language "be gradually improved in copiousness and distinctness," implying that more and different words would assist in making possible the distinctions in meaning required by philosophers, and that better definitions of existing words would

serve a similar purpose. To these suggestions he adds:

that improvements in knowledge and in language may go hand in hand and facilitate each other. But I fear the imperfections of language can never be perfectly remedied while our knowledge is imperfect.

However this may be, it is evident that the imperfections of language, and much more the abuse of it, are the occasion of many errors; and that in many disputes which have engaged learned men, the difference has been partly, and in some wholly, about the meaning of words. 241

Certainly, such suggestions regarding the clarification of meanings of words would make semanticists happy, but basically Reid's suggestions amount to using existing words more distinctly, supplementing our vocabulary, and thus making each word more precise. This would also augment and perfect current knowledge about all subjects. By expanding his knowledge man is able to talk about all subjects more precisely, since misconceptions are eliminated; this would make possible more accurate use of language in these matters. When a man understands the causes of, for example, fertility and reproduction, he no longer employs the term spirit to explain the phenomenon. Significantly, Reid acknowledges the importance of the improvement of language in any field of endeavor outside those of the common man, who, in Reid's opinion, does quite well with the language which is made for him.

Summary

Reid's concept of style involves the division of language into two kinds, that comprised of natural signs whose

241 Ibid., p. 474.
meanings are known to man without his learning them, and artificial signs (primarily words) whose meanings are derived by agreements among men. Natural signs include vocal modulations and movements of parts of the body, and the meanings of these are understood by men and animals alike by means of some mysterious innate ability. Artificial signs of language include words, of course, and presumably any movements of the body and vocal modulations whose meanings are not understood immediately but must be learned. The meanings of natural signs should be studied by the rhetorician because such knowledge enhances oral communication, making it more virile, more powerful and expressive. Like the scientist who studies phenomena in nature, the rhetorician studies the natural signs of language in order to discover the laws governing their use and to facilitate his employing them in communication. Reid sees discourse which employs the natural signs of language as more animated, because using natural signs implies the use of many muscles not employed when the orator communicates with artificial signs alone. Artificial signs speak to the understanding, but natural signs are more effective in persuasive and inspirational discourse because they address the passions, the will, and the affections of the auditors. Artificial language, in Reid's view, is one factor which distinguishes man from the brutes, and although it is admirable on that score, it is not to be used to the exclusion of natural language.

When Reid discusses matters pertaining to aesthetics
he mentions several qualities of a good style; he urges that excellence in anything invariably inspires the imagination; he explains that certain things are tasteful because they are either novel, grand, or beautiful, or have some combination of these qualities. He views the orator as inseparable from his oration, and emphasizes that the grand character of the orator, his wisdom, power, and goodness, as well as the grand subject on which he speaks, contributes to the "irresistible" style. Reid's comments on the beauty of sound and "the noblest part of beauty," grace, or movement of some part of the body, strongly suggest the importance of developing all the features of the voice and gestures to the most pleasing degree. Novelty, grandeur, and beauty in discourse have the ability to captivate and motivate the auditor, and for this reason merit the consideration of one interested in rhetorical and communication theory.

Reid's cursory analysis of the grammatical elements of active and passive verbs may best be understood in conjunction with his remarks on delivery, in which he advocates a vigorous style of delivery characterized by energy and force; for Reid, active verbs establish the existence of man's notion of active power. The use of these active verbs can imbue the orator's language with this necessary energy and force, and makes it better able to motivate auditors by appealing to their emotions and by raising vivid images in their minds. Reid also admires frugality in language, suggesting that the communicator should not overextend the num-
ber of tenses and moods of verbs in his discourse. Though the problem of too many tenses or moods is seemingly an imaginary one, Reid's warning to observe the law of parsimony is one which deserves mention. Of more importance is Reid's concern with precise definition. He suggests that terms should be employed in discourse according to the manner dictated by their universal use. Though he does not solve the difficulties in such a rule, Reid does make his intention clear that precise definitions of terms would immediately solve many disputes. By making the meanings of terms more distinct and by increasing the number of terms available for use, man can improve his language and make it a more useful tool to serve his ends. Reid's treatment of style includes the concept that language, by its very nature, is to serve the purposes of common usage; this concept permeates and influences all his writing about language. He believes that the quality of thought is improved only as the quality of language is improved, and thus it behooves the rhetor to augment his vocabulary and to be clear and distinct in his utterances.

V. Memory

Rhetoricians have been interested in the phenomenon of memory from the time of the earliest writings about rhetoric, though the subject has not enjoyed so prestigious a place in rhetorical writing as topics such as logic and ethics. Cicero considers an efficient memory a qualifica-
tion of the good orator, since a good orator must be able to retain what he has been taught. In De Partitione Oratoria Cicero mentions memory "which is in a manner the twin sister of written script, and is very similar to it in a dissimilar field." He says that ". . . just as script consists of marks indicating letters and of the material on which those marks are imprinted, so the structure of memory, like a wax tablet, employs 'topics,' and in these stores images which correspond to the letter in written script." According to Cicero, topics are "Pigeonholes in which arguments are stored." The memory stores arguments under certain categories where they can be retrieved or revived when needed in a speech, and Cicero likens these categories or topics to the printed letters of written speech, the structure of the memory itself to a wax tablet on which impressions are made. Perhaps the memory might be made more acute by the use of mnemonic devices, like a pigeonhole, in which arguments may be categorized and stored until time for recall. At any rate, to the ancients memory was a practical tool of the orator.

Reid however does not consider the subject of memory specifically as a tool of the orator, but rather as an intellectual power of the mind along with conception.

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242 Cicero, De Oratore, I, i, 28, 89.
244 Ibid., 2, 313.
abstraction, judgment, reasoning, and taste. It is an innate faculty which appears early in man's development, shortly after the appearance of the senses. Memory presupposes the memory of something, just as perception presupposes the perception of something, and Reid adds that "it is by memory that we have an immediate knowledge of things past." He considers the nature of the process of memory in the following excerpt:

When we perceive an object by our senses, there is, first, some impression made by the object upon the organ of sense, either immediately, or by means of some medium. By this, an impression is made upon the nerves and brain, in consequence of which we feel some sensation, and that sensation is attended by that conception and belief of the external object which we call perception. These operations are so connected in our constitution, that it is difficult to disjoin them in our conceptions, and to attend to each without confounding it with the others. But, in the operations of memory, we are free from all ambiguity.

Memory is always accompanied with the belief of that which we remember, as perception is accompanied with the belief of that which we perceive, and consciousness with the belief of that whereof we are conscious. Perhaps in infancy, or in a disorder of mind, things remembered may be confounded with those which are merely imagined; but in mature years, and in a sound state of mind, every man feels that he must believe what he distinctly remembers, though he can give no other reason of his belief, but that he remembers the thing distinctly; whereas, when he merely imagines a thing ever so distinctly, he has no belief of it upon that account. 245

According to Reid, then, memory comes about first by an impression being made upon our sense organs, which in turn bring about an impression upon the nerves and brain. At this point we are aware of some sensation, which is percep-

When we remember, we receive an immediate impression of the thing remembered just as we receive an immediate impression of a thing perceived. Reid's description, however, does not completely explain memory because it stops with the awareness of sensation. Though Reid does not say so, this sensation must in some way become rather permanently impressed to allow for recall at a later time; Reid does not explain how recall is possible.

Accompanying memory of an event is the simultaneous conviction that such an event did occur and that it is not imagined. This necessary conviction makes memory important as a kind of evidence, as was discussed earlier in this chapter. Reid concedes that he cannot explain the necessity of this conviction, but he is certain that unless the mind is immature or deranged it does indeed accompany memory of an event. He explains in the following manner:

When I believe that I washed my hands and face this morning, there appears no necessity in the truth of this proposition. It might be, or it might not be. A man may distinctly conceive it without believing it at all. How then do I come to believe it? I remember it distinctly. This is all I can say. This remembrance is an act of my mind. Is it impossible that this act should be, if the event had not happened? I confess I do not see any necessary connection, then I think that belief which we have of what we remember will be fairly accounted for; but, if this cannot be done, that belief is unaccountable, and we can say no more but that it is the result of our constitution.

Reid reasons that because no necessity can be found between

\[246\text{Above, pp. 158-59.}\]

\[247\text{Reid, Intellectual Powers, p. 341.}\]
the memory of an event and the simultaneous conviction of its occurrence, it must be the result of our constitution. Man believes the testimony of his memory, and he cannot do otherwise.

Reid's theory of memory, while incomplete, is not foreign to eighteenth-century epistemology. His description of the manner in which an impression is made upon the nerves and the brain is reminiscent of Locke's notion of how the mind comes to be furnished with ideas.

Clearly, however, Reid's interest in memory is relegated to its empirical implications as a source of knowledge, and it does not extend to the rhetorical significance of the subject. How the intellectual phenomenon of memory operates is of greater importance to Reid than its practical application as a canon of the orator's art. The rhetorician must concern himself not only with the application of memory in discourse, but also in the function of this mental phenomenon. In this regard Reid's thought is of historical interest.

VI. Speech and Hearing

In scattered references Reid mentions several miscellaneous topics which are relevant to the study of communication and particularly to the physiological study of speech and hearing. In character with his empiricistic bent, Reid investigates the sense of taste, inspecting the oral cavity and seeking to identify the functions of some of its parts.
He also shows an interest in hearing and the nature of sound, and makes in one place a brief mention of stammering. There is also some evidence that Reid was interested in the nature of dialect.

The Mouth

When Reid takes up the topic of tasting, he only incidentally discusses several parts of the oral structure which are of interest to the study of the physiology of speech production. As is evident from his assertions about the sense of taste, research into the nature and function of the oral cavity was in its infancy. Reid writes:

It is probable that everything that affects the taste is, in some degree, soluble in the saliva. It is not conceivable how anything should enter readily, and of its own accord, as it were, into the pores of the tongue, palate, and fauces, unless it had some chemical affinity to that liquor with which these pores are always replete. It is, therefore, an admirable contrivance of nature, that the organs of taste should always be moist with the liquor which is so universal a menstruum, and which deserves to be examined more than it hath been hitherto, both in that capacity, and as a medical unguent. Nature teaches dogs, and other animals to use it in this last way; and its subserviency both to taste and digestion shews its efficacy in the former.248

Reid believes that the sense of taste takes place in the pores of the palate, tongue, and fauces. There is no evidence of his investigation of the tissues of the mouth microscopically. Perhaps for this reason Reid does not mention the taste buds and their locations, though he clearly asserts that taste takes place in parts of the mouth other than the

248 Reid, Inquiry, p. 115.
tongue. He also excludes discussion of the number of tastes of which man is capable. Commendable is Reid's encouragement of research into the solvent and medicinal properties of saliva.

Reid does not mention the tongue, palate, and fauces in relation to their articulatory functions, but only as he believes them to relate to taste. His cursory examination of the oral cavity is mentioned here, however, because it exemplifies the interest of an eighteenth-century empiricist in the nature of a part of the speech-making mechanism. This implied interest in first-hand investigation of the oral cavity, for instance, is an isolated case of the kind of investigations which would eventually lead to a more widespread interest in the workings of the vocal apparatus.

Hearing

Reid's interest in hearing is motivated by the same devotion to empirical investigation which stimulated his interest in taste, but his discussion of hearing is slightly more complete than that of the mouth. Reid seeks to understand the functions of the body which have relation to the mental faculties. The senses are, of course, the means by which the mind comes to know the external world, and, therefore, they hold great interest for Reid.

His concept of the nature and variety of sounds is of concern to those who study communication at its fundamental levels. About these topics Reid writes:
Sounds have probably no less variety of modulations, than either tastes or odours. For, first, sounds differ in tone. The ear is capable of perceiving four or five hundred variations of tone in sound, and probably as many different degrees of strength; by combining these, we have about twenty thousand simple sounds that differ either in tone, or strength, supposing every tone to be perfect. But it is to be observed, that to make a perfect tone, a great many undulations of elastic air are required, which must all be of equal duration and extent, and follow one another with perfect regularity; and each undulation must be made up of the advance and recoil of innumerable particles of elastic air, whose motions are all uniform in direction, force, and time. Hence we may easily conceive a prodigious variety in the same tone, arising from irregularities of it, occasioned by the constitution of the ear itself, upon which the impression is made.

Because Reid does not indicate whether he did experiments which led him to his conclusions about the nature and variety of sound, we might assume that he cites the result of research done by someone else. He does not reveal his source, however, possibly because the acoustic theory of particle vibration in an elastic medium was well understood in the scholarly community at the time of his writing.

His interest in the variety of sounds perceptible to the human being seems almost wholly directed at the awesome ability of man to detect such a large number of sounds, and not at a thorough description of how that variety occurs. He relates the complexity of the physical phenomenon of sound not to point up the difficulty of producing such sound but presumably to give example of the extent of man's ability to perceive the variety.

\[2^{49}\text{Ibid.}, \text{ pp. 116-17.}\]
Generally Reid's concepts of pitch, quality, and loudness seem rather well developed, though he does not employ terms such as frequency, resonance, or amplitude to describe the phenomena. Rather he speaks of the variety of sounds produced by "irregularities" of a tone brought about the composition of the vibrating body, its shape, "situation," and the "manner of striking the sonorous body." While some of his nomenclature is obscure, Reid implies his understanding of resonance which produces the difference in the sounds of several human voices emitting a sound at the same pitch. Reid writes:

Nay if twenty human voices sound the same note, and with equal strength, there will still be some difference. The same voice while it retains its proper distinctions, may yet be varied many ways, by sickness or health, youth or age, leanness or fatness, good or bad humour. Here he appears to have in mind the ways in which vocal resonance, and perhaps pitch and loudness, are altered by the factors he mentions. Most vague, however, is the meaning of his phrase "good and bad humour," which somehow makes a difference in the voice. Supposedly Reid simply means that the quality of vocal sound in somehow altered by the mental state of the speaker, but of course he is not specific about how he understands this to occur.

Reid believes that the ability to detect the many varieties of sounds is given to man for the purpose of determining the place and nature of things in the external world. He bases this belief on the notion that no power is

\[\text{ibid.}, \ p. 117.\]
given to man in vain.\textsuperscript{251} Both the nature and the location of things making sounds are learned by experience, according to the Scottish philosopher. He does not believe men to have an innate ability to distinguish the direction of a sound; he states, "That such a noise is in the street, such another in the room above me; that this a knock at the door, that a person walking up stairs—is probably learnt by experience."\textsuperscript{252}

It seems reasonable that the precise source of a sound may be learned by experience, but that the direction from which a sound comes must also be learned has certain faults. If a man hears a strange whistling noise he may not know whether it is made by man or bird, for example, but he may be able to detect the direction from which it comes without prior knowledge of the location of the man or bird. Why Reid fails to consider this fact, or at least to recommend research in this direction, is not clear in the light of his professed interest in empirical evidence.

Dialect and Stammering

Reid also indicates an interest in dialect and speech disorders, though neither of these topics receives more than the most cursory mention. In discussing instinct as a mechanical principle of action, Reid considers the tendency of man to imitate what he approves. An example of this inclination is the manner in which man learns the dialect of a

\textsuperscript{251}Reid, \textit{Active Powers}, p. 600.

\textsuperscript{252}Reid, \textit{Inquiry}, p. 117.
region foreign to him. Reid writes:

Let an Englishman, of middle age, take up residence in Edinburgh or Glasgow; although he has not the least intention to use the Scots dialect, but a firm resolution to preserve his own pure and unmixed, he will find it very difficult to make good his intention. He will, in a course of years, fall insensibly, and without intention, into the tone and accent, and even into the words and phrases of those he converses with; and nothing can preserve him from this, but a strong disgust to every Scotticism, which perhaps may overcome the natural instinct.

It is commonly thought that children often learn to stammer by imitation; yet I believe no person ever desired or willed to learn that quality.

I apprehend that instinctive imitation has no small influence in forming the peculiarities of provincial dialects, the peculiarities of voice, gesture, and manner peculiar to different ranks and different professions; and perhaps even in forming national characters and the human character in general.253

According to Reid, then, men learn dialects because of their imitative instinct. They can do little to prevent their unconscious imitation of the "tone and accent," if not the "words and phrases," peculiar to those with whom they associate, unless they have the most intense emotional aversion to them. How one may go about intentionally changing his own dialect is not perfectly clear in Reid's account of dialect. Supposedly, in addition to a desire to acquire a new dialect, one might be assisted by a strong aversion to his old dialect.

Equally brief is Reid's treatment of certain characteristic peculiarities of voice, gesture, and manner among members of particular families. Reid supposedly believes his reader to understand his meaning, and therefore fails to

253Reid, Active Powers, p. 548.
amplify the notion. He might have in mind that some children learn from their parents certain peculiar movements of the hands and arms, or certain facial or bodily positions which convey meaning to all who view them but which are common to that family alone. The intended meaning, however, remains obscure as do the means by which the instinctive imitation and learning of dialect and gesture influence the formation of "national character and human character in general."

Reid's remark on stammering is indeed terse. He does not endorse the theory that children learn to stammer by imitation, but merely reports that there are those who hold such a theory. He does not state what he includes under the defect of stammering. Whether one might avoid or cure such a disorder by a strong emotional aversion to it, as in the case of dialect, is equally unclear. While his remark is brief, however, it indicates his interest in and knowledge of such matters, though it does not provide much information about the extent of either.

Summary

The brevity of Reid's comments on the nature of the oral cavity, hearing, dialect, and stammering indicates only an incidental interest in these matters. His remarks are considered here primarily because of their historical value as preliminary investigations in matters of speech science and linguistics, and also because they round out this description of Reid's communication theory. They show his
interest in communication, however slight at times, extended widely.
CHAPTER V

REID'S RELATION TO HIS CONTEMPORARIES

A report of Thomas Reid's theory of communication, unaugmented by any attempt to analyze the possible or probable influence of it, is an exercise in irrelevance. Reid, of course, never thought of himself as a rhetorician, and he never demonstrated an intent to include a comprehensive communication theory into the corpus of his work. This theory of communication is incidental to his systematic philosophy and not an end in itself. Reid's philosophy, however, was an important factor in eighteenth-century thought, and the historian and critic can hardly imagine that it was of no consequence in directing the evolution of rhetoric and communication theory in the century of enlightenment. The impact of Reid's thought and its relation to other thought on communication is an indispensable part of a study of this kind, because a philosopher of his calibre did not produce his work in a vacuum. As the prevailing thought of the century of enlightenment influenced Reid's philosophy, Reid's thought, in turn, molded to some extent the thought of his contemporaries.

This chapter is an examination of the relation between Thomas Reid's thought on communication and that of the principal rhetoricians of the eighteenth century, Campbell, Blair, Whately, Priestley, Kames, Adam Smith, Thomas Sheridan, and Edward T. Channing.
I. Definition

The influence of one man upon another is an elusive phenomenon. The critic finds it always difficult and thus dangerous to assert a causal relation between two systems of thought. Recognizing his obligation to assert only what is certain, he must nevertheless report the correlation between the ideas of two men.

At times, two or more men develop the same idea at the same time, making the assignation of the idea to one man or one school most difficult. For example, the apparent pessimism about mankind which emerged after the two great world wars and appeared in the writings of philosophers and literarians can hardly be attributed to a single influence, much less to a single man. Likewise the origin of the prevailing affinity of many eighteenth-century scholars for empiricism is difficult to pinpoint.

For these reasons this chapter will often deal with points of correspondence between Reid's thought and that of his peers who wrote on communication, and with the possibility or probability of Reid's influence upon them. Where a writer cites Reid as a source, of course, this citation will be noted, but the reader must become the ultimate judge of causal influence between Reid and writers on communication and rhetorical theory of his time.

II. Reid and Campbell

Of all the men who wrote in Reid's era, probably the
closest relationship exists between Reid and George Campbell (1719-1796). Both men helped to found the Aberdeen Philosophical Society, where they nurtured and shared their ideas for many years,¹ and both lived and produced a considerable amount of their writing at Aberdeen while associated with the university.² Reid indicates a rather close relationship with Campbell in a letter to David Hume, saying: "Your [Hume's] judgment of my style, indeed, gives me great consolation, as I was very diffident of myself in regard to English, and have been indebted to Drs [George] Campbell and [Alexander] Gerard for many corrections of that kind."³ Presumably Reid means that Campbell assisted him in editing his manuscripts. This suggests that Campbell was well acquainted with Reid’s work on a firsthand basis, not only from the discourses and discussions at meetings of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society but also from close scrutiny of his writings. Given that these two men were devoted to the examination of ideas, and postulating that scholars tend to influence other scholars, we might expect to find some agree—

¹Aberdeen Philosophical Society Minutes, 1758-1771, Aberdeen University Library, MS 539 (on microfilm in the library of the State University of Iowa), passim.


ment between the thought of Campbell and Reid.

Intuitive Evidence

Agreement does exist between Campbell and Reid in one of the most important areas of Campbell's thought, his discussion of evidence in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776). Evidence is important as a source of knowledge, and Campbell treats it in a fashion commensurate with its epistemological importance, avoiding prescriptions to the orator about how to use evidence in discourse. According to Campbell there are two kinds of evidence, intuitive and deductive. He defines each in the following passage:

Logical truth consisteth in the conformity of our conceptions to their archetypes in the nature of things. This conformity is perceived by the mind, either immediately on a bare attention to the ideas under review, or mediately by a comparison of these with other related ideas. Evidence of the former kind is called intuitive; of the latter, deductive.\(^4\)

The kinds of intuitive evidence are mathematical axioms, consciousness, and common sense, while the kinds of deductive evidence are demonstrative and moral.\(^5\)

These sources of evidence are similar to those mentioned by Reid. Reid endorses all of Campbell's sources of evidence and adds some of his own. In *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* he includes a discussion of the evidence of sense, memory, consciousness, testimony, axioms, axioms,

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\(^5\)Ibid., pp. 35-43.
and reasoning. Campbell's notion of the evidence of axioms is like Reid's except that Campbell, of course, discusses it in somewhat more detail. Reid's treatment of evidence is more concerned with a comparison of the evidence of sense, or common sense, than with the other sources of evidence. Campbell treats each separately and in detail.

Evidence of Axioms.—Both Campbell and Reid understand that an axiom, like a common sense truth, is known to be true immediately upon understanding it. Campbell writes that axioms "have in like manner that original and intrinsic evidence, which makes them, as soon as the terms are understood, to be perceived intuitively," and Reid compares axioms to common sense truths in the following manner:

... if the word axiom be put to signify every truth which is known immediately, without being deduced from any antecedent truth, then the existence of the objects of sense may be called an axiom; for my senses give me an immediate conviction of what is commonly called an axiom.

Clearly Campbell and Reid define axiomatic evidence similarly. An axiom stating that the whole is greater than a part, for example, would, according to Reid and Campbell, immediately convict the auditor of its truth upon being understood.

Evidence of consciousness.—The correlation in the

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7 Campbell, p. 36.

thought of Campbell and Reid extends into their treatment of the kind of evidence called consciousness. Campbell's definition of consciousness is operational. He says that from the evidence of consciousness "... every man derives the perfect assurance that he hath of his own existence. Nor is he only in this way assured that he exists, but that he thinks that he feels, that he sees, that he hears, and the like." For Reid, consciousness is "that immediate knowledge which we have of our present thoughts and purposes, and, in general, of all the present operations of our minds." The evidence of consciousness is understood similarly by both Campbell and Reid; for both, in convicts one of the truth of its propositions immediately, and for both it deals with the processes of the mind, processes which relate to one's knowledge of his own existence, his thoughts, and his feelings.

Common sense.—The most outstanding feature of Reid's thought, however, is his notion of common sense, and it is this kind of intuitive evidence to which Campbell gives most of his attention. As the main advocate of common sense philosophy, Reid must be acknowledged as the fountainhead from which springs any interpretation Campbell gives to common sense as a kind of evidence. Indeed, Campbell acknowledges his indebtedness to Reid as the author of the most articulate expression of this doctrine. In his foot-

9Campbell, p. 37.
10Reid, Intellectual Powers, p. 222.
Campbell says that he uses the term common sense in a more limited manner than it has previously been used, and he seems to mean by this that he considers common sense only as a source of evidence and that he intends to minimize its epistemological significance.

Campbell holds Reid's doctrine of common sense in such high regard that he devotes a lengthy footnote to its defense against the attack of Reid's detractor, Joseph Priestley. According to Campbell, common sense is an innate source of knowledge in all men, except perhaps the mentally ill and the half-witted. While Reid often tends to establish the existence of common sense first principles by asserting the universality of their acceptance and use among men, Campbell goes about it in a more logical fashion, arguing that

All reasoning necessarily supposes that there are certain principles in which we must acquiesce, and beyond which we cannot go—principles clearly discernible by their own light, which can derive no additional evidence from anything besides. On the contrary supposition, the investigation of truth would be an endless and a fruitless task; we should be eternally proving, whilst nothing could ever be proved; because by hypothesis, we could never ascend to premises which require no proof.

All argument is based on some propositions believed self-evident. Without these, no argument could exist, and no truth could be known. Campbell, like Reid, believes that these

11 Campbell, p. 38n. Like Reid, Campbell acknowledges that the French Jesuit philosopher, Father Buffier, treated common sense and its importance to logic in his First Principles, and the Origin of Our Opinions (1732).

12 Ibid., p. 42.
self-evident first principles on which all other knowledge is based are common sense notions.

Campbell does not appear to alter Reid's concept of common sense, but only to limit it to its use as evidence. Because common sense first principles appear true to the mind immediately upon being understood, they are appealing to Campbell as a source of evidence in rhetorical argument. For both Reid and Campbell, common sense propositions are, upon being understood, able to cause the auditor to give his assent to them. Reid says of all forms of evidence that "... they are fitted by Nature to produce belief in the human mind, some of them in the highest degree, which we call certainty, others in various degrees according to circumstances," and though he never says so explicitly, Campbell seems to concur in this. When a proposition is really one of common sense, it is by definition true, and the mind has an innate affinity for it.

Memory.—Campbell includes memory as another kind of intuitive evidence, though he does not separate it from common sense. Reid mentions memory as a kind of evidence, and Campbell takes it up in his discussion of common sense. For the most part he maintains Reid's concept of this particular kind of evidence. Campbell distinguishes the evidence of memory from that of consciousness and common sense as Reid does, insisting that the evidence of consciousness

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testifies to the fact that we think, feel, see, and receive sensations from the other senses; consciousness gives evidence only of one's "own present feelings, whose essence consists in being felt, and of which I am at present conscious."\textsuperscript{14} The emphasis here is upon the term \textit{present feelings}, as it is when Reid declares that the term \textit{consciousness} is used to "signify that immediate knowledge which we have of our present thoughts and purposes, and, in general, of all the present operations of our minds."\textsuperscript{15} By the evidence of consciousness, according to Campbell, we have knowledge that our memory reports certain things, but in addition the evidence of memory convicts man of the fact that such things that he remembers did in fact happen in the past. Explicating this Campbell writes: "... I am certain that things happened heretofore at such a time, in the precise manner in which I now remember that they then happened."\textsuperscript{16}

Campbell, however, places a qualification on the credibility of the evidence of memory which Reid does not recognize. He asserts that while evidence of sense and consciousness may provide certainty in all instances, memory is not always accompanied with this full conviction. He writes:

At the same time it is evident, that remembrance is not always accompanied with this full conviction. To des-

\textsuperscript{14}Campbell, p. 41.

\textsuperscript{15}Reid, \textit{Intellectual Powers}, p. 222.

\textsuperscript{16}Campbell, p. 41.
cribe, in words, the difference between those lively signatures of memory, which command an unlimited assent, and those fainter traces which raise opinion only, or even doubt, is perhaps impracticable; but no man stands in need of such assistance to enable him in fact to distinguish them, for the direction of his own judgment and conduct. Some, may imagine that it is from experience we come to know what faith in every case is due to memory. But it will appear more fully afterwards, that unless we had implicitly relied on the distinct and vivid informations of that faculty, we could not have moved a step towards the acquisition of experience. It must, however, be admitted, that experience is of use in assisting us to judge concerning the more languid and confused suggestions of memory; or, to speak more properly, concerning the reality of those things, of which we ourselves are doubtful whether we remember them or not.17

There are, then, certain less vivid memories which call for man to suspend his conviction about their truth, but in the largest number of instances, man is compelled by necessity to rely implicitly upon his vivid memories in order for the term experience to have any meaning. Indeed experience would be impossible for man were it not that he can rely on his memory to report past happenings truthfully.

Reid's failure to qualify his assertion of the reliability of memory is probably due to the brevity with which he treats the subject. Campbell's discussion of memory is more extensive than Reid's even though Campbell treats the topic somewhat incidentally under the heading of common sense. Reid might possibly have consented to Campbell's qualification concerning the relative vividness and distinctness of memories, since Campbell's limitation on the credibility of memory as evidence seems faithful in its descrip-

17 Ibid.
tion of the way in which men regard their memories in the common affairs of life. Campbell's use of the terms vivid and distinct are reminiscent of Hume, but he does not acknowledge Hume for them.

**Deductive Evidence.**

In addition to intuitive evidence, Campbell distinguishes another kind of evidence which he calls deductive. Deductive evidence derives from two sources:

... from the invariable properties or relations of general ideas; or from the actual, though perhaps variable connexions subsisting among things. The former we call demonstrative, the latter moral. Demonstration is built on pure intellection [perception], and consisteth in an uninterrupted series of axioms.18

Defining moral evidence, Campbell writes:

Moral evidence is founded on the principles we have found from consciousness and common sense, improved by experience; and as it proceeds on this general presumption or moral axiom, that the course of nature in time to come will be similar to what it hath been hitherto, it decides, in regard to particulars, concerning the future from the past, and concerning the things unknown from things familiar to us.19

**Differences between demonstrative and moral evidence.**—The difference between demonstrative and moral evidence, Campbell explains, lies in several factors. The first is their subject matter. Demonstrative evidence deals with "abstract independent truth, or the unchangeable and necessary relations of ideas," while moral evidence treats "the real but often changeable and contingent connexions that subsist among things actually existing."20

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18Ibid., p. 43. 19Ibid. 20Ibid.
difference has to do with the degree of certainty accruing to conclusions drawn from each kind of evidence. "... Moral evidence admits degrees, demonstration doth not," explains Campbell.21 There are degrees of probability in conclusions drawn from moral evidence, while the certainty of a conclusion drawn from demonstrative evidence is absolute. A third difference which Campbell sees is that in demonstrative evidence "... there never can be any contrariety of proofs; in the other [moral evidence], there not only may be, but almost always is."22 For instance a contrary proof to such a statement as "The cube of two is the half of sixteen,"23 drawn from demonstrative evidence, is absurd, but a contrary proof to a conclusion such as "Cae­sar overcame Pompey,"24 drawn from moral evidence, might be perfectly plausible. Because demonstrative proof deals with certainty, when a contrary proof is offered in such a case, one argument must be fallacious.

Discussing another difference, Campbell writes:

The fourth and last difference I shall observe is, that scientific evidence is simple, consisting of only one coherent series, every part of which depends on the preceding, and, as it were, suspends the following: moral evidence is generally complicated, being in relatively a bundle of independent proofs. The longest demonstration is but one uniform chain, the links whereof, taken severally, are not to be regarded as so many arguments, and consequently when thus taken, they conclude nothing; but taken together, and in their proper order, they form one argument, which is perfectly conclusive. It is true, the same theorem may be demonstrable in different ways, and by different mediums;

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21 Ibid., p. 44. 22 Ibid. 23 Ibid. 24 Ibid.
but as a single demonstration, clearly understood, commands the fullest conviction, every other is superfluous.\textsuperscript{25} He goes on to say that "In moral reasoning, on the contrary, there is often a combination of many distinct topics of argument, no way dependent on one another."\textsuperscript{26} One demonstrative proof offers certainty of its conclusion, but any additional moral proofs which may augment the previous ones serve to increase the probability of the conclusion.

Campbell's understanding of demonstrative and moral evidence is quite similar to what Reid calls demonstrative and probable reasoning. Perhaps somewhat more concisely than Campbell, Reid discusses the differences between these two kinds of reasoning in the following manner:

The most remarkable distinction of reasonings is, that some are probable, others demonstrative.

In every step of demonstrative reasoning, the inference is necessary, and we perceive it to be impossible that the conclusion should not follow from the premises. In probable reasoning, the connection between the premises and the conclusion is not necessary, nor do we perceive it to be impossible that the first should be true while the last is false.

Hence, demonstrative reasoning has no degrees, nor can one demonstration be stronger than another, though, in relation to our faculties, one may be more easily comprehended than another. Every demonstration gives equal strength to the conclusion, and leaves no possibility of its being false.

It was, I think, the opinion of all the ancients, that demonstrative reasoning can be applied only to truths that are necessary, and not to those that are contingent. In this, I believe, they judged right. Of all created things, the existence, the attributes, and, consequently, the relations resulting from those attributes, are contingent. They depend upon the will and power of Him who made them. These are matters of fact, and admit not of demonstration.

The field of demonstrative reasoning, therefore, is

\textsuperscript{25}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 45. \textsuperscript{26}\textit{Ibid.}
the various relations of things abstract, that is, of things which we conceive, without regard to their existence. Of these, as they are conceived by the mind, and are nothing but what they are conceived to be, we may have a clear and adequate comprehension. Their relations and attributes are necessary and immutable. They are the things to which the Pythagoreans and Platonists gave the name of ideas. I would beg leave to borrow this meaning of the word idea from the ancient philosophers, and then I must agree with them, that ideas are the only objects about which we can reason demonstratively.²⁷

In words remarkably like Campbell’s, Reid offers his definition of demonstrative and probable reasoning. He states that in probable reasoning there is only a degree of probability that the conclusion is true, while in demonstrative reasoning the inference of the conclusion is certain and necessary. In probable reasoning the premises may be quite true and the conclusion false, while in demonstrative reasoning a true conclusion follows necessarily from true premises. Also like Campbell, Reid believes demonstrative reasoning to deal with immutable relationships among ideas; he explains:

The strength of probable reasoning, for the most part, depends not upon any one argument, but upon many, which unite their force, and lead to the same conclusion. Any one of them by itself would be insufficient to convince; but the whole taken together may have a force that is irresistible, so that to desire more evidence would be absurd.²⁸

In other words, probable evidence, or moral evidence as Campbell calls it, yields conclusions that have only a degree of certainty. Probable evidence is unlike demonstrative-

²⁸ Ibid., p. 482.
tive evidence, which yields conclusions having the highest
degree of certainty.

In brief, Campbell's notion of deductive evidence
shares a similarity with Reid's concept of the divisions of
reasoning. Reid does not include a category of moral evi-
dence, of course, but his term probable reasoning denotes
the same thing and conforms to the same limitations which
Campbell places upon this kind of evidence.

Campbell's esteem for moral evidence.—Though his
remarks about the utility of demonstrative evidence are not
entirely pejorative, Campbell does not find it nearly so
applicable to rhetorical communication as moral evidence.
He says of demonstrative evidence:

Here rhetoric, it must be acknowledged, hath little to
do. Simplicity of diction, and precision in arrangement,
whence results perspicuity, are, as was observed already,
all the requisites. The proper province of rhetoric is
the second, or moral evidence; for to the second belong
all decisions concerning fact, and things without us.29

In another section of his rhetoric, Campbell explains what
he means when he insists that "simplicity of diction, and
precision in arrangement" suffice in demonstrative discourse.
He says regarding the address to the understanding:

There is indeed one kind of address to the under-
standing, and only one, which, it may not be improper to
observe, disdains all assistance whatever from the
fancy. The address I mean is mathematical demonstration.
As this does not, like moral reasoning, admit degrees of
evidence, its perfection, in point of eloquence, if so
uncommon an application of the term may be allowed, con-
sists of perspicuity. Perspicuity here results entirely

29Campbell, p. 43.
from propriety and simplicity of diction, and from accuracy of method, where the mind is regularly, step by step, conducted forwards in the same track, the attention in no way diverted, nothing left to be supplied, no one unnecessary word or idea introduced. On the contrary, an harangue framed for affecting the hearts or influencing the resolves of an assembly, needs greatly the assistance both of intellect and imagination.  

Demonstrative evidence, as Campbell understands its function, speaks to the faculty of understanding alone, and such an address to the understanding serves no effect except to instruct the auditors. The orator might use such evidence "to dispel ignorance or to vanquish error," but according to Campbell these ends are not those most common to rhetorical communication. Rhetoric deals more often in moral evidence, since this kind of evidence yields probable conclusions of fact about affairs in the external world.

One imagines that Campbell envisions the rhetor in a court of law or in a legislative hall continually dealing with probable truth, the deliberative situation constantly forcing him to argue the wisdom of this or that course of action in the future, or the forensic situation calling on him to deal with the probability of the truth of an occurrence in the past. Each of these rhetorical situations necessarily has the communicator employing moral evidence and drawing probable conclusions.

Important, however, is the fact that Campbell finds moral reasoning more attractive for his purposes than demon-

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30 Ibid., p. 2. 31 Ibid.
strative reasoning. Though not for precisely the same reasons, Reid also finds the utility of demonstrative reasoning somewhat wanting. First, Reid thinks that there are other means of teaching men to reason besides the study of logic; there is no necessary connection between logic and reasoning. One might learn to reason as well by the study of mathematics, jurisprudence, or politics as by logic. Second, the progress of knowledge has actually been retarded by strict devotion to the syllogistic method of reasoning, and indeed slavish devotion to the syllogism has caused a factioning of the intellectual community which has severely hampered the advance of knowledge, in Reid's opinion. For whatever reasons, Reid finds induction, the province of probable reasoning, far better adapted to the discovery of truth and the expansion of knowledge than demonstrative reasoning.

Campbell regards the utility of the syllogism as far less than that of moral argument. He states that he is convinced by Locke that the syllogism is of more use "to display the ingenuity of the inventor, and to exercise the fluency of the learner, than to assist the diligent inquirer in his researches after truth."

Briefly, then, Reid and Campbell agree as to the

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33 Ibid., pp. 701, 711-12. 34 Campbell, p. 62.
general divisions of what Campbell calls deductive evidence into demonstrative and moral (probable) types. They also agree in their disdain for demonstrative reasoning, Campbell because he does not find it well adapted to rhetorical discourse and Reid because it is inherently averse to the progress of knowledge and the discovery of truth.

Kinds of moral reasoning.---In addition to the similarities between Campbell and Reid already cited, the two men also agree on another point regarding evidence. Campbell discusses the kinds of moral evidence at length, listing the "three tribes, experience, analogy, and testimony," and a fourth category, "calculations concerning chances."^35

Experience, of course, is of great interest to empiricistic philosophy, and Campbell does not fail to pay it due regard as the first division of moral reasoning. Experience is the kind of evidence that testifies to men of the truth of some things, and this testimony in the mind of man is related to the "tendency of the mind to associate ideas under the notion of causes, effects, or adjuncts."^36 For instance, Campbell says that it is by experience that we acquiesce to the truth of a proposition such as the one stating "that iron thrown into the river will sink, [and] that deal [a plank of wood] will float."^37 Some evidence from experience yields certainty about the truth of the con-

^35 Ibid., p. 49.  ^36 Ibid., p. 50.  ^37 Ibid.
clusion, while other evidence from experience yields only probable knowledge.38

Explaining the function of experience as a kind of moral evidence, Campbell writes: "Further, let it be remembered, that by experience we not only decide concerning the future from the past, but concerning things common from things familiar which resemble them."39 In other words, we make decisions regarding the nature of future events on the basis of our past experience with like circumstances. Oraftors in legislative halls must often propose a course of action for the future based on the past. Legislators are perhaps prone to argue that a treaty with the Soviet Union should not be ratified because of the experience of having similar treaties broken by that country on past occasions. In like manner, it is from our experience with the familiar things that we make judgments about matters which are not familiar. For example, from our observations of water boiling over a flame, we might come to understand the unfamiliar phenomenon of liquid oxygen boiling at room temperature.

Though Reid mentions the topic of experience on several occasions, he never treats it extensively. He does not list experience as a source of knowledge as we might expect an empiricist to do. At one point Reid warns against reliance upon experience alone to find truth. The observer of nature would do better to be well acquainted with the inductive method, particularly that discussed in Bacon's Novum

38Ibid. 39Ibid., p. 51.
Using the inductive method for instance would help prevent the investigator from drawing conclusions from too few instances of a phenomenon. In this admonition, Reid differs from Campbell, who would give more unguarded credence to the testimony of experience.

In another place in his *Inquiry Into the Human Mind* Reid again differs from Campbell in his understanding of the nature of experience. Reid asserts that "... all experience is of the past, and can, of itself, give no notion or belief of what is future." Reid would categorically deny Campbell's assertion that experience is capable of assisting man in making judgments regarding the future on the basis of his experience in the past or about the unfamiliar because of his experience with the familiar.

Briefly, then, though Reid mentions experience as a source of knowledge, his cursory statements indicate either a general lack of interest in the subject or that he has nothing new to add to the existing knowledge about experience. Experience is mentioned in this section not because any similarities exist between Campbell and Reid, but only because of Campbell's interest in the topic and because he considers it along with other kinds of moral reasoning where there is more similarity between the two philosophers.

There is greater agreement of the second of Campbell's "tribes" of moral evidence, analogy. Campbell asserts

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40 Reid, *Inquiry*, p. 200. 41 Ibid., p. 196.
that analogy is similar to experience; it "is but a more indirect experience, founded on some remote similitude."  
We have certain knowledge about one phenomenon occurring in a certain situation, and by enumerating the ways in which another situation is similar to the first, we may conclude that the phenomenon also occurs in the second situation. Campbell says that this kind of moral evidence is perhaps better understood by example, and offers the following as explanation:

The circulation of the blood in one human body is, I shall suppose, experimentally discovered. Nobody will doubt of this being a sufficient proof from experience, that the blood circulates in every human body. Nay, further, when we consider the great similarity which other animal bodies bear to the human body, and that both in the structure and in the destination of the several organs and limbs; particularly when we consider the resemblance in the blood itself, and blood-vessels, and in the fabric and pulsation of the heart and arteries, it will appear sufficient experimental evidence of the circulation of the blood in brutes, especially in quadrupeds.

Further, Campbell admonishes his reader that evidence from analogy "is at best but a feeble support, and is hardly ever honoured with the name of proof," but he adds that "... when the analogies are numerous, and the subject admits not evidence of another kind, it doth not want efficacy."

About the use of analogical reasoning in various situations, Campbell adds:

It must be owned, however, that it is generally more successful in silencing objections than in evincing truth, and on this account may more properly be styled

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42 Campbell, p. 53. 43 Ibid. 44 Ibid., pp. 53-54.
the defensive arms of the orator than the offensive.
Though it rarely refutes, it frequently, like those weapons which, though they cannot kill the enemy, will ward off his blows.\(^{45}\)

Though Reid does not take up analogy specifically as a kind of evidence, either probable or demonstrative, he does treat the topic in the preliminary part of his *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man.* Here his remarks about analogy signify a strong similarity between his understanding of the subject and Campbell's. While he uses examples to illuminate his meaning, Reid attempts a definition as well. He writes:

> It is natural to men to judge of things less known, by some similitude they observe, or think they observe, between them and things more familiar or better known. In many cases, we have no better way of judging. And, where the things compared have really a great similitude in their nature, when there is reason to think that they are subject to the same laws, there may be a considerable degree of probability in conclusions drawn from analogy.\(^{46}\)

As an example, Reid provides an argument from analogy stating that if other planets in the solar system are similar to the earth in numerous ways which he lists then it is probable that they too are inhabited by living beings.\(^{47}\)

Reid also points out that argument from analogy is better in some situations than in others. He says:

> Analogical reasoning, therefore, may be of excellent use in answering objections against truths which have other evidence. It may likewise give a greater or a less degree of probability in cases where we can find no other evidence. But all arguments, drawn from ana-

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\(^{45}\)Ibid., p. 54.


\(^{47}\)Ibid.
logy, are still the weaker, the greater disparity there is between the things compared; and, therefore must be weakest of all when we compare body with mind, because there are no two things in nature more unlike. 48

Hence Reid and Campbell agree as to the nature and value of analogy, offering similar examples of its use and indicating their recognition of its worth in dealing with objections. Both men see a relation between the evidence of analogy and that of experience. Campbell points out that knowledge of things familiar, such as the circulation of the blood in the human body, is found first by experimental observation, "a sufficient proof from experience." Reid on the other hand speaks of the manner in which man naturally goes about judging "things less known, by some similitude they observe, or think they observe, between them and things more familiar or better known." In describing the way judgments are made about unfamiliar things on the basis of their similitude with the familiar, Reid's language is quite similar to that of Campbell's description of the evidence of experience as assisting man to decide "concerning things common from things familiar which resemble them." Both see the relation of the evidence of experience to that of analogy; they regard experience as making argument from analogy possible. Were it not for experience with the familiar there could be no analogy drawn between it and the unfamiliar.

The third kind of moral evidence enumerated by Camp-

48 Ibid., p. 237.
bell is testimony, which, unlike the other types, is treated by Reid in his chapter on probable reasoning in *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*. Campbell does not regard moral evidence as deriving from experience but as having a logical origin. He writes:

... the evidence of testimony is to be considered as strictly logical, no further than human veracity in general, or the veracity of witnesses of such a character, and in such circumstances in particular, is supported, or perhaps more properly, hath not been refuted, by experience. But that testimony, antecedently to experience, hath a natural influence on belief, is undeniable. In this it resembles memory; for though the defects and misrepresentations of memory are corrected by experience, yet that this faculty hath an innate evidence of its own we know from this, that if we had not previously given an implicit faith to memory, we had never been able to acquire experience.\(^{49}\)

He defines the evidence from testimony in the following fashion:

Testimony is a serious intimation from another, of any fact or observation, as being what he remembers to have seen or heard or experienced. To this, when we have no positive reasons of mistrust or doubt, we are, by an original principle of our nature (analogous to that which compels our faith in memory), led to give an unlimited assent.\(^{50}\)

Reid, discussing the evidence of testimony in *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, concurs with Campbell entirely, agreeing that unless there is some external reason to doubt the veracity of testimony, we are prone to believe it. In *An Inquiry Into the Human Mind* Reid treats evidence from testimony from a somewhat different direction, discussing the tendency in man to speak truth

\(^{49}\) Campbell, p. 54.  \(^{50}\) Ibid., p. 55.
by the nature of his being. Reid confesses: "I find that truth is always at the door of my lips, and goes forth spontaneously, if not held back," and adds that "another original principle implanted in us by the Supreme Being, is a disposition to confide in the veracity of others, and to believe what they tell us."\(^1\) This "principle of veracity" or "principle of credulity," as Reid calls it, is the "counterpart" to man's original inclination to speak the truth.\(^2\) The principle of credulity and the subsequent tendency to speak the truth seem to be what Campbell refers to in the preceding excerpt where he asserts "... that testimony, antecedently to experience, hath a natural influence on belief, is undeniable." Campbell, like Reid, believes that man's tendency to believe what he is told is quite strong, even to the point of being an innate principle of his constitution.

As a fourth category of moral reasoning, Campbell adds the calculations of chance almost as an afterthought. Campbell's understanding of chance as evidence is relatively simple. His definition of chance is operational, as in the following excerpt from his work on rhetoric:

> When a die is thrown out of the hand, we know that its gravity will make it fall; we know also that this, together with its cubical figure, will make it lie so, when intercepted by the table, as to have one side facing upwards. Thus far we proceed on the certain principles of a uniform experience; but there is no principle which can lead me to conclude that one side

\(^1\)Reid, *Inquiry*, p. 196. \(^2\)Ibid.
rather than another will be turned up. I know that this circumstance is not without a cause; but is, on the contrary, as really affected by the previous tossing which it receives in the hand or in the box, as its fall and the manner of its lying are by its gravity and figure. But the various turns and motions given it, in this manner, do inevitably escape my notice; and so are held for nothing. I say, therefore, that the chance is equal for every one of the six sides.  

The fact that the causes of the die's coming to lie on one side rather than another are unseen does not preclude the existence of a cause or causes for "the various turns and motions" of the die. Campbell observes that calculations can be done regarding the probability of various combinations of sides turning up in a throw and that "examples of this we have in the computations that have been made of the value of annuities, insurances, and several other commercial articles." He warns, however, that "in such cases a great number of instances is necessary, the greatest exactness in collecting them on each side, and due care that there be no discoverable peculiarity in any of them, which would render them unfit for supporting a general conclusion."

Unfortunately Campbell does not go beyond this point in explaining how calculations of chance might prove useful as evidence in oratory. He seems more concerned with the peculiar nature of chance as it is related to both demonstrative and moral evidence. He calls it "a mixture

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53Campbell, pp. 56-57. 54Ibid., p. 57. 55Ibid., pp. 57-58.
of the demonstrative and the moral; or rather a particular application of the former, for ascertaining the precise force of the latter." Because one is able to do calculations about chance it appears to fall into the category of demonstrative evidence, but as calculations of chance can never go beyond the probable it appears to be moral in nature.

Reid does not seem to find this difficulty in categorizing the evidence of chance, but with reservation calls it probable evidence and credits mathematicians for exploring the topic in detail. Reid agrees with Campbell that we only attribute events to chance "because we know only the remote cause which must produce some one event of a number; but know not the more immediate cause which determines a particular event of that number in preference to the others."58

Thus Reid and Campbell concur in their understanding of the nature of evidence drawn from calculations of chance, but a discussion of the influence of one man upon the other would be pointless here, for as Reid admits, mathematicians have explored the topic extensively. This seems more likely a case of both men drawing upon common knowledge of the day, probably dealing with a popular topic

56 Ibid., p. 49.
57 Reid, Intellectual Powers, p. 483. 58 Ibid.
59 Ibid., pp. 483-84.
in the intellectual milieu in which they lived and worked.

**The Utility of Syllogistic Logic**

In considering Campbell's discussion of the utility of demonstrative evidence, the topic of the syllogism has already been treated, but because Campbell elaborates upon it in a section devoted to the syllogism, the topic deserves specific mention at this point. Campbell, of course, finds demonstrative evidence much less practical in rhetorical discourse than moral evidence, but he has particular antipathy for the syllogism as a means of discovering truth. He writes:

It is long since I was first convinced, by what Mr. Locke had 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 combersome 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 artificial and ostentatious parade of learning, calculated for giving the appearance of great profundity to what in fact is very shallow. Such, I acknowledge, has been, for a long time, my sentiments on the subject.

Campbell's objections to the slavish adherence to syllogistic reasoning centers around the fact that it is not applicable to the manner in which men use reasoning in the prac-

60 Campbell, p. 43. 61 Ibid., pp. 61-62.
tical affairs of life. Discourse relying heavily on syllogistic reasoning unnecessarily flaunts the cleverness of the speaker and ignores the intelligence of most audiences. It does not make the discovery of truth any easier or more certain. Moral evidence is more easily accommodated by the listener, probably because it can be less formal, among other reasons. Campbell strongly implies that the study of the syllogism can never make one adroit at reasoning.

With regard to the syllogism, Reid’s sentiments are almost exactly those of Campbell. It has already been noted in this chapter that Reid regards the philosopher’s devotion to the syllogism as directly responsible for the slow progress of knowledge in the ages when it held sway in the scholarly community, and that he believes man can learn to reason quite well without ever considering a syllogism. Though he does not think the syllogism impractical for rhetorical discourse, as Campbell does, Reid’s ridicule implies his opinion of syllogistic logic as an antique to be kept in a museum. In A Brief Account of Aristotle’s Logic he writes:

> Although the art of categorical syllogism is better fitted for scholastic litigation than for real improvement in knowledge, it is a venerable piece of antiquity, and a great effort of human genius. We admire the pyramids of Egypt, and the wall of China, though useless burdens upon the earth; we can bear the most minute des-

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62 Reid, Aristotle’s Logic, p. 701.

63 Ibid., p. 710.
cription of them, and travel hundreds of leagues to see them: if any person should, with sacrilegious hands, destroy or deface them, his memory would be had in abhorrence. The predicaments and predicables, the rules of syllogism, and the topics, have like title to our veneration as antiquities; they are uncommon efforts, not of human power, but of human genius; and they make a remarkable period in the progress of human reason.  

Reid implies that if man has not evolved in his reasoning beyond the point of the syllogism, he should have done so. In this piece of sarcasm Reid makes his disdain for the syllogism quite apparent, and affirms Campbell's regard for it as an impractical tool in rhetorical discourse. While Campbell believes the syllogism to be "cumbersome" for both speaker and listener, Reid holds it to be another of the "burdens upon the earth."

Both men have little use for the syllogism, but Reid cannot take credit for influencing Campbell on this topic. Campbell cites Locke for his opinion of the uselessness of the syllogism and indicates that Locke's influence on his concept of the syllogism took place long prior to his writing on rhetoric. Here again it is difficult to see causal relationships between the two men, since the concept of the antique and useless nature of the syllogism is acquired from an outside source. Reid also cites Locke in his discussion of the syllogism, and confesses his agreement with that philosopher that the study of mathematical sciences can strengthen the student's ability to reason, but he

64 Ibid., p. 711.  
65 Campbell, pp. 61-62.  
66 Reid, Aristotle's Logic, p. 708.
does not specifically attribute his notions about the utility of the syllogism to Locke.

The Source of Laws Governing the Use of Language

Reid and Campbell agree in their understanding of the source of the rules of language usage. Neither supposes a set of transcendent and immutable laws governing language usage; both believe that the use to which men put language dictates appropriateness.

Campbell explains his concept of language usage in the following manner:

Language is purely a species of fashion (for this holds true of every tongue) in which by the general but tacit consent of the people of a particular state or country, certain sounds come to be appropriate to certain things, as their signs, and certain ways of inflecting and combining those sounds come to be established, as denoting the relations which subsist among the things signified.

It is not the business of grammar, as some critics seem preposterously to imagine, to give law to the fashions which regulate our speech. On the contrary, from its conformity to these, and from that alone, it derives all the authority and value. For, what is the grammar of any language? It is no other than a collection of general observations methodically digested, and comprising all the modes previously and independently established, by which the significations, derivations, and combinations of words in that language are ascertained.67

Amplifying this notion, Campbell asserts further that there is no "universal archetype by which the particular grammars of all different tongues ought to be regulated," and he reasons that "where there is no law there is no transgres-

67Campbell, pp. 139-40.
tion," and hence no "correctness."

Campbell is forced to acknowledge, however, that we do indeed make judgments about correctness and to admit that there is that usage which he calls "not reputable." This kind of usage is common among the vulgar and is quite undesirable. Campbell says that "... what children are to men, that precisely the ignorant are to the knowing," and the knowing would not employ the language of the ignorant any more than a man would speak as a child. When Campbell insists that rules governing language are derived from the manner in which language is used, he apparently does not think it necessary to consider the use of language by the unlearned. He means only to defend the usage of the learned.

In scattered references Reid expresses similar ideas about the origin of laws governing language usage. In one place he states briefly that "language is made to serve the purposes of ordinary conversation; and we have no reason to expect that it should make distinctions not of common use." In a letter to James Gregory he compares language to a machine which is progressively improved by "the inventions of thousands of ingenious men, in a succession of ages," and to a tree "which, from a small seed, grows imperceptibly, till the fowls of the air lodge in its

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68 Ibid., pp. 140-41. 69 Ibid., p. 143.
70 Reid, Intellectual Powers, p. 310.
branches, and the beasts of the earth rest under its shadow." Alluding to the tree of language, Reid adds that "... its growth is the effect of the united energy of all who do or ever did use it." In these passages the evidence is strong that Reid, like Campbell, does not perceive any "universal archetype" which prescribes the manner in which language is to be used. Language is the result of all the improvements of men who use it, and Reid does not impugn the authority of the common man in his use of language nor in any other matter. Indeed, the use of language by the common man is possibly the most frequently used measuring device for evaluating the truth of a common sense proposition; for example, the fact that all men believe in the existence of matter and use language in a manner indicating that belief affirms the validity of such a belief.

The use to which the common man puts language does not corrupt it; on the contrary, language is improved by man's use, like the machine mentioned above.

Like Campbell, Reid finds it difficult to ignore the efforts of grammarians, but Reid is somewhat prone to give them credit for making improvements in language. He writes that "grammarians have, without doubt, contributed


72 Ibid., p. 71.

73 Reid, Intellectual Powers, pp. 230-34.
much to its [language's] regularity and beauty, and philosophers, by increasing our knowledge, have added many a fair branch to it; but it would have been a tree without the aid of either."\textsuperscript{74} Reid again uses the analogy of the tree in speaking of the "branches" added by philosophers and grammarians, but he also recognizes the authority of the masses in regulating the use of language. He says, "So fond are ingenious men to invent such improvements in language, and so prone the multitude to adopt them, when they please the public taste, that all languages are perpetually changing. ... ".\textsuperscript{75} Thus, although the grammarian may advocate changes in language, and although the masses are prone to incorporate frequent changes into the language, both do so only when the suggested changes "please the public taste."

While Campbell recognizes that there is a reputable use of language as well as a disreputable usage, Reid does not seem to notice this. He tends to credit all men, both learned and vulgar, for their combined contributions to the improvement of language. At this point Campbell is more realistic than Reid in observing that although they may not be justified in doing so, men do make judgments about the usage to which language is put. Because of his philosophical reliance upon the manner in which common men use

\textsuperscript{74}Reid, Letter XI to Gregory, p. 71.

\textsuperscript{75}Ibid.
language, Reid is somewhat obligated to condone all usage as reputable.

Aesthetics

Their understanding of the effects of aesthetics upon the listener is yet another point in which Campbell and Reid seem to concur. Campbell advocates the recognition of certain of man's faculties, other than reasoning, which are capable of promoting belief. He points out that gratification of the fancy helps the speaker maintain attention without which all his speaking would be in vain. Further, Campbell explains that "those qualities in ideas which principally gratify the fancy, are vivacity, beauty, sublimity, novelty." 76

Campbell agrees with Hume in his understanding of vivacity as a liveliness of ideas which induces belief. Of course the fact that lively ideas promote belief makes them of great interest to the rhetorician. Campbell is concerned not only with the fact that lively ideas engage the imagination and maintain the attention of auditors, but with the fact that they assist persuasion. He states that ". . . lively ideas have a stronger influence than faint ideas to induce belief." 77

Considering the second quality which appeals to the fancy, Campbell expresses his notion that beauty is an

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76 Campbell, p. 73. 77 Ibid.
"excellence," presumably abiding in an object, but he is less than lucid on this point.\(^{78}\) He says: "That there is a beauty in the perceived fitness of means to their end, and instruments to their use, is incontrovertible,"\(^{79}\) and adds that ". . . as music is to the ear what beauty is to the eye, I shall, for want of a more proper term, denominate this excellence in style, its music. . . ."\(^{80}\) Campbell's reader must wish that he had found "a more proper term," or at least that he had devoted more attention to a definition of beauty as excellence.

Campbell's definition of sublimity is somewhat clearer, but it too lacks precision. He associates the sublime with "those great and noble images, which, when in suitable colouring presented to the mind, do, as it were, distend the imagination with some vast conception, and quite ravish the soul."\(^{81}\) He further defines the purpose of the sublime, saying that "the sublime, it may be urged, as it raiseth admiration, should be considered as one species of address to the passions."\(^{82}\)

The only remark which Campbell makes about novelty, in addition to the one cited above, has to do with his warning of the impropriety of using novelty merely for the sake of avoiding the "beaten track."\(^{83}\) Of course Reid too

\(^{78}\)Ibid., p. 215.  \(^{79}\)Ibid.  \(^{80}\)Ibid., pp. 215-16.  
\(^{81}\)Ibid., p. 3.  \(^{82}\)Ibid.  \(^{83}\)Ibid., p. 200.
finds nothing admirable in novelty for its own sake and in fact regards it as easily overused.

Surprisingly, Campbell's treatment of these elements of style is a great deal more truncated and scattered than Reid's, perhaps because he wishes to discuss them only as they are applicable as appeals to the fancy and not as they are related to a system of aesthetics in general. Nevertheless, a similarity appears between Campbell and Reid on these points. Where Campbell remarks on the effects of vivacity, beauty, sublimity, and novelty on the fancy, Reid enumerates novelty, grandeur, and beauty as the objects of taste in *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*. 84

Novelty, which Reid discusses first, provides man with pleasure. "The pleasure we receive from novelty has so great influence in human life," Reid says, "that it well deserves the attention of philosophers. ..." 85 He would perhaps suggest that Campbell treat the topic in somewhat more detail also, but he agrees with Campbell that novelty affects man and also in his observation that it is at times overused to the detriment of a work. Reid declares that "... things that have nothing to recommend them but novelty, are fit only to entertain children, or those who are distressed from a vacuity of thought." 86 Obviously both men concur in their high regard for the power of novelty

in appealing to the minds of auditors, though Reid does not specifically discuss novelty as it addresses the fancy. Equally important is the fact that they both have the greatest disdain for the use of novelty for its own sake.

Reid does not use the term sublimity, but in discussing grandeur he expresses some of the same sentiments that Campbell does in treating sublimity. While Campbell sees the sublime as dealing with "noble images" which address the passions and inspire man to admiration, Reid, in writing of grandeur, treats those "objects which may be called grand." The emotion evoked by these objects "disposes to seriousness, elevates the mind above its usual state, to a kind of enthusiasm, and inspires magnanimity, and a contempt of what is mean." Clearly Reid's category of grandeur could as accurately be called sublimity, and Campbell's definition of the sublime is quite similar to Reid's of grandeur; the terms appear interchangeable.

The last object of taste which Reid treats is beauty, which appears in a great deal more detail than Campbell's analysis of the subject. Reid agrees with Campbell in his belief that beauty produces a sensation of pleasure. He writes:

The emotion produced by beautiful objects is gay and pleasant. It sweetens and humanises the temper, is friendly to every benevolent affection, and tends to allay sullen and angry passions. It enlivens the mind, and disposes it to other agreeable emotions, such as

87 Ibid.
those of love, hope, and joy. It gives value to the object, abstracted from its utility. 88

In addition to this sensation of pleasure attached to the perception of a beautiful object, or to beauty in written or oral discourse, is its value, which is also perceived by the observer. Reid explains that "this agreeable emotion is accompanied with an opinion of belief of their [the beautiful objects'] having some perfection or excellence belonging to them." 89 In defining beauty further, Reid proclaims that "it is an agreeable feeling or emotion, which is fitted by Nature to produce that feeling." 90 Thus it is Reid who defines not only beauty but the concept of excellence mentioned by Campbell.

Though Reid does not treat vivacity as a quality of discourse appealing to the fancy, he deals with the concept of the lively idea, which is what Campbell has in mind when he uses the term vivacity. The strength of Hume's influence on Reid hardly allows him to ignore this doctrine in his works. Concerning the manner in which lively ideas affect communication Reid writes that "Those who have lively conceptions, commonly express them in a lively manner—that is, in such a manner as to raise lively conceptions and emotions in others." 91 Though Reid neglects to mention the ability of lively ideas to effect belief when he speaks

88 Ibid., p. 498. 89 Ibid. 90 Ibid., p. 499.
91 Ibid., p. 365.
of the manner in which they "raise lively conceptions and emotions in others," he implies an agreement with Campbell's assertion that lively ideas have an ability to bring about belief in others. On this point also there appears to be accord between Campbell and Reid.

Summary

Obviously several similarities exist between Campbell and Reid as they write on topics relevant to communication. One of the most obvious ways in which Campbell's work on rhetoric is like the writing of Reid lies in his approach to many of the topics he investigates. His discussions of evidence and of language usage are remarkably lacking in rules of thumb for the practicing orator. His viewpoint, like Reid's, is stringently descriptive and lends credence to the term philosophy in the title of his work on communication. In this respect Campbell and Reid share an interest in the dispassionate and persistent examination of phenomena. In their discussions of evidence, logic, and language usage neither Campbell nor Reid declines to apply the empiricist's cold eye to the matter at hand. It is as though Campbell carefully and methodically lays what he believes to be the foundation of rhetorical communication when he takes up the philosophical principles of the use of evidence to address the faculties of man, and in this way he reaffirms the relationship between philosophy and rhetoric, a relationship which Reid would hardly
deny.

Attempting to identify some causal relation between Reid and Campbell on the concepts of novelty, sublimity, and beauty is of course an obvious error in the light of Addison's treatment of the subjects prior to the writing of both Reid and Campbell. By the time Reid and Campbell treated these subjects they had quite possibly become widely accepted by writers on criticism and aesthetics. At any rate, few find it necessary to cite any source for these ideas.

Except on the matter of their understanding of common sense as a kind of intuitive evidence, finding a causal relation between Campbell and Reid is a futile exercise. Campbell cites Reid's responsibility in articulating a theory of common sense as evidence, and we might as well take Campbell's word as sufficient testimony to his indebtedness to Reid. Further comparisons for the sake of demonstrating a causal relation between the work of these two is a pretense to knowledge. For example, an influence of Reid's discussion of evidence in *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, 1785, upon Campbell's in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 1776, is impossible. Of course Reid treats various elements of evidence in works which appeared earlier than Campbell's rhetoric, but his clearest account of the topic is in *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*. Notably,

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A Brief Account of Aristotle's Logic (1763) and An Inquiry Into the Human Mind (1774) appear before The Philosophy of Rhetoric; further, Reid was an influential founder of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society, along with Campbell, prior to Campbell's writing. If causal influence does exist between Campbell and Reid on any point except the theory of common sense, then Campbell may have as logically influenced Reid as vice versa.

Perhaps the most judicious appraisal that can be made of this analysis of the common points of interest in the rhetorical thought of Campbell and Reid is that there are striking similarities in the works of these two men. Whether Reid influenced Campbell more than Campbell influenced Reid is difficult to say with certainty. We might as accurately take these similarities as an incident of the occurrence of contemporaries taking their inspiration from a common milieu and deriving similar notions about the nature of man's mind and his motivation.

III. Reid and Blair

Hugh Blair (1718-1800) is another eighteenth-century rhetorician who must be mentioned when considering Reid's relation to his contemporaries. Conclusive evidence of a transfer of intellectual stimulation between these two, however, may be as difficult to show as in the case of Campbell and Reid. There exists the possibility of some exchange of ideas between Blair and Reid. Blair delivered
his popular lectures on rhetoric and belles lettres from 1759 to 1783, first to the townspeople of Edinburgh and then from his position as Regius Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres at the University. 93 Reid and Blair were friends during most of this time, while Reid was professor of King's College at the University of Aberdeen (1763-1787). Both men corresponded with David Hume, and in one of Reid's letters to Hume he refers to his friendship with Blair. A portion of the letter follows:

King's College, [Aberdeen]
18th March 1763

Sir,—On Monday last, Mr. John Farquhar brought me your letter of February 25th, enclosed in one from Dr. Blair. I thought myself very happy in having the means of obtaining at second hand, through the friendship of Dr. Blair, your opinion of my performance; and you have been pleased to communicate it directly in so polite and friendly a manner as merits great acknowledgements on my part. 94

This friendship between Blair and Reid suggests that Blair had probably more than a mild interest in Reid's thought and that he was quite possibly swayed in his thinking about communication by his relationship with Reid.

The Origin and Use of Language

One prominent area of similarity between Reid and Blair is in their ideas on the origin and use of language. 93


94 Reid, Letter to David Hume, p. 91.
Blair devotes several lectures to the evolution of language, in which he puts forth a theory of the "History of the Rise and Progress of Language in several particulars, from its early to its more advanced periods." 

Blair begins with a definition of language, saying:

Language, in general, signifies the expression of our ideas by certain articulate sounds, which are used as the signs of those ideas. By articulate sounds, are meant those modulations of simple voice, or of sound emitted from the thorax, which are formed by means of the mouth and its several organs, the teeth, the tongue, the lips, and the palate.

Pursuing the notion that language is related to ideas in some way, he adds:

How far there is any natural connexion between the ideas of the mind and the sounds emitted, will appear from what I am afterwards to offer. But as the natural connexion can, upon any system, affect only a small part of the fabric of Language; the connexion between words and ideas may, in general, be considered as arbitrary and conventional, owing to the agreement of men among themselves; the clear proof of which is, that different nations have different Languages, or a different set of articulate sounds, which they have chosen for communicating their ideas.

In one place Blair calls this system of sounds which communicate thought an "artificial method," and later, an "invention."

Asserting that language is an invention of man, Blair then turns his interest to the earliest history of man to discover the origin of language. He considers and


96 Ibid., pp. 98-99. 97 Ibid. 98 Ibid.
puts aside the notion that language was given by God to the first couple. In the following excerpt he imagines the conditions under which the rudiments of language first appeared:

If we should suppose a period before any words were invented or known, it is clear, that men could have no other method of communicating to others what they felt, than by the cries of passion, accompanied with such motions and gestures as were farther expressive of passion. For these are the only signs which nature teaches all men, and which are understood by all. One who saw another going into some place where he himself had been frightened, or exposed to danger, and who fought to warn his neighbour of the danger, could contrive no other way of doing so, than by uttering those cries, and making those gestures, which are the signs of fear: just as two men, at this day, would endeavour to make themselves understood by each other, who should be thrown together on a desolate island, ignorant of one another's language. Those exclamations, therefore, which by Grammarians are called Interjections, uttered in a strong and passionate manner, were beyond doubt, the first elements or beginnings of Speech. 99

Supposedly by their original constitution all men are outfitted to understand certain "cries of passion," and before the invention of words such passionate interjections and gesticulations must have been the only means of communications among men.

Words did develop, however, and Blair speculates about how their development came about. He writes:

Wherever objects were to be named, in which sound, noise, or motion were concerned, the imitation by words was abundantly obvious. Nothing was more natural, than to imitate, by the sound of the voice, the quality of the sound or noise which any external object made; and to form its name accordingly. Thus, in all Languages, we find a multitude of words that are evidently con-

structured upon this principle. A certain bird is called the Cuckoo, from the sound which it emits. When one sort of wind is said to whistle, and another to roar; when a serpent is said to hiss, a fly to buzz, and falling timber to crash; when a stream is said to flow, and hail to rattle; the analogy between the word and the thing signified is plainly discernible.  

Blair admits that such an onomatopoeic explanation for the origin of names for objects which make no sound appears weak, but he suggests that some names for objects perceived only by sight or touch had some relation at one time to the objects themselves. He writes:

Stability, for instance, fluidity, hollowness, smoothness, gentleness, violence, &c., they imagine to be painted by the sound of certain letters or syllables, which have some relation to those different states of visible objects, on account of an obscure resemblance which the organs of the voice are capable of assuming to such external qualities. By this natural mechanism, they imagine all Language to have been at first constructed, and the roots of their capital words formed.

Hence there exists a natural relation between words and the thoughts which they are intended to convey, but Blair explains that the principle of this natural relation "can only be applied to Language in its most simple and primitive state." He adds further that "words, as we now employ them, taken in the general, may be considered as symbols, not as imitations; as arbitrary, or instituted, not natural signs of ideas." Apparently it avails the language scholar little to attempt to find the influence of

\[100\] Ibid., pp. 102-103. \[101\] Ibid., pp. 103-104. \[102\] Ibid., p. 105. \[103\] Ibid., p. 106.
imitation in modern language; it is more profitable to assume that words are merely arbitrary assignations of sounds to stand for meanings. Nevertheless, Blair speculates that primitive artificial language was derived from man's attempt to imitate the sounds he heard from things around him and from an original tendency in man to associate certain meanings with particular sound clusters.

Blair's account of the origin and nature of language is actually quite similar to Reid's. Reid, like Blair, comprehends language to be more than words; he reasons that the primitive must have had some method by which he arrived at artificial signs, or words, to stand for ideas and things in the external world. These natural signs consist of vocal modulations and various movements and positions of the body and the facial features.\(^\text{104}\)

Blair's definition of language as that which "signifies the expression of our ideas by certain articulate sounds\(^\text{105}\) in no way indicates that he believes language to consist of words alone. On the contrary, like Reid, Blair comprehends that words are the invention of man, an artificial way of communicating. Though Blair does not indicate how man arrives at a common understanding of these artificial creations called words, he nevertheless declares them to be man-made. He implies, where Reid asserts, that "cries of passion, accompanied with such motions and ges-

\(^{104}\)Reid, *Inquiry*, pp. 117-18.  \(^{105}\)Blair, p. 98.
tures, as were farther expressive of passion" are innately and immediately understood by all men.

Reid's account of the origin and nature of language is scattered through sundry of his writings, and nowhere does it receive so extensive a treatment as Blair gives it in his lectures. Blair finds space to discuss the onomatopoeic nature of language and shows great interest in the subject. Whereas Blair speculates that men commonly came about the words they use by imitating the sounds of things around them and by their innate awareness that sounds somehow convey certain meanings, Reid sees the invention of words as arbitrary agreements among men to have certain sounds stand for meanings. Considering these differences the critical reader of Blair and Reid must confess that a remarkable concord exists between these two on the matter of the origin and nature of language.

Aesthetics

Perhaps less remarkable is the agreement between Blair and Reid with regard to their aesthetic theories. As might be expected of a rhetorician, Blair gives considerably more attention to topics related to aesthetics than does Reid. He devotes an entire lecture to the subject of taste, which he defines as "the power of receiving pleasure from the beauties of nature and of art," and in the three sub-

sequent lectures he treats other topics related to taste, such as sublimity, beauty, and novelty. 109

Blair distinguishes between sublimity in objects and the description of such objects in writing, and declares his intent to discuss the two matters separately for the sake of precision in his own writing. Blair describes the effect of the sublime object on its viewer as follows:

It is not easy to describe, in words, the precise impression which great and sublime objects make upon us, when we behold them; but every one has a conception of it. It consists in a kind of admiration and expansion of the mind; it raises the mind much above its ordinary state; and fills it with a degree of wonder and astonishment, which it cannot well express. The emotion is certainly delightful; but it is altogether of the serious kind: a degree of awfulness and solemnity, even approaching to severity, commonly attends it when at its height; very distinguishable from the more gay and brisk emotion raised by beautiful objects. 110

Blair defines sublimity in writing as follows: "The true sense of Sublime Writing, undoubtedly, is such a description of objects, or exhibition of sentiments, which are in themselves of a Sublime nature, as shall give us strong impressions of them." 111

Sublime writing, in order to be called sublime, must be descriptive of something sublime in the external world, and the writing itself must be done well enough to embue the reader with a vivid notion of the object described. If the writing does not deal with a sublime object, no matter how elegant the style nor how vivid the impression

109 Ibid., pp. 36-96. 110 Ibid., p. 46. 111 Ibid., p. 58.
conveyed by it, the writing is not sublime according to Blair.

Blair devotes considerably less attention to the subject of beauty than to sublimity. He declares:

Beauty, next to Sublimity, affords, beyond a doubt, the highest pleasure to the imagination. The emotion which it raises, is very distinguishable from that of Sublimity. It is of a calmer kind; more gentle and soothing; does not elevate the mind so much, but produces an agreeable serenity. Sublimity raises a feeling, too violent, as I showed, to be lasting; the pleasure arising from Beauty admits of longer continuance. It extends also to a much greater variety of objects than sublimity; to a variety indeed so great, that the feelings which Beautiful objects produce, differ considerably, not in degree only, but also in kind, from one another. Hence, no word in the language is used in a more vague signification than Beauty. It is applied to almost every external object that pleases the eye, or the ear; to a great number of the graces of writing; to many dispositions of the mind; nay, to several objects of mere abstract science. We talk currently of a beautiful tree or flower; a beautiful poem; a beautiful character; and a beautiful theorem in mathematics.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 80-81.}

Attempting to define that quality which all beautiful things have in common, Blair decides that "the agreeable emotion which they all raise, is somewhat of the same nature; and, therefore has the common name of Beauty given to it; but it is raised by different causes."\footnote{Ibid., p. 81.} Thus that which is beautiful appeals to the imagination and raises an emotion not so violent but more enduring than that raised by the sublime.

Novelty is another principle which delights the imagination. Blair says that novelty "has no merit to recommend it, except its being uncommon or new," and "by
means of this quality alone, [novelty] produces in the mind a vivid and agreeable emotion."\textsuperscript{114} He adds that "new and strange objects rouse the mind from its dormant state, by giving it a quick and pleasing impulse," and further, that "the emotion raised by Novelty is of a more lively and pun­gent nature, than that produced by Beauty; but much shorter in its continuance. For if the object have in itself no charms to hold our attention, the shining gloss thrown upon it by novelty soon wears off."\textsuperscript{115} Novelty alone, unenhanced by more enduring qualities, is not appealing for very long, and Blair implies that it is not to be employed for its own sake.

Blair gives only brief attention to the other pleasures of taste. He declares that imitation serves in "recalling the original ideas of Beauty or Grandeur which such objects themselves exhibited."\textsuperscript{116} Melody and harmony heighten "by the power of musical sound" the pleasure received from the beautiful and the sublime, and "Wit, Humour, and Ridicule likewise open a variety of pleasures to Taste, quite distinct from any that we have yet considered."\textsuperscript{117}

Throughout his discussion of the objects of taste, Blair recognizes the lack of originality in his own theory of aesthetics. He cites Longinus in treating sublimity,\textsuperscript{118}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{114} Ibid., p. 91.
\item \textsuperscript{115} Ibid., pp. 91-92.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Ibid., p. 92.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Ibid., pp. 58, 62, passim.
\end{itemize}
and Addison on beauty, grandeur, and novelty.\textsuperscript{119} He does not mention Reid or Campbell, however, whose similarities have already been discussed. The lack of originality in his treatment of taste does not hamper Blair, who rather vigorously pursues the subjects of beauty, grandeur, and novelty as though he thinks they require a concise summary and discussion in his lectures.

Obviously, by including the categories of beauty, grandeur or sublimity, and novelty, Blair's theory of aesthetics becomes much like those of both Campbell and Reid, though the indication is clear that he received his guidance in selecting these three from sources other than Campbell or Reid. As mentioned earlier Reid undertakes a discussion of the three elements of taste, beauty, sublimity or grandeur, and novelty, and expresses sentiments regarding each which are in accord with those of Blair.\textsuperscript{120} Reid, however, does not include categories of wit, humor, or ridicule as objects of taste, and on this point he differs with Blair. Judging from the brevity of his remarks about wit, humor, and ridicule, however, Blair considers them either relatively less important than the other objects of taste or so well-treated in other places outside his lectures that he devotes only a few paragraphs to them. Blair's treatment of aesthetic matters is quite similar to Reid's though certainly no causal relation is perceptible between the two men.

\textsuperscript{119}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 44.
Summary

Though Blair does not acknowledge any indebtedness to Reid for his notion of the origin and nature of language, there is some possibility of a causal influence between the two, however uncertain. Reid's theory of natural language was quite well developed by the time he published his first important long work, *An Inquiry Into the Human Mind* (1763).\(^\text{121}\) Blair's lectures began in 1759, three years earlier than the publication of Reid's work, but there remains the possibility of a personal influence because of the evident friendship between the two. Because neither Blair nor Reid cites the other as his mentor in this matter, however, the possibility that Blair influenced Reid must be admitted as well as the possibility that both came to their conclusions simultaneously and independently. Certainly it seems most probable that each was aware of the theory of natural language expounded by the other, judging from the remarkable concord between the two on the details of the theory and from their friendship. Indeed possibly because of their friendship and the customary disregard for the necessity of citing sources, the exchange of ideas between Reid and Blair, as well as between Reid and other colleagues, was more casual. Such a practice, though perhaps promoting an admirable synthesis of ideas in the century of enlightenment, makes for great difficulty in investigating the

\(^{121}\text{Reid, Inquiry, pp. 117-18.}\)
influences between the thinkers of the era and requires the critic to be satisfied with an assertion of a close correlation in lieu of direct influence.

On the matter of aesthetic theory Blair simplifies matters to a great extent by declaring his indebtedness to Longinus and Addison for his notion of taste. Apparently Reid and Blair drew on similar sources for the development of their respective theories of taste, and in this case the correlation is obviously due to a mutual affinity for an aesthetic theory already well established and in the mainstream of thought in the eighteenth century.

IV. Reid and Whately

Richard Whately (1787-1863) is another rhetorician who must be considered in this analysis of Reid's influence. Whately's work on communication, Elements of Rhetoric, did not appear in the eighteenth century, but the mind of its author, born in 1787, is a product of the dominant influences, philosophical and rhetorical, of the eighteenth century. Elements of Rhetoric was first published as a separate work in 1828, but its preparation and revision stretched over as much as three decades.\(^{122}\) Whately's education at Oxford undoubtedly acquainted him with the ideas of his contemporaries, and in Elements he reveals a know-

ledge of and interest in Reid's work. Writing of the purposes of argument he uses the following example:

Again, Berkeley and Reid seem to have alike admitted that the non-existence of matter was a necessary consequence of Locke's Theory of Ideas; but the former was hence led, bona fide, to admit and advocate that non-existence; while the latter was led by the very same Argument to reject the Ideal Theory. Thus, we see it is possible for the very same Argument to be Direct to one person, and Indirect to another, leading them to different results, according as they judge the original conclusion, or the contradictory of a premiss, to be the more probable.\textsuperscript{123}

Here Whately appears acquainted with Reid's rejection of skeptical epistemology which denied the knowability of the existence of the external world. How extensive his knowledge of or interest in Reid's philosophy was is impossible to say from this excerpt, but at least Whately confesses an acquaintance with Reid's thought. His knowledge of Reid and the entirety of eighteenth-century thought was doubtless extensive, but this excerpt mentioning Reid provides an additional justification for seeking some similarity between the work of Reid and that of Whately.

It is perhaps best to state at the outset, however, that the relation of Whately's rhetorical thought to Reid's is tenuous compared to Reid's relation to the ideas of Campbell and Blair. This meager relation is due in part at least to the practical and prescriptive approach of Whate-\textsuperscript{123} Richard Whately, Elements of Rhetoric, ed. Douglas Ehninger (facsimile edition; Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1963), p. 43.
ly's *Elements* in comparison with Campbell's more analytical *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, for example. Whately is more inclined to make recommendations to the practicing speaker and writer than are either Campbell or Blair. Whately's rhetoric might be compared to Berkeley's epistemology in one respect, since Berkeley and Blair were burdened with the motive of buttressing the church against the onslaughts of its detractors both internal and external. Berkeley solved his problem by refuting the atheists and making denial of the existence of God an absurdity under his system. Whately on the other hand accomplished his goal by arming the clergy with the weapons of argumentation. Whately's motives for writing served to create a highly prescriptive rhetoric in contrast to the more normative and speculative approach of Campbell and Blair.

**Common Sense**

Where Whately mentions common sense, he does so with tacit acknowledgment of Reid's philosophy. For the most part, his brief remarks regarding common sense imply that Whately finds this subject well-absorbed into the scholarly mainstream of the era, so well-absorbed perhaps that most readers either knew at once the source of the idea or were little concerned with its source since it was so generally known. In one reference Whately writes:

Again, in arguing for the existence and moral attributes of the Deity from the authority of men's opinions, great use may be made of a like progressive course of Argument, though it has been often overlooked. Some
have argued for the being of a God from the universal, or at least, general, consent of mankind; and some have appealed to the opinions of the wisest and most cultivated portion, respecting both the existence and the moral excellence of the Deity. It cannot be denied that there is a presumptive force in each of these Arguments; but it may be answered, that it is conceivable, an opinion common to almost all the species, may possibly be an error resulting from a constitutional infirmity of the human intellect. . . .

Revealing his overwhelming interest in ecclesiastical matters Whately offers an argument to which Reid would not be averse. Reid, too, often argues for the truth of a proposition on the basis of its universal acceptance among men. Here, however, Whately warns of the difficulty with such an argument. He concedes that the presumption lies in favor of an argument based on the popularity of its conclusion, but he admonishes his reader that all men holding such a proposition might be misguided, insane, prejudiced, or otherwise afflicted with a "constitutional infirmity of the human intellect."

Reid too is often wont to warn of those infirmities which cloud the judgment of entire nations. He writes concerning taste that "whole nations by the force of prejudice are brought to believe the grossest absurdities. . . ." However, this problem with an appeal to popularity such as the one Whately offers as an example does not deter Reid from making this appeal on many occasions, nor from declar-

124 Ibid., p. 83.

125 Reid, Intellectual Powers, p. 492.
ing its value in determining the truth of first principles. Reid declares, "... I conceive that the consent of ages and nations, of the learned and unlearned, ought to have great authority with regard to first principles, where every man is a competent judge." Seemingly Reid here recognizes what Whately would call the presumption in favor of the proposition held to be true by the "consent of ages and nations," but he does not at this juncture warn of any inherent pitfalls in judging such propositions true on the basis of their long-term popularity among men.

Whately's idea of common sense is an adaptation of Reid's, though he fails to acknowledge Reid. As would be expected, he interprets the notion of popularity in terms of the presumption in its favor, but the idea remains intact as Reid's.

Common Usage

Reid and Whately also seem to agree upon the difficulties created by the use of technical language. In his brief discussion Whately warns against the "unnecessary Introduction of Technical language of any kind" into ordinary discourse, but he makes an exception in the "Theological Style" which is justifiably prone to a "peculiar phraseology." He rejects technical language "when the meaning can be adequately, or even tolerably, expressed in common,

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i.e. unscientific words." He adds that "the terms and
phrases of art have an air of pedantic affectation, for
which they do not compensate, by even the smallest appear-
ance of increased Energy." 128 He warns further that even
with regard to the peculiar language of the cleric, such
language may only "serve as a veil for poverty of thought." 129
In general it is best in all cases to use terms common to
all men.

Reid also indicates an affinity for language used as
it is used by the common man. In discussing language's
limitations, Reid writes that "language must have many im-
perfections when applied to philosophy, because it was not
made for that use." 130 Elsewhere too he declares that
"language is made to serve the purposes of ordinary conver-
sation; and we have no reason to expect that it should make
distinctions that are not in common use." 131 Clearly it is
Reid's sentiment as well as Whately's that "ordinary" lang-
uage is much to be preferred over specialized terminology.
Indeed Reid determines that language is ill-equipped to
meet the demands of specialized fields such as philosophy
because it is created by and for the common man.

**Argumentation**

Whately's treatment of argumentation bears some


resemblance to that of Reid. Whately affords the subject lavish attention. Much of his discussion of argument is of a summary nature, and there is an indication that he knowingly draws on the work of others on the subject, as well as his own *Elements of Logic*. At one point he cites Campbell's distinction between the plausible and the probable argument, and, though he disagrees with Campbell to some degree, acknowledges his reliance on Campbell's work.  

**Kinds of argument.**—Using Campbell's terminology, Whately, like both Campbell and Reid, distinguishes between demonstrative and probable argument. He discusses this issue in the following fashion:

Arguments may then be divided.  
First, into Irregular, and Regular, i.e., Syllogisms; these last into Categorical and Hypothetical; and the Categorical, into Syllogisms in the first Figure, and in the other Figures, &c. &c.  
Secondly, they are frequently divided into "Probable," [or "Moral,"] and "Demonstrative," [or "Necessary."]  
Thirdly, into the "Direct," and the "Indirect," [or *reductio ad absurdum,*]--the Deictic, and the Elenctic, of Aristotle.  

In this excerpt Whately reveals not only his reliance upon Aristotelian logic, but by his use of "&c." indicates his intent to summarize what he believes to be well known. Nevertheless the point is clear that he accepts the designation of arguments into demonstrative and probable types.  

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132 Whately, p. 47.  
Parenthetically he provides the name "moral" which Campbell applies to probable arguments.

Whately's main concern, however, is a clarification of terms and classification of the elements of argumentation. He notes that "... several of the different species just mentioned will occasionally contain each other..." He further asserts that the second designation of kinds of arguments into demonstrative and probable "is plainly a division of Arguments according to their subject-matter, whether Necessary or Probable [certain or uncertain]." In an attempt to clarify this assertion, Whately adds:

In Mathematics, e.g., every proposition that can be stated is either an immutable truth, or an absurdity and self-contradiction; while in human affairs the propositions which we assume are only true for the most part, and as general rules; and in Physics, though they must be true as long as the laws of nature remain undisturbed, the contradiction of them does not imply an absurdity; and the conclusions, of course, in each case have the same degree and kind of certainty with the premises. This therefore is properly a division, not of Arguments as such, but of the Propositions of which they consist.

The subject matter with which we deal in arguments about "human affairs" is necessarily of a probable nature; it does not deal with the certain truth or falseness of a proposition as in mathematics, but more often with the probable best course of action in the future or the probability or improbability of guilt in a law suit. Rhetorical discourse
must be more interested in probable reasoning because of the subject matter with which probable arguments deal. Hence according to Whately the terms **demonstrative** and **probable** or **necessary** and **moral** do not designate kinds of arguments but rather kinds of subject matter with which various kinds of arguments deal.

In his essay on reasoning, Reid discusses the characteristics of and differences between demonstrative and probable arguments, but of course he does not anticipate Whately's relegation of the terms **probable** and **demonstrative** to describe kinds of subject matter instead of kinds of arguments. This type of designation is implied in Reid, however.

Whately, in fact, admits to no effectual division of arguments into kinds except the fourth category above, the division into "Arguments from 'Example,' from 'Testimony,' from 'Cause to Effect,' from 'Analogy,' &c. &c." Here again Whately's use of the inclusive notation "&c." indicates that there is something of which the reader should be aware but that Whately does not feel obligated to state. Regardless of what he intends by "&c.," Whately finds that the fourth category "is a division according to the relation of the subject-matter of the premises to that of the conclusion." Further explaining his meaning Whately

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138 Whately, p. 43.
writes:

... the logical connexion between the premises and conclusion is independent of the meaning of the terms employed, and may be exhibited with letters of the alphabet substituted for the terms; but the relation I am now speaking of between the premises and conclusion, (and the varieties of which form the several species of Arguments,) is in respect of their subject-matter: in reference to the relation existing between the premis, which is the Cause, and the conclusion, which is the Effect; and an "Argument from Example," in like manner, from the relation between the known and the unknown instance, both belonging to the same class. And it is plain that the present division, though it has reference to the subject-matter of the premises, is yet not a division of propositions considered by themselves, (as in the case with the division into "probable and demonstrative,".) but of Arguments considered as such; for when we say, e.g. that the premis is a Cause, and the conclusion is the Effect, these expressions are evidently relative, and have no meaning, except in reference to each other; and so also when we say that the premis and the conclusion are two parallel cases, that very expression denotes their relation to each other. 139

Reiterating his dislike for the division of arguments into probable and demonstrative kinds, Whately, points to the necessity for an appropriate innovation in defining the kinds of arguments.

He solves this problem by dividing arguments into two categories. The first category he calls a priori, which "is manifestly Argument from Cause to Effect." 140 The second category "comprehends all other Arguments," 141 and under this heading fall the several kinds of arguments from sign and all from induction or example.

It is only at this point, after he has restructured the subject of argumentation, that Whately's analysis of it

139 Ibid., pp. 43-44. 140 Ibid., p. 46. 141 Ibid.
again begins to resemble that of other writers. Under the second and more inclusive category, for instance, he treats the use of testimony at some length, and of chance, example, the principle of induction, the use of argument from experience, analogy, and related topics.142

In discussing these matters Whately's analysis often is prescriptive in nature, making his advice easily applied to the actual circumstances of the speaker in the courtroom or the legislative hall. Referring to the use of the testimony of witnesses, for example, he admonishes his reader:

. . . when the question relates to what is strictly a matter of fact,—the intellectual character of the witness is not to be wholly left out of the account. A man strongly influenced by prejudice, to which the weakest men are ever the most liable, may even fancy he sees what he does not. And some degree of suspicion may thence attach to the testimony of prejudiced, though honest men, when their prejudices are on the same side with their testimony: for otherwise their testimony may even be the stronger.143

Generally, however, Whately adds little that is novel to the definition of various kinds of arguments. His customary attitude is summarized well in his introductory paragraph dealing with argument from example, in which he declares that in his definition he is "taking that term in its widest acceptation."144 Though Whately's organization of the subject is perhaps new, he does not profess any innovations in his understanding of the individual topics he takes up. His reorganization, however, must be acknow-

144Ibid., p. 85.
Acknowledged as a beneficial contribution to the study of argument and its use.

Compared to Whately's minute analysis of argumentation, Reid's concept of it seems clumsy indeed. Reid, in his rather scanty treatment of sense, memory, consciousness, testimony, axioms, reasoning, and the probability of chance does not undertake the miniscule demarcations peculiar to Whately, and he designates these as kinds of evidence and not of argument per se. Because of Reid's inclination toward the philosophical analysis rather than prescriptive rules of discourse, he is wont to include such epistemological considerations as memory, sense, and consciousness in his discussion, whereas Whately might be expected to disregard these. While the two men concur in their understanding of the various categories which they undertake in common, their approaches to the subject of argument and their organizations are decidedly different.

The utility of the syllogism.—The issue of the use of syllogistic logic arises in Whately's thought and is expressed concisely in his Elements of Logic. In relating this issue, Whately reveals his awareness of the controversy over "whether it is by a process of Reasoning that New Truths are brought to light, . . . ." a controversy

146 Ibid., pp. 483-84.
147 Richard Whately, Elements of Logic (London: Longman, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1870), p. 156.
in which Reid participated. He does not mention Reid however. At the outset Whately declares that the dispute

... is, perhaps, in great measure, a dispute concerning the use of words; but it is not, for that reason, either uninteresting or unimportant; since an inaccurate use of language may often, in matters of Science, lead to confusion of thought, and to erroneous conclusions.  

While he does not cite Reid's objection to the use of the syllogism, Whately does mention Campbell "and many others" who

... have objected to the Syllogism altogether, as necessarily involving a petitio principii [or begging of the question, as Whately calls it]; an objection which, of course, he would not have been disposed to bring forward, had he perceived that, whether well or ill-founded, it lies against all arguments whatever.  

In Whately's contention against summary dismissal of the syllogism as a useful tool in the discovery of new truth, he argues:

Had he [Campbell] been aware that a Syllogism is no distinct kind of argument otherwise than in form, but is, in fact, any argument whatever, stated regularly and at full length, he would have obtained a more correct view of the object of all Reasoning; which is merely to expand and unfold the assertions wrapped up, as it were, and implied in those with which we set out, and to bring a person to perceive and acknowledge the full force of that which he has admitted;--to contemplate it in various points of view; to admit in one shape what he has already admitted in another;--and to give up and disallow whatever is inconsistent with it.

In other words, Whately maintains that any argument might be cast into a syllogism for any of various reasons and that a syllogism is not a particular kind of argument to be avoided simply for being of that kind. In a reductio

\[148\text{Ibid.} \quad 149\text{Ibid., p. 157.} \quad 150\text{Ibid.}\]
ad absurdum argument against Campbell, and implicitly Reid, Whately asserts that to throw out the syllogism is, in essence, to throw out all argument as a means of discovering truth. In saying this Whately extends Campbell’s contention beyond its intent; this is the only way Whately can argue as he does.

In answering what he identifies as Campbell’s objection against the syllogism, Whately might as well be answering Reid’s. Reid, of course, points to the "slow progress of useful knowledge, during the many ages in which the syllogistic art was most highly cultivated as the only guide to science" as one principal reason for his discontent with this particular kind of argument.\(^{151}\) Reid adds that his conviction of the uselessness of the syllogism "is strengthened by the puerility of the examples which have always been brought to illustrate its rules."\(^{152}\) Reid finds reason to admire the inductive method far more than the deductive syllogism as a tool of the philosopher and the scientist.

On the matter of the examples used to illustrate the rules of syllogistic art, Whately says:

... one cause which has led the above-mentioned writers into their error, is, their selecting examples (such as, it must be owned, are abundant in Logical treatises) in which the Conclusion is merely a portion of what one of the Premises by itself has already implied in the very signification of the term that is taken for its Subject. ... \(^{153}\)

\(^{151}\) Reid, *Aristotle’s Logic*, p. 701.  
\(^{152}\) Ibid.  
\(^{153}\) Whately, *Elements of Logic*, p. 158.
Whately accuses those detractors of the syllogism of prejudicing the case against it by using only examples which demonstrate its triteness and its tendency to beg the question. He contends, however, that the syllogism is not inherently trite and that it is quite useful when proper application is made of it.

Briefly, Whately does not agree in the least with the opinions of Reid and Campbell as he interprets them, when they maintain that the syllogism is of no use. According to Whately such a rejection of the syllogism is a rejection of all argument as a means of discovering truth, since any argument may be cast in the form of a syllogism. The subject of the syllogism is mentioned here, not because of any similarity between Whately's notion and Reid's, but on the contrary because Whately's endorsement of the syllogism as a means of discovering truth reveals what is perhaps a direct negative influence from Reid, Campbell, and others who are averse to reliance on syllogistic reasoning.

Summary

Undoubtedly Whately was knowledgeable about and interested in the work of Thomas Reid, particularly in Reid's notion of common sense. In the two references to common sense in Whately's rhetoric he demonstrates this knowledge and interest. Although he discusses universal common sense as it relates to arguments from authority, there is little indication that Reid's notion significantly altered Whately's view from what it might have been had he
not known Reid. Whately does not, for instance, discuss other methods of determining the truth of a common sense first principle. He mentions only Reid's appeal to the consent "of ages and nations, of the learned and unlearned,"\textsuperscript{154} in order to test the truth of common sense notions.

In the matter of their mutual dislike of specialized language, Reid and Whately display definite accord. The extent to which Whately's agreement with Reid on this issue can be attributed to causal influence, however, is doubtful. The concidence of such a caveat in Reid and Whately seems entirely possible on the basis of its apparent reasonableness alone.

Further, supposing a causal relation to exist between Reid and Whately on the subject of argumentation is probably a mistake. Far more likely than any causal influence is the possibility that Whately was influenced by many sources, some much older than the work of Reid. Of subjects such as the evidence of consciousness and memory, on which Whately might more likely have been influenced by Reid's philosophy, there is no mention at all. Indeed Whately drew on sources from Aristotle to Campbell in treating argumentation, but not specifically from Reid. While he evidently knew of Reid's work and was perhaps swayed by it, attempting to determine the extent of that influence is futile. The greater part of the material used

\textsuperscript{154}Ibid., p. 439.
in Whately's analysis of argument was, judging from his writing itself, in the domain of all scholars, and at the time of his writing no one could possibly have claimed it as a personal possession. As to the organization of his discussion, that is perhaps solely his innovation.

Surprisingly, Whately reveals more of Reid's influence in his disagreement over the utility of the syllogism than in some places where he and Reid concur in their judgment. Here some causal influence between Reid and Whately might be supposed, because Whately acknowledges his awareness that Campbell and others hold the syllogism as an impotent tool for philosophy and science. His argument in behalf of the syllogism's usefulness is a direct refutation of Reid and Campbell.

Therefore, except for Reid's admitted influence on the subject of common sense and his implied influence on the matter of the syllogism, very little else can be said about the relationship between Reid's thought and the rhetorical work of Richard Whately. Though the fact of Reid's contribution of his notion of common sense to Whately's rhetoric cannot be questioned, the importance of the contribution in molding Whately's thought is doubtful. On the matter of language usage and argumentation the significance of the possible Reidean contribution to Whately is not only doubtful, but the possibility itself is tenuous at best. Reid and Campbell's objection to the use of the syllogism quite possibly gave more direction to Whately's thought on
argument and logic, negatively, than on any one of the other items in which their judgments concur.

V. Reid and Priestley

In this examination of Reid's relation to his contemporaries Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) merits consideration because of his demonstrated interest in rhetoric and communication and because of his well-publicized disdain for Reid's notion of common sense. Though Priestley first delivered A Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism in 1762, it was 1776 before they were put into written form and presented for publication in entirety. By this time he had published his Examination of Dr. Reid's Inquiry, leaving the possibility open for some influence between the men, either positive or negative.

Because of the celebrated differences between Reid and Priestley on epistemology we might expect to find a considerable divergence in their concepts of rhetoric and communication as well, but this is not the case.


157 Ibid., pp. xvi-xvii.
Aesthetics

Reid and Priestley concur to some extent in their theories of aesthetics. The concept of taste as composed of beauty, novelty, and sublimity, which appears time and again in eighteenth-century criticism, appears in Priestley’s writing. About novelty he says:

For the first perception of an object makes a much stronger impression than any subsequent perception of it. This must necessarily be the case if perception depend upon any mechanical laws affecting the brain. Upon whatever principle we account for it, the oftener any sensations are repeated, the less we are affected by them. But the chief source of the charms of novelty is the exercise of our active powers. Both previous to the perception of any new object, whether it be a new scene in nature, a new train of adventures, or a new system of principles, the mind is full of expectation, and is eagerly employed in surveying it; which keeps the attention strongly awake, and gives the object an opportunity of making a deep impression. Whereas when this first curiosity is gratified, and the object is become familiar, we view it in a more cursory and superficial manner; there being then no reason for so close an attention to it, as we expect no new knowledge or information. 158

Priestley’s examination is of an expository nature and not directed at proferring the public speaker useful suggestions about the use of novelty. Perhaps because of this adherence to a descriptive approach, he does not specifically admonish against the use of novelty for its own sake or against its over-use, though he describes the tendency of the mind to lose interest in what it once found novel. He is more concerned with the nature of novelty and the intellectual

processes governing its ability to give pleasure.

Writing of sublimity in a similar fashion, Priestley adds:

Great objects please us for the same reason that new objects do, viz. by the exercise they give to our faculties. The mind, as was observed before, conforming and adapting itself to the objects to which its attention is engaged, must, as it were, enlarge itself, to conceive a great object. This requires a considerable effort of the imagination, which is also attended with a pleasing, though perhaps not a distinct and explicit consciousness of the strength and extent of our own powers.\footnote{Ibid., p. 151.}

The sublime exercises the mind by expanding it and thereby gives pleasure, but specifically what sublimity is, Priestley declines to say precisely. To get a more definite idea of how he views the sublime we must consider one of his specific examples regarding science and its relation to sublimity; he writes:

The sublime of science consists in general and comprehensive theorems, which, by means of very great and extensive consequences, present the idea of vastness to the mind. A person of true taste may perceive many instances of genuine sublime in geometry, and even in algebra; and the sciences of natural philosophy and astronomy, exhibit the noblest fields of the sublime that the mind of man was ever introduced to. Theorems may also be sublime by their relating to great objects.\footnote{Ibid., p. 157.}

Seemingly then that which is sublime is related to the noble, the grand, the vast, the general, the comprehensive, and other such things, and by giving attention to such subjects the mind is enlarged and receives pleasure.

Speaking of the various pleasures of taste, Priestley mentions briefly the pleasure taken in beauty, novelty,
and grandeur, but he does not give any explanation of his concept of beauty except to declare it a source of pleasure. He seems only to be paying respect to the accepted divisions of taste. He provides a somewhat more definitive account of beauty in writing when he says:

All beauties, and admired strokes in composition, derive their excellence and fine effect, either from drawing out and exercising our faculties, by the views the present to our minds; or else transferring from foreign objects, by the principle of association, ideas which tend to improve the sense of a passage.

Priestley's treatment of the subjects of novelty, sublimity, and beauty coincides with Reid's, as well as with other writers of the century such as Addison. His scattered discussion of these three aesthetic factors in discourse implies, in fact, that he regarded them as being well assimilated by the minds of the day and certainly not his own contribution. They are mentioned here, not because of any indication that Priestley is influenced by Reid to include them, but because they are a point on which the thought of the two men corresponds.

**Argumentation**

Another point of similarity between Reid and Priestley appears in their treatment of argumentation, but here again little can be asserted regarding any causal influence. Priestley, like Reid, designates two kinds of argument.

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164 *Addison*, pp. 540-47.
which he describes as follows:

Logicians speak of two kinds of method in argumentative discourses, the analytic and the synthetic; and the distribution is complete and accurate. For, in all science, we either proceed from particular observations to more general conclusions, which is analysis; or, beginning with more general and comprehensive propositions, we descend to the particular propositions which are contained in them, which is synthesis.165

Noticeably, Priestley does not pretend to differ from the received division of argument into the two types which correspond to Reid's categories of demonstrative and probable reasoning.166 Apparently Priestley understood these divisions to be the work of other men, but he affirms his agreement with them in their classifications.

As a rhetorician, Priestley demonstrates a somewhat greater interest in the practical application of the kinds of argument than Reid. In the following excerpt he reveals this interest:

In the former method [analytic or probable argument] we are obliged in our investigation of truth: for it is only by comparing a number of particular observations which are self-evident, that we perceive any analogy in effects, which leads us to comprehend an uniformity in their cause, in the knowledge of which all science consists. In the latter method it is generally more convenient to explain a system of science to others. For, in general, those truths which were the result of our own inquiry, may be made as intelligible to others by which we arrive at the knowledge of them; and it is easier to show how one general principle comprehends the particulars comprized under it, than to trace all those particulars to one that comprehends them all.167

165 Priestley, p. 42.
166 Reid, Intellectual Powers, pp. 475-84.
167 Priestley, pp. 42-43.
Here Priestley proceeds as if he is offering advice to his auditors on the best use of the two methods of argument, and in this overt concern for the application of such argument, he differs somewhat from Reid's more analytical approach. This difference, however, is explicable in the intentions of the respective authors.

Summary

The points on which Reid and Priestley share common ground, their concurrence on aesthetics and argumentation, do not point to the possibility of causal influence, but rather to the likelihood that both men were influenced from other sources.

Though the editors of Priestley's lectures, Bevilacqua and Murphy, indicate that Priestley was indirectly influenced by common-sense philosophy,\(^{168}\) the influence does not manifest itself in any tangible manner as rhetorical theory. Perhaps the most remarkable features of Reid's rhetorical theory are the concepts of common sense and natural language, neither of which receives attention in Priestley's work. For this reason Priestley is treated most tersely in this chapter.

VI. Reid and Kames

There is a probability that Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782), was influenced in his rhetorical and critical

\(^{168}\) Bevilacqua and Murphy, pp. xxvi-xxvii.
thought by Reid's work. Kames' *Elements of Criticism* first appeared in 1761,\(^{169}\) predating Reid's earliest important work, *An Inquiry Into the Human Mind* (1763), by two years. The two men corresponded as early as 1772, and in one case there is an indication that Kames and Reid knew each other personally and not only through their writings. Reid writes to Kames:

> My Lord,—I was very glad to understand, by the letter you honoured me with of November 9, that you got safe home, after a long journey, in such dreadful rainy weather. I got to Mr. C____'s on horseback soon after you left me, where I was in good warm quarters.\(^{170}\)

Reid and Kames corresponded about many subjects related to philosophy and science, and after Kames' death his widow sent her husband's gold snuff box to Reid, apparently as a token of the friendship. Part of Reid's reply to her follows:

> I accept, dear madam, the present you sent to me, as a testimony of your regard, and as a precious relic of a man whose talents I admired and whose virtues I honoured; a man who honoured me with a share of his conversation, and of his correspondence, which is my pride, and which gave me the best opportunity of knowing his real worth.

> I have lost in him one of the greatest comforts of my life; but his remembrance will always be dear to me, and demand my best wishes and prayers for those whom he has left behind him.

> When time has abated your just grief for the loss of such a husband, the recollection of his eminent talents, and of his public and domestic virtues, will pour balm into the wound. Friends are not lost who

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leave such a character behind them, and such an example of those who come after them. 171

The high esteem Reid expresses in this letter indicates a very warm friendship, which would facilitate the free and continuous exchange of ideas. As in previous sections of this chapter, however, the discussion of the relation between these two men will not attempt to show any causal link between their ideas where none is specifically admitted. It will, however, present the areas in which Reid and Kames concur in their understanding of rhetorical matters, and will point up the possibility of causal influence.

Natural Language

Kames' ideas correspond perhaps more closely with Reid's than do those of other eighteenth-century thinkers on the subject of natural language. Kames writes about natural language in the following excerpt:

So intimately connected are the soul and body, that every agitation in the former produceth a visible effect upon the latter. There is, at the same time, a wonderful uniformity in that operation; each class of emotions and passions being invariably attended with an external appearance peculiar to itself. These external appearances or signs may not improperly be considered as a natural language, expressing to all beholders emotions and passions as they arise in the heart. Hope, fear, joy, grief, are displayed externally; the character of a man can be read in his face; and beauty, which makes so deep an impression, is known to result, not so much from regular features, or a fine complexion, as from

good-nature, good sense, sprightliness, sweetness, or other mental quality, expressed upon the countenance. Like Reid, Kames perceives the outward bodily appearances and expressions to be signs of the inward emotions which they supposedly represent. In *An Inquiry Into the Human Mind* Reid defines natural language as "the signs that are naturally expressive of our thoughts." Avoiding Blair's historical approach, Kames finds the speculative attitude which Reid uses more adaptable to his purposes.

Kames continues his examination of natural language by considering man's ability to understand these signs. He writes:

> But by what means we come to understand the language, is a point of some intricacy: it cannot be by sight merely; for upon the most attentive inspection of the human face, all that can be discerned, are figure, color, and motion, which, singly or combined, never can represent a passion, nor a sentiment: the external sign is indeed visible; but to understand its meaning we must be able to connect it with the passion that causes it, an operation far beyond the reach of eyesight. Where, then, is the instructor to be found that can unveil this secret connection? If we apply to experience, it is yielded, that from long and diligent observation, we may in some measure, learn in some measure, in what manner those we are acquainted with express their passions externally; but with respect to strangers, we are left in the dark; and yet we are not puzzled about the meaning of these external expressions in a stranger, more than in a bosom-companion. Further, had we no other means but experience for understanding, the external expressions of passions form a language understood by all, by the young as well as the old, by the ignorant as well as the learned. I talk of the plain and legible characters of

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that language; for undoubtedly we are much indebted to experience in deciphering the dark and more delicate expressions. 175

Here Kames asserts his belief that man learns to understand many of these natural external signs of inward emotions by experience. He differs in this matter from Reid, who maintains that natural signs are possessed by man "previous to all compact or agreement [about the meanings of words]"; these natural signs "have a meaning which every man understands by the principles of his nature," and prior to any experience with them. 176

Regardless of this apparent disagreement on how man comes to understand natural signs, Kames and Reid concur on the division of all language into two varieties. Kames calls these voluntary and involuntary, while Reid's divisions are called natural and artificial. According to Kames "words are obviously voluntary signs; and they are arbitrary. . . ." 177 Amplifying this concept further, he writes of voluntary signs other than words, saying:

The other kind of voluntary signs comprehends certain attitudes or gestures that naturally accompany certain emotions with surprising uniformity; excessive joy is expressed by leaping, dancing, or some elevation of the body; excessive grief, by sinking or depressing it; and prostration and kneeling have been employed by all nations, and in all ages, to signify profound veneration. Another circumstance, still more than uniformity, demonstrates these gestures to be natural, viz. their remarkable conformity or resemblance to the passions that produce them. . . . Joy, which is a cheerful elevation of the mind, is expressed by an elevation of body; pride, magnanimity, courage, and the whole tribe of

175Kames, pp. 229-30. 176Reid, Inquiry, p. 117. 177Kames, p. 230.
elevating passions, are expressed by external gestures that are the same as to the circumstances of elevation, however distinguishable in other respects, and hence an erect posture is a sign or expression of dignity. . . . Grief, on the other hand, as well as respect, which depress the mind, cannot, for that reason, be expressed more significantly than by similar depression of the body; and hence, to be cast down, is a common phrase, signifying to be grieved or dispirited. 178

Kames develops a ramification of the theory of natural language which Reid does not treat, speculating that in some way the body is related to and affected by the emotions it feels, and has what appears to be an innate tendency to imitate the emotion. Hence, for example, an elevating emotion such as joy literally elevates the body.

Though Reid does not recognize the possibilities of Kames' theory of voluntary signs, he does concur in Kames' analysis of involuntary, or artificial signs. Kames writes:

The involuntary signs, which are all of them natural, are either peculiar to one passion, or common to many. Every vivid passion hath an external expression peculiar to itself, not excepting pleasant passions; witness admiration and mirth. The pleasant emotions that are less vivid have one common expression; from which we may gather the strength of the emotion, but scarce the kind; we perceive a cheerful or contented look; and we can make no more of it. Painful passions, being all of them violent, are distinguishable from each other by their external expressions; thus fear, shame, anger, anxiety, dejection, despair, have each of them peculiar expressions, which are apprehended without the least confusion; some painful passions produce violent effects upon the body, trembling, for example, startling, and swooning; but these effects, depending in a good measure upon singularity of constitution, are not uniform in all men. 179

Kames does not adequately distinguish between voluntary signs which are "attitudes or gestures that naturally

accompany certain emotions with surprising uniformity" and the involuntary signs which "are either peculiar to one passion, or common to many." Seemingly, voluntary signs which are not words but which, because of the regularity with which they accompany certain emotions, are distinguished as voluntary may upon occasion appear to be involuntary, or natural signs as Reid calls them. Reid seems to have worked out this problem far more clearly than Kames. He declares those signs natural whose meaning is not predicated upon a previously compacted meaning; artificial signs, conversely, are those whose meanings are agreed upon in advance.180

Generally, Kames' notion of voluntary and involuntary signs corresponds quite closely with Reid's. The two men agree so closely, in fact, that the possibility of influence of one upon the other or of their mutual influence is virtually inescapable.

Aesthetics

It is not difficult to determine the source of Kames' theory of aesthetics, which includes novelty, grandeur, and beauty as the three objects of taste. He gives a large amount of space to these ideas, devoting a separate chapter to each of the three.181 Reid treats the subjects

180Reid, Inquiry, p. 117.

181Kames, pp. 102-28, 129-37, 152-57.
in considerably less space,\textsuperscript{182} but essentially little difference exists between the ideas of Reid and Kames on these matters.

The subject may be treated briefly because of the discussion of it earlier in this chapter, and because the many authors who treated the subjects of novelty, grandeur, and beauty as a trinity apparently gathered their inspiration either directly or indirectly from Joseph Addison. The matter is mentioned here, however, because it is yet another point on which Reid and Kames concur, possibly indicating a common interest in Addison.

\textbf{Summary}

Though little of interest can be said about the fact that Reid and Kames concur regarding the objects of taste, the degree of their agreement on the nature of language is more remarkable. Seemingly Kames and Reid were developing their thoughts on communication at about the same time, and there appears every possibility that an exchange of ideas took place, either in the form of manuscripts or conversations and letters. Whether the relationship between Kames and Reid was close enough to warrant an assertion that one influenced the other on the theory of language remains uncertain, however.

VII. Reid and Adam Smith

Adam Smith (1723-1790) is another eighteenth-century figure who gave some attention to communication. Because Smith's lectures on rhetoric at the University of Glasgow are a significant contribution to communication theory, and because of the possibility of some influence between Smith and Reid, Smith may appropriately be considered in this chapter. Smith lectured on rhetoric and belles lettres at the University of Glasgow from November 1762 to February 1763. Reid became Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow in 1763, succeeding Smith in that post. Before this appointment Reid had served as Professor of Philosophy at King's College at the University of Aberdeen. There is no indication that Reid heard Smith's lectures, but he was aware of them and apparently admired them. In his inaugural lecture at the University of Glasgow Reid requested help in finding any of Smith's lecture notes, including those on rhetoric.

Whether Reid actually acquired Smith's notes remains uncertain, but his interest in Smith's work is clearly indicated and the probability of his knowledge of Smith is


185 Alexander Campbell Fraser, Thomas Reid (London: Oliphant, Anderson, and Ferrier, 1898), p. 76.
great. Reid's first important work, *An Inquiry Into the Human Mind*, of course, appeared in print only slightly prior to his arrival at Glasgow,186 lessening the probability of Smith's being directly influenced by that work. The possibility remains, however, that each was influenced by the other in some other way. The evidence shows only that Reid was interested in Smith after he succeeded him at Glasgow. No certainty exists about the relationship between the two men prior to this time, but there are some similarities in their works dealing with rhetoric.

### The Origin and Nature of Language

Both Reid and Smith deal with the origin and nature of language, and both take a rather speculative approach to the subject. In one lecture, Smith attempts to focus attention upon man's beginnings to discover the origin of language in the pristine ages of civilization. He describes the situation in which language developed in the following passage:

> Two savages who met together and took up their dwelling in the same place would very soon endeavour to get signs to denote those objects which most frequently occurred and with which they were most concerned. The cave they lodged in, the tree from whence they got their food, or the fountain from whence they drank, would all soon be distinguished by particular names, as they would have frequent occasion to make their thoughts about them known to one another, and would by mutual consent agree on certain signs whereby this might be accomplished. Afterwards when they met with other trees, caves, and fountains, concerning which they would have occasion to

186Stewart, pp. 9-10.
converse, they would naturally give the same name to them as they had before given to other objects of the same kind.\(^{187}\)

Seemingly Smith imagines that language originated by the arbitrary assignation of words to stand for things. He sees no natural connection between the sounds of words and the meanings they denote. Nor does he concern himself with why these savages would "endeavour to get signs to denote those objects which most frequently occurred and with which they were most concerned," nor with whether any natural language existed before the use of words.

In this respect at least Smith differs from Reid, who, of course, postulates the existence of a natural language prior to the use of the artificial language of words. Like Reid, however, Smith understands words as purely arbitrary signs which stand for things. Similarly, Reid and Smith concur in their postulation that meanings are assigned to words by the "mutual consent" of those who use the words.\(^{188}\) In brief, Reid and Smith concur to some degree in their understanding of the origin of language but the extent of the agreement is not great enough to assert any influence between them. There is a possibility that both men came upon their ideas about the origin of language from a common source, but no mention appears in their writings of this possibility.

Aesthetics

Smith and Reid seem to agree in their notions of the objects of taste, but as stated before regarding Kames, this is a topic on which many eighteenth-century rhetoricians and critics concur. For that reason it is treated briefly here.

Smith discusses novelty, grandeur, and beauty, but only in scattered and rather succinct remarks. Defining grandeur, he says that "whatever we see that is great or noble excites our admiration and amazement; and whatever is little or mean on the other hand excites our contempt," and adds that "a great object never excites our laughter, neither does a mean one, simply as being such. It is the blending and joining of those two ideas which alone gives that emotion." In another lecture, he talks of grandeur and beauty together:

As there are two sorts of objects that excite our admiration, viz. when an object is grand, or when it is beautiful; and two that excite our contempt, viz. those that are little or mean, or such as are deformed or disagreeable in themselves; so there must be two sorts of ridicule proceeding from the combinations of these different objects: firstly, when mean objects are exposed by considering them as grand; or secondly, when grand ones, or such as pretend or are expected to be so, are ridiculed by exposing the meanness and littleness which is found in them. Here, however, Smith is as concerned with producing the effect of ridicule as he is with producing grandeur and beauty. He mentions grandeur and beauty only as they re-

\[189\] Smith, p. 39.  \[190\] Ibid., p. 44.
late to the real subject of his concern, the use of ridicule.

The subject of novelty arises in another of Smith's lectures. He decries the poor estate of the novel as a literary form, saying: "As newness is the only merit in a novel and curiosity the only motive which induces us to read them, the writers are necessitated to make use of this method to keep it up."\textsuperscript{191} Even in this brief comment, however, Smith reveals a striking similarity to Reid, who warns that "... things that have nothing to recommend them but novelty, are fit only to entertain children, or those who are distressed from a vacuity of thought."\textsuperscript{192} Though Reid is somewhat more explicit in his disapproval of novelty for the sake of novelty, both men agree in this matter.

Of course Smith's remarks about the objects of taste are quite brief, perhaps because he recognized that the subject had been thoroughly treated by others, but they provide evidence enough to confirm the fact that, like Reid,\textsuperscript{193} he acknowledged the validity of the triad: novelty, grandeur, and beauty.

Summary

Upon textual analysis of the rhetorical writing of Smith and Reid, little can be stated with certainty about the nature or cause of the agreement. The fact that they

\textsuperscript{191}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 91.


\textsuperscript{193}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 490-508.
agree, however, is interesting in itself and probably points up a common source of influence, as in the case of the objects of taste, or possibly the fact that they developed their ideas simultaneously without external influences.

VIII. Reid and Thomas Sheridan

Thomas Sheridan (1719-1788), another contemporary of Reid's, deserves mention here as showing some agreement with Reid's theory of communication in *A Course of Lectures on Elocution*, which he delivered at Oxford in 1759. Though Sheridan does not confirm the fact that he drew directly from Reid's thought on language, and though Reid does not acknowledge an acquaintance with Sheridan, Reid's theory of the nature and use of language is quite similar to Sheridan's.

Like Reid, Sheridan divides language into two kinds, declaring:

... we have in use two different kinds of language, which have no sort of affinity between them, but custom has established, and which are communicated thro' different organs: one, thro' the eye, by means of written characters; the other, thro' the ear, by means of articulate sounds and tones. But these two kinds of language are so early in life associated, that it is difficult ever to separate them; or not to suppose that there is some kind of natural connection between them. And it is a matter of importance to us, always to bear in mind, that there is no sort of affinity between them, but what arises from an habitual association of ideas. Tho' we come to consider them in relation to others, we see clearly enough their utter independence of each

other; as is obvious in the case of men born blind, or deaf; the former of whom may be perfect masters of the language which is spoken, and the latter of that which is written; tho' neither of them can form an idea of the other's language, or of the manner, by which a communication of that sort, between the deaf and the blind, is possible. 195

Sheridan divides the kinds of language according to the manner in which they are perceived. One kind of language is received visually and the other aurally. He further explains that we have these two means of receiving communication by the design of nature, which "did not trust an article, so essential to the well-being of man, to communication by one sense only; she has also made it visible to the eye, as well as audible to the ear." 196 As a kind of safeguard against the loss of all communication, nature has provided a back-up system to assure that man is always provided some means of communication.

Sheridan calls the former kind of language the "hand-writing of nature" and the latter the "speech" of nature, and further declares that each kind of language "carries evident marks with it, of its divine original; as it corresponds exactly to its archetype, and is therefore universally legible, without pains or study; and as it contains in itself a power, of exciting similar, or analogous emotions." 197 Man then has some original ability to know the

196 Ibid., p. 144. 197 Ibid.
meaning of the written language without having encountered it before. He can perceive the meaning of natural language because of the affinity which the language has for the thing it signifies. For instance, the handwriting of nature might be a frown which conveys the meaning of its archetype, a sentiment of disapproval. Nowhere, however, is Sheridan explicit about the elements of this natural language of which he speaks.

Reid's articulation of the theory of natural language is clearer than Sheridan's though they hold similar views of it. Sheridan's designation of the kinds of language according to the manner in which they are perceived by men is only slightly different from Reid's. Reid differentiates the artificial from the natural language according to the manner in which their signs acquire meaning. The signs of artificial language "have no meaning but what is affixed to them by compact or agreement among those who use them," and the signs of natural language "have a meaning which every man understands by the principles of his nature." The two men agree, however, that natural language, or the "handwriting" of nature, is universally understood without previous agreement upon its meaning. Generally, their concepts of the nature of language are similar enough to justify speculation about the reasons for this likeness.

\[198\] Reid, Inquiry, p. 117.
Because Sheridan delivered his lectures at about the same time that Reid was formulating his *Inquiry Into the Human Mind* Sheridan could not have been influenced directly by that work. Further, there is no evidence that Sheridan was aware of Reid's thought at all, whether from Reid's lectures at the University of Aberdeen or in the Aberdeen Philosophical Society. Sheridan's theory of language, like Reid's and other writers' mentioned in this chapter, appeared at about the same time, giving credence to the speculation that this particular theory was widely known and accepted during the eighteenth century. No ownership can be rightfully credited to Reid, although his was one of the early discussions of it. The similarity between Sheridan and Reid on this point, however, requires its brief mention here.

**IX. Reid and Edward T. Channing**

Edward T. Channing (1790-1856), an American who made an appreciable contribution to rhetorical theory, might also be considered in this examination of Reid's relation to his contemporaries even though Channing lived most of his life in the nineteenth century. An analysis of the relation between Reid and Channing has been done by Dorothy I. Anderson and Waldo W. Braden in the introduction to their edition of *Channing's Lectures Read to Seniors in*
Harvard College. Anderson and Braden point out the correlation between Channing's and Reid's approaches to the subject of rhetoric and the similarities in their views on the nature and use of language. They do not speculate about any causal influence of Reid upon Channing. They do assert, however, that Channing was influenced by several eighteenth-century thinkers, and add that

Specifically Channing reflects the philosophy of Thomas Reid, the Scottish common sense philosopher (1710-1796), whose methods and conclusions are reflected in the rhetorics of Blair, Campbell, and Whately, and whose ideas and those of his follower, Dugald Stewart, permeate the thinking of American academic communities, especially Harvard, during the late eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth century.200

Anderson and Braden thus note the possibility of influence upon Channing by others besides Reid. They summarize this relationship to other eighteenth-century minds in the following manner:

In rhetorical theory, Channing is clearly in the same stream with Kames, Blair, and Campbell. He was the typical nineteenth-century rhetorician and teacher attempting to ground his discipline firmly in the Scottish philosophy, seeing rhetoric as the root of all the verbal communicative processes, attempting to strengthen all the faculties involved in verbal communication, and recognizing the interaction of society and the individual communicator.201


200 Ibid., p. xxı. 201 Ibid., p. lıı.
Anderson and Braden seem to recognize that to state with certainty a causal influence between Reid and Channing is to misconstrue the available facts. They justifiably resort to an assertion of the probability of such influence, stating that the evidence reveals that "Channing is clearly in the same stream with Kames, Blair, and Campbell."

X. Summary

Virtually all that can be stated with certainty about most of the men examined in this chapter is that they are "in the same stream" with Thomas Reid, and that they give tacit assent to his thought on some points. Asserting more than this, except in cases where Reid's influence is clearly acknowledged, places any student of eighteenth-century communication in a most tenuous position. Campbell and Whately, for instance, cite Reid and reveal their knowledge of his thought on common sense. In doing so they warrant an assertion of the fact that Reid influenced their thought in this matter. Of the two men, however, only Campbell recognizes the rhetorical significance of the theory of common sense. Like Reid, Campbell discusses common sense as a source of evidence. Whately, on the other hand, mentions Reid's epistemology only briefly in one place and presents in another an argument from popularity very similar in form to those used by Reid to prove common sense first principles. In other words, only in the case of Campbell is there any evidence that Reid's notion of
common sense had any actual effect on rhetorical theory. In this case, of course, Campbell acknowledges his indebtedness to Reid.

While the evidence of Reid's influence upon his contemporaries is circumstantial in most cases, it serves to underscore some possibility of a causal relationship between his ideas and those of the prominent rhetoricians of his time. The similarities between his thought on language and that of the rhetoricians discussed in this chapter are obvious, and these clearly invite the statement that the rhetorical thought of Thomas Reid, in varying degrees, is in the tradition of that of Campbell, Blair, Whately, Priestley, Kames, Smith, Sheridan, and Channing.
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ESSAYS AND ARTICLES IN COLLECTIONS


UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL

Aberdeen Philosophical Society Minutes, 1758-1771; Aberdeen University Library, MS 539 (on microfilm in the library of the State University of Iowa).


APPENDIX

SUPPLEMENTARY BIBLIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL

I. A Chronological List of Reid's Major Works


**An Inquiry Into the Human Mind** (1763).

**A Brief Account of Aristotle's Logic** (1774), first published in the appendix of Lord Kames' Sketches of Man.


**Essays on the Active Powers of Man** (1788).

**A Statistical Account of the University of Glasgow** (1799).

II. Other Sources for Reid's Works


III. Unpublished Materials

Those researching Reid's thought may wish to inspect the appendices to *The Scottish Philosophy* by
James McCosh*, in which the author includes a list of the questions proposed for discussion in the Aberdeen Philosophical Society and summarizes some of Reid's unpublished manuscripts lent to McCosh by Francis Edmund of Aberdeen.

IV. Orations

Four orations, delivered in Latin by Reid at graduation ceremonies in King's College, Aberdeen, from 1753-1762, are collected and edited by Walter Robinson Humphries**. They do not provide additional insight into Reid's communication theory, however, and are not cited in the text of this study for that reason.

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VITA

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