

*omni* says :—

1. Anything whatever predicated of a whole class,
2. Under which class something else is contained,
3. May be predicated of that which is so contained.

What is the predicate of the conclusion? *More likely to be false than a miracle to be true.* Of what is it predicated? Of *the evidence on which the Christian miracles are believed.* But in order that the predicate may be justly affirmed of the subject in the conclusion, it must already have been predicated in the premises of another subject which represents a whole class. What is the subject in the premises? *Testimony.* All testimony *whatsoever?* Does the major proposition mean that "all testimony whatsoever is a kind of evidence more likely to be false than a miracle to be true?" Hume himself would not surely say so, therefore the premises are two particular propositions from which no conclusion can be drawn, and this carefully prepared argument is in open violation of the principle which was considered too obvious and simple ever to be stated. Thus it is with every fallacious reasoning. The cleverest writers, the most original thinkers make the most glaring mistakes, from which a knowledge of a few simple rules of Logic would have preserved them. It is easy to see how difficult it is to become a good argumentative writer without studying Logic. For in any serious writing whose object is not merely to please, but to persuade or to teach, we must lay down propositions. Otherwise the whole train of reasoning will be perplexed, obscure and loose. In order to lay down these propositions we must already have formed in our own minds the judgments of which the propositions are but the expression. In each of these judgments there is a subject and a predicate, and the latter is said to agree or disagree with the former. But before this can be said, subject and predicate must each be separately known, clearly and distinctly. We must have a clear and distinct mental picture of each one of them, in other words we must have clear and distinct ideas of them. Here is precisely where many writers fail. It is acknowledged that clear style does not necessarily follow from clear ideas. A sailor has clear ideas of the various parts of a ship's rigging; he may even have a

clear idea of the science of navigation; but it is almost certain that he will not convey his ideas on these matters clearly to a landsman, that is, that his style of expression will not be clear. But clearness of expression, though it does not necessarily accompany clearness of thought, cannot exist without it. We are told of the American philosopher Emerson that "his style is of a crystal transparency; and if at times his meaning is as vague as a riddle, the fault must be laid to his cloudy ideas, not to obscurity in their expression." This seems rather paradoxical, and it is so. How can we credit an author with "transparency of style," when his "meaning is as vague as a riddle"? Did we not, when we first began to study composition, learn the definition, "style is the dress in which thought exhibits itself, and by which it makes its power felt"? And, sad to say, instead of being considered merely obscure, such writers as Emerson are generally thought to be very profound. It would be well to remember Dean Swift's caustic remark: "Whatever is dark is deep. Stir a puddle, and it is deeper than a well." If no man ever put pen to paper until he had clear and distinct ideas of what he wished to write, there would be many authors lost to the world, but the world would be the better for it.

But given that the author has clear ideas, it by no means follows, as has already been said, that he will express these ideas with clearness and force. To assist him to do this is the object of Rhetoric, and Rhetoric is nothing but the development of special principles of Logic. To obtain clearness or perspicuity of style, not only must the ideas be clear, but the arrangement of the expressions must be attended to. If the author is writing a discourse, or indeed any other serious work, nothing is more essential to clearness than a good division. The laws of division, as laid down by Logic, might, like the *dictum de omni*, be considered by many as too obvious and simple. They might find occasion to take offence, if reminded that the parts into which a whole is divided must, when taken together, be equal to that whole, or that one member of a division must not include another. Yet in how many scientific works, I don't think we need go outside our own text books for at least one example, do we find that half the value of the work has been sacri-