

an act of judgement a *proposition*; and an act of reasoning an *argument*. An argument, regularly expressed, is called a *Syllogism*.

A Syllogism therefore is an argument consisting of three terms so arranged that the conclusion, or third term, necessarily follows from the other two; as,

Every virtue is commendable;

Diligence is a virtue;

Therefore diligence is commendable.

Every Syllogism has three terms; viz, the *major*, the *minor*, and the *middle term*, or, as they are sometimes called, the *major* and *minor extremes*, and the *middle term*. The major term is the attribute of the conclusion; the minor term, the subject of the conclusion; and the middle term is that with which the other two terms are compared in order to judge of their agreement or disagreement. Every syllogism moreover has three propositions; viz. the *major proposition*; the *minor proposition*; and the *conclusion*. The major proposition contains the major extreme and the middle term; as, in the above example, "*Every virtue is commendable.*" The minor proposition contains the minor extreme and the middle term; as, "*Diligence is a virtue.*" The conclusion contains the major and minor terms or extremes; as, "*Therefore diligence is commendable.*"

In forming a Syllogism its validity may be tested by the following rules;

Rule I. If two terms agree with one and the same third, they will agree with each other; as,

A is equal to B,

And C is equal to B;

Therefore A is equal to C.

Rule II. If one term agrees, and another disagrees with one and the same third, these two will disagree with each other. On the former of these rules rests the validity of *affirmative* conclusions; on the latter, of *negative*. The *major* proposition of every *Syllogism* should be universal, and incontestably true. The following Syllogism is therefore incorrect.

Some men are intemperate;

John is a man;

Therefore he is intemperate.

But if we say; All men shall die;

John is a man;

Therefore he shall die; it is correct.

From an ambiguous middle no definite conclusion can be drawn; as,

Light is contrary to darkness;

Feathers are light; therefore

Feathers are contrary to darkness.

From negative premises nothing can be inferred; as,

A fish is not a quadruped;

A bird is not a quadruped, proves nothing.