

shame about her, as some people said, it certainly did not come from the fact that she was in receipt of a salary for the performance of certain prescribed duties. Such remuneration was, she thought, as honourable as the Doctor's income; but to her American intelligence, the acceptance of a present of money from a Marchioness would have been a degradation."¹

Among examples of successful exposition that are too long to quote are: the lecture on "Idealism and Naturalism," in Mr. Otto Pfeleiderer's "Philosophy and Development of Religion;" the chapter on "Intellectual Education," in Mr. Herbert Spencer's "Education;" the chapter on "Money," in Mill's "Principles of Political Economy;" the chapter on "Sweetness and Light," in Matthew Arnold's "Culture and Anarchy;" the report of the Committee on Secondary School Studies to the National Council of Education; Walter Bagehot's "English Constitution;" Mr. A. R. Wallace's "Darwinism."²

¹ Anthony Trollope: Dr. Wortle's School, part i. chap. ii.
² Other examples are given in "Specimens of Exposition," selected and edited by Hammond Lamont.

CHAPTER IV.

ARGUMENT.

ARGUMENT, like exposition, addresses the understanding; but there is an important difference between the two. Exposition achieves its purpose if it makes the persons addressed understand what is said; argument achieves its purpose if it makes them believe that what is maintained is true: exposition aims at explaining, argument at convincing. The difference between an argument and an exposition may be shown by a comparison between the address of an advocate to the jury and the charge of the judge. The advocate tries to convince the jury that his client has the right on his side; the judge, if he has the truly judicial spirit, tries to make the jury understand the question at issue exactly as it is.

The work of argument is sometimes done by exposition. Thus, Cardinal Newman¹ expounds the distinction between true and false education so skilfully that the reader draws for himself the conclusion suggested, but not proved, by the author; and Webster² points out so plainly the evils that would result from an attempt to nullify a law of the United States that the inference from what he says is unmistakable. Argument which thus takes the form of expo-

¹ See pages 312, 313.

² See pages 308-310.

sition may be more effective than it would be in its own form.

The way for argument is often prepared by exposition. Some words of the assertion in dispute may need to be defined and their relations to one another made clear. If the subject is novel or complex, the assertion as a whole may need to be explained before the argument is begun. It is useless to try to convince a man of the truth of anything that he does not understand.

Argument prepared for by exposition.

SECTION I.

PROPOSITION AND PROOF.

The body of every composition in which reasoning plays an important part consists of the PROPOSITION in dispute, — the assertion which is to be proved or disproved, — and the PROOF, which includes whatever tends to show either that this proposition is true or that it is false. The aim of argument is to convince the persons addressed that the proof is sufficient to establish, or to overthrow, the proposition.

For exposition a word may serve as subject, since one form of exposition is the definition of a word; but for argument a word cannot so serve. "Honesty," for example, is in no just sense a subject for argument; for, though many propositions about honesty can be framed, the word by itself suggests no one of them rather than another: but "Honesty is the best policy" is a subject; for it makes a definite assertion, an assertion that can be reasoned about.

Nothing can free a writer or a speaker from the obligation of having the proposition distinctly fixed in his own

Proposition and proof defined.

A word not a subject for argument.

mind before he begins his argument; for he cannot safely take the first step toward proving a proposition until he knows exactly what proposition is to be proved. The process of investigation, by which a man arrives at certain conclusions, should be completed before the argumentative process, by which he endeavors to convince others of the correctness of those conclusions, can advantageously be begun.

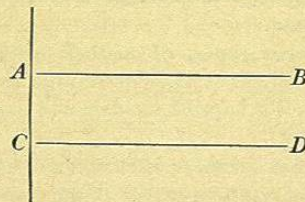
Importance of having a distinct proposition in mind.

Proof may be either direct or indirect. Direct proof goes straight to the desired conclusion. Indirect proof demonstrates the truth of a proposition by showing that the opposite conclusion is absurd; it is, therefore, called *reductio ad absurdum*.

Proof, direct and indirect.

A familiar example of *reductio ad absurdum* may be taken from a treatise on geometry: —

"Two perpendiculars to the same straight line are parallel.



"Let the lines AB and CD be perpendicular to AC .

"To prove AB and CD parallel.

"If AB and CD are not parallel, they will meet in some point if sufficiently produced.

"We should then have two perpendiculars from the same point to AC , which is impossible.

"[From a given point without a straight line but one perpendicular can be drawn to the line.]

"Therefore, AB and CD cannot meet, and are parallel." ¹

¹ Webster Wells: The Elements of Geometry, book i.