

## ADVERTISEMENT

AT the end of my logic I have traced the plan of the elements of ideology, such as I conceived they ought to be, to give a complete knowledge of our intellectual faculties, and to deduce from that knowledge the first principles of all the other branches of our knowledge, which can never be founded on any other solid base. It has been seen that I divide these elements into three sections. The first is properly the history of *our means of knowledge*, or of what is commonly called our understanding. The second is the application of this study to *that of our will and its effects*, and it completes the history of our faculties. The third is the application of this knowledge of our faculties to the study of those beings which are not ourselves, that is to say of all the beings which surround us. If the second section is an introduction to the moral and political sciences, the third is that to the physical and mathematical; and both, preceded by a scrupulous examination into the nature of our certitude and the causes of our errors, appear to me to form a respectable whole, and to compose what we ought really to call the *first philosophy*. I even believe this to have been proved in my third volume, chapter the ninth.

If I cannot flatter myself with the hope of bringing so important a work to perfection, I wish at least to contribute to it as much as is in my power; and I hope to contribute to it, perhaps even by the faults from which I shall not have been able to guard myself. My three first volumes of *ideology*, *grammar* and *logic*, compose the first section, or the history of our means of knowledge.

I am now about to commence the second section or the treatise on the will and its effects; but before entering on this new subject I think it right to add yet something to that which I have said on the first. Here then will be found, under the name of a supplement to the first section, something further supporting by some new observations my manner of conceiving the artifice of judgment and reasoning.

I hope it will not be displeasing to the amateurs of this research; because in condensing and bringing more closely together the most important of my logical principles, I present them under a new aspect,

and have moreover added some considerations on the theory of probabilities, which are not without interest, considering the little progress this science has hitherto made. Those too who are not curious as to the latter article, and who may be sufficiently satisfied with my theory of logic and convinced of its justice, may save themselves the trouble of reading this supplement, which is but a superabundance of proof.

Afterwards follows *the treatise on the will and its effects*; the first part of which I now submit to the public. It is to contain three. The first, which treats of our actions; the second, which treats of our sentiments; and the third, which treats of the manner of directing our actions and our sentiments. These three parts are very distinct in their foundation, although closely connected with one another; and I shall be very careful not to confound them, notwithstanding the numerous relations which unite them, and to avoid as much as possible all repetitions. But it will readily be perceived that there are general considerations which are common to them; and that before speaking of the effects and consequences of our *willing faculty*, and of the manner of directing it, we must speak of this faculty itself. This will be the subject of a preliminary discourse, composed of seven chapters or paragraphs. I fear it will appear too abstract; and that many readers will be impatient at being detained so long in generalities which seem to retard the moment of real entry on our subject. I can agree that I could have abridged them. If I have not done it, it is because I have been well persuaded that I should gain time under the appearance of losing it.

In effect I pray that it may be considered, that wishing really to place the moral and political sciences on their true basis, a knowledge of our intellectual faculties, it was necessary to begin by considering our faculty or will under all its aspects; and that this preliminary examination being once made, almost all the principles will find themselves established naturally, and we shall advance very rapidly afterwards, because we shall never be obliged to retrace our steps. If any one wishes to satisfy himself of the advantage of this course, he has only to commence reading the book after the preliminary discourse. He will see every instant that he has need of an incidental dissertation, to obviate the difficulties which will have been solved before; and so much the worse for those who should not experience this necessity, for such are capable of being persuaded without sufficient reason. There are but too many readers endowed with this kind of indulgence; but it is not of their suffrages I am most ambitious. I consent then that they shall

accuse me of having said too much; but I should be very sorry if those who are more difficult, should be able to accuse me of having passed over some links in the chain of ideas. It is especially in the commencement that this fault would be most unpardonable, for then it might lead to the most serious errors; and it is thence that arise all those erroneous systems which are the more deceiving, inasmuch as the defect is hidden in the foundation, and all that appears is consequent and well connected. Should the last reproach be urged, my only answer would be that I have made every effort not to deserve it; and I can at the same time protest, that I have not sought beforehand any of those results to which I have been conducted, and that I have only followed the thread which guided me, the series of ideas exerting all my attention not to break it. The judgment of the public will teach me whether I have succeeded, and I will not forestall it by any other preface than this simple advertisement.

My plan, my motives, and my manner of proceeding have been sufficiently explained in the preceding volumes.