

**THE PROCESS OF  
ARGUMENT: A  
CONTRIBUTION TO  
LOGIC; PP. 4-235**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649681839

The Process of Argument: A Contribution to Logic; pp. 4-235 by Alfred Sidgwick

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**ALFRED SIDGWICK**

**THE PROCESS OF  
ARGUMENT: A  
CONTRIBUTION TO  
LOGIC; PP. 4-235**



THE  
PROCESS OF ARGUMENT

473508

A CONTRIBUTION TO LOGIC

BY

ALFRED SIDGWICK

AUTHOR OF

"FALLACIES," "DISTINCTION, AND THE CRITICISM OF BELIEFS," ETC.

LONDON  
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK

1893

*All rights reserved*

X



## PREFACE

THIS book, like my former ones, has for its aim the extension of a knowledge of the more useful parts of Logic. It is written for those who are interested rather in the war against fallacy than in the grammatical inquiries which form so large a part of the Logic taught in the text-books.

Some care has therefore been taken to use words as far as possible in their everyday sense. Wherever it has seemed more convenient to depart at all from the commonest custom, reasons are given and the departure is left optional. No attempt is made to force the reader to accept hard doctrines or strange definitions, which are not yet his own.

It is specially in regard to the meaning of technical terms that this negative mode of treatment shows itself. In Logic, as in other subjects, the leading terms are capable of better and worse definition, and it is not unusual to find that doctors differ on the question which definitions are best. In all such cases the aim of this book is to help the beginner to improve his own first notions for himself, rather than to get him to accept any ready-made ones which happen to seem satisfactory to some particular school of thought.

Appendix A is part of an article contributed to *Mind*, which the Editor kindly allows me to reprint. Special thanks are due to Mr. Carveth Read for the many improvements he has helped me to make throughout.

JULY 1893.



guarded, less impulsive, more conscious of the victory over doubt.

( This weighing of judgment, this balancing of reasons for and against the truth of a belief, this awakens of our critical faculty, is here to be included under the notion of "argument." We shall not restrict the word argument to mean only disputation between two parties, but shall take it in the widest possible sense. At any rate the process which is here to be discussed occurs in the mind of an individual, as well as where two individuals are disputing; and we may call it the process of argument in default of a better name.) ( So understood, there is argument wherever an inference is critically drawn, or wherever a judgment is critically formed, even when the criticism against which it stands firm proceeds from our own critical faculty in the absence of any opponent.) Still, the process can best be observed in cases where there is a conflict of opinion, and therefore there is some convenience in draw-

ing illustrations chiefly from argument in the narrower sense.

Objections against an assertion, on the score of its truth, may be divided under two heads,—the objection that it is based upon false “facts,” and the objection that it involves a false inference from facts that perhaps are true. For a reason which is explained in the next chapter, it is enough for Logic to concern itself with the latter form of objection only.

Our plan therefore will be, first to discuss the nature of *Inference* generally,—meaning by inference the *reading of signs*; that is to say, the inferring of one supposed fact from another or others. There is also a different process of “Inference” usually recognised in books on Logic, namely, that of reaching a conclusion by means of merely verbal transformations. From a given *sentence*—say, “All men are mortal”—we may infer certain other *sentences* to be true; for in-

stance, that "No immortals are men," or that "Some men are mortal," "Some mortals are men," and so on. Or, again, we may often take two sentences, and by leaving out a part of both of them, arrive at another sentence (called the "conclusion") whose truth is involved in theirs. To take again the hackneyed example, we may draw from the two sentences "all men are mortal," and "Socrates is a man," the one sentence "Socrates is mortal." There is room for much ingenuity in following out the laws of this kind of inference, and in speculating on the grammatical and other questions suggested by the study of them. But this function is admirably performed already by a host of books too numerous to mention, and too complete to leave room for much improvement. We shall therefore here turn our backs resolutely upon all inquiries into the proper meaning of forms of sentence, singly or combined, and assume in the reader just that knowledge of ordinary grammar which