

Landesbibliothek Oldenburg

Digitalisierung von Drucken

Sketches Of The History Of Man

In Two Volumes

Home, Henry

Edinburgh, 1774

Sect. 2. Of Porphyry's Introduction.

urn:nbn:de:gbv:45:1-697

every branch of human knowledge to its utmost limit; and who was not very scrupulous about the means he took to obtain his end.

We ought, however, to do him the justice to observe, that although the pride and vanity of the sophist appear too much in his writings in abstract philosophy, yet in natural history the fidelity of his narrations seems to be equal to his industry; and he always distinguishes between what he knew and what he had by report. And even in abstract philosophy, it would be unfair to impute to Aristotle all the faults, all the obscurities, and all the contradictions that are to be found in his writings. The greatest part, and perhaps the best part, of his writings is lost. There is reason to doubt whether some of those we ascribe to him be really his; and whether what are his be not much vitiated and interpolated. These suspicions are justified by the fate of Aristotle's writings, which is judiciously related, from the best authorities, in Bayle's dictionary, under the article *Tyrannion*, to which I refer.

His books in logic which remain, are, 1. One book of the Categories. 2. One of Interpretation. 3. First Analytics, two books. 4. Last Analytics, two books. 5. Topics, eight books. 6. Of Sophisms, one book. Diogenes Laertius mentions many others that are lost. Those I have mentioned have commonly been published together, under the name of *Aristotle's Organon*, or *his Logic*; and for many ages, Porphyry's Introduction to the Categories has been prefixed to them.

SECT. 2. *Of Porphyry's Introduction.*

In this Introduction, which is addressed to Chrysoarius, the author observes, That in order to understand Aristotle's doctrine concerning the categories, it is necessary to know what a *genus* is,