Sketches Of The History Of Man

In Two Volumes

Home, Henry

Edinburgh, 1774

Sect. 3. Of the Invention of a Middle Term.

only when it is the subject of an universal proposition, but when it is the predicate of a negative proposition; on the other hand, a term is said to be taken particularly, when it is either the subject of a particular, or the predicate of an affirmative proposition.

SECT. 3. *Of the Invention of a Middle Term.*

The third part of this book contains rules general and special for the invention of a middle term; and this the author conceives to be of great utility. The general rules amount to this, That you are to consider well both terms of the proposition to be proved; their definition, their properties, the things which may be affirmed or denied of them, and those of which they may be affirmed or denied: those things collected together, are the materials from which your middle term is to be taken.

The special rules require you to consider the quantity and quality of the proposition to be proved, that you may discover in what mode and figure of syllogism the proof is to proceed. Then from the materials before collected, you must seek a middle term which has that relation to the subject and predicate of the proposition to be proved, which the nature of the syllogism requires. Thus, suppose the proposition I would prove is an universal affirmative, I know by the rules of syllogisms, that there is only one legitimate mode in which an universal affirmative proposition can be proved; and that is the first mode of the first figure. I know likewise, that in this mode both the premises must be universal affirmatives; and that the middle term must be the subject of the major, and the predicate of the minor. Therefore of the terms collected according to the general rule, I seek out one or more which have these two properties; first, That the predicate of the proposition to be proved can be universally affirmed of it; and,

secondly,