

problem mentioned is no problem at all, and, as we have suggested, that is just what it is in itself. Many would take the whole thing as "growing pains" that will pass as the student learns more of the Truth. Nevertheless there seems to be a real problem here, subjectively, a real obstacle to the progress of the beginner, a difficulty that will prevent him from giving himself whole-heartedly to the study of Wisdom. Essentially the difficulty lies in a too frequently encountered misunderstanding of the purpose and method of Philosophy. The problem is not one of philosophy, or even of a philosopher, but of one who is or wishes to be a philosopher. It is a consideration of the philosophical starting point as if philosophy were the same as, say, science or

theology. It involves the contradiction of doing something without doing it and of finding something previous to what is first. If the true character of philosophy is made clear at the outset and if the fact is emphasized throughout the course that the proof of philosophical thought is found in its very working out, if the entire problem of human philosophical knowledge thus adumbrated in the beginning of the course is kept in mind throughout, treated from a different point of view in Psychology and "clinched" in the treatise on Natural Theology, there will perhaps be an effective antidote to the writings of certain modern neo-scholastics and neo-thomists who are far more *neo* than they are either scholastic or Thomist.

The Province of Rhetoric and Poetic

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THE literature of all ages is inextricably wound up with rhetorical and poetical theory. This is true even of a time like the present, when rhetorical theory often proceeds by a kind of negation of formal rhetoric. The conscious avoidance of certain devices not only is impossible without the substitution of others, but is itself based on a theory. We can avoid certain techniques, but not technique. Though we may have cultivated a horror of naming our tools, which earlier artists did not know, we still retain some knowledge of how to use them. Hence rhetoric and poetic remain with us.

But rhetorical and poetical theory has most often failed to find the location of the boundaries within which each of these two arts operate. Current studies in literary history have not placed the lines of demarcation any more accurately.¹ Although the literary historian's distinctions between rhetoric and poetic have been more or less sufficient for his immediate purposes, there is still need to settle more definitely how a poetical work differs from a rhetorical one. The investigation of this question falls rather to the lot of the philosopher than to that of the literary historian, and hence the present discussion will be properly philosophical.

I

Those things in the world which are made by man, being artifacts and not as such possessed of any substantial forms of their own, are differentiated from one another in a variety of ways: in terms of a variety of accidents which they possess, as when I speak of square artifacts, or black artifacts; in terms of the material, that is to say, the second matter in which they have their being, as when I speak of works of stone or works of iron; and finally in terms of their final causality—and this is the way in which we most gen-

erally speak of them—as when I speak of a table or of a gun or of a fountain pen.

Differentiation of the works of man in terms of final causality will proceed according to the more or less perfect participation of these works in this principle.² Thus we have the division into works of non-servile or fine arts and works of servile arts. The former are more perfect in the order of final causality in that they are ordered directly to the speculative intellect, to man's enjoyment as things of beauty, and are therefore destined only indirectly for other use, although their contemplation is of course governed by prudence.

Over against these works of fine arts, we have the works of those arts such as the machinist's or the paint manufacturer's art, which works are not directly for contemplation but means to further ends.

Rhetoric Ordered to Action

Within this division of works of art in terms of final causality the division between works of rhetoric and works of poetic falls.³ For, if we take rhetoric to signify what Aristotle took it to signify—"the ability to find the available means of persuasion with reference to any subject whatsoever"⁴—works of rhetoric must be ordered to the production of action in another individual and to action in the sense of something other than contemplation. Works of rhetoric have their finality, then, only in terms of that action to which they are ultimately directed. There is another art, which we call poetic, which produces works ordered to contemplation and to no other direct end, that is, works of beauty. Such works are produced simply to be enjoyed by the one contemplating them.

It is to be noted that this rhetoric and this poetic are logical arts directive of the acts of the intellect itself. It is true that there is what we may call a general poetic, an inclusive order of those arts directed to the production of

¹ Among the studies of rhetoric and poetic should be mentioned Charles Sears Baldwin's *Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1924), *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1928), and *Renaissance Literary Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), as well as Donald Lemen Clark's *Rhetoric and Poetry in the Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1922). A bibliography which includes works on rhetoric and poetic is given by William G. Crane, *Wit and Rhetoric in the Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), pp. 253-76. There are also bibliographies in Baldwin.

² Final causality, form, accident, etc., are of course to be taken analogously when referring to artifacts.

³ There is no need to quibble over words. Rhetoric has some unpleasant meanings that interfere, but the meaning which is here attached to rhetoric is a traditional and accepted one. All that is asked is that the reader look to what is meant here by rhetoric—call it what he will.

⁴ *Rhetoric* i. 2. 1. 1355b.

works for contemplation, which has a kind of unity derived from the community of end realized in such works. This order of arts, or general poetic, breaks down into poetic in the ordinary sense, sculpture, music, painting, and so on.

To this general poetic there corresponds another order of arts which we may call a general rhetoric and which includes those arts which may produce action in others not only by intellectual persuasion but by means other than the significative use of words. The sales agent who installs fluorescent lighting to put his customers at ease and thus indirectly persuade them to buy an automobile is practicing this general rhetoric.

However, the rhetoric and poetic which govern the formal use of words (as significative sounds) are both individual arts. They are logical arts, for each is not only a *habitus* of the intellect (all arts are this) but a *habitus* directive of the operations of the intellect itself. And yet they are not of the same species of logic as that according to which science (*scientia*) proceeds; for the connections in the logic of rhetoric and of poetic are not the necessary connections which exist in the logic of demonstration.

It will help to schematize a text from St. Thomas⁵ (Fig. 1). Schematization of St. Thomas Aquinas in *I Anal. Post.*, Lect. 1.

Figure 1

Ars logica directs the acts of the intellect itself (*actus rationis*).
Ars logica is diversified as are *actus rationis*:

- I. *Intelligentia indivisibilium*
- II. *Compositio vel divisio*
- III. *Discursus*

Treated by Aristotle in:
Praedicamenta (Categoriae)
Perihermenias
 Other logical treatises as follows:

Art, like nature, acts in three ways, and the third act of the intellect has therefore a three-fold diversity, with corresponding arts:

A. *De necessitate ars logica judicativa*
 (*cum certitudine*)

ex forma syllogismi: Analytica Priora cum forma ex materia syllogismi: Analytica Posteriora

B. *Frequentius ars logica inventiva*

1. *In pluribus*

- a. *Cum probabilitate dialectica Topica (Dialectica)*
- b. *Cum suspitione rhetorica Rhetorica*
- c. *Cum existimatione poetica Poetica*

2. *In paucioribus*

sophistica De Sophisticis Elenchis

In the diagram⁶ the connection between the members of the syllogism in *logica judicativa* (or *demonstrativa*) is a necessary one. As we proceed downwards, the connections are seen to become progressively looser. In dialectic (disputation) they require probability. The rhetorical syllogism, or "enthymeme," requires only suspicion—for this degree of certitude is sufficient to induce a man to act. In poetic, the logical connection is merely feigned, for the poet is *making* his connection. Certain and probable connections—more probably ("cum probabilitate") or less probable ("cum suspitione")—exist independently of the poet and hence are not his to make. The sophistical argument, of course, does not really conclude and resists conclusion, so that it is lower on the scale than even the merely assumed argument of poetic.

⁵ In *I Anal. Post.*, lect. 1.

⁶ There are many points of difference among these arts which a scheme such as the one given here does not bring out. See, for example, Averroes *In Libros Rhetoricorum Aristotelis Paraphrasis*, lib. 1, praef. (ed. Venetiis: apud Iuntas, 1574, p. 65a): "Ars quidam Rhetoricae affinis est artis Topicae: quoniam ambae unum finem intendunt, qui est eloqui cum alio. et quo neutra istarum artium homo secum ipse utitur, sicut est Dispositio artis Demonstrationis: sed utitur eis cum alio."

Rhetoric, then, and poetic both differ from the logic of the sciences in that neither requires certitude for its arguments.⁷ Rhetoric must more closely approximate certitude in its conclusions. Poetic contents itself with a logic that is very thin: its argumentation is treated as though it concluded, and this assumption suffices. Furthermore, although rhetoric and poetic are distinct arts directive of the third operation of the intellect, no given work is the product of such an art alone. The works of these arts, as they stand, concreted in matter, are erected by other arts as well, arts which are directive of the physical structure out of which such things are made, as, for instance, an art which directs the rhythmical use of words, and so on. It is the aggregate of all these arts necessary for the production of a work of rhetoric or poetic which is often meant by "rhetoric" or "poetic," and it is such an aggregate that we have called a "general rhetoric" or a "general poetic." A book professing to teach rhetoric may, then, treat of many things other than the enthymeme and the example, and thus present a composite of several arts. Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, for instance, is a composite of this nature.⁸

II

An important phenomenon in literary history is the persistent confusion of poetic with rhetoric or with demonstrative logic.⁹ Poetic and rhetoric are confused when, in an attempt to strengthen its logic, poetic is made to proceed by means of the rhetorical enthymeme and example. Such an attempt can only result in something neither fish nor flesh—a poetic whose works are ordered to the practical intellect. Nevertheless, this sort of monster can be fathered on every age since Plato's. It comes into being when poetry is taken to be a direct means of persuasion, either because the defense of an art which creates objects simply for contemplation is felt to be impossible, or because the common association of certain other arts with both poetic and rhetoric obscures the true position of these latter arts. Since the works of both poetic and rhetoric are concreted in matter which is words, these arts gather around themselves a system of satellitic arts which are often the same for both rhetoric and poetic, arts such as that which governs the production of oral sounds. The fact that these arts are found in connection with both rhetoric and poetic tends to obscure the fact that in each case they are serving a different purpose.

Judicative Logic and Poetic

The confusion which constantly tends to arise between poetic and the logic of demonstration which governs the sciences (including philosophy) is likewise of some importance. Clearly distinct from a work of rhetoric, a philosophical work, which proceeds according to *logica judicativa* and may be taken as typical of all scientific works, is not so easily distinguished from a poetical work. A philosophical treatise, like a poetical work, is directed to the speculative intellect. But in what way? The philosophical is concerned with the communication of something which has its existence independ-

⁷ Historical works occupy a special place by the side of science. History is not science, though it constantly approaches science, as a calculus to its term.

⁸ See, for instance, his treatment of gesture, xi. 3. 65 ff. Quintilian, who was a rhetorician without being a philosopher, defines rhetoric as "bene dicendi scientia." *Op. cit.* ii. 15. 34: "Huic eius substantiae maxime conveniet finitio, rhetoricem esse bene dicendi scientiam." Cf. *ibid.* ii. 15. 38. Not only is Quintilian's rhetoric a composite of many arts, but his "ars" and "scientia" are other things than St. Thomas'.

⁹ Baldwin, *Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic*, pp. 100, 229; *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic*, pp. ix, 24, 39, etc. (see General Index under "poetic merged with rhetoric"). Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-37.

ently of the words used to communicate it, and, while the poetic use of language communicates truth too, it is truth which does not exist in its totality as entirely independent of the language in which it is conveyed. The logical connections are made by the poet. They are fabricated ("cum existimatione"). Consequently, since they do not exist of themselves necessarily, assent to the argument of a poem must be induced by something other than the truths with which the poet deals, so that these truths are apprehended by the intellect with some special kind of cooperation on the part of the senses and emotions that is dependent on the very words in which the truths are presented. Insofar as a work acts independently of the words in which it is presented, it tends toward the scientific treatise.¹⁰

Now, in the confusion of poetic with rhetoric and with demonstrative logic, it is always poetic which tends to disappear. And the reason for this is not far to seek. The principal domestic struggle of Western culture has been between a philosophically centered and a rhetorically centered regimen. The forces engaged have been the champions of the speculative intellect versus the champions of the practical intellect. On this basis was waged the struggle between Socrates and the sophists, the struggle which led to John of Salisbury's *Metalogicus*, and the struggle which was echoed in Swift's *The Battle of the Books*. The victory has gone first to one side and then to another. Under the Roman Empire and until the eleventh century the rhetoricians were in the ascendancy, but by the thirteenth century philosophy seemed destined to win out, only to receive a sharp set-back when rhetoric triumphed and made the Renaissance.¹¹

Meanwhile poetic has had to eke out an existence in occupied territory. Philosophy is eminently speculative. It will do no work. Rhetoric is eminently practical. It will do a work which is itself productive of some work on the part of others. Poetic is practical, but its work is not. It runs shortly to a dead end. Its work is for the speculative intellect here and now, ordered further only indirectly by reason of prudence. Hence, tucked away in its tight little corner, poetical composition has never been accorded the prominence in any curriculum that either rhetoric or philosophy have, and even when rhetoric has fallen on evil days, as it had in the thirteenth century and as it more or less has now, it is still in a position to bestow largess on poetic, which, as an art, is consistently neglected in schools.

Poetry's Results—Indirect

The defense of poetry depends not on what its works do

¹⁰ Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J., a poet highly conscious of technique, had an artist's characteristic awareness of this special mode of operation in poetry:

"Poetry is speech framed for contemplation of the mind by way of hearing or speech framed to be heard for its own sake and interest even over and above its interest of meaning. Some matter and meaning is essential to it but only as an element necessary to support and employ the shape which is contemplated for its own sake." *The Note-Books and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Humphrey House (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), p. 249.

It should be noted, however, that what the poet makes is not independent of the truths he makes it of. The truths he employs are not the poetry, and he can use great truths to make poor poetry indeed, but he cannot make great poetry without great truths. Neither stone nor straw is of my making; nevertheless, although I can badly botch a piece of stone construction I attempt, a better house can be made of stone than of straw. For all this, the poet can utilize any material, for he is not making houses but simply things: his art is in a way coextensive with being.

¹¹ For a thorough and enlightening treatment of the conflict between philosophy and rhetoric that runs through the history of Western civilization, I am particularly indebted to some unpublished work of

directly, but on what they do indirectly. Because so many well-meaning but unobserving persons insist on defending it for the direct results it produces—a line of defense which is untenable—neglecting the entirely valid argument that the organization which a schooled appreciation of poetry imposes upon the human being is something that cannot be attained independently of words of poetic (or of music, painting, and so on), we are continually having the wrong thing defended or the right thing defended for the wrong reasons. This difficulty is, of course, chronic, and will remain so, for the indirect results which works of poetic bring about in the human being are known only to those who have had experience of them.

It will be seen, then, that the contrast between poetic and scientific writing is a more basic one than that between verse and prose. In the one case the difference arises from final causality, while in the other it is merely of accidental origin, dependent upon and ordered to the purpose which the work is to serve.¹² This should be a commonplace. It has been said over and over again from Aristotle's time¹³ on, even by persons whose discussions are critical rather than philosophical, as, for instance, Coleridge.¹⁴ But it represents a stand which is continually being challenged.

There is, of course, a connection between verse and poetry, as there is between prose and scientific writing. Scientific writing, as has already been said, is concerned with the communication of something which has its existence independently of the words used to communicate it. Hence any configuration of those words lies outside the realm of such writing. If a scientific work is written in verse, the configuration is truly an ornament added to the scientific content of the writing. In poetry, however, the verse functions as an intimate part of the work itself. Apart from what special significative force verse rhythms may themselves exert (as in rhythmic onomatopoeia), they constitute a part of the object to be contemplated. Their relation to the "logical" content is close in a work where the connections in such content are, like the verse itself, of the author's own making.

Poetry in Prose

But this is not to identify verse with poetry, for prose, too, may be written to produce a work for contemplation. Such a work would be poetry in the sense in which this word is used here. No more is it to identify verse with one particular kind of rhythmic patterning (as, for example, with the syllable-counting systems of Homer, Vergil, and most English poets after the Conquest, as against the antithetical patterning of Hebrew poetry or the stress patterning of Old English or modern "free" verse).

Rhetoric, falling between *logica judicativa* and poetic, favors a prose development, for the rhetorician, although he deals with that which is not necessary (or certain), is not the "maker" that the poet is. His logic is not as intimately connected as the poet's is with the words in which it is concentered.

It is seen, then, that poetic is distinguished from rhetoric by the relative tenuousness of its logical connections. The

Professor Étienne Gilson made available in a course of lectures delivered recently by Dr. Bernard J. Muller-Thym at St. Louis University. Cf. also Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), pp. 93-126.

¹² Cf. Hopkins again, *op. cit.*, pp. 249-51. This short section, headed "Poetry and Verse," is in reality a chapter on poetic, and directly pertinent to the present discussion.

¹³ *Poetics* i. 7-12. 1447b.

¹⁴ See *Biographia Literaria*, ed. by J. Shawcross (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1907), Ch. XIV (II, 5-13—esp. 10).

logic of poetic and of rhetoric follows the end to which each of these arts is directed—the former to the making of a thing for contemplation, the latter to the production of action in another. Both poetic and rhetoric are distinct from the logic of the sciences in that their arguments do not proceed with necessity, although rhetoric approximates the necessary in a way that poetic does not.

However, as a matter of fact, most writing is a composite, not only in the sense that arts other than those which govern the operations of the intellect are needed in order that a given concrete piece of writing take form, but also in the sense that a given piece of writing will often partake of the nature of many kinds of writing at once. In most of what

may be designated as poetry there is a considerable mixture of special pleading which is nothing more or less than dialectic or rhetoric. Again, what we would ordinarily call a poem may *de facto* convey scientific as well as poetic truth, although it is not as a poem that it does so. And a politician who should be practicing rhetoric may introduce a fact for its own sake. Finally, writing ostensibly scientific can and often does become a plea to take this attitude toward the subject, or that. Works of rhetoric, poetic, and science do not exist in the concrete in separate works. We must generally rest satisfied with calling a thing a poem because it is mostly a poem, or a political speech a work of rhetoric because it is nearer to that than it is to anything else.

Education for Progress

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IN recent numbers of *Harpers*¹ have appeared two articles favoring the kind of culture for which Scholastics have long been contending. One detects in these articles an echo of the controversy a few years ago between President Hutchins and John Dewey,² yet the note of controversy is not now so pronounced. Certainly Hutchins still discounts Dewey's educational philosophy, as instanced by the racy comment: "We understood, if we thought about the matter at all, that American Philosophy held that whatever succeeded was O. K." (p. 513) And he later touches the core of the dispute between himself and Dewey: "Our most disturbing questions, moreover, are questions about ends. Science is about means." (*ibid.*)³ Neither in the companion article does Professor Adler break a lance on the Dewey-minded, except by his opposition to their "nothing but" attitude. An unwary reader may be led to think that there is no basic difference between what Hutchins and Dewey are advocating.

Metaphysics and Religion

In a way of speaking, they are *not* at odds in what they are aiming at; both want a better human life for the many. They are both *for* the same thing. The difference is in what Dewey is *against*. Dewey is against metaphysics and religion.⁴ As a matter of fact, what Dewey represents as metaphysics is not really metaphysics at all, and what he takes to be religion is not really religion. The harm comes from his turning men's minds against all metaphysics and all religion, the genuine as well as the counterfeit. Nor is Dewey, despite his protestations, unconcerned about ends; his constant end is the betterment of human life. And though he limits his aim to the "deepening and broadening" of man's enjoyment of this passing life, surely that aim is not excluded by the philosophies he opposes. He declines to consider an after-

life, on the pragmatic ground that the belief in such life renders man indifferent to the social ills of the present; but he conveniently forgets that our future well being is conditioned on our working to eliminate human evils, both physical and moral, here and now. The "organism" (man), we are told, is to improve his environment (his neighbors) while they improve him. Except for terminology and scope, wherein does this differ from the Christian concept of the better life? The difference is in the means. Dewey relies on human "impulsions," without fixed code or principles, and a trial-and-error method to discover what yields the desired results. Hutchins, practical man that he is, is sure that such a method can only mean continual experimenting *ab ovo*, and can lead to no other "growth" than that of increasing confusion and disorder in society. The means Dewey advocates will defeat the very end he aims at. Were it not better then to capitalize on the long experience of the human race, the cultural heritage, as a starting point for making modern adjustments?

Dewey's notion of metaphysics is that it is, or sponsors, some sort of entity alien to the realities of human experience, an "Absolute" that would force its iron will upon us humans by doing violence to our spontaneous aspirations. Perhaps the Emersonian Transcendentalism and Puritanical rigor that surrounded Dewey's boyhood gave him that notion, but one would think that he would eventually have outgrown it. In a similar way, religion is to him an emotional state which is out of all contact with science, logic and everyday experience—an entirely subjective and intolerant feeling that has no justification except the obstinacy with which certain people cling to it. He blames this obstinacy on institutions, customs, rites, codes. And this explains why, though Dewey is in favor of "religious" feelings, because they are enjoyable, he is opposed to "religions." He falls victim to the age-old canard that religion has been foisted on man by interested parties. And even the simplest metaphysics of the nature of man he would put in the same class.

There is a field here [he writes] that has hardly been entered by intellectual explorers:—the story of the way in which ideas put forth about the make-up of human nature, ideas supposed to be the result

¹ Robert Maynard Hutchins, "Education for Freedom," *Harpers*, no. 1097, Oct. 1941; Mortimer J. Adler, "The Chicago School," *ibid.*, no. 1096, Sept. 1941.

² Cf. *Social Frontier*, Dec. 1936, Jan., May, June, 1937; *MODERN SCHOOLMAN*, Jan., March, 1938.

³ *Harpers*, Oct., 1941, p. 513.

⁴ Cf. "Dewey's Esthetic Experience," *MODERN SCHOOLMAN*, Nov., 1937, p. 9; "The Man Whom Dewey Would Educate," *ibid.*, March, 1939, p. 60.