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**The process of thought adapted to words and language**

**Smee, Alfred**

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Chapter IX. Value of the pronoun I.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### VALUE OF THE PRONOUN *I*.

(100). Natural Process of Thought.—(101). Value of *I*.—(102).  
Suppression of Opinion.—(103). Effect of.—(104). Practical  
Application.

(100). In the human brain impressions from the external world are continually being received, are there registered, and remain to produce their influence on the comparison between new and bygone knowledge. As far as the mechanism of the brain exceeds that of any human contrivance, so is the result of the proper application of the mind more trustworthy than the artificial contrivances of reasoning by words, cyphers, or mechanical inventions.

(101). From this cause great respect is paid to any trustworthy person, when he boldly declares that he himself believes that any opinion which he promulgates is true. In writings, therefore, nothing can exceed the value and force of the word *I*, either implied or used; and although there are

not found wanting amongst the lower class of literary scribblers, persons who scoff at the Pronoun, and attempt to ridicule its use by recounting the number of times per page it occurs; yet its more abundant employment would have saved the world from much sophistry, deceit, and falsehood.

(102). Almost all untrue statements are based upon arguments by words, and the person who writes never gives his opinion unequivocally. His arguments in words throw the responsibility of the conclusion on his readers, from the facts which he has recorded; and there is nothing to show how many other facts or parts of facts he has suppressed. But if he makes an assertion of his own belief, his readers have the result of the natural process of thought, if he be but trustworthy.

(103). By avoiding the use of the word *I*, a newspaper editor in America actually conducted two journals of totally opposite politics at the same time. In both cases he shewed certain arguments, and the conclusion legitimately deducible from the premises; but he took care not to include the little word *I*, or in other words, to shew the belief which his own natural process of thought led him to adopt.

(104). In all professional subjects the opinion of the professional person should be obtained. If you

judge from a long report, you have a result of far less value than if you judge from his own opinion of the case. In the case of a lawyer, he should distinctly give his opinion upon the whole facts of the case, so a medical man should be expected to state a definite opinion from all the materials which he can collect upon the subject. In giving this opinion, a result is obtained which has been derived from the mind, the immediate work of God. In setting out an argument by words or symbols, a result is obtained by a process of mechanism devised by man.

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