

III.

The reason why the dialectical method is peculiarly applicable to such conceptions as Truth, Beauty, and Goodness is this, that we become familiar with these terms at a much later stage in our childish experience than we do with things and their relations. Our becoming acquainted and familiar with things in the outer world reaches back into the earliest period of our conscious life, so much so that the recollection of how we learnt of them is almost entirely absent; still more important is the circumstance that the names of things become known to us after the things themselves and their relations have been seen and handled by us. On the other side, abstract notions, and notably such as are designated by the words "True," "Beautiful," and "Good," only enter our minds by a mysterious process after the words themselves have been many times used and have become familiar to us. In the one case, the thing named precedes its name in our experience; in the other case the name or word precedes its meaning, which we have very frequently great difficulty in drafting. In fact most persons have very indefinite conceptions not only of these highest abstract terms, but also of many others which they nevertheless continually make use of in conversation or writing: thus, for instance, mind, matter, substance, development and evolution are used continually, but it would be very difficult to give definitions which would satisfy most of those who use them. The consequence of this is that many meanings attach to abstract terms, and the more in proportion