

Final Cause

1902 | Minute Logic: Chapter II. Prelogical Notions. Section I. Classification of the Sciences (Logic II) | EP 2:120; CP 1.211

It is [...] a widespread error to think that a “final cause” is necessarily a purpose. A purpose is merely that form of final cause which is most familiar to our experience. The signification of the phrase “final cause” must be determined by its use in the statement of Aristotle that all causation divides into two grand branches, the efficient, or forceful; and the ideal, or final.

1904 [c.] | New Elements (Kaina stoiceia) | EP 2:315-6; NEM 4:252-3

If the cause [...] is a part of the *causatum*, in the sense that the *causatum* could not logically be without the cause, it is called an *internal cause*; otherwise, it is called an *external cause*. If the cause is of the nature of an individual thing or fact, and the other factor requisite to the necessitation of the *causatum* is a general principle, I would call the cause a *minor*, or *individuating*, or perhaps a *physical cause*. If, on the other hand, it is the general principle which is regarded as the cause and the individual fact to which it is applied is taken as the understood factor, I would call the cause *major*, or *defining*, or perhaps a *psychical cause*. [—] The defining external cause is called the *final cause*, or *end*.