

Pragmatism: A New Method in the Theory of Knowledge

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The old familiar statement, "There is nothing new under the sun", bears itself out in philosophical methods as well as in our physical and chemical laboratories, where we actually demonstrate that all things are old and only seemingly new, because man, in his need for them, has found them as already existing to these many years. In most of the articles written for our philosophical and psychological periodicals we find the writers starting with the philosophy of Kant and then working to his own conclusions. But back of Kant what? All principles that will satisfy we find grounded in those thoughts of the old Greeks who after all struck deep down to the fundamentals and gave us the seeds of promise from which have sprouted and grown the various manifestations of philosophical vegetation.

In this respect if in no other the very modern movement in epistemological theory, known as Pragmatism, does not differ from its companion philosophies.

Heractus recognized the theory of relativity which contained the doctrine of sense perception and the subjective factor included in it. It is altogether true that different individuals are affected differently by one and the same object; and the different states in which the individual finds himself causes the object to appear different to him. Institutions, laws and truths, though adapted to one period of man's career are wholly incongruous and inapplicable in a later stage of his development. So without this sense of relativity no explanation at all satisfactory can be made of the changes between the good and the evil, the beautiful and the ugly of the past and present.

But Pragmatism may be said to have had its very beginning in the Homo-mensura doctrine of Protagoras in which we learn that all that is true, beautiful and good, is such only for the knowing, feeling and willing subject, a permanent truth. This doctrine of course has caused many disputes among historians, but perhaps it is more clearly understood by Goethe who says, "I have observed that I hold that thought to be true which is fruitful for me, which adjusts itself to the general direction of my thought and at the same time furthers me in it, now it is not only possible but natural, that such a thought should not chime in with the sense of another person, nor

further him, even perhaps be a hindrance to him, and so he will hold it to be false. When I know my relation to myself and to the outer world, I say that I possess the truth."¹ This, it may be considered, is more really what Protagoras meant, but be that as it may we can easily see that herein lies the rise of the Pragmatic theory. So Aristotle in the statement that the most general truths must be immediately certain; Descartes in his voluntaristic psychological theories; Spinoza in his theory that things cannot exist in isolation, but must somehow belong to every other part, his causal hypothesis as an eternal and ultimate relation; Locke with his theory of empiricism; and Kant in placing the will in terms of categories and postulates and in not holding reason as forming the basis of our faculties and of things, all give us pragmatic tendencies.

But Pragmatism is not of German origin, for it was the English speaking philosophers who first introduced the custom of interpreting the meaning of conceptions by asking what difference those conceptions would make for life. All this at first resulted in negations and contradictions and it has only been within the last few years that the theory of truth as practical and useful has created any great stir in philosophical circles.

1. Goethe - Zellerscher Briefwechsel, v. 36-7.

This agitation, in fact, has become so great that some of our Idealists and Realists have been much alarmed lest philosophy should sink into mere utility and subjectivism. Even before any systematizing of the theory has yet been done; even, we might say, while it is yet in a state of formation, there is much concern lest it in its very youth, though with the strength of a giant, choke our earlier and already well organized systems of philosophy. And though the practical advantages of Pragmatism be significant, the reforms to be affected by it are so sweeping that it, like every other theory or method which has been introduced within the history of philosophy, has much to do in order to build battlements sufficient to withstand its opponents and at the same time to form itself into a systematized whole. But either side that one chooses as his own, he finds himself in excellent company and all rests on the appeal which this problem makes to the individual's own way of thinking. And with this statement one subjects himself immediately to the theory of Pragmatism.

This word Pragmatism is derived from the Greek word πρᾶξις meaning action, from which our words "practice" and "practical" come. It was first introduced into philosophy by Mr. C. S. Pierce in 1878.¹ The word and the idea carried with it lay dormant until 1898 when

1. "How to make Our Ideas Clear" Popular Science Monthly Vol. XII,

Professor James brought it forward in his lecture in California before the Philosophical Union at the University.¹ It was very natural that this attempt to give an account of knowledge without assuming its absolute validity would bring about a sharp and searching reconsideration of the whole epistemological question. Some of our most advanced thinkers, besides Professor James, who have espoused this new method are Professor Dewey, Schiller and Moore. But just about three years ago a reaction set in against the movement; it made itself felt at the Princeton meeting of the Philosophical Association in papers read by Professors Royce, Creighton and Baldwin. And in the meantime, others who consider themselves, Absolutists, Realists, etc. have joined these thinkers. Owing to these conditions all of our philosophical periodicals have been filled with arguments both for and against this method. In such articles the movement is spoken of at times with respect, at other times with scornful insolence, but seldom with clear and direct understanding. And it is this clear understanding of the pragmatic movement or tendency that I wish first to define before proceeding to any vital discussion of the subject.

Pragmatism is not a doctrine or a word, neither is it a theory nor an hypothesis, nor does it carry with it any new facts; but rather it is a shifting of

1. "Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results".

attitudes held in the past. It assumes no fundamentals from which to build up a system of philosophy, for it is no system. It has no dogmatic principles. It is not a great school like that of Absolute Idealism or Realism. It is only an attitude towards, a test of, and as it were a position from which to review all philosophical propositions. As defined by Professor James, "Pragmatism is the method for estimating the practical value and results of philosophical conceptions:"¹ and according to Mr. Schiller, it is, "The thorough recognition that the purposive character of mental life, generally, must influence and pervade also our most cognitive activities".² From these two definitions it is quite evident that the basic ideas of Pragmatism are, that value is equal to practical utility, that the origin of all knowledge, beliefs and acts originate in the voluntaristic nature, and that intellect is only an instrumental medium for accomplishing the desired ends, and at the same time the empirical attitude is maintained in the determining of all truths.

Pragmatism asks the question: What difference will this idea make in the practical working out of

1. "Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results", Address before the Philosophical Union, University of California, 1898.
2. "Humanism", Chapter 1, p. 8.

my life; what effects that might have practical bearings will the object of conception have in experience? In the fact the whole meaning of a conception expresses itself in practical consequences, consequences which, if the conception be true, are either in the form of conduct to be recommended, or in the form of experience to be expected. English Empiricism has asked the question, from whence came the question? while Pragmatism asks, where does it go? They asked from what simple ideas of experience or from what impressions the conception was put together; while Pragmatism asks, what effect on our action is the conception bound to have and what difference will it make with us in the future? They appeal to past experience and our new tendency appeals to future experience. If we can find no consequential differences between two ideas there can really be no difference between the ideas themselves. And when just this test of finding a concrete consequence is placed upon philosophical disputes it is surprising how many of them totally lose their significance. If this simple formula were applied to all our systems of philosophy we would soon have a philosophy of vital importance to every one at every instant of his life. Christ placed this test on all of his doctrines, and through many hundreds of years his doctrines have lasted

and to all accounts will still ring true in thousands of years to come. And this is because they make a definite difference to each of us at each definite instant of our life.

The words, Matter, Reason, Absolute etc. which metaphysics has brought out after so many laborious quests are the end of the labors. But try to pick out of each its practical cash value in the life of an individual experience and what have you that satisfies you? Are they not rather only outlines for further work? Thinking after all is only for the sake of doing, and "thought in movement has for its only conceivable motive the attainment of belief or thought at rest."¹ Sure and safe action cannot begin until thought has found its rest in belief. So if in some thought there should be a part that would have no place in the practical consequences of the action, it has no right to be an element of the thought's significance. "Hence to attain perfect clearness in our thought of an object, we need only consider what sensations immediate or remote are conceivable for us to expect from it and what conduct we must prepare in case the object should be true. Our conception of these practical consequences is for us the whole of our conception of the object, so far as that conception has

1. James, "Varieties of Religious Experience", p.449.

positive significance at all".¹

But the objection is made, if that is just a phase in a single process it would be hard to see how it can have any efficiency at all. If it is only a function of an action how can this idea have creative and constructive power and at the same time be an instrument?²

But Pragmatism replies, needs fashioned the ideas. And it is quite probable that experience would have remained unreflective in its character, if the activities of life had always been performed smoothly. But when the old reactions will no longer suffice there is a resulting conflict; the concrete whole of stimulus and response is in a manner broken up and there is a certain isolation of the conscious stimulus. The Pragmatist by his "reaction theory" implies that when we intellectualize pure experience we should do this in order to descend to the pure and concrete level; for, if the intellect stays among the abstract and generalized terms and with its conclusion does not reassert itself in some particular point in the practical life, it does not perform its normal function. This constant changing of brains, in this direction and then in that direction at particular times into particular ideas is equal to

1. James, "Varieties of Religious Experience, p. 444

2. Creighton, "Purpose as Logical Category", Phil. Rev. Vol. Xlll.

their permanent tendency in permanent directions. Thus the personal tone of each mind, which makes it more interested in one phase of experience than another, and makes it more attractive to certain impressions and reasons, is due to the inherent tendency of the nervous system which makes a certain brain act in a certain way.

This takes us back to the primitive beginning of the origin of our ideas; and this origin according to the Pragmatist rests upon man's volitional nature. Will, as the fundamental function of the mind, is not derived from presentation, but, without intelligence, comes as a craving, a desire or an impulse and intelligence has its function only as it finds or invents ways or means to accomplish the desires. The fundamental function of a desire is comfortableness, then the direction of our interest and attention is determined by pleasures and benefits which certain parts of our environment yield and pains and injuries which other parts inflict: thus intellect is for the direction of the accumulated mental experiences and for an accomplishing of practical ends in terms of our desires. In psychical terms we first have a feeling in the presence of an object and then a movement away from or toward the object. Thus, before knowledge of any kind we must have attention, and to have attention we must have desire, and before desire the primary feeling for or against

something. Professor James says, that, "The prime factor in the philosophical craving is the desire to have expectancy defined". Of course the nature of this expectancy depends on man's environment, his past experience and his own voluntaristic nature. If his natural tendency is a feeling of hardness and despondency, if his environment is dark and gloomy, and if his experience has been one of deprivation and "hard luck", then his expectancy is likely to be one of gloomy forebodings; and their expecting such a future his actions will be of a "don't care" manner (perfectly consistent with his state of mind) and thus his gloomy forebodings will be realized, for, according to Professor James, "every idea tends to act itself out".

This idea has its particular use in the field of religion. Amid all the varieties of religious feeling the one most constant conception of the Divine has been, not some desecated formula about the unity of the Universe wrought out from some cold metaphysical hypothesis, but it has been a demand for something in response to the outcry of the human heart. We are well aware that the Englishman's God is not our God, neither is John's God Jack's God. Each person in the Universe has in his mind a conception of that God that suits his needs and his purposes best. This question is one that can never be

solved through the intricacies of logic or by intellectual gymnastics, and such a principle as Pragmatism will help us to decide which attributes among the scholastic inventories are most significant. What makes our religion meaningful is not some cold abstract definition and system which for our human needs are absolutely worthless. It is the moral attributes that count. It is they that positively call for an expression of our hopes and fears and build the foundation for our religious life.

However Pragmatism would not that this question be settled by a sentimental preference, but it must be decided as to whether or not our belief will be useful to us. Here we follow our volitions and if we form a belief that is true to our volitional nature and fully expect it to work out to our use and advancement, we will work on this principle of belief and change it, according as to whether or not we find it working out in our experience. Even as the scientist's interests center on the known or becoming known so also is this principle demanded of the man of action in religion. Mr. Schiller commends this argument as a "most salutary doctrine to preach to a biped oppressed by many "ologies" like modern man, and calculated to allay his growing doubts; whether he has a responsible personality and a soul and a conscience of his own, and is not a mere phantasmagoria of abstractions, a transient complex of

shadowy formulas that Science calls "the laws of nature". Its great lesson is that there are not really any eternal, and not human truths to prohibit us from adopting, the beliefs we need to live by, nor any infallible a priori tests of truth to screen us from the consequences of our choice".¹

In all this Pragmatism does not deny or attempt to annihilate the intellect, but merely to reinterpret it and make it one with the rest of man's nature. The cognitive relations are very important to the radical empiricist, and holding fast to them means taking them at their face value. This means, of course, taking them just as we feel them and not abstractly talking about them. Here Professor James makes his position as to the subjective and objective relations very clear.

"The distinction between subjective and objective is not one of the substance, but of relation within experience. Affectional experiences commonly supposed to bear upon them the stamp of subjectivity, are not an exception to this principle, but when rightly understood, strengthen the position. Emotional experiences are not real affections of the mind, but are ambiguous in their reference; they may be taken as objective or subjective. The emotions tend to remain relatively pure, because no urgent need has arisen in practical life requiring them

1. "Humanism", Preface p. XVI.

to be assigned rigorously to one class or the other. Affectional attributes are without influence upon all physical nature beyond the limits of our own bodies. Since, however, they produce immediate bodily effects upon us they yet are ^{of} ambiguous status. The existence of this ambiguous class of experiences proves, that subjective and objective are not absolutely different substances, but are contexts within experience". There is no such thing as mere intellection, for that which is ordinarily so called is mere purposive thought pursuing its desired end. And the whole of human life is unified by emphasizing the whole ~~prev~~ading purposiveness of human conduct. The only criticism of the results of our experience comes through their use; and we have no other way of judging except through experience. Only when our assumptions fail to work are we justified in theorizing and have to modify them. To be sure one part of our experience leans upon another part, but, according to Pragmatism, when taken altogether it is self-sustaining and leans on nothing beyond experience.

Hence we find that intelligence is due to the will or to the practical purposes, or, in other words, that the value of knowledge is an instrumental value. Knowledge is of use only as it provides ways and means towards the desired ends. To attain a conclusion our thoughts must be propelled and guided by the promptings

of volition and desire. Hence it is evident that logic, which has taken the phase of our thinking as irrelevant, assumes a very different complexion, and becomes more natural and more clear when reformed by Pragmatism.

Purely useless thoughts may be internally consistent, but such a system would constitute only a logical philosophy.

All this has lead to what is now termed the Pragmatist's theory of truth. If thought is always determined by its relation to a specific situation and to a definite problem, one would naturally conclude that a thought's standard of success and test of adequacy is found in the practical success which it achieves in the individual's experience. Only the workable, useful and efficient is true. The not useful, unworkable and non-efficient are False. And here is where the Pragmatist's principle of selection comes in. If truth is to be really safe and more than an individual valuation it would transform itself into a common property. The way in which that is done is one way in which the Pragmatists claim to have made a real advance in our comprehension of Truth. "It contends that once more, only more signally and clearly than in the individual case, it is the usefulness and efficiency of the propositions, for which Truth is claimed, that determines their social recognition. The use criterion selects the individual truth valuations, and constitutes thereby the objective truth which obtains

social recognition."¹ And in order that we may attain perfect clearness in our thought of any object, we need only consider what effects of conceivably practical kind the object may have. Hence there is no difference in abstract truths which do not express themselves in a difference of concrete facts.

This seems to place truth under an individual criterion. But if truth is to be really safe and more than an individual valuation, it must transform itself into a common property. But this concrete test has never been agreed upon, for what one person has decided on calling truth, another has considered false. And the psychological truth valuations are recognized as subjective and somewhat chaotic.

Here we hear the opponent of this theory saying, you destroy all system, you create a chaos out of your universe. Each experience depending on the sum of its own experiences alone, makes the world many instead of one, and many in confusion and without order. This method limits you to individual and personal experience, and therefore cannot offer any explanation from a more inclusive standpoint. Pragmatism, when put to the test, becomes a lonesome kind of theory, for there is no standard. There should be a companionship in our judgments, and conformation to the true as such. Practice

1. Schiller, F.C.S.- "Humanism", Chapter 111, p. 59.

is due to individual conceptions, while truth is relative, not to individual consciousness, but to an ideal or universal consciousness. And this is why some things which are practical for some people are not practical for others. In practice we make something, while we find truth, and we cannot either make False True or True False. One group cannot say that a certain proposition is true and another group say that it is not true, but the True must be wholly unaffected. Truth is to be found in experience, but experience not of the Individual but of the universal experience and therefore all practical tests of Truth are impossible.

To the Idealist thought is not separate from reality, but it is its very nature to be one with the real, and no "bell" is necessary to tell us when we have reached reality. "Truth is a systematic whole, forming a single individual experience, which is composed of elements or constituents which are in their turn individual experiences. But each of the practical experiences reflects the whole system from its own peculiar point of view. And the whole can exist only so far as it expresses its nature in the system of its parts, and the parts can have no being or meaning except as the whole expresses itself through them."¹

We will admit that this theory will at once

1. A.E.Taylor - Metaphysics, p. 95.

close the argument for the aesthetically inclined. The apparent fragmentariness of the Pragmatic theory of Truth has led many to call it ugly, while the wholeness, the finished roundness, and systematic oneness of the Absolutist's theory has led many to embrace it and to keep it as their own. But on what is aesthetics based, but on our own volitional nature, our desires to be pleased; and if this theory satisfies these desires it is accepted by means of the pragmatic attitude. Are not the eternal truths after all those demands that we make upon our experience because we need them in order that we may have a cosmos fit to live in. Grant that the True and the Real are an absolute fixed somewhat, will it mean anything except as it is instrumental in our actions to-day and now? And if it doesn't satisfy these present demands does it make any difference whether or not it, as an Absolute Truth, exist? "We have to live to-day by what truth we can get to-day, and be ready to-morrow to call it falsehood if it does not satisfy. Truth with a big T and in the singular claims abstractly to be recognized, but concrete truths in the plural need be recognized only when both relate to the situation, but when neither does truth is as little of a duty as falsehood."¹

1. James, "The Pragmatist's Conception of Truth". Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods, 1V:6

In other words we must find a theory that will work; which will be a medium between our former truths and new experiences; it must destroy previous beliefs as little as possible and it must terminate sensibly in something that can be truly verified. It is only the symbols of reality that we deal with when we treat of the cosmic and the abstract; realities are in our private, personal phenomena. Thus the Pragmatists believe in a greater number of realities than do the so-called orthodox philosophers. They are interested in the reinterpretation of the universal realities, in such a way as will authorize the accrediting, without depreciation, concrete empirical conscious centres of action and passion. Beliefs are in themselves real, and they manifest their reality in shaping the reality of other real things; in their realities they cannot be bias, the preferences and the affections, the needs and the endeavors of personal lives, with the values of character ascribed to things whereby the latter are made worthy of human acquaintance and responsive to human intercourse. To be sure realities are commonly supposed to be experiences other than our own. But the Pragmatist would never listen to this, which ignores the practical appeal of his argument. Personal communion is essential to knowledge. "The unreflective world is full of practical values; and of their ends and means, of their effective adaptations,

of control and regulation of conduct in view of results."¹
This does not mean that there is no thought at all in this so-called "unreflective world", for there is doubtless many an act of thought to effect the organization of our most common practical region of value. "This only indicates that thought does take place in such a world; not after a world of bare existences, lacking value specifications; and that the more systematic reflective we call organized science, may, in some fair sense, be said to come after, but after affectional, artistic and technological interests, which have found realization and expression in building up a world of values."² Truth, therefore, is not static, nor is it a completely finished somewhat, but it is inseparable from its content. It is sought and found in the world of experience, of incessant change of contents, together with time, space, means, ends, memory, intention, anticipation and so forth.

After accepted will the Absolute Idealist's theory work; will it satisfy in every day experience? All the wickedness and evil that we see, can we say that it is all for the total good, that it is a part of the whole and, therefore, necessary in the totality of things. Do we not rather feel that we, as well as the world, would have been practically better off if that terrible murder

1. Dewey, John.- "Studies in Logical Theory", p. 43
2. Dewey, John.- "Studies in Logical Theory", p. 43

had not occurred. Can we reconcile ourselves to the occurrence of dreadful disasters on the strength of some cold, far away somewhat called the Absolute. But must we not rather feel that, that which makes for the good now, here, with immediacy is the good, and being good now will necessarily make for the good in time to come. After all is not theoretical truth essentially determined by practical value? Is it possible for us to separate our intellectual function from the whole complex of our activities so that it will be able to function absolutely independent of our practical life? Will not those principles which fail to work practically, just through their failure of adaptation, become eliminated through the process of survival of the fittest?

But with our knowledge derivative from conduct distinct moral responsibilities in a really definite way are set up and through this ethical attitude we are set free from the Absolutist's theory of an indefinite universe which makes us feel so determined that all efforts on our part is alleviating our own or other's suffering are of no avail; and by doing away with this nightmare of Absolute Reality we are brought face to face with reality as it really is in our own individual concrete experience, where we can will to believe, to do, and actually accomplish. Knowledge is one, and the true and the beautiful must be practically useful. Our only way of knowing the truth of our knowledge, is by the practical

working out in experience, and in the meantime we will to believe in our proposition. We can never reach Reality for there is "no bell that rings" when that goal is reached. So with our interests and desires, we form by means of our intellect, our system of knowledge, using our faith to believe, that as long as our practical ends are reached we are on the true road to Absolute Reality if there is such a thing.

So we see that Truth is volitional in its origin, and is real only in that it satisfies and works in our concrete individual experiences. But Truth is more than this, it is true instrumentally also. For the scientist theories are neither true nor false, but only more or less useful in his practical experiments. The atomic theory is just about completely discarded, and no one is taking any serious note of it, for something that works better, and gives better results has been adopted. So long as this method of instrumentality of theories was used only in the laboratory no complaint was heard. But now when it is attempted to apply the same method in the field of metaphysics there is a great commotion. Old beliefs are hard to give up; rather patch and mend them if necessary, to meet the opponent's argument, than to throw them completely away, for they are very precious. But this is all nonsense to hold on to an old dogma when it no longer explains nor completely satisfies. Thought

is instrumental always in character, having for its only object the discovery of ways in which the purposes and needs of the practical life can be realized in action; and the test of the adequacy of the theory which it promulgates is found in the practical success which it achieves. The possession of true thoughts always means the possession of right means to right action. And so the possession of truth is not an end, but is a state of progression. "When a movement in our experience of any kind whatever inspires us with a thought that it is true, that means that sooner or later we dip by that thought's guidance into the particulars of experience again and make advantageous connection with them."¹

Pragmatism is decreed as being mere "subjectivism", and the critics hold up their hands in utter horror at the outrage of reducing all knowledge to mere subjectivism. To be sure, "need", "Present" and "Immediate" are all subjective categories. "Need" does have a close connection with feeling, but at the same time it has some idealization. Critics agree that the "Need" arises from the situation, but when it comes to interpreting the "situation" they disagree. Though thought is relative to the "need" and "need" arises from the "situation", they say that the "situation" is momentary and "subjective". But every reflective at-

1. James, "The Pragmatist's Conception of Truth", Journal of Philosophy, Psychology & Scientific Methods, 1V:6

titute and function whether of naive life, deliberate invention or controlled scientific research, has arisen through the medium of some such total objective "situation". And the Pragmatist's objection is not indifferent to or independent of or unmodified by "thought". There is no connection between the Absolutist's general definition of truth and error, and the standard actually employed in testing any particular judgment.

This war against a practical philosophy very quickly reminds one of the struggle some few centuries ago for the maintenance of the classics to the exclusion of the humanities in educational systems. Theoretical knowledge was preferred to the more practical and that which had to do with the every day needs of man. So it has been with philosophy. For it has largely fallen into the hands of hermit like thinkers, who are no longer concerned with the longing of the human heart; and philosophy has become abstract, something to be ~~shunned~~^{shunned} and laughed at even by some of our most cultured men. But philosophy since it is a theory of life ought to be of interest to every man and ought to contain the practical interests of man. And why not a study of humaner philosophy as well as a humaner curriculum in our school system.

Philosophers hitherto have adopted the a priori method of establishing philosophical data, but the only

natural starting point is to take man himself for granted and then to consider man's world of experience as it has come to seem to him. There is a human interest back of all philosophy and a human purpose as its goal. It could not be without this human touch, for man is working, striving and thinking for man. Then why not admit this factor, which necessarily exists in every man's reasoning, and start clearly and honestly in our philosophical systems.

Nothing in the Universe is absolute and fixed, but reality and truth are changing with every sun rise and sun set, and it cannot be otherwise, for man's purposes and demands are constantly changing and these demands must be met by our theories if they are to be of any consequence or truth or reality. In neither theoretical nor practical questions can the truth or falsehood of a matter be decided by its correspondence to some Abstract Ideal Theory which is far and remote from the situation and needs of the moment, but it is decided by its warmth and nearness to our demands and by its practical working out in the round of experience. The Truth cannot be superhuman, but must be human and applicable to our human needs, and beyond this truth can have no meaning for us.

The eternal truths are merely postulates that we make in our experience, because we feel that in order

that there may be a cosmos fit to live in we need them. The reason that so many of us come to perceive the same postulates is because we must, in order that we may live together. Our histories bear us out in this statement, for we can see that those who perceive things in the same way prospered at the expense of those who did not, proving that the objectivity of our own perceptions is practical and useful. We have a perfectly legitimate right to contend that the right understanding and that the real meaning of theoretical questions are for him only who will use them for practical purposes, for theoretical truth is subordinate to practical truth for practical ends.

To be sure there are some who study art for art's sake, and theorize as an end in itself, and you say that there is no practical issue here and that those people have no practical result in mind. But still the answer,-There is a great deal of knowledge which is called useless and actually is useless for certain purposes, but there really is nothing which is useless in all cases. Much that is called useless is so because certain people refuse to use it, and in this case it may be called indirectly useful. A great deal of mathematics would come under this head. Again some knowledge may be useful as logically completing a system of knowledge which is useful in other parts, while as a whole its

use is not yet perceived, or there is a great deal of knowledge which is comparatively useless, because the time spent in acquiring it might have been more usefully employed in other ways. No matter how theoretical one may become, there is always a personal desire for this theoretical study, a feeling of comfort only when nearest the height of theoretical knowledge, and one ever feels that as far as he himself is concerned, this is the only thing of value and practicability in this life for him. But this case is the exception and it is the majority of conditions that we must notice, where practicability is not theoretical.

Above everything else Pragmatism gives us a boyant, optimistic attitude toward life and the universe. It is ours, and ours to will, to do and to accomplish by means of our own responsibility and actions. It is ours to prove True and True in that it is useful in our steady progress onward. It relieves us from agnosticism and skepticism in the various fields to which it is applicable. Religion becomes warm and more vital in its significance, for it is to be worked with, and our theories in regard to it to be proven as true when they satisfy our demands on the spiritual essence of things.

To what this movement of Pragmatism is going to lead us we can hardly tell. It is at the "Strike but hear me" stage and is bound to be heard in logic,

in psychology, in metaphysics, in science, in all the departments of man's life. It will have its bearing because it recognizes man's three-fold nature and its influence on his knowledge. And who shall say but what it will lead to that grand culmination toward which philosophy has ever striven, the unity of all knowledge under one head,- Science spelled with a capital. But be that as it may we can only hope that this method, so young as now in its development may be worked and found to be useful in its own theory of "usefulness", that it may satisfy in its own theory of "satisfactoriness" and in its attitude of instrumentality toward the epistemological problems bring philosophy as a vital problem home to every man and solve for him his problem of being and purpose.

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