PRAGMATISM IN THE MODERN SCHOOL

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PRAGMATISM IN THE MODERN SCHOOL

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the North Texas State Teachers College in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

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Granbury, Texas
August, 1940

88459
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PREFACE

This study proposes to (1) set forth, in a brief way, the gradual evolution of pragmatism from about 1905 down to the present, (2) to clearly define pragmatism and to differentiate between it and some other "isms" having philosophical significance, (3) and to show how pragmatism has made for itself a place in the modern school curriculum.

The paper is based on information secured from research data secured through reading widely books and magazines on the subject.

The information secured has been analyzed in an effort to answer the following general questions:

1. What is pragmatism?
2. How did pragmatism come about?
3. How has it affected the modern school?

In a word, this study was made for the purpose of presenting a simple, but definite picture of the meaning, implications, and place of pragmatism in education.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

Philosophic Basis of Education

One of the main objectives of education is the development of personality. We can therefore see at once that education is "not something which can be imposed from without and that it does not consist in mere acquisition of information as such, but information of such a character as embodies itself in capacity to use it in the expression of personality." ¹

Education is a course of instruction which is intended to enlighten, to cultivate the taste and form manners and habits of youth, and fit youth for usefulness in present and future living. Education is not static, but as growth or maturity it should be an ever-present process. Education, in my opinion, might be termed a unified way of thinking about life. Life and education are changing all the time. This forces us to include education in our philosophy. We should educate along the lines of democracy. We should teach willingness to assume responsibility, dignity and worthwhile things in the school and in the home. This involves work which is necessary to provide a full, wholesome, abundant life.

"Every human being, whether he realises it or not, has a philosophy of life. It is by no means a technical matter." ² It is a thing which

¹ J. S. Haldane, Materialism, p. 109.
² Ibid., p. 110.
we absolutely need to guide us in life. Our philosophy may be got a little bit from the reading of books, some from our contacts with other people, and some from actual life experiences and situations. Thus, philosophy seeks to unify knowledge. It is the correlation by each human being of all his knowledge and experience which may have a bearing upon some life problem he has to face and solve. And so we see that for one's philosophy to have value, such depends upon the range of one's knowledge and experience and also upon the effectiveness of the correlation of that knowledge.

John Dewey, who is possibly the greatest philosopher of education, says: "Only that which has been organized into our disposition so as to enable us to adapt the environment to our needs and to adapt our aims and desires to the situation in which we live, is really knowledge." 3

In other words, it seems that we might say our schools should so train the rising generation that, with its improved adjustment to the environment, it will be stronger and more definitely in contact with reality than preceding generations.

In our thinking of modern philosophy we must remember that modern thought is objective and that philosophy has the right to observe, discover, explain, and generalize its explanations free of all church doctrines. Medieval thought was at times very subjective.

The scholastic philosophy was criticized and attacked. Through the new scientific method the whole method of thought was turned topsy turvy.

After this struggle, new views were presented. Bacon and Locke on

3 John Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 400.
the one hand, and Descartes on the other, stand respectively at the head of the two systems... Empiricism and Idealism, which begin modern philosophy. By Empiricism is meant "the method of practice of an empire; pursuit of knowledge by observation and experience. Idealism asserts that the ultimate reality is spiritual or immaterial; that it consists of pure forms or ideas of which things observable or sensible are merely imperfect reflections or shadows." True idealism holds that truth is definite, ultimate and absolute. In general, we all, especially when young and inexperienced, feel that there is something about idealism which we greatly admire. Most of us hold on to a bit of idealism in our make-up all through our lives, regardless of the philosophic creeds we may believe.

Modern philosophy is usually said to begin with Bacon, about 1600, as a critic of scholasticism. It is also usually said to begin in full seriousness with Descartes, as the thinker who introduced the method of doubt, the appeal to self-consciousness, and the criterion of clear and distinct ideas.

Although Bacon created no definite system of philosophy, he gave a new direction to thought, the empiricism which he founded finally developed into scepticism, which is "the theory that truth is unknowable, or the refusal to accept any positive statement until it has been proved true." He has been highly praised as the prophet of positivism and was the first to express the empirical ideal or practical type of thought for which England has stood for three centuries. But here, too, he is a

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4 Class notes on "isms"

5 Ibid.
critic and fore-runner rather than a constructive thinker. Bacon voiced thoughts and hopes current when the new science was coming into being; his insight into the trend of thought in its re-shaping of conceptions was keener than that of other thinkers in the period of transition. His method of enumerating facts is different from that of the laboratory. Yet it has been said \(^6\) that he accomplished more than any one else in freeing the human mind from preconceptions and directing attention to the unbiased study of facts. He put speculation aside, separated faith and theology from philosophy, and showed that philosophy is concerned with formal and efficient causes, hence philosophy should be a study of things in their connection, not of words. Bacon stands preeminently between ancient and modern thought. He indicated the method of studying negative instances, and by describing the inductive method in detail he made a real advance. He rejected the authoritative Aristotle of the Middle Ages without understanding how thorough was the method of the real Aristotle, who used both induction and deduction. For Bacon, science in contrast with religion is founded on perception, on general ideas derived from sense-impressions.

Descartes the rationalist cautiously enlarged rationalism to a world-wide view. Other rationalists threw caution to the winds and followed their logic as far as it could lead them. Thus there came about the criterion of truth arose from the consent of reason to its own principles. The most important successor of Descartes, Spinoza, became so free from tradition that he questioned even design or purpose.

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in nature, doubted human freedom, and regarded God or first principle (sometimes called substance) as the necessary ground of all thought and extension. In Spinoza's moral and intellectual interests, he resembled the Stoics. He was fundamentally impressed by the universal order of things, the natural necessity which achieves its ends in spite of human will.

In opposition to this materialistic tendency, there arose the idealism of Leibnitz and Berkeley. Berkeley's idealism says there are no abstract general ideas, and that knowledge is not a copy of things, but consists of concrete items of experience. He reasoned that since nature is not self-explanatory, all things exist for the sake of the good, and that intellect and reason are the sure guides to truth. Taking his stand on the certainties of immediate experience, Berkeley's point of view has proved to be the starting point of thinkers who tried to simplify or to avoid metaphysics and have analyzed the content of consciousness. Berkeley's spiritual realism has been a stimulus to personal and pluralistic idealists. Even recent realists of the scientific type have adopted Berkeley's philosophy, at least in part.

John Locke is regarded as the father of modern materialism and empiricism which sought to derive knowledge from experience. Locke is less systematic than the rationalists; perhaps that may be attributed to his empirical method, his desire to be true to experience as given. He is not concerned with problems respecting the physical basis of mind, nor with its essence, or even the relation of mind to body as that relation

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had been regarded after Descartes' time. His inquiry is further limited by interest in the origin of ideas, and not in the relation of motion to sensation. Locke's whole philosophy reinforces his doctrine of hedonism, that pleasure or happiness is the good. He was one of the founders of religious rationalism, a great forerunner of religious toleration. In brief, Locke is the ideal empiricist.

After all, the actual history of philosophy is a "pragmatic test of the great systems." The progress of thought has been not by direct lines, but by zigzags, just as one doctrine leads to its antithesis in an ensuing criticism, out of which rises fresh effort.

The greatness of philosophy is chiefly due to the thinkers who have most nearly succeeded in working out a system. The great philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were not interested in history, with the exception of Leibnitz, who in this respect was far beyond his time. For Descartes, Spinoza, and their followers the norms of all knowledge are mathematics and mechanics, the mathematics of the physical order. For Locke and Hume and others the chief interest lay in the psychological and epistemological analysis of knowledge. For them, too, mathematics was the highest and most exact kind of knowledge, since it dealt only with the relations between ideas. The notion of the gradual growth of evolution of human institutions was foreign to their thinking. Everything social and human was conceived to be a deliberate invention of reason or the result of a voluntary convention or of a conscious contract.

The reaction against intellectualism in Germany, England, and in the United States has been due in part to the rejection of speculative
idealism, particularly the absolute idealism of Hegel. Bergson wrote a book, Creative Evolution, which has a criticism of intellectualism. The rapid increase of scientific knowledge has made the constructive enterprise more difficult. Reason seemed able to generate principles out of its own nature and so has come to be regarded as an instrument. Thus, we see that the instrumentalism of Dewey and his followers has come into vogue, and pragmatism as a method of testing conceptions has made its contribution. Pragmatism, according to Dresser, is not a philosophy, but is merely preparatory to philosophy.

Definition of Pragmatism

In order to properly define pragmatism, we must go back to the history of the idea to get a clear picture of what pragmatism really means. The term comes from a Greek word meaning "action", from which our words "practical" and "practice" come. It was first introduced into philosophy by Charles Peirce in 1873 in an article entitled "How to Make our Ideas Clear" which was published in the Popular Science Monthly for January, 1873. In this article Mr. Peirce says that our beliefs are really rules for action and to develop the true meaning of a thought, we need only determine what conduct it is fitted to produce. "That conduct is for us its sole significance, and the tangible fact at the root of all our thought distinctions, however subtle, is that there is no one of them so fine as to consist in anything but a possible difference of practice." This idea, advanced by Mr. Peirce, was ignored for twenty years. Then, in 1898, William James, in an address, brought it forward.

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8Dresser, op. cit., p.429.
and made a special application of it to religion. From that date the word "pragmatism" spread and the term has come to stay, for pragmatism is the underlying philosophy of progressive education.

William James says there is absolutely nothing new in the pragmatic method. Socrates was an adept at it. Aristotle used it methodically. Locke, Berkeley, and Hume used it. However, these forerunners of pragmatism used it only in fragments. They only scratched the surface. It is only in our day that it generalized itself. It is in America in the eighteenth century that pragmatism really thrived. Progress in science in modern times has caused men to test all results in actual experience.

Since pragmatism means "practical", it comes through practice. It came out of or as the result of the cracking up of the old world, and what came out of that period. Pragmatism comes out of human experiences. We used to reason that a thing was true when it came to reality, if it conformed to a certain phase. James does not go back to these old ideas. He says if an idea is true it depends upon whether or not it is true. Pragmatic ideas are constantly on the go, never static.

"Pragmatism represents a perfectly familiar attitude in philosophy, the empiricist attitude. It turns away from old habits, from abstractions, insufficiency, from verbal solutions, from fixed principles, closed systems, from pretended absolutes and origins." 9 Thus James describes the term and insists that the pragmatist turns from all these things deliberately towards concreteness, adequacy, to facts, to action, to power. That means "open air and possibilities of nature contrasted with dogma, ar-

9 William James, Pragmatism, chapter 4.
tificiality, and pretense of finality in truth. At the same time, it does not stand for any special results. Pragmatism is a method only."

James further says that theories become instruments, not answers to puzzles in which we can rest. Thus we can move forward. But pragmatism is not a new theory at all. In fact, it harmonizes with many ancient philosophic tendencies. It agrees with nominalism in always appealing to particulars. It agrees with utilitarianism in that it emphasizes practical aspects. It agrees with positivism in its disdain for verbal solutions, useless questions and abstractions. Pragmatism stands for no particular results. It has no dogmas, no doctrines save its method. And the pragmatic method merely means an attitude or orientation. It is an attitude of looking away from first things, principles, and of looking forward towards last things, fruits, consequences, facts. Not only James, but other writers on pragmatism, emphasize the fact that the pragmatist clings most tenaciously to facts, to concreteness. He observes truth at its work in particular cases and then he generalizes. Pragmatism is a method that may be applied to all philosophies. Papini says, "pragmatism is really less a philosophy than a method of doing without philosophy."

J. B. Pratt defines pragmatism as follows: "First, it seeks to give us a definite, exact, and technical doctrine of the nature of meaning . . . to show us what meaning consists in, and, therefore, when it is present and when it is absent. Second, pragmatism aims to formulate for us a

\[10\]
Ibid., Chapter 4.

\[11\]
Papini, "What Pragmatism is Like", Popular Science Monthly, 71:534, October 1897.
method of choosing our problems, which shall eliminate for us a number of meaningless questions and help us to see what is worth discussing, and what is not."

"Pragmatism consists of simple statements of relevant facts, and is strong, not only in criticism of the older views, but also in developing forward-looking, practical attitudes which are especially needed today. Pragmatism remains essentially pragmatism: action, trial and error, reactions to stimulus, a social and industrial movement forward. It can be appreciated in action, but cannot have its value exhaustively expressed in words or in any theoretical exposition. To really appreciate pragmatism properly, we must look at it, not as it is in itself, as positive, forward-looking action."

Joseph A. Leighton makes the statement that: "Absolute pragmatism is the only form of the doctrine that is in harmony with the nature of logical and ethical truth, as at once volitional or purposive and drawing its character and meaning and its inherent authority from the determinate structure of the absolute, rational, and ethical will or purpose involved in the telological or worldful and meaningful order of reality."

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13 Ibid., p. 22.
CHAPTER II

PRAGMATISM'S INTERPRETATION OF CERTAIN SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS

Pragmatism says truth is a verified idea. "Truth," says the pragmatist, "is purely a matter of consequence: that is true which works in any particular circumstance." The question then arises: What does the word "verification" itself pragmatically mean? Verification or truth-making is literally determining the truth. Truth, as Brubacher says, is "never complete nor perfect, but always in the making."

Pragmatism has made a real contribution here for the possession of true thoughts means everywhere the possession of invaluable instruments of actions, and our duty to secure the truth can account for itself by excellent practical reasons, and not resolve itself into a "stunt."

We all agree that it is important to human life to have true beliefs about matters of fact, since we live in a world of realities that can be very useful or very harmful. The practical value of true ideas is thus primarily derived from the practical importance of their objects to us. Since almost any object may some day become temporarily important, then it is of advantage to have a general stock of extra truths, of ideas that shall be true. From this we see that pragmatism gets the general notion of truth as something essentially bound up with the way

in which one moment in our experience may lead us towards other moments which it will be worthwhile to have been led to. Therefore, from a common-sense viewpoint, the truth of a state of mind means this function of a leading that is worthwhile. Truth, says the pragmatist, is made, just as health, wealth, and strength are made, in the course of experience.

This is where the rationalist rises up in opposition, saying, in effect: "Truth is not made; it absolutely obtains, being a unique relation that does not await upon any process, but shoots straight over the head of experience, and hits its reality every time. The pragmatist puts the cart before the horse in making truth's being reside in a process of verification. It cannot be analyzed away into pragmatic consequences."17

The true, says the pragmatist, is only the expedient in the way of our behaving. The "absolutely" true, meaning by that what no further experience will ever change, is that ideal vanishing point towards which we imagine that all our temporary truths will some day lead. Meanwhile, we have to live to-day by what truth we can get to-day, and be ready to-morrow to call it falsehood. Human experiences just go over certain limits and certain things we used to call absolutely true are to-day, in our present-day experiences, only relatively true, or true only within certain borders of experience. A Danish writer once said, "We live forwards, but we understand backwards." He meant by that that new experiences lead to retrospective judgments, for the present sheds a backward light on the world's previous processes. In other words, truth is made largely out of previous truths.

In concluding this topic, I shall quote from Schiller who says the

17Ibid., p. 568.
"true is that which works," while Dewey says "truth is what gives satisfaction."

The more one studies truth and knowledge, the more one is convinced that they are definitely inter-related. True knowledge is more than simply what we taste, touch, feel, or see. It cannot be explained as the result of some sensation or some sense perception. To common sense there is no problem concerning knowledge or truth either. Everyone knows that knowledge or truth is, yet when we delve into the theories of each, common sense is utterly lost.

Pragmatism differs from both realism and idealism. Pragmatism eyes with suspicion anything that has to do with "systems." The pragmatist looks on sensation only as a cue or lead to guide and initiate action in definite, concrete situations. Only thus does the pragmatist grant sensation any genuine function. In the last analysis, the business of the educator is not to "implant knowledge" but to train in techniques.

In discussing pragmatism and religion, we must recall, as has been stated before, that pragmatism lay entirely unnoticed by anyone for twenty years. It was William James, in an address before Professor Howison's philosophical Union at the University of California, who brought it forward again and made a special application to religion.

Pragmatism is willing to take anything, to follow either logic or common sense and to take into account the humblest and most personal experiences even if that means the discarding of traditional creeds and doctrines of the church. Pragmatism will count mystical experiences if they have any practical consequences or results. Pragmatism will take a God who lives in the very dirt of private fact... if that should seem
a likely place to find him. As has been said in the discussion on
Truth, pragmatism considers what works best in the way of leading or
guiding us, what fits every part of life best, nothing being left out.
If theological ideas should do this, if the notion of God, in particular,
should prove to do this, how could pragmatism possibly deny God's ex-
istence? Pragmatism could see meaning in treating as "not true", a no-
tion that was pragmatically so successful. To the pragmatist there can
be no other kind of truth than that which agrees with concrete, definite
reality. James says that the relations of pragmatism with religion are
"various and flexible, with resources rich and endless, and with con-
clusions as friendly as those of mother nature."

Pragmatism, under the leadership of John Dewey, has become one of
the most influential movements in American thought. Its influence is par-
ticularly strong and increasing in the philosophy of education and in
social ethics and philosophy. Particularly does it fit into the American
pupil's scheme of things, for all Americans love to do things. Our stu-
dents are not given too much to musing or meditating. Pragmatism is
popular with leading educators. The pragmatist teacher will always in-
sist that ideas must have purpose back of them. Ideas, to the pragma-
tist, are not just internal copies of external realities, but working
plans of action to promote the student's practical interests, and to in-
crease his own well-being. Pragmatism shows trends in education wherein
the mind is considered as a powerful instrument with a capacity of creat-
ing a cultural environment whereby humanity may lift itself far above that

18James, op. cit., p. 80.
of lower levels. In this there is a sort of evolutionistic flavor. For
pragmatism says that reflective thinking would, most likely, never have
arisen and grown as it has, if man's desires and wishes had always been
satisfied as soon as felt and if the satisfactions and results had always
been good and pleasant. Because of discords, pains, because of di-
verging differences between belief and experience, expectation and ful-
fillment, thought arises and works out its own salvation until these dis-
cords are eliminated.

"The relation between theory and practice varies. In most high
schools and colleges, theory occupies about half of the student's time.
But in technical and especially in trade and vocational schools, the
amount of time spent in theory tends to be reduced, in some cases, al-
most to the vanishing point, in favor of acquiring techniques, habits,
and aptitudes capable of immediate use on the practical side. The rea-
son for this is because practice under present conditions is especially
in the earlier stages, almost entirely a matter of routine. And we be-
lieve that routine leads nowhere. Trade schools, in the eyes of the prag-
matist, are no more educational than Latin schools managed by vested in-
terests. Both are deadening. What is needed is an institution in which
there is freedom for economic needs, where there is no insistence upon im-
mediate profits, where there is time for the natural interests in problems
to lead to a natural interest in techniques related to just such problems.
School, in a word, should be a place in which there is time for progressive
reaction to progressive stimulation." 19

"The pragmatist ideal of training pupils in the elementary techniques
of many sciences, of urging them to look forward to new discoveries,

19 R. C. Lodge, The Questioning Mind, p. 66.
and to trust always to scientific experimentation, seems to the realist a good step in the direction of his own view." 20 Thus there enters a criticism of pragmatism in that pragmatic researches are inevitably superficial and too easily satisfied with practical results, and indifferent to the far-reaching claims of pure science. In the field of education, according to Brigg, 21 there is need for two kinds of research: that which regardless of immediate utility but never forgetful of ultimate application, aims at the discovery of fundamental truth or the proving of hypotheses; the other arises from a perception of inefficiency or of difficulty in accomplishing effectively the useful work of the world, it springs from practical obstacles and returns to remove them. Educational research in order to be pragmatic, should radiate from a central important problem so that many co-ordinated studies under the direction of a master research worker would form a hierarchy, each unit of which would contribute in its own way to the knowledge necessary to answer the original major question. Intelligent and worthy research would be pragmatic in the sense that it sets out to ascertain the facts that are needed to plan more effective procedures." The pragmatist believes that the individual does not just apprehend what is there to be apprehended but that, even in knowing he is doing something. He believes that he has proof of this in actual experience. Hence pragmatists lay great emphasis on the educational value of experimental science. Pragmatists would so train the individual in the most up-to-date scientific tricks that he would be able to meet any emergencies

20 Ibid., p. 72

in his environment at least upon an equal footing and to change what he
does not like in it.

Pragmatism in its view of education, denies all idealism of the
classical type, for that type differed widely from actual experiences.
The pragmatist turns his back upon vague aspects of idealism and contents
himself with training individuals so that they may go ahead to a success
which has a definite meaning to human beings in human relationships.

Pragmatism accepts the definition of education as the process of ad-
justment of the free, the conscious human being to the environment of
man. It has no use for the parts of the definition connected with the
words, "Eternal", and "God", which to the pragmatist, seem to make non-
sense of life and education, as definitely empirical processes, since
these point to the assumption of some "Absolute."
CHAPTER III

PRAGMATISM APPLIED TO THE MODERN SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Objectives

In his book, Modern Methods and the Elementary Curriculum, Phillips says 22 that all objectives in modern education may be summarized under the following five heads:

1. Health and physical efficiency
2. Mastery of the tools of formal learning such as reading, spelling, drawing, and the number combinations
3. Vocational efficiency
4. Education for play and recreation
5. An appreciation of the great moral values in the race experience.

Pragmatism, in the main, agrees with all of these objectives listed above to some extent. In number two, possibly there is the greatest deviation, for pragmatism is a far cry from formal learning and the traditional ways of teaching. The pragmatist argues that it makes absolutely no difference if a child spells "cow" with a "c" or a "k", just so long as the idea gets across as to what he means, and as long as he has had the experience of figuring it out for himself.

Another list of objectives follows:

1. The school program gives boys and girls control of the tools of learning. Our earliest American schools were started for the purpose of teaching children to read, to write, and to figure. This was important not only for young people's social, civic, and vocational success, but also for their self-respect.

2. The school program establishes worth-while permanent interests.

3. The school program provides work experiences. This is the vocational preparation.

All are equally concerned for the total development of the boys and girls with whom they work. There are some aspects of growth, some habits, some skills, some important information.

4. The school program contributes to health knowledge and healthful practices.

5. The school program develops right social attitudes, habits, and standards of personal action.

The school's purpose everywhere is to:

1. Prepare its charge for independence

2. Prepare for adjustment to new situations

3. Give courage in facing indifference or opposition

4. Face personal handicaps for giving a good account of special abilities etc.

Bobbitt says that the schools have some very definite objectives.

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23 Bess Goodykoontz, School Life, p. 11.

These can be ascertained by discovering the "achieved" results for which the pupils are given "credit." They are shown also by the kinds of instruments, methods, and standards employed in the measurement of the results.

"The greatest present need of the schools is to formulate in considerable detail the activities that constitute the good life and to adopt them as its objectives." 25

The new elementary schools have much broader and deeper goals for their children than the traditional schools where initiative was so strictly suppressed and where the children had to do exactly as the teacher said. The elementary school of the past did teach its pupils how to read and write and gave them a fair knowledge of how men lived in the past and present, but there were many, many other objectives it did not even touch.

In our schools to-day we want for our pupils the following objectives: We want our youngsters to:

- get along well in work and play with playmates and older people,
- be able to speak clearly and correctly,
- be able to start a job and keep at it until it is finished,
- have wide interests in art, music, science, and the world around him,
- be fairly capable of locating what he wants to know,
- be able to write clearly,
- be able to read well,
- have a wide outlook,
- be well and strong,
- be decent." 26


How are we as teachers in the modern school going to achieve these objectives? It is certainly not a question of adding more material, but rather by the manner of presentation. That, after all, is the main point, and one that vitally concerns the teacher. Of course, materials used are also important, but not as much so as the method used. Just now and for several years every state and community in the nation is and has been carefully scrutinizing its curriculum and more and more coming to realize that old ways of teaching must be discarded and that the school must have broader objectives. And in order to reach these objectives the teachers themselves must not be scared of the whole process, but must think that in accepting these broader objectives as goals these differences in materials and methods come from an earnest attempt to realize the things we want our youngsters to experience in the elementary school.

Objectives will come out of the society they are to serve and naturally they will differ in different societies and communities. The educational objectives in each case will be based on that community's ideas of good and bad and will vary greatly. We in America admit our desires for a democratic state and there are certain democratic values that are most important in the education of our children, such as: the pursuit of happiness, the appeal to reason, civil liberty, the consent of the governed, and general welfare. From this, we might say that our objectives also emerge from our ideals for our pupils and democracy, for education is certainly definitely concerned with the development of the pupil, with the home and community life, with economics, civic responsibility and duty.

27Ibid., p. 6.
The Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association, in "The Purposes of Education in an American Democracy," pages 50-108, gives a fine list of objectives of education. Only a few will be quoted here under the various headings:

1. The Objectives of Self-Realization:

   Speech
   Reading
   Writing
   Number
   Sight and hearing
   Health knowledge, habits, health of community
   Recreation
   Intellectual interests
   Aesthetic interests
   Character

2. The Objectives of Human-Relationships:

   Respect for humanity
   Friendships
   Cooperation
   Courtesy
   Appreciation of the home
   Conservation of the home
   Homemaking
   Democracy in the home

3. The Objectives of Economic Efficiency:

   Work
   Occupational information
   Occupational choice
   Occupational efficiency
   Occupational appreciation
   Personal economics
   Consumer judgment
   Efficiency in buying
   Consumer protection

4. The Objectives of Civic Responsibility:

   Social justice
   Social activity
   Social understanding
   Critical judgment
Tolerance
Conservation
Social applications of science
World citizenship
Law observance
Economic literacy
Political citizenship
Devotion to democracy

Again, the school and the teacher’s big question is how to reach these objectives. Each objective should be examined separately and try to find in it some experiences for the children that will help them make some progress in the general direction which the objective indicates. Naturally, some of these objectives overlap. We might begin by examining the present program of the school to see just how well it meets these objectives, and then try to discover how the gap can be lessened.

There was a time, and not many years ago too, when for each course of study there were long lists of general and specific objectives, but they made little difference in the teaching, for there was little, if any attempt to check upon the objectives. Our modern objectives for the modern school realize more than ever that education is a process of growth through a gradual development from year to year. It is the teacher’s business to choose such experiences as will make a definite contribution to the additional growth in general objectives. In order for the teacher to help the class develop in wider interests, she must live widely herself in order to stimulate wide interests in her classes. It takes courage to experiment and to leave old, beaten tracks of pedagogy.

While the traditional program primarily required of the teacher a thorough knowledge of the subject matter she was to teach, the program of the new school requires that and more too. The modern school re-
quires a much broader knowledge of the subject to be taught, a wider knowledge of children, how they grow and develop, and an understanding of profitable learning experiences and ways to organize and present them.

To educate the individual so that he will be able to make adjustments to suit life demands and situations, to develop personality, for we now know that personality is a thing that is learned and acquired, and not a gift from nature, comprises one main objective in education. Pragmatists say that most persons have in them "a strong vein of pragmatism; and at no time is this so conspicuous as in childhood and adolescence." The pragmatist is essentially a "man of action," rather than a "man of thought." For this reason, exponents of pragmatism agree that the basis is pupil experience. Since all that teaching can do is to induce and direct that experience, the all-inclusive objective, as pragmatists see it, is the self-activity of the student. In up-holding this objective, pragmatism further maintains that stimuli are the natural, biological and social stimuli, and that food, drink, exercise, and rest mean much in self-activity. And so, in conclusion, we may say that self-activity, in a measure, summarizes the pragmatist's objectives.

Methods

The early school curriculum had certain philosophic bases. For all practical purposes the history of philosophy really began with the Greeks. Socrates united the scientific method and a high ethical and religious spirit. Plato professed to be a disciple of Socrates, yet his philosophy had an idealism of its own. He began with the general and the ab-

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Aristotle differed in that he begins with the particular and the individual. He used the inductive method. Modern philosophy began with the fifteenth century and was of a freer, more independent spirit of questioning and inquiry. Bacon came along as the founder of empiricism which attributes the origin of all knowledge to experiences; it is a pursuit of knowledge by observation and experience. Kant is the father of the philosophy of the nineteenth century and it was a critical idealism. Schopenhauer bridged the transition period from the idealism of Kant to the realism of the present. Rationalism was one of the great philosophic methods just before the scientific age came in. Kant was one of the great rationalists. Science came along as a man-made idea, assembled elements or facts and organized, humanized them until they became meaningful, appreciated and functional. Philosophy goes further than science. In other words, science gets the data and facts, organizes them in terms of use, while philosophy wants to get back of things and never settles anything definitely. Science describes while philosophy interprets. New philosophy is very scientific. Science and philosophy go hand in hand. John Dewey, greatest philosopher in America and the chief exponent of pragmatism, knows much about science, particularly about physics, biology, and chemistry, even more than some scientists.

As we begin the discussion of methods, we must get a real insight into the traditional method. There was a popular opinion handed down from the past that "anybody who has been educated can teach school; and that there is no art of teaching, no science underlying the practice of teaching and therefore no profession of teaching. The impression pre-
vails that anybody who can pass an examination and get a certificate is a duly qualified teacher, and consequently, that no specific preparation for teaching is necessary other than personal experience derived from actual work in the schoolroom. 23 Back in 1880, when this book was written, there was some ground for this opinion. Out of 500,000 teachers in the United States, not more than one in ten was a graduate of a normal school; of the remaining nine-tenths, most of them were merely unskilled school-keepers and were ignorant of their own ignorance. Carlyle graphically described the traditional-method teacher: "By teachers were hide-bound pedants without knowledge of man's nature, or of boys, or of aught save lexicons . . . How can an inanimate mechanical verb-grinder foster the growth of anything, much more of mind, which grows, not like a vegetable by having its roots littered by etymological compost . . . my professors knew syntax enough, and of the human soul this much . . . that it had a faculty called memory." 24

In the "good old days" the unscientific teacher, in arithmetic, began with definitions, continued in abstractions and mechanical rules, and ended in puzzling problems. In grammar, he devoted his attention to the technicalities of parsing and analysis; in geography he concentrated on the pupils' memorizing masses regardless of ideas. In history, "he strings dates like wooden beads upon the thread of memory." "In reading, he trains pupils to call words without such reference to meaning. In botany, he takes books before flowers, and in physics

23 John Swett, Methods of Teaching, p. 1.
24 Ibid. p. 4.
omits experiments. Object lessons he regards with disdain. In fact, he does not educate at all; that is, he does not draw out, train, and discipline; he does not awaken curiosity, nor excite inquiry, nor develop discrimination. Lessons were committed to memory and the teacher, by question and answer, conducted the recitation. A state superintendent, who, during a four years' term of office, had made many visits to rural schools, stated that he had never once seen a teacher conducting a recitation without a book in hand; and that he had seldom seen either teacher or pupil at the black-board. Object lessons were practically unknown. Pupils never actually used globes and neither did they learn how to write business or 'Friendship' letters. The chief anxiety of the teacher seemed to be to manage to get her pupils to pass the annual official written examination in order to promote them to the next higher grade. The pupils, of course, were frequently worried by long, tedious, voluminous written examinations. Such crude teaching was the natural outgrowth of the popular notion that "anybody can keep school." To summarize the traditional method and subject matter, one might say that all materials were organized, cut-and-dried, limiting them strictly to the text-book. Facts and ideas were bound up with the past. Education seemed to be a long tedious torture to prepare the child for some hazy experience in life in the dim and distant future, with nothing whatsoever to do with the present.

Even in the height of the traditional method's use there were some far-sighted educators who saw that the entire system was all wrong.

31 Ibid., pp. 7-10.
Thomas Hunter, President of the New York Normal College said: "The chief function of the normal school is to prevent machine teaching."

President Eliot, of Harvard University, said: "A good school is a man or a woman. Our common-schools need not more laws, rules, and regulations, but better-trained teachers in the school-houses."

In contrast with this, it might be well to list Hopkins’ criteria for the selection of method, as published in his 1931 book: 52

1. Keep the aims and objectives clearly and definitely before the pupils

2. Utilize pupil motivation or drive

3. Utilize pupil activity

4. Take into account the education level upon which the pupil begins.

Even at the first casual glance at this list, one sees definite influence of pragmatism. It might be well to look at pragmatism as it is reflected in four individuals, prominent in the making or marring of any school system: the pupil, the teacher, the parent, the administrator. Let us consider each of them in the order listed.

The pupil in school is interested more in the recitations than in the lectures, because recitations give him a chance to do something and to interact with the teacher and with his classmates, whereas, in the lecture, he has to sit still and listen to someone else all the time ... or try to! Experiments are often unconnected, and teach, not so much the subject, as their own particular technique and their own particu-

lar insight. That is why educators with the pragmatic viewpoint insist that "we must substitute for the futile and harmful aim of covering the whole field of knowledge, the better ideal of dealing thoroughly with a small number of typical experiences in such a way as to master the tools of learning, and present situations that make pupils hungry to acquire additional knowledge." 35 What the pupil really needs is not exact information, as was done in the traditional method, but how to find out for himself. The pragmatist pupil does not expect to be turned into a narrow scholar or an other-worldly mystic. But he does not expect to become a thoroughly practical, up-to-date citizen of his own world. 34

The influence of pupil purpose on learning has too often been ignored or forgotten by teacher and educators in making the curriculum. They have centered their attention completely on getting the pupils to engage in certain specified activities or to use certain subject materials that very little attention, if any, has been given to what the pupils were trying to achieve by means of the activities and subject matter. This emphasis has too often led to the use of sources of motivation that usually were entirely extraneous to the activities and subject matter involved in the situation, and also to procedures that gave the pupil very little chance to map out a course of action in order to achieve some goal he desires to gain. Quite often it is a very common belief that just any stimulus which causes the pupils to engage in some desired activity is a very satisfactory one. Or, to

express it differently, the activity alone is often thought sufficient to produce the desired result, and the planning of his course of action by the pupil seems to be considered in many cases just a useless complication of the educative process.

This is one of the most dangerous misconceptions in education. Not only does the pupil's purpose materially condition his present experience, but it also decides to a considerable degree the way current experience may serve as guide to his future conduct.

The way a pupil behaves in a given situation depends upon connections he is able to make between the disturbance he is experiencing and the activities that may reduce it. If the school secures particular types of behavior by means of stimuli that the pupil is unable to identify in out-of-school experiences, then these types of behavior will not work as a rule in life situations. This relationship of some particular stimuli to particular ways of behaving is of great significance and importance in meeting new situations. In order to meet new situations in a satisfactory manner, the pupil must be able to discover in the stimulus of the situation certain cues, then the pupil is in a position to work out a satisfactory way of behaving in the new situation. If the teacher and the school do not provide the pupil opportunities to meet many new situations under guidance and supervision, then there is a very slim possibility that the pupil will ever recognize in the new relationships the cues of stimuli previously experienced in a sufficiently clear manner to help him map out a satisfactory plan of action.

We teachers are prone to overlook this point. For example, pupils will hand in neat, carefully-prepared papers to the English teacher,
but at the same time will give sloppy, carelessly executed written work to other teachers, or to some out-of-school situations. In this example, the element which causes or stimulates the producing of a well-written English paper has no connection whatsoever with writing papers in general. Perhaps fear of the teacher or of receiving a low score that produced the good paper, but at any rate, since that fear is not present in other writing situations, it cannot stimulate the desired response of well-written papers in every situation. In the elementary school we often see little children, out of sheer fear of the teacher, show great respect for the property of others, but in out-of-school situations when the teacher is out of sight, there is not such respect in evidence. Too often is fear of low marks often employed exclusively to motivate work in the school. The natural result is that as soon as the pupil leaves school and the fear of low marks is no longer found in the stimuli to action, he gives up all activities he learned in school. That explains why many very desirable activities he learned and carried on in school are not continued in life situations. All of this the pragmatist teacher tries to remember.

The teacher with pragmatic leanings is a pragmatist in the first place, and a teacher in the second place. The pragmatist is above everything else, an empiricist. And no empiricist can tolerate for one moment the transcendentalism which characterizes every phase of idealism. Selves which are metaphysical ideals which are transcendental, points of view which are ultimate, are from the empirical standpoint, neither actually real nor practically usable. They are fictions, delusions, cheats. The pragmatist prefers to take his stand with the
actualities of human experience. As an empiricist, the pragmatist believes in a self which is a kind of fact. Self, in the last analysis is not a thing, but a function.  

Primarily, the pragmatist is interested in the things he is himself doing, in the individual problems which the biological and social environment sets him, one after another, and in solving each problem as it comes along. He is essentially an experimentalist, a trial-and-error man, solving his problems a bit at a time as best he may, adapting himself to each situation as it arises, and being, as far as possible, all things to all men.

Among the problems which come his way, are, of course, those connected with classroom teaching, and he finds himself adopting the teacher personality as he enters the schoolroom and not putting it off until the teaching day is over. And yet, although he has not become a teacher personality, he still remains a pragmatist with the same pronounced leadings or tendencies to take his problems one at a time, in an experimental, trial-and-error way.

The pragmatist teacher claims that his business is to teach his students to do rather than to know, to discover for themselves rather than to repeat laboriously the pedantic systems of others. And in so teaching his pupils, he points out that he is acting in accordance with the present day tendency in all branches of human endeavor.

Let us now consider some of the activities in which the pragmatist teacher engages in order to carry forward the educative pro-

Ibid. p. 58.  
Ibid. p. 59.
case. The number and variety of such activities are limitless. For instance, Charters and Naples, from a great many sources, have compiled a list of twelve thousand duties or activities engaged in by teachers. Every teacher must have a plan of action by which a proposed series of activities so related that the individual pupil may reasonably expect some desired results. In agreement with the concept of the pragmatic curriculum held by writers, teacher activities may be grouped into four general classes:

1. Teacher activities that have to do with the study of environment,

2. Teacher activities that have to do with the study of the pupils,

3. Teacher activities that deal with the direction of pupil activities,

4. Teacher activities that have to do with the limitations of the curriculum.

A brief discussion of each class will follow. No one questions the statement that the general environment of the pupil has a great influence upon the nature of activities engaged in and the results obtained in the schools. It is also agreed that the most accurate and the best way to secure information concerning the environment is by means of a continuing community survey which usually includes these items: types of homes and industries in the community, occupations of parents, community organizations, natural resources, public

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buildings, community attitudes, recreations, newspapers, customs and traditions peculiar to the community. In order to secure this information the teacher may have a number of specific activities, such as: visiting in homes, places of business, talking with public officials, tabulating materials gathered by observation and interview and reading, making graphs, charts and posters showing the results of the survey.

This thing the teacher must remember: that a single snapshot of an environmental condition is of little value. In fact, in some instances, it may even be positively misleading. There is need for consistent use of a cumulative inventory of environmental data.

In considering the teacher activities that deal with the study of pupils, they may be divided into two classes: those that relate to the characteristics of the pupils as a group, and those that relate to the characteristics of the different individuals in the group. Such data may be obtained from the teacher's own observation. The teacher should have information on these items:

1. The child's health and physical condition
2. The pupil's chronological and mental ages
3. The home environment
4. The pupil's training in previous years
5. Nationality and language difficulties
6. Work, social attitudes and habits
7. Characteristics, interests, special abilities
8. Emotional development.

There are a number of activities the teacher has that deal directly with the curriculum. First, the teacher must discover the character and extent of such limitations, and provide for planning and carrying out
activities that will reduce the undesirable effects of such limitations. What are these limitations of the curriculum? Such limiting factors as are commonly found in school programs are:

1. Rigid allotment of time
2. Promotion and grading
3. Rigid prescription of textbooks and course of study
4. Kind of supervision
5. Non-teaching duties and extra school duties required of teachers
6. Disciplinary requirements in the school system
7. Rules and regulations of the school

At times these limiting factors are mere excuses offered by the teachers for having narrow, uninteresting programs of work. Sometimes teachers will say, "Oh, well what can I do? I HAVE to use the adopted texts. I must comply with state laws." All of which may be true in some cases. Any wide-awake teacher, even though he or she must use the adopted texts, is free to go as far beyond the text as he cares to. That means, though, that the teacher must be resourceful, energetic, and willing to work hard. In any case, the teacher should critically enumerate her limitations in order to plan a course of action most effectively. The pragmatist teacher will do all or most of these things: read carefully the course of study and the school's rules and regulations, become familiar with the teaching schedules, examine all textbooks, both prescribed and recommended, see what materials are available, and discover the general program of supervision.

All teacher activities that have been discussed so far, are
in one sense, just preliminary to the main task to be accomplished, and that is the immediate direction of the pupils' activities. Of course, no teacher will even imagine that her activities are segregated and followed out in definite sequence, but rather, she will determine the appropriate time for a certain activity by her method of organizing instruction and the particular situation in which she finds herself. What procedures the teacher follows in directing pupils' activities will be determined by the method of organizing her teaching.

Regardless of the particular method of organizing instruction that may be given in a school or system, many of these activities will be essentially the same. Following is a list that has been used in the Virginia course of study: making books, exhibiting, arranging bulletin board, making posters, graphs, modeling, construction work, making maps, friezes, peep shows, miniature scenes, dramatics, hobbies, playing, survey, excursions, field trips, developing a school museum, and home, and school and community beautifying projects.

Through experiences successful teachers have found satisfactory ways of directing pupils who are engaged in certain activities and often a course of study will have procedures on general teaching for particular activities that are most helpful and suggestive.

Furthermore, pragmatism has called repeated attention to evaluation of the outcomes of instruction. The necessity of checking results achieved over against the task set out in the beginning has usually been accepted as a matter of course. But it is very important to consider the means used for evaluation. The procedures followed, the purposes and functions implied, the interpretation and use of results
secured, all have a direct bearing upon the general viewpoint upon which a curriculum is developed. "Outcome" is the term usually used synonymous with "aim" or "objective." This may lead to confusion at times. A more general concept of outcome is that it is a "specified isolated aspect of behavior." This concept has been stimulated by the scientific movement in education and has resulted in the minute analysis of human conduct and ideals.

Thus considered, evaluation occurs constantly as the curriculum develops and evaluation deals with every aspect of the curriculum. The three aspects of a program evaluation that require special emphasis for the teacher are:

1. It should provide pupils the means of evaluating their own activities. Pragmatism is particularly strong on this point.

2. It should give the teacher a definite basis for planning the activities of the pupils and to constantly evaluate results.

3. It should have a definite basis for constant revision of the curriculum.

As the pupil has an experience he evaluates it in terms of his own purposes, and the relationship to his dominating purpose is never lost. He will plan and carry out various activities to reach that dominant purpose and in so doing will revise his plan of action from time to time. This constant process of evaluation develops an awareness of his need for more adequate mastery of certain skills and abilities to achieve his plan of action.

In like manner, the teacher directing the activities of the pupils must constantly evaluate in terms of his own purpose as it is
directed by the aims of education, the progress that is made toward the achievement of that purpose. Thus is it necessary for the program to be elastic and flexible to allow of changes that can be made without too obvious abruptness.

Also, the evaluation as a function of the curriculum provides a check upon the aims, the selection and organization of materials, the teaching procedures, and the means of evaluation itself. In other words, the revision of the curriculum takes place properly through constant evaluation of its various elements as they are observed in action.

According to the pragmatic point of view courses of study for the use of teachers in developing curriculum should give suggestions that will aid them in the various phases of evaluation. Many courses of study do make such provisions for assisting teachers in evaluating the results of their instruction. These provisions are usually suggested procedures for administering standard tests or for constructing and applying tests developed in a certain curriculum program. It is certainly true that objective tests and examinations have been used more widely than any other means for evaluating the results of instruction. Probably, this is due to the ease with which they can be given and scored and the results may be treated in a uniform manner. Sometimes, the tests are included in the courses of study. Such tests are usually designed for testing specific habits and knowledge, and usually consist of completion, direct recall, multiple choice, true-false, reason, thought question, classification, or matching. While there is no doubt that the use of these objectives tests has improved the evaluation of
those educational results concerned with specific knowledge and skills, there are the two outstanding defects that just must be mentioned: the doubtful validity of objective tests, and the variety of uses made of the results of the tests.

When the aims of education are stated only in terms of specific knowledge or habits, then the types of tests usually found in courses of study may be quite satisfactory as means of evaluating instruction. When generalized controls of conduct are expected as outcomes, then other means must be provided. Attitudes and fixed associations must be measured almost entirely by observational tests, by the teacher's careful observing the pupils' everyday activities.

Important attitudes, appreciations, and methods of work may be tested by the teacher's securing from observation of each pupil answers to such questions as these:

1. Does the pupil work well with a group?
2. Does he get along with other children?
3. Is he on time?
4. Is he pleasant and cheerful?
5. Does he read good books during leisure time?
6. Does he get books from the public library?
7. Does he raise interesting and stimulating questions?
8. Does he stick to a task until it is finished?
9. Does he listen courteously to others?
10. Is he thoughtful of smaller children?
11. Does he enjoy hearing good music? 39

39Florida Course of Study for Elementary Schools, pp. 766-770.
The parent with pragmatist leanings has a very definite influence on what the school, the teacher, and the pupil are trained to do. He desires that his child has training in the modern techniques which will enable him to make a success of his life in whatever field he chooses as his own. He wants his child to be taught "the whole bag of tricks", so he may be able to solve his own problems and prove a match for most of his contemporaries. Such a parent is in thorough sympathy with the notions of the pragmatist teacher. On his own part, he is quite concerned to see that his child does not become too academic, too much of a schoolboy or schoolgirl, with schoolboy notions of honor and a quasi-professional interest in this or that branch of athletics. He makes every effort to keep his child in contact with the actual world about him, the world of industrial democracy, with its shops, its mills, its processes, and its methods of organization. He tries to especially emphasize the importance of preserving intimate contact with the larger community, and not withdrawing into the life of the smaller school community.

If at times a new course is demanded by pupil opinion, he will cooperate with the teacher and not ask too narrowly how this will affect departments of instruction already had. There are many such parents in the world to-day and other members of the community are really largely pragmatist in outlook. It is only rarely that our modern communities can be described as idealist in outlook, although perhaps big groups of citizens, are, in some of their activities, rightly thus described. Such communities know education to mean the trained ability to take problems one at a time and in small parts, and solve them by the
trial-and-error methods invented and applied until they terminate in practical success.

The pragmatist administrator has many things to consider too. One question that has been discussed pro and con in educational circles is the question about the size of classes. Opinion in the teaching profession has almost always been in favor of small classes, with twenty-five as the approved maximum. To the administrator, who has to think of the wisest way to use his financial resources, it is quite a question as to what is really the best size of a class for beginning instruction in this or that subject. As a pragmatist, he subjects it to scientific experimentation. He has two groups of students, matched in pairs, so that to each student in the A group, there corresponds a student in the B group, with similar background and similar record of achievement. He has the A group taught in a small section, and the B group taught in a large section by the same teacher. At the end of the course, both groups are given the same objective tests. If either group scores a definitely higher record than the other, while in other courses, the matched students continue to secure similar records, the evidence is taken as decisive. While investigators and their critics are still not entirely satisfied that class size alone is the determining factor, the pragmatist administrator is sufficiently satisfied with its approximate correctness to arrange for the building of large classrooms, and the hiring of a staff of a few outstanding lecturers, to which a number of inexpensive departmental assistants are added in order to attend to the routine work. The apparent inconsistency of the experimental results, when applied to the different departments of
study, does not in any way distress the pragmatist administrator. He
accepts the conclusion of each experiment as far as they go, and does
not try to make any of them cover the entire field.

By adding new courses demanded by the pupils, the administrator
may soon develop a school that will come to resemble, after a while,
not a well-knit organism, but an aggregation of somewhat unlike ele-
ments, with partial overlappings, and with no pretense at perfect
unity. Some liken such a school to a "quick-lunch counter"\(^{40}\) where
you can in a brief time obtain in a fairly satisfactory form, nearly
everything and anything you want. The school soon offers "brief
courses" in nearly everything at the high school and university stage.
Thus a graduate from such a school will not necessarily have a thorough
grounding in Latin, Greek, history, or English, or indeed, a thorough
grounding in anything! It simply means the completion of so many
"courses", each of which is valued at so many "credits" that count
toward a degree.

In the pragmatist school there is no place for the discipli-
narian; there is also no place for the moralist. The pragmatist
teacher and administrator believe that certain activities are interest-
ing because they appeal to natural, biological, social reaction ten-
dencies located within the nervous system of the normal individual.
These are the natural resources, the uninvested capital, upon the ex-
ercise of which depends the active growth of the child. The prag-
matisit accepts the enjoyments of life as part of his self. Life is
made up of such things and he accepts them as they come and enjoys

them for what they are. The activities of school life are interesting in themselves and fit in with the needs of a pupil’s nervous system. In pursuit of whatever interests him, the pragmatist makes whatever effort seems called for. He further believes that work and play are so intertwined in the growing child’s attitude that it is perfectly sound to expect him to play at his work and work at his play.

Now the realist believes in discipline, in the elimination of interest and effort, so far as these are subjective. The idealist believes in the elimination of discipline in the sense of external control and direction, and in the cultivation of subjective power. Active interest and effort naturally go along together. The pragmatist also discards external discipline and stresses the educational value of interest. In his case the interest is strictly empirical, biological and social, and is entirely devoid of transcendental backing.

The realist maintains that the proper method of teaching any subject is to abstract from the personality of both teacher and pupils and let the facts speak for themselves. Everything is strictly objective and the best method is to have no method of one’s own. The teacher’s methods are nature’s ways. For the idealist, education represents always the development from within the very essence of living and growing self. The method used by idealism is to help the student who is reaching out after more mature experiences to attain for himself an insight which is deeper than the insight he possesses at the time, and to realize that far beyond all phases of experiences there are many attractive, inviting insights. The pragmatist, like the idealist, rejects the realist view of factual knowledge as received from lec-
tures. He prefers to base himself upon experience. It is the method known as trial-and-error, or the experimental method. The problems which we all have to face are primarily of a biological or social nature and are usually solved by doing something, starting something in the world of actions and reactions, and seeing whether what happens is or is not satisfactory. If the practical solution proves to be satisfactory, then it "works," says the pragmatist and he need not look further in his seeking. The pragmatist substitutes for subject a few outstanding problems which he proceeds to investigate by the experimental method. In the classroom, all the pupils join in the investigation—they may not "know" the subject, but they become "trained investigators" with a real zest for research. They find out for themselves rather than learning by memorizing lecture notes. This is true particularly in learning foreign languages. One, by using the trial and error method, learns by doing, and the pupil learns to speak the language from the very beginning.

The curriculum, as defined by Rugg, is "really the entire program of the school's work. It is everything that the students and their teachers do." It includes both activities and the materials which are used in these activities. The pragmatist would define the curriculum in terms of experiences of the individual. Some consider the curriculum as being synonymous with course of study. "Course of study" is the name given to the specifications and directions relating to a given field of instruction. Such specifications

41Harold Rugg, American Life and the School Curriculum, p. 13.
42Caswell and Campbell, Curriculum Development, p. 440.
and directions are determined by the point of view from which the curriculum is developed. Some consider the course of study as a very flexible, changing sourcebook with materials and suggestions to assist the teacher in organizing instruction. An outline of major objectives, major concepts and experiences is very helpful but it should not be a substitute for living curriculum (experiences) that grows from the individual character of each experience.

There are two major concepts of the course of study. In the first, the course of study is planned to be the curriculum and if it is followed rigidly it becomes inflexible with uniform standards for achievement, varying very little from time to time. It thus becomes limited and a thoroughly regimented administrative program. In the second concept, the course of study is considered a printed manual or guide to serve in directing the development of the curriculum. It points out the general direction for progress and suggestive materials are given to assist the teachers in planning their work in the different areas.

Florence B. Stratmeyer and Herbert B. Bruner suggest the following heads for every course of study:

I. Recognition of educational objectives
   1. Standards of attainment
   2. Objectives

II. What to teach: Organization of subject matter
   1. Content
   2. General organization

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43 Caswell and Campbell, Curriculum Readings, p. 458.
3. Use of textbooks

III. Recognition of and adaptation to pupil's needs

1. Recognition of the individual
2. Activities
3. Projects and problems
4. Use of tests and measurements

IV. Adaptation to teachers' needs

1. General helps for teachers
2. Method
3. Illustrative lessons
4. Reference materials for pupils
5. Reference materials for teachers

V. Course of study itself

1. Mechanical make-up
2. Course of study as a whole

VI. Miscellaneous

Following this, these same authors list some essentials for every course of study:

1. Illustrative lessons for teaching procedure
2. Standards of attainment
3. Suggested standards for checking results of teaching
4. Type problems, projects
5. Suggestions for correction of specific difficulties - remedial materials
6. Suggested drills
7. Suggestions as to the proper use of illustrative materials
8. Basis references for children
9. Supplementary references for children
10. References for teacher to experiments, books on theory etc.
11. References for teacher on subject matter, content
12. Suggestions for teaching children how to study

When criticized, the pragmatist teacher may justify his method of instruction by showing that the systematic textbooks so beloved in past generations are really false to the method of scientific discovery. That method is piecemeal, solving particular problems one at a time, as he is teaching his own pupils to deal with their problems. The whole point is that knowledge is something which changes and grows. The characteristic attitude of the scientist is to look, not backward, but forward. His work is always piecemeal, experimental, strictly empirical; in a word, it is pragmatic.

The concept of growth is basic to the new and modern school curriculum. John Dewey expressed thus: "Since growth is characteristic of life, education is all one with growing; it has no end beyond itself... Growing is not something which is accomplished in odd moments; it is a continuous leading into the future."

Thus the pragmatist accepts with enthusiasm the trial-and-error account of learning, especially in its experimental treatment of learning as a response to specific hunger stimulation. He sees problems as separated and isolated. Each is complete in itself. The past has very little influence upon the future. The pragmatist believes

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that progress and the growing, forward-looking mind demand a complete
break with the past, a complete scrapping of the conventions, beliefs,
usages which were adapted to our modern, present ways of living. Hence
the pragmatists insist on throwing overboard the almost medieval cur-
iculum that unfortunately still exists in so many schools and putting
in its place a thoroughly modern curriculum with thoroughly modern
methods, so that life within the smaller school community will keep
pace with life in the larger social and industrial community. For prag-
matism, learning is the process of social interaction which results in
the discovery of new techniques which can be applied to our modern bio-
logical and social problems. It is essentially discontinuous and
piecemeal, and involves a complete break with the past, a complete re-
jection of systems, and a complete disbelief in any sort of trans-
cendentalism.

Now if we apply philosophical principles to curriculum-building,
from the realist viewpoint, we shall emphasize the importance of ob-
jective subjects, especially those subjects which fall within the
field of natural science. From the idealist view, we emphasize not
one subject rather than another, but the quality of personal great-
ness which some subjects possess in abundance. From the pragmatist
viewpoint, we emphasize the social sciences, but not on their merely
objective side. All subjects will be used to develop mastery over
techniques in order to solve new problems, rather than to train a
memory capable of flawless reproduction of systematic contents.
Realists are interested in it, not so much for its own sake, as for
the extent to which it can be used to develop the aptitudes and in-
sights with which such idealists and pragmatists are respectively concerned.

Therefore, due largely to the influence of pragmatism, the modern teacher has adopted the slogan of "learning by doing" and lays great emphasis on doing things in school. The pupils are encouraged to think for themselves each problem as it comes up. Every method is used to have the children do all the work, not to keep all the responsibility and initiative in the hands of the teacher. Such is the experimental method upon which the pragmatist relies. As a teacher the pragmatist is prepared to use a trial and error method to meet his students. He knows that he is going to make his students do the work themselves, and not just memorize what he tells them. His method of handling his own students will vary from year to year and from class to class. As he would himself pay, the precise classroom method he uses will be a function of the total situation, including students and teacher, as well as equipment and the particular experiment.

To some students, the pragmatist teacher will seem to be extemporizing, making it up as he goes along. And students of that sort would probably prefer for the teacher to come and dictate to them from ancient and well-worn lecture notes of by-gone days!

In discussing a problem with individual students, the pragmatist teacher will clear up many a difficulty felt by other students in the class, and such students will appreciate the mental alertness which can enter into the detail of experimental difficulties with such complete understanding and sympathy with the pupil's efforts to reach a satisfactory solution. The students who are permitted to enter into a dis-
cussion will feel equally stimulated to proceed further with their re-
searches as the student who had a specific problem. The pragmatist, by
doing, by the method of experimental trial and error, develops in his
pupils the experimental, scientific techniques, which lead to success
in the solution of individual problems as they occur. Such a teacher
turns out, not men who know, not men who contemplate, but men who DO
THINGS. What they do is empirical, is of biological and social sig-
nificance, and plays its part in influencing the course of events in
the actual world.

Pragmatism has also had a definite influence on examinations. When
the pragmatist examines, he is not trying to educate, but merely to
measure the objective results achieved by other methods. He is content
to do his educating in class time, and to use the examination period in
order to measure, as conveniently as may be, the general progress made
by the student in such and such a course. As he sees it, the achieve-
ment of a student is really a question of being able to solve success-
fully the problems set him in the laboratory or its equivalent. These
are all specific problems, each dealt with by itself, by devising and
applying an appropriate technique. When they are solved they are solved,
and no further examination should be necessary. The pragmatist would
like to see certain specified laboratory courses count for the total
credit in a course, and he would further like to see that term work
would in most courses count for at least two-thirds of the total credit.

Dr. George S. Counts, in an address at the North Texas State
Teachers College, Denton, Texas, March 21, 1940, on the subject, "Edu-
cate for Democracy," made the statement that democracy is a society of
free men and women. He further said that the key of liberty is knowledge, emphasizing that knowledge is most necessary for freedom in a democracy.

Pragmatism has no faith whatever in the realist or in the idealist account of knowledge. Systematization is always very general, universal, abstract; it is always the work of second-hand thinking and underrates the work of original research. The function of intelligence is to solve the practical problems by devising appropriate reactions and thus to add to the interest and richness of concrete, democratic living. Knowledge is only a cue to initiate and guide such action that sensation, as the pragmatist sees it, has any genuine function. The business of the educator, is not to implant knowledge, but to train in techniques, as has been stated before in this paper.

Furthermore, the pragmatist has no use for what common sense, with its realist outlook calls "memory." Mechanically repetitive drill seems to him a most terrible thing, enslaving and deadening the potentialities of the growing child. Any kind of dwelling in the past seems to him a product of the academic point in which realist psychology rejoices. This whole attitude, to the pragmatist is in the present and the immediate future, in planning and realizing our plans, in solving new problems with new techniques. In the pragmatist school "learning by heart" will vanish forever and "memorizing" will never be mentioned.

In the present generation, it is largely the work of the pragmatists, headed by John Dewey, which has drawn attention to the confusion, inconsistencies, and inefficiencies contained in the traditional views, and has urged the uncompromising adoption of the pragmatist position and
Naturally, no two pragmatists have agreed. Naturally, too, there have been severe criticisms of the movement. Writers of pragmatic types have found difficulty in making philosophical headway without passing over into materialism, realism, or personal idealism. It is also true that pragmatism has waned since the death of William James in 1910. But, in spite of all the adverse judgments and harsh criticisms passed on pragmatism, it has by no means ceased. It is still a great influence in educational circles. It has varied with the types of philosophers. Yet it is recognized wherever empiricism prevails.

Pragmatism is old and it will never die, regardless of what critics may say. In fact, the actual history of philosophy is a pragmatic test of the great systems. And first and last, pragmatism is not a philosophy, but in preparatory to philosophy. It is, as James says, "a means of settling disputes that might otherwise be interminable." 45

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