

[Transcribed by Ahti-Veikko Pietarinen, 20 February 2005]

Charles S. Peirce, MS 330¹

[p. 1]

The argument for Pragmatism anachazomenally or recessively stated

- (0) The meaning of an intellectual concept consists in the general manner in which it might modify deliberate conduct.
- (1) For an *intellectual* concept is one that is developed in [the performatively deliberate] *thinking*.
- ~~(2) And all thinking is reasoning.~~
- (2) Now ~~whatever that which~~ is [let any thing be] deliberately performed and it will have to be done ~~in the~~ under *active self-control*.
- (3) And let anything be actively self-controlled and it must be done with *controlled attention*.
- (4) Attention involves *effort*.
- (5) And ~~rational~~ [effort is action]. Indeed rational human action is nothing but controlled effort.
- (6) Besides all thinking is *reasoning*.
- (7) And the very first step in all reasoning, — which is *retroduction*, — consists in the manipulation of [p. 2] ~~of~~ signs of a certain sort, and that all attentive and observational manipulation, self-controlled & self-conscious.
- (8) It is therefore *conduct*.
- (9) And the only ultimate issue of reasoning that can be justified is a general rule of conduct.
- (10) The conclusion is the logical interpretant.
- (11) And this is as much as to say the signification.
- (12) The work of defining a concept is eminently a work of thinking.
- (13) And as such is subject to the rules of reasoning.
- (14) And therefore the only essence of the concept — its logical interpretant — is the generalized habit of conduct.

¹ [Watermark: BOOK-KEEPERS, LINEN LEDGER; Size: 1 13/16 * 10 5/16 before folding; Weight: Med; Condition: Good; Ink: Blue, red, black; Remarks: 1 folded sheet. Parsons/Paper/Co. 8 * 10 (1 folded sheet). LINEN LEDGER 8 * 10 1/2 before folding (3 folded sheets) + 1 half-sheet xxx plain paper, white.

[p. 3]

The argument is that

(1) Thoughts are signs

(1') and *general* signs

(2) and Thought is subjectively general

(2') The subjectively general has the mode of being of a *thought*

(3) All signs have ~~signification~~ interpretants

(4) All general signs have *significations*

(4'') Significations are a special kind of *interpretants*.

(4') and all signs have interpretants

(4''') and any existence that involves continuity cannot be singular but must be a compound of $> n$ triads just as any potency that involves existence must be of $> n$ triads?

(5) In order that a thought should come into a man's mind it must be *conveyed* to him by a sign of which it is the interpretant

(6) And no ~~general~~ [subjectively general] sign can be conveyed without an *instance*

(6') But an instance is a [subjectively] *singular* sign

(6'') And whatever is subjectively singular *exists*

(7) Now existence consists in *potency of action*

(7') And the potency of reaction cannot exist unless action *somehow* takes place.

[p. 4]

Man comes from the womb in actuality as animal little higher than a fish; by no means as high as a deponent. His humanity consists in his *destination*.

He ~~is~~ [becomes] not actual man until he acquires self-control and then he is so in the measure of his self-control. Woman is lower than man [(as common sense declares)], notwithstanding her superiority as an animal [(her human perhaps ?parthenography? is not utterly impossible at any rate, fertilization, though it brings so much modification, that the offspring represents the father *about* as much as it does the mother, yet all that fertilization *necessarily* does, its essential function, is a new stimulation.)] that she has less self-control. For with feebler passions she is more the victim of circumstances than man is.

Man becomes to his normal development only through the so-called *evil passions*, which are evil, only in the sense that they ought to be controlled and are *good* as the only possible agency for giving man his full development. Personally, I believe in omnipotent God; and consequently I hold that the only [CSP, marginal note: this is impertinent] [p. 5] true solution to the problem of evil is that of *Substance & Shadow* that God delights in *evil per se*, (not because it is the only means in his power for effecting his purposes [which ~~is~~ cannot be if he be omnipotent] but because he altogether wills it & wishes it to be). The truth is the *evil* is merely that we ought to war against, but that does not prevent its being admirable *per se*, as to God's mind it is, and as we ought to try to comprehend that it is, — which we can do, but only through self-control.

It may be objected with truth that the control of evil passions is not genuine self-control but is only the substitution of one passion for another, just as the trainer of an elephant, dog, or horse only imposes his own control upon the animal. But the reply to this objection is that just as that animal by the process does acquire a genuine self-control & ~~comes~~ [become] capable of genuine self-conduct doing things that he never has been thought, so though the control of evil passions is not itself genuine self-conduct it leads to the development of this [CSP, marginal note: Impertinent].

(9 [sic, 8]) The above is ~~only~~ pertinent only so far as it shows that man's existence *qua* man [which is not *mere* existence] consists solely in ~~acting begun~~ [his growing to act from] rational self-conduct.

(10 [sic, 9]) Now the *true*, and therefore *real*,

[end of section, p. 6]

1. If the doctrine that the true is the Satisfactory be that those two words are synonymous, it is not a doctrine of philosophy, but only a proposition in English lexicography.

2. It seems plain, however, that it is a doctrine of philosophy, vaguely expressed, and that the assertion is that while to be true *means* something else, [yet the true] ~~is~~ *coextensive with* the Satisfactory in cognition.

3. In that case, ~~the~~ it is indispensable to say what is meant by the True: until this is done the statement has no meaning. I suppose that by the True is meant that at which inquiry aims.

4. It is equally indispensable to ascertain what is meant by Satisfactory; but this is by no means so easy. Whatever be meant, however, if the doctrine is true at all, it must be necessarily true. For it is the [p. 7] very object conceived in entertaining the purpose of the inquiry that is assented to have the character of satisfactoriness.

5. Is the Satisfactory meant to be whatever excites a certain peculiar feeling of satisfaction? In that case, the doctrine is simply hedonism in so far as it affects the field of cognition. For when hedonists talk of "pleasure", they do not mean what is so called in ordinary speech but what excites a feeling of satisfaction.

6. But to say that an action or the result of an action is Satisfactory is simply to say that it is congruous ~~with~~ to the aim of that action. Consequently, the aim must be determined before it can be determined, either in thought or in fact, to be satisfactory. An action that had no other aim than to be congruous to its aim would have no [p. 8] aim at all, and would not be a deliberate action.

7. The hedonists do not offer their doctrine as an induction from experience but insist that, *in the nature of things*, [that is, from the very essence of the conceptions, an] action can have no other aim than “pleasure”. Now it is *conceivable* that an action should be disconnected from every other in its aim. Such an action, then, according to hedonistic doctrine, can have no other aim than that of satisfying its own aim, which is absurd.

8. But if the hedonist replies that his position does not relate to satisfaction but to ~~the~~ [a] feeling of that only arises upon satisfaction, the rejoinder will be that feeling is incomprehensible; so that no necessary truth can be discovered about it. But as a matter of observation we do, now and then, [p. 9] meet with persons who very largely behave with a view of experiencing this or that feeling. These people, however, are exceptional, and are wretched beings sharply marked off from the mass of [busy and happy] mankind.

9. It is, however, no doubt, true that men act, especially in the action of enquiry, *as if* their sole purpose were to produce of certain state of feeling, in the sense that when that state of feeling is attained, there is no further effort. It was upon that proposition that I originally based pragmatism, laying it down in the article that in November 1877, prepared the ground for [my argument for the] pragmatic doctrine (*Pop. Sci. Monthly* for January 1878). In the case of inquiry, I called that state of feeling “firm belief”, and said, “As soon as [p. 10] a firm belief is reached we are entirely satisfied, whether the belief be true or false”, and went on to show how the action of experience consequently was to create the conception of real truth. Early in 1880, in the opening paragraphs of my memoir in Vol. III of the *American Journal of Mathematics*, I referred the matter to the fundamental properties of protoplasm, showing that purposive action must be action *virtually* directed toward the removal of stimulation.

10. My paper of November 1877, setting out ~~with~~ from the proposition that ~~inquiry~~ [the agitation of] a question ceases ~~and and only as~~ [when satisfaction is attained] with the settlement of belief and then only, goes on to consider how the conception of truth gradually develops from that principle under the action of experience, beginning with willful {sic.} belief, or self-mendacity, the most degraded [p. 11] of all intellectual conditions; thence rising to the imposition of beliefs by the authority of organized society; then to the idea of a settlement of opinion as the result of a fermentation of ideas; and finally reaching the idea of truth as overwhelmingly forced upon the mind in experience as the effect of an independent reality.