ESSENTIALS OF
J.L. CHILDS' CONCEPTION OF
JOHN DEWEY'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.
Exposition and Criticism

THESIS PRESENTED AT THE FACULTY OF ARTS

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DEDICATED TO MARY IMMACULATE

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J.L. CHILDS' CONCEPTION OF JOHN DEWEY'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Upon lecture of such an elaborate thesis title one is immediately inclined to inquire: why has the author of this thesis chosen to study Childs' conception of Dewey? Why has he not limited himself to one or the other of these two prominent figures in the realm of education? The answer lies in the objective prompting this essay. The aim of the present thesis is to expound and appreciate the underlying principles of the powerful educational movement known in America as "progressive education". John Dewey's philosophy is the fundamental inspiration of this educational trend.[1] His name will remain forever memorable in the history of education in America, and one can assert, in the history of education throughout the world. But Dewey is not alone in propaganding progressive education; his personality as an original philosopher and a powerful thinker has won over a host of enthusiastic followers. To-day, a vast number of

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1. BRUBACHER, op. cit., p. 324.

educators are advocating progressive education and giving it their whole-hearted support. At the present time, J.L.Childs, one of Dewey's disciples and former students, is the chief interpreter of the new movement.[1]

Bearing these two elements in mind, namely that Dewey's philosophy is at the basis of progressive education, and that Childs is its leading representative to-day, we have deemed the study of Childs' conception of Dewey's educational thought, an ideal way of entering into contact with the actual trends of progressive education. Hence, the object of this essay is neigher Childs' philosophy of education, nor Dewey's philosophy of education, but Childs' conception of Dewey's philosophy of education.

The vast range of Mr. Dewey's writings, the progress and evolution of his thought, compelled us to limit this study to a resume of the bare essentials of his philosophy of education.

And now this is how we shall proceed in realizing our objective. First let us say a word about the main source of this study, the core or principal object of our considerations. In 1939, P.A. Schilpp of Northwestern University, began a philosophical collection entitled: "The Library of Living Philosophers". The first volume of this series bears the title: The Philosophy of John Dewey. A group of philosophers, scientists and psychologists, some favorable and others unfav-

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1. REDDEN and RYAN, op. cit., p. 476.

orable towards Dewey, collaborated in the production of this volume; each specialist contributing a chapter on some particular point of Dewey's doctrine. The closing chapter is a rejoinder by John Dewey himself in which he appreciated the various articles expounding his thought, makes certain precisions and tries to answer certain charges brought against his teachings. One of these articles was composed by J.L. Childs: "The Educational Philosophy of John Dewey". In a thirty page essay, Childs gives a synopsis of Dewey's educational thought. We have made the study, analysis and criticism of Childs' essay, the object of our present thesis.

It is interesting to note that Childs' essay offers every guarantee of truth and fidelity in expounding Dewey's views. Childs is not only familiar with Dewey's teachings, but this very essay we are about to study has been submitted to Dewey. Dewey has found nothing to deny or precise in Childs' exposition. Before the eyes of history Childs can justly claim that his essay is a genuine treatise of his master's thought.[1]

Three principal parts will compose our thesis. Part one will expose the doctrine contained in Childs' essay. Part two will consist in a few principles of the Christian philosophy of education, and in the light of these principles,

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1. DEWEY, op. cit., p. 518-519.

part three will appreciate Dewey's views as exposed by Childs' essay.

From what we have just said, it results that our thesis will not be complete or exhaustive in nature. However it is our belief that Childs' essay expounds the essential principles of Dewey's system of education. It is far easier to judge and appreciate these principles in Childs' essay where they are expounded synthetically, clearly and orderly, free from detailed technical development.

The separation of this essay from the entire context of Dewey's philosophy has brought on a serious difficulty: that of vocabulary. Each philosophical system has attached certain precise meanings to words common to all philosophies. What is the exact meaning of each of the terms used by Dewey? It has not always been an easy thing to decide.

Notwithstanding this handicap, we have endeavored to be as fair as possible in our exposition and criticism. Our study of John Dewey's system of thought has revealed him to be a personal and profound thinker. Our essay may contain certain imprecisions. In spite of the risks and difficulties involved, we have preferred to tackle progressive education's philosophical background. We have limited our study to an unique essay in order to facilitate a deeper and more thorough analysis. Here the saying: "Non multa sed multum" has been our inspiration.

Our thesis aims, as we have stated, at establishing an immediate contact with the progressive education movement, at expounding and appreciating its fundamental principles. We could have dwelt lengthily on the new techniques and methods, the various reforms and multiple innovations of the movement. It has appeared to us more urgent and more profitable to study the system at its basis, to research its philosophical foundations. All the concrete applications and practices of the movement flow from its underlying principles. We nourish the firm conviction that any endeavor at an adequate understanding of progressive education must begin by the study of its philosophical premises.

PART ONE

ANALYSIS OF J.L. CHILDS' ESSAY

ANALYSIS OF J.L. CHILDS' ESSAY

J.L. Childs has subdivided his article "The Educational Philosophy of John Dewey", in five sections: I- Philosophy and Education, II- Mind and Education, III- Nature and Education, IV- Society and Education, V- Democracy and Education. Let us examine the general sequence of the essay.

Our first consideration will bear on the general title of the essay: "The Educational Philosophy of John Dewey". What does Childs mean by educational? what does he mean by philosophy? Only Dewey's definition of education is defined in Childs' essay. Had Childs given a personal definition of education however, we may suppose it would have a close resemblance with Dewey's. No explicit definition of philosophy is given. Judging from the content of Childs' essay, we may state that philosophy is here synonymous with fundamental principles or basic doctrine.

Section I begins by showing a few relations that exist between education and philosophy for Mr. Dewey. One of these relations lies in the fact that education permits us to study the human aspect of philosophy. Bearing this in mind, Childs draws up the general plan of his essay. He intends to:

> explore some of the major conceptions of Dr. Dewey's philosophy by indicating their implications for the theory and practive of education.[1]

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1. CHILDS, op. cit., p. 421.

Faithfulness to Dewey demands that method be the first consideration entered upon. The experimental method is set down as the supreme criterion. This method implies a new life-outlook, the acceptance of natural experimentalism.

The remaining sections of the essay develop the consequences of natural experimentalism. Consequences first on the theory of mind (Section II), second on nature (Section III). Now experimental naturalism stipulates continuity between man and nature. The social explains the marked differences between the two, hence Section IV. Finally Dewey's conception of education is in function of a definite way of social life, the democratic. Section V enumerates the implications of the democratic ideal and their educational consequences.

SECTION I

Section I contains several important statements. In Mr. Dewey's philosophy, no level of experience[1] detains superior metaphysical status. Mr. Dewey's philosophy is interested in creating a better world. Philosophy could possibly focus about education as the supreme human interest. Different philosophical outlooks can be detected by developing their educational implications. A definition of education is given.

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1. Experience, this term in Childs' essay has a particular meaning, we believe. Cf. Part three.

Education is a moral undertaking. Dewey's philosophy accepts the method of experience or experimental enquiry as the supreme interest, reliance and value. The acceptance of this method however, implies a new world-view, but this is the only road to moral and intellectual reconstruction. The acceptance of the method of experimental inquiry also implies a naturalistic view of existence as presurposition of one's educational and philosophical practice. This method of experience contrasts sharply with the ideas of Western culture, saturated as are these latter with supernaturalism.

And now let us examine these affirmations in detail. Section I begins by establishing a few relations between philosophy and education as understood by Dewey. The child, the nursery or the kindergarten are as apt as an electron or a star to rêveal the nature of reality. For, according to Mr. Dewey, no level of experience should be given superior metaphysical status. The moral interest, we read, is also central in Mr. Dewey's philosophy:

> Although resolute in the desire to understand and interpret the world solely on the basis of empirical findings, he is equally concerned to use these findings to change the world so that human goods may become more secure, more numerous, and more widely shared[1].

This affirmation of empiricism should be borne in mind.

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1. CHILDS, op. cit., p. 419.

Education has always interested Mr. Dewey; he has afforded much attention to the subject, and in turn it has played an important part in the development of his own basic ideas. He manifests surprize at the fact that no one has thought of focussing philosophy: "about education as the supreme human interest".[1] Education may serve to discover differences in philosophical outlook, for according to the pragmatist, meaning of ideas is to be found in the practices to which they lead. Differences in philosophy must likewise differentiate educational practice.

The next paragraph defines education. In its broader sense it:

> denotes any change wrought in an individual as a result of experience;[2]

in its narrower sense:

> deliberate form education signifies conscious effort by some organized group to shape the conduct and the emotional and intellectual dispositions of its young.[3]

Deliberate education is thus a moral undertaking:

> moral in the sense that it is designed, controlled action concerned with the formation of fundamental attitudes of the individual toward nature and fellow human beings. It inescapably involves the manifestation of preference for some particular kind of social and individual life. We engage in deliberate education because we desire to make of the young something they would not become if left to their own unguided interactions with their natural and social environments.[4]

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1. CHILDS, op. cit., p. 419-420. N.B. All quotations in Part One of this thesis are taken from the above work. For more brevity only the page of the reference shall be given in the foot-notes from now on.
2. p. 420.
3. p. 420.

Basing himself on Mr. Dewey's thesis that:

> education offers a vantage ground from which to penetrate to the human, as distinct from the technical, significance of philosophical discussions.[1]

the author here begins expounding some of the major conceptions of Dewey's philosophy. To attain this purpose, the author explains the educational consequences of Dewey's philosophy.

The first consideration to be made regards method, for the method of experience or experimental inquiry is his: "supreme interest, criterion, reliance, and value."[2]

The following paragraph is of particular importance:

> But the educator who pursues this method of experience whole-heartedly discovers eventually that philosophically he is committed to something more than a mere method. To be sure, the method as such does not automatically prescribe a complete set of metaphysical theses, but it does, nevertheless, define a principle of approach and analysis which clearly is not compatible with certain philosophical presuppositions. It inevitably cuts the ground, for example, from under the conception of supernaturalism --[...] A new world-view may be the necessary correlative of this empirical method, but desirable intellectual and moral reconstruction in the lives of the individuals can be attained educationally only if the outlook itself be given independent consideration.[3]

The author then quotes a significant passage from Mr. Dewey's Living Philosophies, contrasting the philosophy of

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1. p. 421.
2. p. 421.
3. p. 421.

faith in experience with the ideas of all Western culture, saturated as are the latter with the supernatural. Supernatural means precisely: beyond experience.

> To use the method of experience as Dr. Dewey himself uses it, is to make a naturalistic theory of existence the common presupposition of one's philosophical outlook and educational practice. In his philosophy the naturalistic outlook is as fundamental as the empirical.[1]

SECTION II

In Section II, Mind and Education, we see that man is continuous with nature; his rational and moral attributes have but a natural genesis. This however, does not impair in the least, the distinctive human traits, for Mr. Dewey doesn't reduce education to mere animal training, nor does he intend in any way to replace the so-called culture values by practical utility.

Our rational operations have developed from organic activities by a process of evolution. Mind does not stand for a complex of inherited faculties but for a function, a quality of behavior.

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1. p. 422.

No longer are we to bother about the classical distinction between the knower and the world. The difference lies in being in and of the movement of things in a physical or intelligent way.

The author has then explained at length the function of the mind and the ensuing educational consequences.

1. The school program must engage in activities which call for the complete act of reflective thought.
2. Books are of themselves insufficient, but are not to be rejected. An environment is required to test the validity of ideas.
3. Dewey has sought to do away with mechanical rote learning, through the activity program and community life within the school.

Let no one imagine however that an activity program is identical with muscular exercise or indulgence in the whims of the young. Efficiency in managing resources and overcoming obstacles, sociability, aesthetic taste, intellectual method and conscientiousness have been set up as criteria for appreciating an educational program. Let us examine these points in detail.

Section II opens with the blunt affirmation that experimental naturalism implies organic evolution, an evolution which upholds

> that man's rational and moral attributes have had a natural genesis just as literally as have the structures of his body.[1]

Man is continuous with nature:

> The postulate of the continuity of the human, the organic, and the physical, is foundational in his approach to the problem of logic, psychology, politics, art, ethics and education.[2]

Follows a quotation from Dewey's Creative Intelligence stating the continuity of the human with other animal forms of life, or animal forms of life with chemico-physical processes.

What does this naturalistic interpretation of the human personality imply? Not animal training at any rate, for Dewey has incessantly protested against authoritarianism and routine habituation.

> His educational aim has been the development and liberation of individual intelligence, not animal training in the form of mere mechanical conditioning of reflexes.[3]

It is also denied that the rejection of the: "historic mind-body dualism"[4] involves:

> approval of the notion that human interests are limited to those which make for creature comfort or for practical utility to the exclusion of those values which are called cultural.[5]

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1. p. 417.
2. p. 422.
3. p. 423.
4. p. 423.
5. p. 423.

According to Mr. Dewey, however, human traits and capacities are in no way diminished because of their evolutionary development.

> Man is no less rational because his capacities for reflection have developed from activities which are not consciously purposeful.[1]

None of the distinctive human traits are:

> to be eliminated by any theory about man's origin and psychological make-up. [...]
>
> The naturalistic humanism of Dr. Dewey is no more compatible with gross materialism which assimilated the human to the organic, and the organic to the physical, than it is with that species of mentalism, or spiritualistic monism, which goes to the opposite extreme and turns mind, an emergent function, into the ultimate ground and stuff of all existences. For Dr. Dewey evolution denotes emergence.[2]

The author substantiates his affirmation with a quotation from Dewey's Logic; The Theory of Inquiry, 18-19:

> The term "naturalistic" has many meanings. As it is here employed it means, on the one side, that there is no breach of continuity between operations of inquiry and biological operations and physical operations. "Continuity", on the other side, means that rational operations grow out of organic activities, without being identical with that from which they emerge.[3]

This naturalistic view of continuity has consequences on Dewey's philosophical and educational outlook, particularly on his theory of mind.

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1. p. 423.
2. p. 424.
3. p. 424.

> Mind is real, but its reality does not denote the presence of a transcendental reason or cosmic consciousness in the human form... Neither is mind viewed as a complex of inherited faculties which unfolds when stimulated and trained by the so-called disciplinary subjects [...] Dr. Dewey regards mind as a quality of behavior -- a function.[1]

Here follows a surprising excerpt from Dewey's Creative Intelligence, surprising at least to the Thomistic philosopher.

> It [the organism] becomes a mind in virtue of distinctive way of partaking in the course of events. The significant distinction is no longer between the knower and the world; it is between different ways of being in and of the movement of things; between a brute physical way and a purposive, intelligent way.[2]

If mind is then but a quality of behavior, a function, precisely what is this function? What is its exact role? The next two paragraphs answer this question.

> In sum, mind appears in the conduct of the individual when outcomes are anticipated and thus become controlling factors in the present ordering of events and activities. To have mind, we must have knowledge which is grasp of the behaviors. We may be said to have the meaning of events when we know what can be done with them, and how to behave with reference to them. This involves understanding of the conditions on which their occurrence depends, and also of the consequences to which they lead. Meaning, therefore, signifies that knowledge of operations, or of the behavior of events, which makes significant prediction and control possible.
>
> This behavior which is mind, and which denotes freedom through control is by no

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1. p. 424 & 425.
2. p. 425.

> means the exclusive property of these inherited structures. In other words, mind is not an endowment given at birth. The child acquired mind - a rational nature - as he masters the meanings of affairs in his environment. These meanings are not primarily his own original creations. They have been developed by the long and painful experience of the race; they are funded in the habits, customs, traditions, tools, methods, techniques and institutions of his society. The child makes them his own through a learning process. It is through learning by participation in the ways of his community that he achieves mind - becomes a person.[1]

This theory of mind carries with it, important consequences for education:

> Reflection is linked with behavior. It is viewed as an indirect mode of response to environment. The act of reflection begins in a situation of difficulty; develops through observation, the gathering of data, the making of inferences, the tracing out of the implications of suggested meanings or ideas until such a time as the nature of the problem is defined, and a promising plan for dealing with it has been projected in imagination; it ultimately leads to an action which puts the plan to actual test.[2]

An educational program should therefore engage in activities which call for this complete act of reflective thought.

> The important thing is that thinking, according to Dr. Dewey, is the method of an educative experience. The essentials of method are therefore identical with the essentials of reflection.[3]

Dewey has upheld that books are indispensable for experiences of this kind. He has condemned the theory that

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1. p. 425.
2. p. 426.
3. p. 426.

the child should deal with things, as well as those who oppose learning through activity to learning through language.

But Dewey has also maintained that if thinking involves the use of written and oral symbols, it involves more than that. Thinking is an experience and experiencing involves a two-fold give-and-take process:

> an active process of doing and undergoing, of acting on things in the environment and suffering or enjoying their reactions to our acts. We learn to think as we connect what we do with the consequences that follow from our doing. Ideas are valid or invalid to the extent that they define activities, which, as means, are appropriate to the ends and the individual desires. The first principle of rationality is to learn "to think in terms of action and in terms of those acts whose consequences will expand, revise, test, your ideas and theories."[1]

Thinking and the nature of mind thus defined, have led Dewey to seek reform of the traditional school. Thinking for him cannot take place in the child's head alone; an environment must be provided for, to test the idea in deed. His conception of thinking is not relevant to books alone, but to the natural and social world. Dewey has therefore endeavored to replace passive rote learning by active community life within the school, and asked for vital interaction between the environning social and natural world and the school.

Dewey's theory of mind has thus given birth to the activity program. The activity program must encourage:

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1. p. 426.

> that conservative and cumulative ordering of experience which leads to the progressive enrichment of meaning and to added power of control over self and environment.[1]

Mere muscular exercise, busy work, or indulgence in the passing whims of children, are not to be identified with educational activity. The human interests, aesthetic, intellectual and utilitarian, must be taken into consideration.

The author ends this division with an extract from Dewey's Democracy and Education, setting up the following as criteria of the educational worth of an activity: competency in the management of resources and obstacles encountered (efficiency), sociability, aesthetic taste or artistic appreciation, trained intellectual method, sensitiveness to the rights of others - conscientiousness.[2]

SECTION III

In section III, Nature and Education, we see that Dewey's empiricism which constitutes the world of ordinary experience ultimate point of departure for both philosophy and education, implies not only a new theory of mind, but also another conception of the world.

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1. p. 427.
2. p. 427.

Experience reveals that objects possess diverse qualities, that our world is a manifold world, that the course of events is undetermined by antecedent forces, and finally that nature is without beginning and end.

This outlook affects method, content and aims of education. The method of experimental intelligence becomes all-important in a changing world. Tools have enabled man to control his precarious world. Hence the curriculum must grand import to the occupational activities of life. And finally, since the ends and standards of life develop from within, by a process of reaction between organism and environment, satisfaction becomes the criterion for determining the aims of life and education.

Human satisfaction however must be tempered by the personal and social consequences of our actions. Only those conditions which produce all-round growth are to be considered beneficial.

The acceptance of experience as the criterion of truth and value, identifies education with growth, and makes of education its own end.

And now let us examine these various affirmations in detail. Experimental naturalism is not only a new theory of mind, but of the world as well. Dewey's empiricism considers the world of ordinary experience as the "ultimate point of departure"[1] of both philosophy and education.

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1. p. 428.

Common experience teaches us that things in themselves have different qualities; some are tragic, others humorous; some settled, others disturbed. Events have a phase: "of being just what they irreducibly are."[1] If one is faithful to experience, one arrives at the conclusion that our world is many, that it is dynamic and changing. Individuality has its place in this plural world, but events are contingent and predetermined by no antecedent forces. Despite recurring sequences, nature is without beginning and final end. Nature includes the intellectual and moral traits of man but: "has no preference for good things over bad".[2]

This view of the universe, with conflict and uncertainty as final traits, has bearing on the method, content and aims of education.

Life becomes: "a process of selective adjustment"[3] to a precarious world. Blind trial and error or slavish recourse to custom are insufficient in a world of change and novelty. According to Dewey, this experimental adjustment should be made consciously; hence the necessity of intelligence. Both Dewey's naturalistic view of existence and theory of mind lead to the same conclusion: "the supremacy of method both in life and in education."[4]

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1. p. 428.
2. p. 429.
3. p. 429.
4. p. 429.

The final phrase, a quotation from Dewey, may be of interest to us: "ultimately method is intelligence, and intelligence is method."[1]

For Dewey, man's ultimate resource in adjusting himself to a changing, unstable world, lies in the method of experimental intelligence. In his studies of logic, Dewey has sought to discover the pattern inherent in all experimental inquiry. Likewise in education, his purpose has been to elaborate a corresponding method for the school.

Now Mr. Dewey esteems human thought as highly as do the rationalists. His controversy with them bears on the nature, subject-matter and means of developing the intelligence.

For him meanings, principles and universals come from the world of ordinary experience and are:

> means for ordering empirical affairs; they are not a priori, and they cannot be learned effectually apart from their use in social and natural contexts. Meaning, [...] "is primarily a property of behavior, and secondarily a property of objects".[2]

Reasoning originates in a tensional situation. Reasoning is valid if the proposed plans are capable of solving the conditions that caused the tension. Reasoning is thus a stepping stone in changing conditions; it does not effect the change but provides the plan of operations to be executed.

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1. p. 429.
2. p. 430.

The rationalist cannot accuse Dewey of abasing the intelligence. If they are to be listened to, they must prove that their conception of intelligence, of the world in which it operates, and of the means of developing it, are superior to Dewey's.

After speaking of the influence of Dewey's naturalistic view of the universe on the method of education, the author begins expounding its influence on the content of education as he had preceedingly proposed.

Control becomes all important in a precarious world. Man has gained this control by abandonning the belief in supernatural and magical powers, and having recourse to tools and techniques instead. Tools have increased his personal powers, added diversity, multiplied his needs and interests. Tools are not only useful, but they are extensions of the human personality; hence the desire to perfect and beautify them.

> Thus art, technique, and interest in the practical have been "dynamically continuous" in the course of civilization.[1]

Tools have developed scientific interests, for a tool:

> denotes a perception and acknowledgement of sequential bonds in nature.[2]

It is Dewey's belief that science both as "technological invention, and as controlled method for the achievement of

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1. p. 431.
2. p. 431.

knowledge",[1] has developed from processes involved in the making of tools and the use of tools.

Consequently the curriculum must provide for the technological and occupational phases of life. The occupations of a well-ordered society could serve as frame work for a school program, for the school must unite the intellectual and the practical, the utilitarian and the cultural. In Mr. Dewey's views on education, there exists no opposition between the liberal and the vocational; on the contrary he stands against any insistance on the mechanical skills to the detriment of the cultural.

Dewey's naturalism is not without influence in determining the ultimate aims of education:

> Dr. Dewey even asserts "that the final issue of empirical method is whether the guide and standards of beliefs and conduct lies within or without the shareable situations of life.[2]

According to him ends and standards of life flow from within the process of experience.

Experience is the creation between organism and environment. Certain conditions of the environment are beneficial to the organism, others detrimental. The organism strives to maintain the beneficial conditions, which when present, produce satisfaction. Human satisfaction thus becomes the criterion of good.

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1. p. 431.
2. p. 432.

This process of selective adjustments takes place in society also. Groups reconstitute the environment so that it may better favor their interests. The following sentence is difficult to grasp for one unacquainted with the whole of Dewey's philosophy:

> By this cumulative process human activities have become informed with meaning, but by meanings evolved from within the activities of the group, not from sources external to them.
>
> [...] Dr. Dewey believes that this logic of experimental behavior developed to deal with problem of adjustment is also competent to deal with problems of value.[1]

Value is here used:

> to designate whatever is taken to have rightful authority in the direction of conduct.[2]

Value thus has its ultimate source in satisfaction and desire. But reflective judgment condemns many likings. How are we to know then, if a liking is a genuine object of value? By its personal and social consequences; if it makes for all-round growth, it is good. Away with mystical intuition and absolute standards.

> Thus life creates its own sanctions for conduct as it learns to judge consequences. That which makes for continued growth of flesh and blood human beings in their social relations is the end - the end for life and the end for education.[3]

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1. p. 433.
2. p. 433.
3. p. 434.

The author follows with an important quotation from Dewey's Democracy and Education:

> Our net conclusion is that life is development, and that developing, growing, is life. Translated into its educational equivalents, this means 1) that the educatiomal process has no end beyond itself; it is its own end; and 2) the educational process is one of continued reorganizing, reconstructing, transforming.[1]

The acceptance of experience as the ultimate criterion of truth and value, the conception of education as identical with growth, does not however exclude adult guidance. To:

> let the immature drive their findings about truth and value exclusively from their own trial and error experiences[2]

is not proned by Mr. Dewey. It:

> is one thing to say that the kingdom of meaning and value lies wholly within the realm of ordinary experience; it is another and quite different thing to assume that truths and values unfold spontaneously from within the unguided activities of children.[3]

SECTION IV

Section IV, Society and Education, follows closely the preceding sequel of thoughts; in fact Dewey's views on education are begotten by his conception of man and nature.

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1. p. 434.
2. p. 434.
3. p. 435.

Experimental naturalism stands for continuity between the human and the physical, but also for marked differences between the two. Man's social qualities are the explanation of these differences.

Education is social for five reasons:

1) Values spring from and are transmitted through society. Hence the relationship between society and the aims and subject-matter of education.
2) Education is a social because society is the principal means or instrument of education.
3) The existing conditions and institutions of society influence the aims of education.
4) Society survives and continues through education.
5) Education must prepare for life in actual society.

And here again we must examine each of these points more closely. Dewey's theory of education also emphasizes its social aspect; this insistance is the correlative of his stress on the naturalistic. His social views of education sprout from his conception of man and nature. Can one demand a more cogent argument to prove the compatibility of absolute naturalism with the distinctively human or social? Experimental naturalism leads to a two-fold conclusion: the continuity of man and nature on the one hand; extraordinary differences between man and other biological forms, on the other hand. The only explanation of these "extraordinary differences"[1]

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1. p. 435.

lies in:

> the new properties behavior acquires at the social level. The social according to Dr. Dewey, provides the natural bridge from behavior that is organic to behavior that is distinctively human.[1]

Education is social first of all because meanings are properties of social behavior; they emerge from, and are necessary to deliberate communication; they render unity and agreement possible. Society creates and conserves meanings and values; hence the social character of the ends and subject-matter of education. Meanings:

> are properties of a kind of behavior which appears only in a society in which language has made deliberate communication possible. This process of communication transformed the natural environment into a cultural environment and in so doing "created the realm of meanings". [...] Meanings, on the contrary, emerge from within those cooperative human activities which culminate in consciousness of self and in significant communication.
>
> When we turn to the social, we find communication to be an existential occurrence involved in all distinctively communal life, and we find that communication requires meaning and understanding as conditions of unity or agreement in conjoint behavior. [...]
>
> Since the realm of meanings and values is created and conserved by the organized life of society, the materials of education - its content and purposes - are social in nature.[2]

Education is a social process, secondly, because society is the great educator. A child is not born a person but

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1. p. 435.
2. p. 436 & 437.

becomes a person. This transformation takes place in the social environment, by participation in group activities:

> Everything which is distinctively human is learned, not native, even though it could not be learned without native structures which mark man off from other animals. [...]
>
> The aim of education should be to help the child act as a member of his group, and to be aware of the meanings inherent in his action.[1]

Education is closely linked with society, thirdly, because the conditions and institutions of society influence the aim of education. The child's plastice nature may be fashioned into diverse possible adult selves. This fashioning depends not only on the child's organism but on the values and activities of society.

Fourthly, education has ties with society, because society perpetuates itself through education.

> What nutrition and reproduction are to physiological life, education is to social life.[2]

Through society education communicates its experience to the young; through education the young are initiated into the techniques, outlooks and values, of the community.

Fifthly and lastly, education is linked with society because the educated are members of a society in which they must live. To understand actual society, knowledge of the

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1. p. 437 & 438.
2. p. 438.

past is a requisite; but ways of the past are not to be substituted to the ways of to-day. Thus most probably, Mr. Dewey would oppose any attempt to set up the classics as the core of the curriculum.

> Dr. Dewey's philosophy of experience has too much respect for the findings of experience to slight the struggles and achievements of the past; it also has too much respect for experience as a present ongoing affair to want to make devotion to the past a mode of escape from the problems and possibilities of the present.[1]

SECTION V

Dewey's philosophy of education has close connections with society, and in a particular way with democratic society. This aspect is treated in Section V, Democracy and Education. The author enumerates some of the implications of the democratic ideal with their resulting effects in education.

1) Democracy values the individual person; so must the school.
2) The good of the individual is the end of democracy. Hence equality of opportunity must be safeguarded in all domains. The field of education is no exception to this rule.

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1. p. 430.

3) Setting forth the individual as the end of democracy also makes him judge of values. One of the functions of education will be to prepare the individual for this task.
4) Democracy gives full liberty to the individual. However certain restrictions are necessary to safeguard the common good. Democracy repudiates external authority. Education must provide a substitute.
5) The rejection of external authority leads to a procedure of solving conflicts by discussions, by a method of give and take. Educators have the duty of developing practice of such methods.
6) An equitable distribution of wealth is another condition of democracy. Education has an important role to play in replacing our actual competitive economy by one, planned and democratically controlled.

Let us examine these various points more attentively. Education is a social process; such an expression is without definite meaning, until one precises the kind of society one has in mind. Dewey's philosophy of education is based on the democratic conception of society.

The author follows with some of the more important implications of the democratic ideal according to Dewey, and their educational consequences.

First, democracy recognizes the intrinsic dignity of each individual person. Now the child is a person in development, an individual and not a mere item. The school must consider him thus. The educational program must give consideration to the "child's present experience, uniqueness, and felt needs and interests".[1]

Secondly, the democratic ideal considers the good of the individual as its end, institutions as means to this end:

> The concrete individual is the only center of experience, and hence the ultimate locus of all value. Dr. Dewey believes the growth of this actual individual is the supreme test of social arrangements, and the final end of all educational activity.[2]

Equality of educational opportunity for all, flows from this conception of democracy. Mr. Dewey has championed public education as a means of realizing this equality.

Thirdly, if the democratic ideal regards the individual as its end, education must render the individual competent to judge values. Such competence requires knowledge of the life-conditions and institutions of the past, present and future. Only when he views his own experience and that of his fellow-men in the light of this knowledge of technical and social conditions, can he:

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1. p. 441.
2. p. 441.

> be intelligent about his interests, and competent to share in the construction of purposes for himself and his society.[1]

Fourthly, democracy esteems and respects individual differences. Hence the individual is encouraged to form voluntary associations productive of a healthy diversity. Only that coordination of the individuals indispensable to the welfare of all may step in to limit this liberty. Democracy stands for plurality of political groups. Education alone can furnish the interior dispositions necessary to democratic society.

> Since a democratic society repudiates the principle of external authority, it must find a substitute in voluntary disposition and interest; these can be created only by education.[2]

Fifthly, democracy implies a method of solving conflicts. If fixed standards and external authority are incompatible with democratic life, a method of inquiry, discussion and majority rule must be called upon. Conflicts "of interest and value"[3] are inevitable when all the members of society have power and group themselves in associations that pursue different interests.

Education must provide for the actual practice of solving conflicts by this method of give and take.

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1. p. 442.
2. p. 442.
3. p. 442.

Finally, democracy calls for an equitable distribution of wealth. In America to-day, the edonomic conditions are a menace to democracy. The excessive concentration of wealth in the hands of a few has rendered economic equality impossible and threatens to restrict freedom of thought. Education has its part to play in replacing these unfavorable economic conditions by a democratically controlled, planning society.

> This need for a society in which experimental inquiry and planning for social ends are organically contained is also the need for a new education.[1]

Mr. Dewey believes that this transformation can be accomplished by "cooperative, peaceful economic and political means",[2] if education is allowed "to carry on its functions of criticism and construction."[3]

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1. p. 443.
2. p. 443.
3. p. 443.

PART TWO

A FEW PRINCIPLES OF THE

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

A FEW PRINCIPLES OF THE

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

And now, before undertaking the detailed criticism of Childs' essay, let us give a brief exposition of the Christian philosophy of education. For it is in the light of the Christian philosophy of education that Dewey's views will be appreciated.

First we shall define what we understand by the expression: Christian philosophy of education. Then after distinguishing between general and deliberate education, we shall explain why the philosophical approach to education, the angle which concerns us here in the present essay, is inadequate. A brief distinction between education as an art, education as a science, and pedagogy will be established. Finally we shall expose the Christian philosophy of education by treating of education's four causes.

By Christian philosophy one must be here given to understand the philosophy or principles prevalent in education of traditional scholastic inspiration. One will not be surprized if we refer frequently to Saint Thomas, the prince of the scholastic philosophers.

The word Christian is also in need of a specific definition. Our thesis is a philosophical, and not a theological thesis. Consequently, only the light of the human reason left to itself is called upon in this study. The principles of Faith have no direct and positive influence in this exposition. Still they have an indirect influence in as much as they ban all affirmations contrary to the superior knowledge of Faith. This is why our philosophy is termed Christian, and this is the meaning of Christian in the expression: Christian philosophy. Once again, not because any of our conclusions are proved by principles of Faith, but solely because none of them contradict Faith.

And now what do we mean by education in the expression: Christian philosophy of education? Education is here taken in its broadest sense, and signifies the perfecting of man. Comenius has defined education as the development of man; Pestalozzi defines it as the natural, progressive and systematic development of all the powers. Plato claims it consists of giving to the body and the soul, all the perfection of which they are susceptible. Rabelais tells us that education consists in the forming of a complete man.[1] Our definition is closely related to all of these.

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1. CUNNINGHAM, op. cit., p. 18-20.

Now the perfecting of man is a long task since it is not fully completed in this world:

> Only when that last destiny has been forever determined will man be fully educated; for the process is something limited not merely to the classroom but lasts as long as life.[1]

However one may distinguish between education taken in this broad meaning, and formal or deliberate education. In this latter sense, education represents a more intense and direct influence exercised on the educand by some organization. Schooling is a typical example of deliberate education. During a certain number of years the acquisition of knowledge and good habits of living is the student's principal task.

Education defined as the perfecting of man, continues long after cessation of attendance at school. Indeed it is a life-long endeavor as we shall soon explain. Before commencing the exposition of the philosophical principles of education however, we would like to insist on a fact of extreme importance.

The naturalistic view-point of education is the sole object interesting us in this educational thesis. Education is to be envisaged as we have said, from a purely human angle, human here standing for rational. This means that only the findings of our natural reason left to its own capacity are to be given consideration. It is primordial to note however,

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1. SLAVIN, op. cit., p. 328.

that our conclusions and findings will fall short of reality. And why? Simply because our actual order is one of grace. Man has been elevated to a superior status, the supernatural status. Man's destiny is the beatific vision of God in the world to come. The final goal, the ultimate end of life, man's only destiny is supernatural. Now if education is naught else but a preparation for life, education must be influenced by this supernatural aspect of life. If means have to be proportioned to the end, a supernatural end calls for supernatural means, is attained through supernatural means alone. Hence any educational movement deprived of this fundamental principle of the existing economy of things, is necessarily most deficient. It thus becomes impossible to expose completely and perfectly the basic principles of education without recourse to theology, the science of Faith. The elevation of mankind to the supernatural order has bearing on the four causes of education: the purpose of education, the agents of education, its formal and material causes. A complete and perfect picture of the object we are now trying to determine calls for both the light of philosophy and theology. Like two powerful beacons, these supreme sciences light up the educator's path, and safely pilot his ship to port. From this two-fold source, the educator learns whom he must deal with, (the subject of education), what he must make of him (what the finished product must look like). He also learns

his own precise role in this undertaking, his obligations and limitations. Once the educator has armed himself with these fundamental notions, he must set to work and seek to realize his task in the happiest manner possible. Here begins the art of education.

The art of education. Education may be considered as a science or an art. It is important here to draw out the distinction between education as an art and education as a science. A comparison taken from ethics will enlighten us.

Moral science distinguishes itself from moral living. The first explains what the end of man is and how he must realize it; the second is the concrete realization of this moral program. A similar distinction may be established between the science of education and the art of education. The art of education consists in the actual realization of education's aim. The science of education consists in the abstract knowledge of education's four causes.

In the science of education a further distinction may be made between the general principles and the more particular conclusions. Theology and philosophy set the goal to be attained. Then a whole family of inferior sciences of the experimental level come to the educator's assistance. The educator may chose between various psychological techniques and devices, different methods and prodedures, to attain his goal. Properly speaking, we are now dealing with

pedagogy, or the science of education in its more limited aspects.

And now after these preliminary remarks, we are ready to expose the Christian philosophy of education. When a thomistic philosopher wishes to penetrate a being thoroughly, he seeks to discover its four causes. What then does he regard as the four causes of education?

This research is somewhat arid, but we believe it will bear fruitful results. It will permit us to develop a brief synthesis of our main educational principles, and hence facilitate comparisons with those exposed by Mr. Childs in his essay.

THE FOUR CAUSES OF EDUCATION

1) FINAL CAUSE

First comes the final cause, the "causa causarum", the supreme cause which explains the existence and nature of all the other causes. The final cause is of vital importance in education for as Mr. Maritain explains:

> Education is an art, and an especially difficult one; yet it belongs by its nature to the sphere of ethics and practical wisdom. Education is an ethical art (or rather a practical wisdom in which a determinate art is embodied). Now every art is a dynamic

> trend toward an object to be achieved, which is the aim of this art. There is no art without ends, art's very vitality is the energy with which it tends towards its end, without stopping at any intermediary step.[1]

Indeed failure in determining the end of education seems to be one of the main evils of the day. Great progress has been made in the means of pedagogy, outstanding improvement has been realized in the field of scientific educational methods.[2] Yet absence of sure purpose and precise ends has paralysed the advance of education and the superior means now at the educator's disposal.

Education has been defined as the perfecting of man. The definition we have adopted is as sound and as justifiable as any other. Education's final cause then, will not be distinct from man's final cause. One might contest the precision of our definition of education, and uphold that education is but a preparation for life. But even if education were defined as a preparation for life, education in fine would still have the end of human life as its ultimate cause. Any preparation is in function of, depends entirely on what it prepares for.

God is man's ultimate and according to Thomistic philos-

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1. MARITAIN, op. cit., p. 2 & 3.
2. Herein, we believe, lies the great contribution John Dewey has made to the field of education as we shall see in Part Three. He has indeniably provoked progress in psychological and pedagogical techniques.

ophy, for God alone can satisfy man's infinite capacities and longings. Only God can fill the intellect's quest for knowledge illimited, and quench the will's thirst for universal good. It is of prime importance to keep this first principle of education in mind.

2) EFFICIENT CAUSE

The efficient is the second extrinsic cause. In Thomistic psychology, the educand is the principal efficient cause of education. The efficient cause is here synonymous with agents of education. One's perfecting is a vital operation, an immanent action. There is no real education, no education properly speaking, which does not proceed from the interior.[1] An example may help to illustrate. Leather is tanned, softened, prepared by the tanner. The leather plays but a passive role. All its perfection is brought about by the exterior agent. Education is no such process.

Education is also distinct from mere animal training. Why? Because education is concerned primarily with man's spiritual faculties. Animals are not gifted with spiritual faculties, and hence their capacity of perfection is very limited and sharply distinct from man's.

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1. This is also a principle Dewey has insisted upon to the honor of the new educational movement.

Self-education thus understood is in truth the only education deserving of the name. Man educates himself in all reality; to force education upon him is an impossibility. He always remains free to react interiorly, to accept or reject what is proposed to him from the exterior. Without this free assent from the interior, there exists no education properly speaking. There may be apparent discipline as in the army, for example. But if this exterior conduct is doubled with a state of interior rebellion and refusal of the will, we are not in the presence of genuine education. In other words, no education without the free acceptance of the will. A classroom may seem disciplined. If it breaks into an uproar when the teacher is obliged to absent himself for a few minutes, and then becomes deadly silent as soon as his returning footsteps become audible, no true discipline exists. The students remain silent in the master's presence for fear of the sanctions of misconduct. If they don't accept the disciplinary rules interiorly, they are not educated but trained. Animals respond to training; education will ever be proper to man.[1]

The child is thus the principal efficient cause of education. Other agents in the natural order however help the child perfect himself: the family and the State. We need

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1. This does not exclude however a certain amount of training present in human education which "progressive education" has established and utilized advantageously.

not insist on the necessity of these secondary agents. At birth the child is helpless and remains so for several years. His parents hence, are the first of the secondary agents of education. But the State also has an indispensable role to play. It would be impossible for the most brilliant individual child to discover by himself what society has taken centuries to elaborate. The State thus provides for the transmission of man's best discoveries and productions that have come down to us through the ages. The young are thus enabled to profit by the experience, both fortunate and unfortunate of the past generations. The State usually accomplishes its task of education through the medium of the school.

The State is a perfect society, but its rights in education are inferior to those of the family, the first of the instrumental agents of education. Although the family is an imperfect society because of the inadequacy of the means at its disposal for the perfection of its members, the family is prior to civil society. The rights of the family antedate those of the State. Children receive their existence from their parents. They belong to those who have given them life, before belonging to the State from which they expect but a secondary perfection of their being. Education is exclusive to the family before the age of school attendance is reached. But the role of parents remains eminent until a much later date.

Thus to sum up this topic, the educand is the principal efficient cause of education. The family and State are secondary agents of the educative process.

3) MATERIAL CAUSE

So much for the extrinsic causes. What then is the material cause of education? the subject of education? the educand?[1]

The human person, composed of body and soul, united in a substantial union (as the philosophers say), in philosophical language, is the material cause of education.

Man is a spiritual, and hence immortal being. He is endowed with spiritual faculties, the intelligence and the will. Because of his knowledge of the natural law and the freedom of his will, man is a moral being, responsible of his acts.

Man's nature is indeed a splendid realization, the master-piece of creation. Man rules and reigns over the material universe; he is king and master of this world. Yet he has a little trouble establishing peace and harmony within himself. He discovers two distinct and different tendencies

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1. Even here Dewey's philosophy leads to sharp contrasts with the traditional scholastic positions concerning the subject of education, as we will explain in greater detail in Part Three.

within his own being; the tendency of his sensitive appetites towards the sensitive good and the tendency of his rational appetites towards the spiritual good. Thus a certain conflict or warfare goes on between these different tendencies. The inferior appetites tend towards their own particular good regardless of the good of the whole person. The superior appetites are constantly trying to keep their blind and impetuous little sister appetites in file. Conscience dictates the conduct to be observed, but often the passions succeed in winning over the will from the path of duty and righteousness. The reason sees what should be done but under the strain of the passions the golden mean of virtue is transgressed. One of the reasons of this lies in the very nature of man. All the activity of man's superior faculties originates from the senses. The intelledt must have recourse to a process of abstraction from material objects before it can perceive its object. Abstraction requires an effort, an effort we are inclined to avoid or reduce as much as possible. The concrete seems so much closer to us, is so much more immediately attractive and fascinating. What is still more appalling is the restrained control of the superior faculties over the inferior; the superior faculties exercise but a "political" and not a "tyrannical" control over the passions. Due to this state of things, man is said to be prone to evil. He must gain self-mastery by a long and difficult process of character building.

Ignorance of this truth is disastrous in any educational program. Failure in grasping this psychological constitution of man has rendered many educational systems inadequate. Thousands of educators have taken for granted Rousseau's famour principle that the child's nature is good, tends towards eveil only because of the evil influence of society. This statement has been the handicap of many educators because it has portrayed a false picture of human nature. Man's nature is of itself prone to evil in the sense we have just explained, independently of any exterior social influences.

To summarize, the material cause of education is the human person composed of body and soul, endowed with a spiritual intellect and a free will. It is also vitally important to remember that a state of conflict exists between man's superior and inferior faculties.

4) FORMAL CAUSE

In fine comes the formal cause of education. This will consist in the educand's subjective development or perfection; the personal perfectioning which assures the realization of education's ultimate end. Something is said to be perfect in as much as it attains its proper end; a being's end is its

ultimate perfection.[1]

Union with God, we have said, is education's ultimate end. This union between God and man takes place through the spiritual faculties of the intelligence and the will. The intelligence knows God, the will adheres to him as to its ultimate end. This union which takes place between the spiritual creature and its Maker is susceptible of indefinite progress; it develops gradually through successive acts of love.

Now man is gifted with liberty. When his will tends towards God, his ultimate end, and towards all created things as means to this end, it does so of its own free choice. Man possesses the power of chosing his own ultimate end. Certain human faculties are thus in a state of indetermination. Man can practice temperance or indulge in intemperance; practice injustice or honor justice. Now when a faculty enjoys this sort of indetermination, repetition of actions of the same kind gives this faculty a particular determination, shape or crease. This determination of the faculty begotten by repetition of the same acts is termed an "habitus", or habit. Habits thus understood may be good or bad, virtues or vices. Man's ultimate end is the criterion of evaluation. All the habits that assure or facilitate the realization of this end are good; all the contrary habits are bad.

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1. S.THOMAE DE AQUINO, op. cit., II-II, 184, 1, c.

Both the cognitive and appetitive faculties of man must be informed by good habits if man wishes to tend towards his end in the best possible manner.[1]

The intelligence is the supreme human faculty. It divides itself into the speculative and practical intellect according to the nature of its object. The speculative intellect is perfected by the three habits of understanding, knowledge and wisdom. Art, prudence and the science of morals perfect the practical intelligence.

All is not said however, when the cognitive powers of man have been perfected. Education includes not only learning but good living as well. Love of God above all else, is exacting. It requires not only that the will tend towards God as to its ultimate end, but that man tend towards all created things as means to this end. The appetitive faculties are perfected by the moral virtues. The virtue of justice informs the will. Temperance and fortitude inform the two inferior appetites.

The formal dause of education, the essence of education, may thus be defined as a group or complex of habits which perfect man and assure the realization of his end. The habits

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1."Sic igitur ad hoc quod homo bene agat, requiritur quod non solum ratio sit bene disposita per habitum virtutis intellectualis, sed etiam quod vis appetitiva sit bene disposita per habitum virtutis moralis." S. THOMAE de AQUINO, op. cit., I-II, 58, 2, c.

of understanding, knowledge and wisdom, art, prudence and moral science perfect the cognitive potencies; the habits of justice, temperance and fortitude assure good living. To these habits could be added:

> generosity, magnanimity, honor, meekness, docility, eagerness for truth, assiduous application and recreation. This last provides not only for physical well being but also for emotional stability.[1]
>
> The truly educated man will be the one with the most fully developed habits.[2]

Man's education increases thus with the development of his good habits.[3] This development may be either in extension, through the extension of the habit to new objects, or in intensity, by a deeper and firmer information of the faculty.

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1. SLAVIN, op. cit., p. 327.
2. Ibid., p. 322.
3. Many modern educators with leanings towards "progressive education" refuse to admit the existence of these habits in education. However it appears that this aversion rests on an inadequate conception of the nature of habits as understood in scholastic philosophy.

PART THREE

APPRECIATION OF

DEWEY'S EDUCATIONAL VIEWS

AS EXPOSED BY CHILDS' ESSAY

APPRECIATION OF DEWEY'S EDUCATIONAL VIEWS AS EXPOSED BY CHILDS' ESSAY

We have now arrived at the most difficult aspect of our essay, the appreciation of Dewey's philosophical principles as exposed by Childs. The most serious problem arises from the question of vocabulary as we have already stated. What is the exact meaning of each of the words of Childs' essay? Occasionally the terms are explicitly defined; sométimes the meaning can be gathered fairly accurately from the context. In the more obscure cases we have been obliged to accept certain words for their face-value.

Our criticism follows the divisions of Childs' essay, and proceeds section by section. Not all the points expounded by Childs have been explicitly criticised. Certain intricate passages requiring a more extensive knowledge of Dewey's complete philosophy have been left aside, as well as a few issues of lesser importance.

SECTION I

The first affirmation sed down by Mr. Childs is that no level of experience should be given superior metaphysical status. This statement sounds suspicious to the Thomistic philosopher. For the Thomist establishes an irreducible distinction between an intellectual and a sense perception. The intelligence alone perceives the innermost constituent of being, its essence, and consequently its necessary aspects. All science is based on this perception of the necessary links between an essence and its properties. Sense knowledge on the contrary is limited to concrete qualities, and consequently fails to rise above the contingent elements of reality.

There exists thus for the Thomist, a superior level of experience and an inferior one, the sense level and the intellectual level. The intellectual level also contains diverse degrees according to the degree of abstraction. A more or less perfect abstraction from the material conditions of a being results in a superior or inferior level of experience.

But what is the precise meaning given to the word "experience" by Dewey and his school? Does Dewey limit the meaning of the word to objects of the sense order, to objects that fall directly under the perception of the senses? How explain then his description and works about the rational

activities of man and the intellectual process? Experience consequently seems to stand for all knowledge which can be measured and controlled. Experience of the intellectual order is of its very nature beyond control; because of its spirituality it transcends time and space. Still its operations, its manifestations can be measured in a certain way. For example, whole groups of children are subjected to the now common intelligence tests. The accuracy and rapidity of reasoning is thus reduced to quantitative factors. One may thus be said to think faster than another. This is how,we believe, Mr. Dewey is brought to speak about intelligence and rational activities.

Next we read of Mr. Dewey's:

> desire to understand and interpret the world solely on the basis of empirical findings.[1]

Here lies perhaps one of the most serious errors in Mr. Dewey's philosophy; limiting his considerations of the world to empirical findings. Empirical facts exist, all will agree. But the possibility of drawing up a complete picture of the world with such a method alone is inexistant.

> The great educational sin of contemporary civilization is the blindness of positivism which refuses to consider imponderables because they defy the slide-rule and the alembic.[2]

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1. CHILDS, op. cit., p. 419.
2. SLAVIN, op. cit., p. 327.

Now I have termed this principle a postulate and indeed it is naught but a gratuitous affirmation, unproven and unjustified. The Positivist may be compared to a student of astronomy who would proceed thus: he is intent on probing the heavenly bodies, but staunchly refuses to peer through the telescope. Oh no, the naked eye is the only means he consents tu use in his study of the heavens. What would result from such a procedure? Many stars and planets can be discovered through the sole power of the unaided eye, but hundreds and thousands of others remain unknown. Positivism begets a similar situation. The principal realities of life fall beyond its narrow range, escape its limited reach.

But one may object: if Mr. Dewey desires to interpret the world solely on the basis of empirical findings is he not free to do so? What can be advanced in opposition to this procedure?

Indeed one is absolutely free to adopt a like procedure. As the saying goes: "Abstrahentium non est mendacium". But the trouble starts when one has the pretension of giving a complete picture of reality with such a method. One has wandered from the path of objectivity when one upholds the sufficiency of this procedure to establish the foundations of genuine education. This empirical method is legitimate in a particular field but insufficient to elaborate an entire philosophy of life and explanation of the world, as Mr. Dewey does.

Pages 419 and 420 of Childs' essay speak of education as the supreme human interest. Now if union with our Creator is the ultimate end of education, this affirmation is not wholly unfounded. On the contrary the Thomistic educator could endorse this statement.

Will philosophy focus about education then? For the Thomist, philosophy is the certain and evident science of being through the ultimate causes. Philosophy comprised various branches: Metaphysics treats of being as such, Natural Philosophy is the science of mobile being, Mathematics of quantitative being, and Moral Philosophy of moral being. The ultimate end acts as first principle in Moral Philosophy. Man, fashioned in the likeness of God, is made to unite himself with his Creator. Moral Philosophy must therefore focus itself on this goal. Education, as we have explained, is totally relevant of man's ultimate end. Education, we have explained in Part two of this thesis, must focus itself above all else on man's final destiny, is entirely in function of man's ultimate destiny. It thus seems difficult to admit education as the focussing point of philosophy in general, and even of moral philosophy. According to us, both moral philosophy and education have the same focussing point, namely man's ultimate end.

In the following paragraph we find the affirmation that differences in philosophy have their consequences on the

practice of education. To such a point indeed, that different philosophical outlooks may be discovered by the educational practices to which they lead.

The Thomistic educator is of this mind. All the vital principles of education are cut and dried by philosophy and theology before the educator undertakes his task. It appears from Childs' statement, that Dewey's philosophy has played a similar role in the elaboration of his educational views. The issue between Thomistic and Progressive systems of education thus lies in the underlying philosophies of life. The only adequate understanding of Mr. Dewey's educational theories and practices is to be sought for in the understanding of his philosophy.

The definition of general education proposed in the sequential paragraph: "any change wrought in an individual as a result of experience",[1] is incomplete for us. The ultimate end of education is something very determinate and precise for the Thomist. According to him, only that change in an individual which fosters the realization of this end merits the name of education. In other words, only the acquisition or practice of virtue is to be termed education; virtue taken in its broad sense to cover both learning and good living. Error and vice are changes wrought in an indiv-

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1. CHILDS, op. cit., p. 420.

idual; still neither can be called constituents of education as we conceive it.

Childs' definition of deliberate education may be accepted by the Thomistic educator if the words of the definition are given a good interpretation. The

> conscious effort by some organized group to shape the conduct and the emotional and intellectual dispositions of its young[1]

includes all the elements required for education in the Thomistic conception. But have the words "conduct" and "intellectual" the same meaning for Childs and for the Thomist? Here is the important issue. We have serious reasons to think the contrary, as this exposition of the general trend of Dewey's philosophy of education will show.

The next paragraph is another statement of the fact that an educational system supposes an underlying philosophy. Education:

> inescapably involves the manifestations of preference for some particular kind of social and individual life.[2]

Mr. Childs then begins the exposition of some of Dewey's philosophical principles and their consequences in education.

The first principle set forth deals with Dewey's method, the method of experimental inquiry.

It appears that Mr. Dewey has made the same error as the famous philosopher, Descartes. The father of Idealism, though

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1. CHILDS, op. cit., p. 420.
2. Ibid., p. 420.

not an Idealist himself, began his philosophical elucubrations with a methodical doubt. The existence of all things, himself not excluded, was set in doubt. A clear and distinct idea became the criterion of truth.

Dewey has established the principle of experimental inquiry as his ultimate criterion and supreme value. This procedure is unreasonable because it cannot be justified. If a philosophical system holds the pretension of explaining our existing world, it must not begin by some arbitrary postulate which unduely limits its insight. The affirmation of being, principle endowed with extra-mental value, is the sole starting point for any philosophy which pretends to explain the existing world, and at the same time safeguard science defined as certain and evident learning.

The next paragraph is a reaffirmation of the close relation between education and philosophy. Childs realizes the vulnerable spot Dewey's philosophy contains; Dewey's starting point. He nevertheless believes, it would appear, that Dewey's position is as tenable as any other. He seems to say: the method of experimental inquiry is one way of beginning a philosophy but there are also other ways. What he fails to grasp is precisely the difference in the validity of both starting points. He calls all alike metaphysical presuppositions. Thomism begins with an evidence, the self-

evident principle of identity. Mr. Dewey's philosophy and subsequent educational theories are products of the method of experimental enquiry. This method is, as we have said, legitimate if it is not proposed to the exclusion of all others.

Herein one is to find the good and weak points of Dewey's contribution to education, I believe. He has awakened educators to the experimental, scientific (in the modern meaning) aspect of education and for this he merits high praise. On the other hand, his method being incapable of reaching and attaining the higher values of life, the philosophical (in the scholastic meaning) realities which lie beyond the realm of empirical observation.

Mr. Childs here quotes an excerpt from Dewey, stating the contrast between the philosophy of faith in experience with the ideas of Western culture, saturated as are the latter with the supernatural. Supernatural is defined: beyond experience. Apparently Dewey finds a contrast between these two orders and so does the Thomist. The supernatural order transcends, surpasses, lies beyond the powers of created beings.[1] But Mr. Dewey must not lead us astray by contrasting experience and the supernatural. Contrast does not mean opposition. The supernatural transcends but never contradicts

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1. A classical distinction exists between the supernatural "quoad substantiam" and the supernatural "quoad modum", but we may leave this aside here.

experience of the natural order. Because the faithful is endowed with a superior mode of knowing, a keener and more penetrating light, the gift of Faith, he doesn't abdicate in the least the use of his natural faculties. Our comparison of the naked eye and the telescope may be of utility here also. Let the naked eye represent the light of natural reason, the telescope the light of supernatural Faith, Just because the astrologist consents to peer through his telescope, he does not repudiate the use of his naked eye. On the contrary he probes the heavens with both his telescope and his naked eye to obtain a fuller knowledge of the celestial bodies. The Thomistic educator is in much the same position. He possesses the light of his natural reason and the superior supernatural light of his faith. There is not the least opposition between the two. Faith elevates and completes, but does not destroy reason. The two combined give man a superior knowledge of reality.

In Thomistic psychology, knowledge begins with the perception of the senses. The senses perceive the diverse material qualities of things. From the material objects which fall directly under the senses, the intelligence abstracts its universal concepts. Thomism can thus be said to be founded on the direct experience of things. Thomism is a philosophy of being, of the being which surrounds us on all sides and includes us.

We have limited ourselves to the purely philosophical aspect in expounding the four causes of education. Our reason for this, as we have already stated, is simply because our essay is of an entirely philosophical nature. Abstraction from the supernatural is justifiable in such cases for didactic clarity. After all, an irreducible distinction exists between the two orders; knowledge of both is facilitated if they are studied separately. It is only a question of fistinguishing to better unite. But there can be no question of rejecting the supernatural in the practice of education, or of excluding it, as Dewey does. Both the natural and supernatural findings are necessary for an integral conception of this difficult science of education. The supernatural order completes and transforms the natural. It is not only compatible with the latter but exacted by it. Natural reason is capable of arriving at the knowledge of God, first principle and final end of all things. But God decided to reveal to mankind, truths regarding his intimate life. He accompanied his revelations with miracles, prophecies and other heavenly manifestations. These miraculous doings, perceived with the most absolute certainty by human reason, demonstrate that God alone is the author of revelation. God spoke to humanity and God can neither err nor lead into error. The reverence and respect due to his Creator, make acceptance and belief in God's message of love, imperative. We thus see

that there is no opposition whatsoever between Faith and experience. On the contrary refusal to accept supernatural reality entails the negation of an experience of the natural order. Still if experience is here given the meaning we believe Dewey assigns to this term, we cannot excuse him of unfaithfulness to his method. For it is impossible to draw up a cogent apologetical argument for one who limits himself to empirical phenomena. But here again we can question the legitimacy of such a procedure to the exclusion of other modes of knowledge.

SECTION II

The principal difference between the Thomistic conception of education and Dewey's system as developed in Childs' essay may be traced back to the principles enuntiated in Section I.

The presupposition of empiricism mows down in a single stroke all apiritual and supernatural explanations of reality. The only alternative of a like position in the presence of spiritual phenomena is blunt denial of the facts or their reduction to materialistic proportions.

Mr. Dewey upholds the natural genesis of man's rational attributes. A like theory is impossible for the Thomist who looks at reality with an unprejudiced eye. Indeed the Thomist perceives an irreducible gap between human and other forms of animal life. Man's spiritual activities are of a superior

nature and imply a superior principle of operation, the spiritual soul.

Mr. Dewey's method forbids him to draw such conclusions. He observes and admits of course the presence of intellectual activities in man but fails to see the depth of this consequence. Having cut himself off from all non-experimental findings from the start, he is at a loss to follow the Thomistic philosopher's reasonings.

Mr. Dewey also upholds the continuity of man and nature. The Thomist may accept this statement in a certain sense. Man possesses certain chemical reactions and the vegetative and sensitive operations of life in common with lower forms of being.

However these beings of different species have rigid and absolute lines of demarcation. A sharp distinction exists between chemical or more physical reactions, and vital operations of living beings. Among living creatures knowledge distinguishes animals from vegetative life; the power of abstraction marks off man from other animal forms.

Thus there exists a gradation in the world of being. Is an evolutionalistic theory of the origin of species possible? Have living creatures evolved from chemical processes, animal life from the vegetative, and human life from lower forms? This hypothesis is not impossible for the

Thomistic philosopher. One can admit the existence of a superior being actuating and transforming the lower forms of being into the higher. St. Thomas himself speaks of the possibility of this type of evolution through the "equivocal" causality of a superior agent. The existence of man's rational attributes however, necessitate the direct and immediate intervention of God. The soul is an immaterial and consequently simple being. To attribute a natural genesis to the soul is absurd in Thomistic philosophy.

In his refusal to adhere to the mind-body dualism, Dewey believes that none of the distinctive human traits are in any way diminished. Human education would still be very different from animal training.

This, the Thomist is at a loss to admit. If man's distinctive traits are not spiritual, there no longer exists an irreducible distinction between education and animal training. The only difference is one of degrees of perfection on the same material level, in the same specific order. Let us illustrate the last part of our sentence with an example. A difference between a fast and a slow race-horse is a difference on the same level. Both are horses and both run; the only difference is that one runs a little faster than the other.

I would not state that Dewey disregards the distinctive human activities; on the contrary he insists on their import-

ance and necessity. But my claim is that he cannot reject the spirituality of the human personality and still pretend to save the distinctive human traits and capacities.

Dewey considers the mind as real but refuses to view it as a complex of inherited faculties. Mind for him is a function rather than a faculty. Such a position flows from his rejection of metaphysics. For the Thomist an operation is a secondary act. Man is not always thinking, still he possesses the power to think at all times. The human soul is not immediately operative so an intermediary being must be placed between the soul and its actual intellection. This entity is called a faculty, and supposes being. Before acting, a being must exist. Man's intellectual activity thus presupposes the existence of an intellectual faculty which is, before functioning. Never then will the Thomist say that an organism becomes a mind. All infants are endowed with spiritual faculties the instant the soul is created and informs the body. The mind remains inoperative however, until the age of reason, until the body is sufficiently developed. The mind then begins operating; the child's human activities get under way. But the child is not said to become a mind; he simply exercises faculties which were latent since the information of his body by his rational soul.

Here a puxzling sentence from Dewey's Creative Intelligence is quoted:

> The significant distinction is no longer between the knower and the world; it is between different ways of being in and of the movement of things.[1]

For the Thomist both the distinction between the knower and the world and the distinction between the brute, physical, way and the intelligent way of being in the world are significant.[2]

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1. CHILDS, op. cit., p. 425.

2. It would be of interest to know, if Mr. Childs has grasped Dewey's theory of knowledge. This aspect is beyong the bearing of our thesis, but it is surely interesting to note what Dewey has written in Experience, Knowledge and Value: A Rejoinder: "As far as I can make out, Mr. Stuart believes that I begin with two separate entities, those commonly called knowing-subject and object-to-be-known, and that I then think of knowing as some kind of transaction carried on between these two end-terms." (DEWEY, op. cit., p. 584). In the foot-note Dewey writes: "Stuart reads into my theory an original separation of self and object, organism and environment, and regards that disturbance which initiates knowing to be something produced in the former by some change in the latter; as over against my actual theory in which the disturbance is of a situation in which organism and environment are functionally united." (p. 584). He continues on the following page: "The same point of view is found when he says, speaking of my supposed view, that a situation presents itself to the knower as doubtful' or precarious, as if I held the situation to be outside the knower, and again when he says, nominally reporting my view, that "precariousness apprehended" is the occasion for the knower's resort to method. He also frequently speaks of some 'intrusion' furnishing the occasion for the self's engaging in knowing. [...] So far is the account given in this connection from being the whole story, that this section of my discussion was occasioned by the need of advancing some theory of the phenomena ordinarily called mental or psychological in which the 'self', 'subject', 'mind', 'knower' is not (as I have held it is not) an original separate entity set over against objects and the world. [...]

In one passage, Mr. Stuart expressly points out that according to me determinations like mind, body, and the outer world emerge and function within 'the situation taken as a whole in its problematic character.' Taken by itself this passage might lead one to wonder how it was that he did not see the

Childs then exposes Dewey's theory of the mind and its function. In such a brief exposition, it is impossible to grasp exactly what is meant. Let us hence come immediately

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distinction of organism and environment, knower and that-to-be-known, also arises and functions within the total problematic situation as a means to its resolution a process by which both are in some degree modified or reconstituted. But his previous sentence explains why he did not grasp my actual view. For it reads 'The precarious environment must accordingly be faced with such detachment and fortitude as the agent can muster the grasped as a whole as problematic.' Not only does this passage prove that Mr. Stuart attributes to me from the very start a differentiation and opposition of 'knower and 'the-to-be-known' but also supposes that it is the environment which is grasped as problematic - while according to my view a situation is problematic prior to any 'grasping' or 'apprehension' whatever." (p. 585, 585 & 587).

Earlier in this article, Dewey tells us: "Most of the dualisms forming the stock problems of modern epistemological theory have originated, as I have tried to show, out of the assumptions which generate these two problesms. If, however, the philosophical theory of experience is brought up to date by acknowledgement of the standpoint and conclusions of scientific biology and cultural anthropology and of the import of the experimental method in knowing, these problems, I have argued, are 'solved' by recognition that they depend upon premises inherited from traditions now shown to be false. Some of the gratuitous dualisms done away with, I have argued, are those of mental and physical." (p. 525).

[...] I believe that the factors of the existing cultural situation, scientific, technological, and 'social', are such that philosophic theories which in effect, even if not in intent, are products of prescientific and pre-technological, dominantly leisure class conditions, are now as obstructive as they are unnecessary." (p. 526).

Such a position is in sharp contract with Thomistic psychology and metaphysics. However it is not clear from Childs' essay that he conceives Dewey's theory in like fashion. We shall dispense ourselves from criticising this particular question in consequence.

to the consequences of this educational theory, consequences more easily understood and evaluated.

The school, Mr. Dewey argues, must provide an environment in which the child may test his ideas. Now this procedure appears to flow directly from Dewey's theory of knowledge. At any rate it is superfluous in Thomistic philosophy. Of course one must admit that the concrete visualization of an experiment possesses immense pedagogical advantage. Laboratory work and the practical application or demonstration of laws and principles usually leaves a deeper impression on the mind of students. The Thomist like other pedagogues encourages this method because of its psychological advantages. But the presence of an environment, of a reaction between the child and the environment, is not of absolute necessity in Thomistic education.

To replace passive rote learning by active community life has been another of Dewey's desires for the class-room. Learning in Thomism, we have already developed, is a vital operation, requires an active operation on the part of the knowing-subject. This reaction however, may vary in intensity. It is sometimes termed passive when the subject exacts but little effort, reacts but slightly. Yet in reality there exists no such a thing as passive learning. All learning is active; still this activity varies. The more a child reacts, the greater his attention and effort to grasp what is being

taught, the better chance he has of assimilating what is being taught. If this is what Mr. Dewey prones, we are in accord with him. But here also a certain restriction must be made. If Mr. Dewey understands that it is impossible to educate without giving the child actual practice in the field of knowledge being taught, we are no longer of one mind. An example will illustrate the point. In certain schools to-day, the traditional desks have given way to comfortable chairs and sofas. The children come to school and class begins like a wonderful game. To-day one of the children would like to build a toy-house; if his companions consent, the task is undertaken. Sand, water and cement are prepared. The teacher assist at the scene and seizes the opportune moments to explain the various subjects of the curriculum. When the children begin mixing concrete, a certain proportion between its various components must be observed. The teacher profits of the occasion and slips in a few mathematical notions. He then tells them where the cement comes from and here explains a little geography. And on goes the class in like fashion. This method has immense advantages; it may also have its disadvantages. The point I wish to make clear is that this process is not of absolute necessity, is no "conditio sine qua non", in the Thomistic theory of knowledge.

The Thomistic educator agrees with Dewey in setting up efficiency, sociability, aesthetic taste, intellectual training and conscientiousness, as criteria of an educational program. Very likely however, these words have one meaning for him and another for Mr. Dewey. An abyssmal difference exists between their two philosophies of life. The Catholic educator will agree with Mr. Dewey in accepting his criteria of education as important and as indispensable; but he regrets the total absence of what he considers most important in education; religious and moral education, religious and moral, understood in the Thomistic conception.

SECTION III

Section III commences with a reaffirmation of Dewey's empiricism. This point has already been examined; so nothing will be said about it here.

Things have different qualities in themselves, Dewey affirms. The Thomist agrees with this statement. Experience teaches us that all things are not alike. Because he upholds the objectivity of knowledge the Thomist must conclude that things in themselves possess different qualities.

Fidelity to experience says Dewey, also teaches us that our world is many, dynamic, and changing. What does Dewey

mean by stating the plurality of worlds, a plurality of worlds in which individuality has its place? The only sense I see to this is that our world is composed of a plurality of beings, each being possessing its own individual existence. It is most difficult to know if Mr. Dewey would endorse such an affirmation, so I shall go on without delay. With Dewey the Thomist views the world as dynamic and changing. The Thomist distinguishes with care however, substantial and accidental change.

Events are contingent and predetermined by no antecedent forces, states Dewey. The Thomist also makes a distinction here. All events are contingent in as much as the creation of the world itself is a contingent event. God was under no necessity to create. If other beings exist it is solely because of a free merciful act of love on the part of God. Viewed in God's eternal decree to create, however, every event which occurs in the world acquires a certain necessity; a necessity St. Thomas calls: necessity of infallibility.[1] But there also exists another necessity, a necessity flowing from the very nature of things. All bodies tend towards the centre of the earth and necessarily. An apple which detaches itself from the tree, for example, falls necessarily towards the earth. The apple's movement is subject to the law of

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1. S. THOMAE de AQUINO, op. cit., I-II, 112, 3, c.

gravity and its fall is in this respect a necessary event. This is an example of physical necessity which flows from the efficient cause. Under certain conditions a certain cause produces necessarily such and such an effect. The negation of this fact entails the destruction of all the physical sciences for the Thomistic philosopher.

In Thomistic philosophy all events are predetermined by God's eternal decree of creation. The nature of beings also determines their operations and thus natures are also antecedent predetermining forces. A tree for example, nourishes itself, reproduces itself, Nutrition, growth and reproduction are necessary events in a tree's life.

Dewey admits the fact of recurring sequences in nature but also upholds the absence of a beginning and end in nature. Reason alone is incapable of proving that the existence of the world had a beginning in time. This was the case however, we know through faith.

Nature and all things in the world have a final end. The principle of finality is one of the most intimate laws of being for the Thomistic metaphysician.

Nature has no preference for good things over bad, Mr. Dewey tells us. This affirmation sound weird to the Thomist who sees every being tending towards its proper end, its proper good. He defines good precisely what all things

desire: "id quod omnia appetunt". To say then that nature has no preference for good things is an absurdity in Thomistic philosophy.

If our universe is characterized by conflict and uncertainty, education of necessity will have to bear this in mind in elaborating its method, content and aims.

Mr. Dewey advocates the method of experimental adjustment to cope with our precarious world. This method is justified in as much as the principle it supposes is true. Recourse to custom is insufficient in as much as our world is a changing one. We have distinguished two sorts of change in our world: substantial and accidental. Natures have the same essential properties to-day they had two thousand years ago. But here again, we believe this principle is beyond Mr. Dewey's system of thought because it is beyond the scope of the method of experimental enquiry.

Mr. Dewey's other conclusions regarding the method of education follow from this view of change in the world: the supremacy of method, or intelligence, since the two are ultimately one and the same thing.

In scholastic philosophy intelligence is not identical with method. Moreover the Thomist upholds as contrary to experience, that reasoning is necessarily related to a tensional situation. The rationalist, Mr. Childs claims, accuse Dewey of abusing the intelligence, and naturally Mr. Childs

refuses to admit this.

The intelligence is some sort of a stepping stone in experimental adjustment, for Mr. Dewey. Here again we believe, a distinction is to be made. That the intelligence has a part to play in experimental adjustment, all will agree. In fact the capacity of adjustment and adaptation is more highly developed among intelligent beings. But is the intelligence only that? The Thomistic philosopher goes beyond the experimental periphery and asserts that the intelligence is a spiritual faculty capable of attaining being in all its fullness.

Mr. Dewey stands for both the utilitarian and the cultural, the mechanical and the liberal in the curriculum. How inferior this curriculum still remains to one elaborated by the Christian philosopher who considers man and the world in all their fullness and reality. God is the only object capable of satisfying the quest of happiness unlimited which the human heart longs for. Mr. Dewey's curriculum makes no provision for the most important aspect of human life. No one can be surprised at this for the curriculum is entirely relevant to the aim pursued in education. Mr. Dewey's philosophy seeks to determine all ends and standards from within the process of experience. Personal satisfaction becomes the ultimate source of value. But this conclusion meets with

obvious difficulties. Dewey then has recourse to the criteria of personal and social consequences: something is good if it makes for all-round growth. And thus he is lead to affirm that life is growing and growing is life. Now the Thomist could accept such a definition of life if growth was properly understood. God constitutes man's supreme end; union with Him on earth takes place through love. Thus growth in love may be justly regarded as the realization of life's end, at least on this earth.

Education asserts Dewey, has no end beyond itself. Such a statement also if given an orthodox interpretation is not as absurd as it may sound on first reading. The present interpretation however, surely transcends everything Mr. Dewey had in mind. Union with God we have stated in our exposition of the Christian philosophy of education, is the end of education, the end of life and the end of education.

This union is never completely realized in this life. Only in the future world is the soul perfectly and forever united to its ultimate end. But the Thomistic philosopher distinguishes two ultimate ends of man, or two aspects of the ultimate end: the "finis qui", and the "finis quo".[1] The "finis ultimus qui" is the exterior object one loves and desires; the "finis ultimus quo" is the activity through

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1. S. THOMAE de AQUINO, op. cit., I-II, 2, 7, c.

which the subject takes possession of, or is united to, its ultimate end.

God is man's ultimate end, (finis ultimus qui) and so is the operation which unite man forever to God, (finis ultimus quo). Thus this subjective operation, this ultimate activity puts the seal on the educational pursuits, fully terminate the educational process. But does this final educational activity, "finis ultimus quo", realize the definition of education? Indeed it does, for we defined education as the perfecting of man. The activity which unites man with his ultimate end is the most perfect of all human activities. It thus fulfills the definition of education. Education can thus be said to have no end beyond itself, end understood as the subjective end, "finis ultimus quo" as we have explained.

SECTION IV

The social properties of man are the discriminating characteristics between human and organic behavior according to Dewey. The powers of reason distinguish human from lower forms of life, according to the scholastic thesis, and the rational faculties of man explain his social properties; not vice versa.

Mr. Dewey's theory of meaning is dealt with here. The brevity of the exposition and the abstrusiveness of the question makes its comprehension most difficult. Education is said to be social in its content and purposes, because the realm of values is created and conserved by organized life of society. In Thomism of course, there is no such thing as a creation of values by society, even when creation is given the broadest of meanings. In our system of thought, values and ends are set up through the consideration of natures. Man's end is none other than God because none other than God can fulfill his desire of infinite happiness. Society may transmit from generation to generation the findings of by-gone philosophers, or what the sages of old considered as values. But society, past, present or future, does not fashion values of its own. Society, in other words, is not absolute; it cannot set up values as it pleases.

It remains true that society has the right and duty to draw up and promulgate laws; but these laws are but determinations, precisions of the natural law. Since all natural laws proceed originally from God, God is the supreme source of values and not society. Even society itself is subject to God and ultimately regulated by Him.

Education is said to be social, secondly, because society is the great educator. The Thomist will, I believe, subscribe to this affirmation. He will be less fervent never-

theless in admitting the reason advanced by Dewey in support of his statement. A child, Dewey claims, is not born a person but becomes a person. For the Thomist, a person is one endowed with a rational nature, possesses a rational nature at birth, and hence realizes the definition of a person. Until the age of reason, however, usually varying between three and six years of age, the child has not the use of his rational faculties. Thus, there exists only a distinction between the possession and the use or exercise of the rational faculties in the child before and after the age of reason; the child thus is a person at all ages.

Dewey states that education is social thirdly, because of the influence of society on the child. All pedagogues admit the fact. Education it is said, results from a three-fold influence: heredity, schooling and environment or society.

The fourth and fifth reasons advanced by Dewey are equally acceptable: namely, society perpetuates itself through education and education must prepare for life in present-day society.

Finally section IV concludes with a highly commendable principle for the progress and sound development of education. Present-day educators cannot but profit from the experience of the past, but our own age must also guide and inspire them.

Herein lies the secret of all true progress, in education as in other fields.

SECTION V

According to Mr. Dewey, the democratic ideal implies certain principles which are not without consequence in education. Democracy recognizes the intrinsic value of the individual; considers the good of the individual, his growth and development as its end. Democracy respects individual differences, repudiates external authority and calls for an equitable distribution of wealth. In turn education must respect each individual child and his individual differences; equality of educational opportunity, competence to judge values, and a democratic method of solving conflicts must be provided for. Finally education has its role to play in bettering the economic conditions of America.

One must not be lead astray by Dewey's affirmation of the intrinsic dignity of the individual child. His negation of supernatural and spiritual values destroys what the Thomist considers primordial in his conception of the human person. In this latter conception the human person is endowed with a spiritual and immortal soul which God has elevated to a far greater dignity, the dignity of Divine adoption.

Mr. Dewey is perfectly right in stating that education must respect the individual child. The child's interests and felt needs should be given consideration. This does not mean however that all inhibition in education is to be rejected.

The good of the individual is education's end. This statement, if properly understood is acceptable in Thomistic philosophy. The Thomist distinguishes as we have already explained, between the subjective and objective ultimate ends. Institutions are but means by which the individual attains his end, says Mr. Dewey. This affirmation is also true, I believe. Institutions and society in general are but means which facilitate the total development of each individual person. Still this is not in contradiction with the fact that as a member and part of society, the individual's good is subordinate to the good of the whole, to the common good of all. Just as the good of one member, or limb of the human body, is subordinate to the welfare of the whole body. In establishing the good of the individual as the end of education, Mr. Dewey concludes to the necessity of equality of educational opportunity and hence of public education. I fail to grasp the logical sequence between these two affirmations. Equality of opportunity in education is certainly something to be proned. Certain children are more talented

than others, but the "minus habens" have as much right to the same educational facilities. Mr. Dewey champions public education as a means of providing equality of education. To-day, in many instances, public education is synonymous with non-confessional education. If public education makes no provision for moral and religious formation, the Thomist is definitely against such a system. Non-confessional institutions as they exist to-day, are one of the greatest evils of the hour. An educational system devoid of religious and moral training lacks the most important item on the program. From what we have seen of Dewey's educational principles we are in right to suppose that religious and moral training are absent from the system of public education he advocates.

Dewey furthers knowledge of the past, present and future to guarantee the individual's competence in judging values. Knowledge of the past, present and future (in as much as the future can be foreseen), is certainly desirable. History repeats itself; knowledge of the past helps to understand the present and infer what the future holds in store. But the Thomist refuses to admit any radical change in human values. Certain circumstances may vary and bring about slight modifications in the moral code. For example, in the Old Testament, bigamy was tolerated by God. But man's nature is essentially static and hence human values are likewise

invariable. The Thomist thus disagrees with Dewey when the latter speaks of the individual constructing purposes for himself and society. In Thomistic philosophy both the individual and society have definite purposes which flow from their very nature.

Esteem and respect of individual differences is encouraged by Dewey. This, as we have previously said, is fine, as long as the welfare of all, or the common good is safeguarded. Mr. Dewey goes on to tell us that an interior disposition is created by this healthy diversity, an interior disposition ncessary to democracy. For he continues, democratic pociety repudiates external authority. Such a conception of democracy is evidently false for the Thomist. Democracy is generally defined govenment of the people, for the people and by the people. Now this conception implies no repudiation of external authority. Democracy is a temporal form of government, but its members have an eternal destiny. Man is not an absolute, but a dependent creature, dependent on God his Creator and ultimate end. Members of a democracy have a word to say in the nomination of their rulers, have the privilege of electing their representatives; but the governing party in a democracy, as in all other temporal posers, is subject to God's authority. A democratic govennment like all other temporal governments participates in God's

authority; to such a degree that any legislative enactment contrary to God's Divine Will, is no law at all, and consequently obliges nobody. No, democracy does not repudiate external authority. On the contrary, democracy is not only compatible with external authority for the Thomist, but it supposes external authority.

Education should foster good understanding and other dispositions necessary for peace and harmony in democratic life, states Mr. Dewey. Here again this does not imply, as Dewey could have us believe, absence of fixed standards and external authority.

We must agree with Dewey's statement that the excessive concentration of wealth in the hands of a few is a menace to democracy. Education certainly has a role to play in the economic readjustment of the world of to-day. Still one may question the efficacy of such a reform by an educational system like Dewey's. He makes no provision for what the world is yearning for most: spiritual and supernatural values.

CONCLUSION

In concluding this essay I would like to bring out two ideas: first the radical difference between Dewey's philosophy of education as exposed by Childs and the Thomistic conception of education; second what appears to me as the core of this divergence, or at least one of main reasons of this divergence.

A sharp contrast indeed exists between Dewey's conception of education and ours. The contrast is to be found in all four causes of education. The very fact that these two conceptions assign different, and extremely different aims to education produces radical differences throughout the entire systems. Dewey's rejection of the supernatural and all other knowledge above the experimental level, limits his system of thought to empirical things. The whole order of grace crumbles into ruin; the most important part of the natural order likewise. The distinctively characteristic traits of man, at least from the Thomistic point of view, can be no longer spoken of: the spirituality of the intellect and will, the immortality of the soul, human morality. Even the existence of God, beginning and end of all things, becomes impossible to affirm. Any educational movement devoid of this

background of ideas is of necessity very different from another movement precisely constructed on these principles.

And now what is in our modest opinion, the reason of this vast divergence between Dewey's conception of education and our own? The very limited knowledge of Dewey's philosophy contained in Childs' exposition makes attempts at answering this question rather imprudent. However let us run the risk.

Dewey's philosophy of reality is the substructure of this educational views. But what in his philosophy leads him to conclusions so drastically opposed to ours? In Experience, Knowledge and Value: A Rejoinder, Dewey says:

> Before taking up the issue raised by Mr. Parodi, I want to thank him for his grasp of the main purpose of my philosophical writings: 'To integrate human knowledge and activity in the general framework of reality and natural processes.' For I doubt if another as brief a sentence can be found to express as well the problem which has most preoccupied me.[1]

This affirmation gives us Dewey's end in his philosophical undertakings: the integration of human knowledge in the general framework of reality. So far, so good. But here begins the divergence. Instead of starting off with the affirmation of extra-mental being, Dewey seems to have been influenced by the Positivists' postulate, if what Childs tells us is correct. For this letter affirms that Dewey began his philosophical elucubrations: "resolute in the desire to

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1. DEWEY, op. cit., p. 597.

interpret the world solely on the basis of empirical findings".[1]

This method is incapable of attaining the higher human interests. Unquestionable acceptance of this procedure can explain many of the irreducible divergences between Dewey's philosophy of education and that of the traditional Catholic philosophers. From the very beginning Dewey's method shut him off from the superior realm of thought and being. In the field of education Dewey's principles seem to merit what R.J. Slavin has written of Positivistic educators, and we would like to quote this page in concluding.

> Positivistic educators by their misuse of education have been leading students steadily and surely toward the pit of spiritual and cultural dissolution. When students become indifferent to the real dignity of being men they begin to think that saving their physical existence means saving their humanity. When they grow indifferent to truth they are open targets for the shattering gunfire of propaganda and emotionalism. When spiritual values are rejected because they do not have pragmatic validity then life becomes a mad scramble to worship lesser man-made gods. When the final goal of life ceases to be the center around which hopes and desires revolve, people grow weary of being human and think they can shake off their humanity. The cult of self-made man, the debasing teachings of naturalism, the tragic rejection of man's submission to God, the false humanism closing the avenues leading to the joy of human living, the glorification of method to content, the premium placed on

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1. CHILDS, op. cit., p. 419.

> research at the expense of the sparkling vitality of teaching, the neglect of philosophy and theology - these are but natural consequences of any philosophy of life that has forgotten the real nature of man. If education is the progressive development of the potentialities of man in relation to the whole meaning of life, how can teachers ignore the things that really matter and still lay claim to teaching! Sociology divorced from ethics, psychology from the spiritual soul of man, science from the Supreme cause of all reality, economics from morals, politics from human nature - these and other similar divorces are disintegrating that creature of God called man.[1]

Indeed the above passage seems to apply to education as explained by J.L. Childs in his essay on Dewey's philosophy of education. Once again the adage: "Parvus error in principio magnus est in fine" appears to have been realized. Failure in elaborating a sound foundation for his philosophical system has led Dewey to radically false conclusions in the field of education.

Still in spite of this severe reproach, we believe that Dewey and his followers have made a lasting contribution to the field of education. If Dewey had but awakened and stimulated the extraordinary interest in education one finds everywhere "progressive education" makes its appearance, his merit would be great. Moreover Dewey's method has alerted educators to the precious advantages the experimental sciences

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1. SLAVIN, op. cit., p. 330 & 331.

can bring to education. "Progressive education" has innovated in many instances to the real advancement of the whole educational field. The new school has introduced and given a formidable impetus to innumerable pedagogical and psychological techniques and devices to the betterment of the educational process. These reasons alone are sufficient for all educators to be grateful to Dewey and his associates for their untiring efforts in fostering the progress of education.

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