CHAPTER II

TRUTH AND BEAUTY AS INSTRUMENTS.

§ 1. EXPLANATION OF THE POSITION:

In the previous chapter we considered truth and beauty as imitation and found that this view does not satisfy as the epistemological and aesthetic criteria. We noted that this view both in the epistemological and aesthetic spheres suffers from, similar difficulties. In this chapter we shall consider another view of truth and beauty: as instruments. This view holds that an idea is true if it proves itself to be the most satisfactory instrument in a given situation, from the point of view of a given purpose. This description of ours is quite inadequate and vague. It does not do justice in giving a clear exposition of the theories expounded by highly respected persons. Hence we will do well to start with giving a brief exposition of the general position of this view. Our account of this view will be neither exhaustive, nor, can we consider in detail the points of difference between the leaders of this school. Our interest in this chapter is only to consider this view as a position—epistemological and aesthetic— and to see whether it proves itself to be epistemological and aesthetic criteria. On the other hand, if it suffers from fallacies and difficulties in both the epistemic and the aesthetic spheres,
by studying whether there is similarity in these fallacies too, we will appreciate more clearly the relation between truth and beauty. To repeat once again, our main interest in this work is: (1) to consider a principle which serves both as the epistemic and aesthetic criteria; and (2) how even the unsatisfactory theories exhibit similar fallacies; thereby proving that basically the epistemic and the aesthetic criteria are one and the same though their spheres of application are different.

According to the instrumental theory, truth is not an eternally existing quality of ideas. No idea possesses any permanent significance. Truth is something which is conditioned by experience, by situations. As the situations change, the truth also changes: i.e., our ideas about the situation should change and they should prove themselves to be true by undergoing verification. The process of verification is not imitation as the realist would say, nor the consistency in implication as the idealist would hold, but it consists in practical action. Truth, in other words, owes its validity to its success in practical action.

This view of truth is the result of the peculiar view that the instrumentalist holds about human life in general. Being influenced by the biological theory of the survival of the fittest, the instrumentalist views life as a process of interaction; the individual comes across newer and newer situations and every new situation offers a practical challenge to him. The individual has to master or
change the environment so that it serves his practical needs. It is at this situation that the life process originates an instrument called thought. Thought is something which is evoked only when there is a cross-road, a dilemma, a challenge in the practical course of life. Then the thought begins to function; a number of ideas are originated, which are just plans of action, but neither true nor false by themselves. When they are applied to the practical situations, if they work well, if they are found to be useful from the practical situational point of view, then and then only do they gain the value of truth; and if they do not work, they are dismissed as false. Thus when the situation is over, the value of its truth is over. What comes next is another situation and not the old one, the new situation demands a new plan of action; a new idea, again, becomes either true or false depending upon whether it successfully serves the practical course of action. Thus truth is not an eternal quality of the ideas. To start with, ideas are neither true nor false. As W. James puts it: "The truth of an idea is not a stagnant property inherent in it. Truth happens to an idea. It becomes true, is made true by events. Its verity is in fact an event, a process: the process namely of its verifying itself, its verification. Its validity is the process of its validation."  

This view at once destroys the difference which is

held by other schools of thought that though we may concede that the practical men in the market hold that truth is workability, the scientist and the philosopher should be above this utility-predicament in their investigations. What differentiates science and philosophy is their detachment from the utility notion of value and their love of knowledge for its own sake. But the instrumentalist does not accept this distinction between the truth of the practical minded market-man and that of the so called disinterested notion of the truth of the scientist and the philosopher. The scientific and philosophical enquiries may be more refined in their methods and subtle in analysis, but their truth should essentially be proved by their utility. As it is stated by a recent student of the school, "An enquiry in a science, though far more refined and controlled is no different in its over-all characteristic (as an enquiry) than the commonsense and practical enquiries of everyday life. Commonsense and science are thus not set apart from each other as radically different enterprises, each employing different methods of thinking."

In the words of Dewey: "That all knowledge, as issuing from reflection, is experimental (in the literal physical sense of experimental) is then a constituent proposition of this doctrine". And "If Ideas, Meanings, Concep-

2. E. S. Thayer: The Logic of Pragmatism, p.34.
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tions, Notions, Theories, Systems are instrumental to an active organization of the given environment.... then the test of their validity and value lies in accomplishing this work."³

When the question, what is the meaning of universal proposition?, is asked, the instrumentalist does not ask it in the rationalist's sense. For the rationalist a universal proposition is one the import of which is true or false without reference to the practicality of verifiability with a concrete situation. But, certain ideas have what Dewey calls the founded meanings—i.e., when an idea has been used as plan of action successfully in several similar situations, that idea will gain certain meaning which we take as the possible truth, though we have not verified it with the other situations. Thus universal propositions are only "formulation of possible ways or modes of acting or operating."⁴

For the effective control of an action on the environment certain discrimination and ordering is necessary. Though the environment is very complex, it is necessary for the mind to grasp it clearly in order to control it effectively. But a clear grasp of it without some general ideas is not possible. Hence on the basis of the past experience, the mind tries to grasp it in the form of certain formulae of the kind of "a relation of an entecedent if

content and a consequent then cause." 5  That is, we may have some general plans of action in the pattern of a hypothetical proposition that if certain conditions are fulfilled certain results can be expected. But these universal propositions which should be taken as merely general plans of action are only what they are: i.e., they are not absolutely true, as their truth or falsity depends upon a number of concrete verifications yet to take place.

In short instrumentalism is the theory that truth is always founded on a practical situation. In other words, truth is that which works.

The same position can be adopted and treated from the aesthetic standpoint also, when we adopt this position for the sake of critical treatment, we treat it as an aesthetic position and hence we do not point to any particular aesthetician. Still we may refer to some writers, where necessary, who have taken a similar, if not exactly the same view.

The instrumentalist aesthetics denies any ultimate value to beauty. Beauty, for it, is only a means to fulfil certain other ends. The end may be any--moral, religious, social reform etc. In the western tradition of art and literary criticism we find that instrumental standpoint being taken by a number of writers. The first instrumental aesthetician was Plato, who despite his condemnation of the then existing artists and poets, had understood the powerful influence that art could wield on men's intellect--

5. Ibid. p.264.
tual and emotional life. Plato shows a remarkable understand-
ing of the relation between the various modes and styles of musical and poetic metres and the emotional and temperamental variations in the listener. Though the then adored artists are banished from his ideal community life, Plato is very clear in making use of the soothing and sus-
sive nature of art in training the people to become good citizens of the community. Hence the merit of a particu-
lar work of art is determined by studying how far it can be a successful instrument to bring about a particular end; which end is always considered to be superior in value to the work of art which is only a means.

Aristotle was not as instrumentalistic in his aes-
thetic as his teacher was; yet, he speaks very clearly of art experience. One of the most valuable uses of witnes-
sing tragedy, according to him, is the purgation of the excesses in the emotional make-up of the spectator; thus restoring for him the normal emotional balance.

In the middle ages art was in the service of religion and the general tendency of the religious authorities was to look upon the merit of a work of art on the basis of its power and vividness in making the devotees more devotional and converting the non-believer into a believer.

As late as 1580's an English literary critic gives expression to probably what was then the general learned view point in looking at a work of art. "Poesy therefore is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in the
word *Mimesis*, that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth—to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture: *with this end, to teach and delight.* Even Johnson—the most respected of the English critics—says sometimes, "The end of writing is to instruct; the end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing." Didacticism in art is essentially instrumentalistic at its core however enlightened its end may be. Even Tolstoi, himself an artist of the greatest order, turned in his later years to be an instrumentalist and held that the end of art is to instruct the people in the high values of morality and religion. It is too well known a truth that in the modern totalitarian state (even in the ancient and the Plato's utopia) the philosophy of the state treats beauty as always a means to propagate and confirm the adopted ideals of the authority.

In the contemporary time Prof. Dewey has done a great effort to explain the aesthetic experience from the instrumentalist point of view. Just as for the instrumentalist thought is true when it best serves our practical need, so also imagination is beautiful when it also serves our practical need. In fact the instrumentalist does not make a clear distinction between truth and beauty or thought and imagination. For him life—a process—is alone real in which both the true and the beautiful are only significant.

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modes in so far as they aid us to proceed with this process. Since in this process there is nothing like a fixed eternal underlying principle which governs the whole of the process, the way we will understand and plan ourselves for it should also change according to the changing situation; and the way in which we enjoy it also depends upon a number of situational factors. Beauty is a relative concept even as truth is.

The most striking feature of Prof. Dewey's aesthetic position is his demolition of the distinction between fine art and applied art, like the art of home-keeping etc., Prof. Dewey's main purpose in doing so is to prove that artistic activity is not a special activity but it is any work done excellently. This view is exactly the same as that of Socrates when he uses words like, the art of carpentry, the art of warfare, the art of sheep tending etc. Prof. Dewey offers various sociological reasons which, according to him, accounts for the development of the sharp distinction between fine art and applied art. Though it is an oversimplification of the position of Prof. Dewey, we may put the aesthetic and epistemic position of an instrumentalist in this way: truth is that which is planned well and beauty is that which is done well. Planning and doing are the only means to bring about a concrete, practical result. Just as there is no difference of kind between commonsense truth and scientific truth and the difference consists only in the degree of exactitude and skill, so also the distinction between fine art and applied art is a matter of degree. In the words of Prof. Dewey himself: "It is tempting to make a distinction of degree and say that
a thing belongs to the sphere of use when perception of its meaning is instrumental to something else; and that a thing belongs to fine art when its other uses are subordinate to its use in perception. The distinction has a rough practical value, but cannot be expressed too far. For, in production of a painting or poem, as well as in making a vase or temple, a perception is also employed as a means for something beyond itself. Moreover, the perception of urns, pots and pans as commodities may be intrinsically enjoyable, although these things are primarily perceived with reference to some use to which they are put. 8

Artistic activity, for Prof. Dewey, is prefigured in the very process of living. Living is a process in which the nature is transformed in a satisfying and useful manner to the living creature. The criterion of deciding the aesthetic value of any act is to ask the question: how far the action has satisfactorily culminated to add to the process of living? A bird builds its nest and a beaver its dam and if these two lower animals have done their action most satisfactorily—i.e., if the nest and the dam are efficient from the point of view of the purpose with which they are built, they are beautiful and the activity is artistic. But here one may question the relevancy of this assertion and say that the activity of the bird and the beaver is not artistic as there is no directive conscious vision in it. But to this the instrumentalist would reply that this directive conscious

vision itself has arisen, say in a developed creature called man, only as a means for efficient activity. The directive conscious vision is nothing but the knowledge of the relation of cause and effect which man has observed in nature and when he acts, he only makes use of what he learnt from nature. Thus his conscious vision is nothing but a more skilled way of acting than that of the birds and the beavers. Thus there is no basic distinction between the nest, the web of the spider, a drinking vessel and a painting by Cezanne. The existence of art "is the proof that man uses the materials and energies of nature with intent to expand his own life, and that he does so in accordance with the structure of his organism-- brain, sense organs, and muscular system. Art is the living and concrete proof that man is capable of restoring consciously, and thus on the plane of meaning, the union of sense, need, impulse and action characteristic of the live creature."9 Consciousness may originate and aid this process and it may also enable us to be aware of what we are doing. In the light of this awareness we exalt some of our activities as artistic. And even though consciousness is absent in the lower animal, the activity is nevertheless artistic so far as it is done successfully.

The instrumentalist's position in aesthetics is explained very succinctly but clearly by Prof. Stephen C. Pepper under the caption "Contextualistic Criticism."10 As he

10. Stephen C. Pepper: The basis of Criticism in the Arts. Ch.III.
explains it, all our experience has a certain degree of vividness, extensiveness and richness of quality. But these features are found in the innumerable situations of life in varying degrees. When these features are found in experience in a higher degree, the situation has a greater aesthetic value. Aesthetic activity is to have an experience—whatever the experience be according to the theory, from cooking to shoe-polishing—with greater intensity and depth. Every situation has a series of contrasting features like, quality or relation, intuition or analysis, fusion or diffusion, unity or detail. In having the experience we can concentrate on either the first of the pairs of the series or on the second. Thus one can experience a situation by concentrating more on quality, intuition, fusion and unity; or by concentrating on relation, analysis, diffusion and detail. If the situation is experienced with a greater emphasis on the former features the experience is distinctly called aesthetic. And if the emphasis is more on the latter, it is called non-aesthetic. But since every situation has both these sets of features, may be in varying degrees, we cannot experience pure quality devoid of any relation or pure intuition completely excluding analysis and so on.

"There is accordingly no sharp line in experience between the aesthetic and the non-aesthetic. Aesthetic value runs out into all life, though it runs pretty thinly through much of it".11 In short, aesthetic experience is the "way

11. Ibid. p. 58.
of our getting the fullest realization of our environment and our lives.\textsuperscript{12}

We may mark in this connection, the significance of the title of Prof. Dewey’s work on aesthetics—"Art as Experience". It is "experience", the "realization of our environment and our lives" which is art. And a beautiful thing is a means to this experience.

We have so far given a brief exposition of the epistemological and aesthetic position of the instrumentalist. Here a word of clarification is necessary. The word "instrumentalism" has gained a technical meaning associated with the position of John Dewey. But our aim in this chapter is not to consider exclusively any one particular philosopher of the school like Dewey or James or Schiller or any one. Nor is our treatment exhaustive. Our aim is only to consider a certain position both in epistemology and aesthetic, and to see whether that position is tenable.

We have used the word instrumental only because it has a clear meaning and in this context it unambiguously implies that truth and beauty are only instrumental for our practical ends.

Now we may proceed with a critical study of the position.

\textit{§ 2. PERSONALISM IN EPISTEMOLOGY AND AESTHETICS:}

The most salient feature of the instrumentalist’s

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid. p.59.
position of truth and beauty is that it is personal. All instrumentalists vehemently set themselves against the Absolutism and all other forms of rationalism which upheld the impersonality or objectivity of truth and beauty. After Kant gave the transcendental proof for the impersonality or universality of truth and beauty and thus saved them from the personalistic position of Hume, the idea was accepted by the neo-Kantian and neo-Hegelian philosophers. And even the realists, who are anti-idealists, accept this nature of truth and beauty. Now that the instrumentalist holds that truth and beauty are values because they are instruments in serving the purpose of man, the question arises: Is it the "Man" in general with a capital M or particular individuals that these values serve? If they serve the universal man, instrumentalism cannot be thoroughly personalistic; for what is the basic and the universal purpose which guides and determines the activity of all men? Whatever it be, in so far as it is universal, the activity of every individual human being is motivated by the purpose of all other human beings. Now, what is the proof that this purpose is universal? On the instrumental theory of truth, no proof can be given for it. For the truth of the proposition depends upon its workability. What is the workability of the proposition that all human beings are governed by the same purpose? Here the position turns out to be hopelessly unfavourable to the instrumentalist.

Hence truth and beauty are always instrumental to the purposes of individual persons. Schiller writes: "pure
intellection is not a fact in nature; it is a logical fiction which will not really serve even the purposes of logic. In reality our thinking is driven and guided at every step by our subjective interests and preferences, our desires, our needs, and our ends.\(^1\) "Actually every philosophy was the offspring, the legitimate off-spring, of an ideosyn- crasy, and the history and psychology of its author had far more to do with its development than \textit{der Gang der sache selbst........} '' A system of philosophy is best regarded as a sort of poetry, and often of lyrical poetry at that!'\(^1\)\(^4\)

In the field of aesthetics, this personalistic position has unmistakably crept in. When Dewey says that art is the culmination of experience in all its vividness and depth, it is the individual's experience that he means and not the universal man's experience. "A poem is created by every one who reads poetically------ every individual brings with him, when he exercises, his individuality, a way of seeing and feeling......''\(^1\)\(^5\) "Any other idea makes the boasted 'universality' of the work of art a synonym for monotonous identity. The Parthenon, or whatever, is universal because it can continuously inspire new personal realizations in experience.''\(^1\)\(^6\)

There are various other ways in which the personalistic viewpoint has expressed in the theory of art and art

\(^{14}\) Quoted from Ibid. p.387.
\(^{15}\) Dewey: Art as Experience. p.108.
\(^{16}\) Ibid. p.109.
criticism. The biographical method of literary criticism which advocates a careful study of the personal life of the author in all its precise sequential order is based on the assumption that a work of art is essentially the expression of the emotional make up of the particular artist. The modern cry that art is individualistic is also personalistic. But we need not assert that these various offshoots in the personalistic viewpoint are prompted by the instrumentalist philosophers or that all personalistic schools are instrumentalistic. But we can say doubtless that the instrumentalistic position in art is essentially personalistic.

But the personalism, whose great grandfather was Protagoras, is a relapse into a self-stultifying position. We define philosophy, or even science as a matter of fact, as the study of things following the leading of pure reason. But this position is condemned by the instrumentalist as "intellectualistic." "The term intellectualism is used by pragmatist writers to include all theories of knowledge that do not agree with their own, very much as the Greeks called all who were not Greeks, Barbarians." Perhaps there is no other ghost for the instrumentalist than the word intellectualism and the word is always used by him in the condemnatory sense. The instrumentalist is right when he points out that our thoughts are more often coloured by our emotions and prejudices which are usually conditioned by our practical interests. But he steps at this positivistic position and refuses to go further and recognise the

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17. Scott James: Making of literature Ch. 22
18. Wildon Carr: The problem of Truth. p. 44.
possibility of reaching pure objective and unprejudicial thought. The attempt of sciences and mathematics and even philosophy to evolve newer and symbolic terminology is essentially an attempt to be impersonal in our thought and expression. And to a great extent, sciences, mathematics and philosophy have succeeded in it.

Instrumentalism is a reaction against the old faculty psychology which divided human personality into three compartmentalised functions and it is right in its reaction. It never treats thinking as functionally distinct from feeling, and feeling from willing and so on. But while rejecting the old psychology it admits one feature of the former in an implicit manner. It was considered that thought can be objective while feeling was always personal or subjective. Now, when the instrumentalist reduces the special claim of thought to the level of feeling, he dismisses the objectivity of thought and makes it personal. But on the other hand, why could he not have made feeling itself objective?

Applying his epistemological position to aesthetics, the instrumentalist holds that it is our personal creation and our own emotions that we experience in art. So far it is acceptable to all. For, I as an individual cannot get the resources for my art experience from you, another individual. But what makes me have the experience in the same way as the artist intends me to have? The fact that you and I and all the others if sufficiently trained are capable of having the same kind of experience of a musical piece or a drama etc., and later on add to the appreciation
of each other by our descriptions of our own experience goes
to show unmistakably that my feeling in aesthetic experienc­
e is similar, if not the same, to yours and all others'.
To this extent aesthetic experience is not purely personal,
but something which undergoes a transformation transcending
the personal limits. Aesthetic experience defies the anti­
thesis between the personal and universal, it is at once
both.

We may once again write down the quotation from
Prof. Dewey and point out the inadequacy of its implication:
"Any other idea makes the boasted 'universality' of the work
of art a synonym for monotonous identity. The parthenon
or whatever, is universal because it can continuously ins­
pire new personal realization in experience,"

It is true that unless a work of art, and even a truth
of science or philosophy, is personally realized, I cannot
claim it to be either beautiful or true for me. But what
is the meaning of personally realizing a work of art or a
scientific proposition? Is it to reduce the truth to my
personal level or realizing my personal level to the level
of the truth and beauty? All clear thinking and genuine
aesthetic experience are impersonal or universal. Otherwise
scientific discussion and discussion on art experience would
be an open confession of mere wrangling.

Further, Dewey says that a work of art is universal
not because it is a monotonous identity but because it can
inspire men of each successive generations. But why should
it inspire men of each successive generations? In doing
so, does it inspire the people of each generation in a similar way or quite in different ways? If what the Parthenon meant for the Greek is completely beyond my comprehension, it follows that a work of art is an indefinite something on which any man can imagine as he chooses.

§ 3. A CRUDE FORM OF EVALUATION:

We may now proceed to consider the basic proposition of the instrumentalist: truth or beauty is what works or serves our practical interest. The phrase "what works and serves our practical interest" is highly ambiguous. If the phrase "practical interest" is taken strictly, it should mean biological practical interest. For, if taken in a wide sense practical may include a wide range between the need of a brute to that of an enlightened Buddha. The Buddha also taught that our notion of truth must be practical. But what he meant by the word practical was different from what a modern instrumentalist means.

Biological practicalism is a theory that reduces the value of truth and beauty to the value of mere survival. It fails to distinguish the fact that we have different motives and our sense of the practical is determined by these motives. What is practical for an ordinary bread-earner is not practical for a passionate lover of knowledge. There is such a thing in us as disinterested love of truth and beauty, which is of course not awakened in all people in the same degree. Socrates believed that the soul is immortal and it was immoral for him to escape from the prison.
while in the same situation an ordinary man would have conceived the truth in the practical way according to him.

Instrumentalism reduces all men to a single level, to the level of animals. The difference between animals and men is a matter of skill: while man makes use of intelligence as an instrument for his practical end, the animals do not have this sharp instrument.

The instrumentalist theory is essentially a crude form of evaluating sciences and works of art. It is mistaking the uses of science and the concrete influence of art for their very spirit. Science for an unenlightened man is what gives us motor cars and refrigerators and art is what helps us to forget our worries for sometime and to give a few hours of relaxation. The instrumentalist takes the same view and tries to raise it to the dignity of a logical and aesthetic theory. But the men of science and art themselves hold quite a different view about their activity. Says Russell: "Almost all great advances have sprung originally from disinterested motives. Scientific discoveries have been made for their own sake and not for their utilization, and a race of men without a disinterested love of knowledge would never have achieved our present scientific technique." But the instrumentalist, to be consistent with himself reduces the disinterested scientific account to the description of his own personal senti mentality. According to him, as Russell puts it, "we were

to suppose that blood heat, summer heat, temperature, and freezing were the only temperatures."

Almost every genuine artist has said that he creates not for any avowed utility but because he cannot help creating it. When the mood comes for the artist and his imagination starts functioning, it does not care to stop its activity even if the artist is threatened with his life. The most recent case is: Boris Pasternak was not unaware of the probable consequence after he completed and published his novel, Dr. Zivago. But yet he wrote it and all of us know what happened to him by the Russian Government. The point of importance for us is to note that there are motives in man other than merely biological ones and these motives are so strong in some men that they are prepared to end their lives for the sake of the fulfilment of these motives. But the instrumentalist is too fanatic to recognise this fact. He is too much obsessed by his utility-motive that he never allows any other excellence to human life. But as Montague puts it, "if man began to think in order that he may eat, he has evolved to the point where he eats in order that he may think." Montague further says that the argument of the instrumentalist is like saying that since the fingers were originally evolved from the peculiar orboreal needs of our animal ancestors, the same fingers should not be used to hold a pen to play a musical instrument.

A closer examination of the instrumentalist position of truth and beauty reveals that it implicitly appeals to a non-instrumentalist principle, and yet it verbally sticks to the self-created dogma of practical verification. What is the meaning of verification? Should it mean mere practical verification or intellectual demonstration as in the case of verifying the truth of a geometrical theorem? If it means the first, it is an appeal to concrete facts. Here a difficulty awaits us. While considering the imitation theory of truth and beauty, we noted that the real meaning of the phrase "imitating the object" means just to have an idea of how the object acts on us. The instrumentalist says that to verify an idea is to see whether the idea brings about the intended result. But what is the meaning of bringing about the intended result, if it is not to see whether our idea conforms to the actual reality that is presented to us at a later period? Hence, the instrumentalist may point out that there is a difference between the two positions: of his own and that of the imitation theory: whereas in the case of the imitation theory the object or reality is treated as a constant something, the instrumentalist holds that the object itself is a fluctuating thing. But granting that the object itself is a fluctuating thing, how can we plan our ideas so that it can be verified with the object, if the object has not got any definiteness through its fluctuating behaviour?
In this connection, we find the instrumentalist changing himself with certain convenient modification. James says that the verification-process may be direct or indirect. In the case of direct verification, we seek direct agreement of our ideas with reality and in the case of indirect verification we see whether our ideas conform to other ideas which are already verified and found true. Anyway there is a coercion by the facts on our minds. "Between the coercions of the sensible order and those of the ideal order, our mind is thus wedged tightly. Our ideas must agree with realities, be such realities concrete or abstract, be they facts or be they principles, under penalty of endless inconsistency and frustration." 22 Now, what is the meaning of "to agree"? In the words of James himself, "To 'agree' in the widest sense with a reality can only mean to be guided either strait up to it or into its surroundings, or to be put into such working touch with it as to handle either it or something connected with it better than if we agreed." 23

The first part of this statement, "to be guided either strait up to it (reality) or into its surroundings" is nothing but a way of taking recourse to the imitation theory of truth; while the second part "or to be put into such working touch with it as to handle either it or something connected with it" (our italic) is a peculiar way

23. Ibid. p. 213.
of appealing at once to both the imitation and the coherence theories of truth.

We find many times both James and Prof. Dewey admitting the intellectual utility also as a way of verification. James says that for the sake of the economy of time, we need not verify our ideas every step with concrete facts. So "when we have once directly verified our ideas about one specimen of a kind we consider ourselves free to apply them to other specimens without verification." To this restricted extent, we have to observe, the instrumentalist allows the intellect the claim for truth without verification. And he says further: "we relate one abstract idea with another, framing in the end great systems of logical and mathematical truth, under the respective terms of which the sensible facts of experience eventually arrange themselves, so that our eternal truths hold good of realities also." Again, "our ready-made ideal framework for all sorts of possible objects follows from the very structure of our thinking. We can no more play fast and loose with these abstract relations than we can do so with our sense-experiences." What is all this explanation and in what way does it differ from the coherence theory of truth? Only the instrumentalist should answer this question, but it is the rebel himself who has made an indirect confession.

24. Ibid. p. 208.
25. Ibid. p. 210
also confesses almost in the same tone. In order to answer the criticisms of Prof. Montague, Dewey wrote: "I have never taught that all needs were practical, but simply that no need could be satisfied without action. Our needs originate out of needs that at first were practical, but the development of intelligence transforms them so that there are now aesthetic, scientific, and moral needs... I have never said that thought exists for the sake of action. On the contrary, it exists for the sake of specific consequences, immediate values etc., What I have insisted on is a quite different point, namely that action is involved in thinking and existential knowing, as part of the function of reaching immediate non-practical consequences." Again Dewey wrote elsewhere: "The check upon immediate acceptance of ideas is the examination of the meaning as a meaning. This examination consists in noting what the meaning in question implies in relation to other meanings in the system of which it is a member, the formulated relation constituting a proposition. If such and such a relation of meanings is accepted, then we are committed to such and such other relations of meanings because of their membership in the same system." 

Commenting on the above quotation, a student of Dewey's thought writes: "The point here being that in the case of advanced scientific inquiries the 'relstedness' of a meaning to a system of meaning often takes prior

consideration to the practical or experimental consequences of that meaning. This is on the grounds that consistency is not only an ideal but a ruling principle in scientific inquiries, and it is a violation of that principle for both 'P' and 'not P' (where 'P' is some proposition) to be accepted as members of the same system."²⁹

The truth of the matter is, the instrumentalist started with a violent condemnation of the rationalist's ideal of following the lead of pure intellect as the way to truth, and he elevated the practical verification to the status of the sole test and the very core of truth. But on later reflection, he found that his theory was miserably inadequate and hence he tried to recast or modify the structure of his theory. But in the course of this modification, he included within his theory much of what he condemned at the outset. In a sense we may say that the error of the instrumentalist consists more in what he denies than in what he positively affirms. That verification is also a way of reaching or confirming knowledge is never rejected by us. But, we shall not, to start with, make an unbridgeable distinction between the intellectual order of ideas and the physical order of things and thus start with a preconceived dualism. We should hold that what is genuinely intellectually verifiable may also be physically verifiable if the point under consideration admits spatio-temporal existence and thus we shall include the truth of what the instrumentalist insists, rejecting his

one sided dogma and the anti-intellectualistic prejudice.

We may now come to see how the instrumentalist modifies his position from his original standpoint in his description of art experience. To start with he defines beauty as instrumental to the furthering of the life-process. That is why Dewey insists that there should be no distinction whatever between the fine art and the applied art.

To put it in a simple way: art is any work done efficiently from the point of view of the purpose which the work is intended to serve. But when the question of describing the nature of art experience comes, Prof. Dewey says: "Art is the living and concrete proof that man is capable of restoring consciously, and thus on the plane of meaning the union of sense, need, impulse and action characteristic of the live creature." The instrumentalist theory of art which has been explained earlier lays stress on intensity and depth of experience, which can be had by realizing the quality rather than the relation, intuition rather than analysis, fusion rather than diffusion, and the unity than detail of the situation. It is by concentrating on the quality, intuition, fusion and unity that we get "the fullest realization of our environment and our lives." This is exactly what Dewey means in what he speaks of as "the union of the sense, need, impulse and action." But on analysis we find that it implicitly appeals to the harmony theory of beauty. For, what is this union, and what is the significance of laying emphasis on quality, intuition, fusion and unity as distinguished from relation, analysis, diffusion

and detail? The point here is so clear that we need not indulge in offering a logical analysis of these terms.

In the opinion of a sympathetic critic of the contextualistic (instrumental) theory of criticism: "It is remarkable how few contextualistic writers on art have noticed this. They tend to veer off after a good start in contextualism toward an integrative, organistic theory of art. If aesthetic value is a matter of vividness of quality, there is virtue in integration as a means of increasing the spread of quality through massive organization. This is an old story, the old story of harmonious unity."³¹ It is true, as Prof. Pepper himself says, the contextualist puts greater stress on conflict of the situation and what he speaks of is an integration of conflict. "We envisage with pleasure Nirvana and uniform heavenly bliss only because they are projected upon the background of our present world of stress and conflict."³²

Here the point is: the instrumentalist theory of art experience wants to preserve the tension and the stress and at the same time it wants to describe art experience in terms of the integration of experience. But how far is it basically different from the harmony theory of beauty, is a question the answer to which becomes obvious to us when we will have the occasion to study in detail the meanings of integration, balance, tension etc.; in a later chapter (Ch.IV). But it suffices our purpose here if we note

³² Dewey: _Art as Experience_. p.17.
that the instrumentalist is not the first man to put this view forward. It is an old theory which is boldly accepted in all its nakedness by the idealistic aestheticians and which is restated by the instrumentalist in a not completely new way. Here also what happened is the same as what we noted in the case of the verification theory of truth: To start with, the instrumentalist made a too noisy condemnation of the rationalistic and idealistic views and when he was pressed to describe his own position in detail, he found the inadequacy of his position and hence tried to modify it. But the modified version is not materially different from what he protested against.

§ 5. THE SELF-CREATED LIMITATIONS:

We should consider another serious limitation from which the instrumentalist notion of truth and beauty suffers. Since truth and beauty are only means for effective practice, both of these values are reduced to be mere adjectives of the will. The will according to the instrumentalist has always a forward looking tendency and never a retrospective viewpoint. "This notion presupposes that ideas are essentially intentions (plans and methods), and that what they, as ideas, ultimately intend is prospective—certain changes in prior existing things."33

Further when Dewey says that beauty is nothing but efficiency in practice he makes art "presumably contemporary", i.e., art is something, the value of which is confined to

34. Peppers Op., Git., p.68.
mere immediate present. "So far as art depends on culture and not upon instinct, the art of one age cannot be vividly repeated in another, and if the art of one earlier age appeals to a later, it is often for other than the original reasons, so that as contextualists repeat, sometimes too insistently, critics are required in each age to register the aesthetic judgments of that age."\(^{35}\)

This position has certain graver limitations with regard to the conception of both truth and beauty. With regard to truth, it makes it impossible, (1) to claim any intellectual validity for history, (2) to go even a little beyond the immediate present and to make any scientific generalization; with regard to beauty, (3) it denies any aesthetic value to what was considered genuine art in the past and makes the contemporary artist not to think of the survival of his work in the next age.

We may consider briefly all of these three points one after the other.

(1) Instrumental theory of truth denies any intellectual validity to history: Since all truth is prospective and it is purely contextualistic, depending upon the concrete situation which will be always in a changing process, one should care only for the future and not for the past. This is all right if it merely means an ethical spirit of optimism. But this view is pressed by the instrumentalist as epistemologically valid too. What about the truth of

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35. Pepper: Ibid. p.68.
the proposition that Prithviraj eloped Samyukta on, say, a new-moon day? The instrumentalist may say that it is a useless fancy to waste our mental energy over this question. But granting that it is not a practically useful speculation, if the instrumentalist is pressed to either deny or affirm this proposition giving reasons, he should do either or say that the existing evidence is not sufficient to reach any conclusive judgment about the issue. But in any case he is attacking a problem which is not a prospective situation and no supposition about it can be "practically" verified in the instrumentalist's sense of the term.

In order to save the situation, the instrumentalist may twist the situation a little and say as Blanshard states it\textsuperscript{36} that "the concern of such judgment is not with the past alone, but the past as continuous with and determining future consequences." But it is obvious that it is too strained an interpretation. The instrumentalist may argue in this line and say that he is not interested in the event of the warrior king and the beautiful princess as a past event but as something which has influenced the practical course of Indian history (and thereby that of the world too in some essential aspects), the effect of which is still continuing to shape the present and the future. He may say that he studies history but as a model for future practice. But this makes for many commitments on his part. When situations are changing and the truth of each situation is peculiar to that situation what more can we learn

from the past situations? Moreover, granting that he studies the event of Prithvirajin so far as it influences the future of the country, can he change anything about what already did happen in the past? No. But still can he study the past event without redefining his notion of truth?

(2) Instrumentalism makes it impossible to go even beyond the immediate present. The theory denies not only the value of permanence to truth and beauty but treats their function as limited only to the immediate present. Thus according to it, we cannot speak of anything with certainty about an event not yet happened and a situation we clearly do not know as yet. Contextualism is right when it emphasises character of truth and beauty. But when the further question is pressed: whether the structure of existence is not such that the same basic inner principle rules the diversified contexts, contextualism gives a negative reply. Thus both in epistemology and aesthetics it emphasises only the peculiarity of the individual circumstances. No picture is exactly identical in detail with any other. Every work of art is a unique experience or creation. But by virtue of what — if we put the question which Clive Bell asks — all these are called works of art? The answer, mere efficiency of action is not sufficient. In the same way, every natural phenomenon is an unique event. No two summers can be exactly alike and no two eclipses are identical. But the principles that underly the summers and showers and eclipses and all other phenomena of the kind are the same. Without recognising this fact, we cannot extend the scope of
our knowledge. If the instrumentalist strictly sticks to his original position, he should not recognise any such principle and if he does, he cuts the ground from under his feet.

Further, the instrumentalist's interpretation of scientific principles is notoriously unnatural. Why a particular scientific theory is accepted is not so much merely because of the consistency with which it explains the existing mass of the data and its promise to explain the data yet to be found out with the help of that principle itself. In a sense, the verifying process of a scientific theory continues by generations of scientists after generations. History of sciences abounds in instances that a particular theory advanced and believed by one scientist has been verified by another born about a century later. The originator of the theory believed in it without verifying it because of its deductive strength and consistency of thinking in applying a higher principle. It is only concretely demonstrated by a later scientist. But the instrumentalist would say that till it was verified by the subsequent scientist, it was only a fancy in the mind of its originator.

(3) We have seen already that with its insistence on the present and the prospective, instrumentalism denies any value to the past. But truth and beauty though they are experienced and are seen manifested in time, have something transcendental about them. Very roughly we may describe truth as the knowledge of the principle according to which events take place in time. This is of course a description of truth of only the physical sciences. There are other
values the truth of which should be discussed without any reference to time. We may take an instance from ethics. To lie is morally bad. The instrumentalist (who is a kind of hedonist) would say that to lie is bad when in the context it leads to the harming of another person. But why should harming another person be considered bad? The answer should be without any contextualistic condition, without reference to time. But the instrumentalist gives value only to the prospective situation.

In fact all values, the values of ethics, religion and philosophy have something which goes beyond the reference to time. So is the value of art. Mahābhārata is a great epic not merely because it solved a spiritual crisis which its author might have experienced in the context of his contemporary social conditions; but because it can answer the spiritual crisis of all the ages to come. The instrumentalist may point out that unless the significance of the Mahābhārata is realized in the context of one's own personal experience, its value cannot be accepted. But this is quite a different point and the question remains: how is it that the Mahābhārata or the works of Kālidāsa or Bhāsa etc., are still capable of making us realize their aesthetic content in our own experience? The instrumentalist cannot at the same time guard his original position and give a cogent answer to this question.
§ 6. FAILURE TO DISTINGUISH THE
VALUES FROM ONE ANOTHER:

There is still another grave blunder to which the
instrumentalist theory of truth and beauty as values leads
us. When truth and beauty and goodness are defined in terms
of expediency—expediency from the point of view of the ef­
ficient survival of the biological life—there cannot be
any clear difference between these three values. For it
is logically absurd to treat these values as distinct while
we define them in terms of one and the same principle with­
out any modification. Thus the instrumentalist confounds
the true and the beautiful and the good for each other, with­
out paying any special attention to their distinctness.

But the truth of the matter is quite otherwise. The true,
the beautiful and the good may meet each other and become
one when all of these transcend themselves, but in so far as
they are treated for what they are, we cannot destroy their
individuality and make a mess of the distinct values.

In a sense we may say that morality has a wider and
more powerful sway in our value judgment than truth and
beauty. If any claim for beauty or truth comes into a ge­
uine conflict with the basic principles of morality, that
claim cannot fully justify itself. But in many cases, the
conflict is only surfacial and apparent. In so far as each
of these three values does not come in conflict with the
others, it is autonomous in its own sphere. But it is this
very autonomy of these distinct values that the instrumen­
talist's position denies. It does so because it fails to
distinguish between the different values.

Prof. Dewey advocates that the useful should be made beautiful and the beautiful useful. This advocacy is most welcome for any one with an intense wish to lead a culturally rich life. As long as Prof. Dewey's genuine intention is to make life concretely artistic, we have all honour for it. But on principle, we can not identify the two values: the useful and the beautiful. The useful is also a value which depends upon principles peculiar to itself while the beautiful is governed by its own inner principles. It is by a failure to recognise this fact that modern architecture is proceeding in the merely useful way. Many of the Railway Stations, houses and public offices are built on the basis of their utility, economy and durability. They are not beautiful. But the pity is, the architects of these buildings claim them to be beautiful, because these buildings best serve the purpose for which they are erected. The fallacy that arises here is: The beautiful is governed by the principles of rhythm, harmony, proportion, balance etc. The useful is governed by the principles of mere economy and functional efficiency; and it avoids any kind of "luxury". The beautiful never consciously cares to know whether a thing is useful in the instrumentalist's sense. There will be no proportion in the mass and the volume of the modern twenty-five-storied-building built on a small space. Such a building is useful in the condition of modern industrialised urban area. But it cares the least for the principles of beauty. It cannot care for it.
It is a sad fact of modern life and we should honestly confess it. But when the utility-minded architect claims such a building to be beautiful, it only reveals either his ignorance or insincerity.

Many times the beautiful can be made useful and the useful beautiful. Music which is considered to be the highest form of the fine arts is used by the psychiatrists for curing mental melodies. The psychiatrist may vary the tonal development of a note according to the peculiar abnormality of a patient. But he is not varying tonal sequences as a musician, but as a psychiatrist. The way of composing music is to do it "musically"—i.e., according to the inner principle of music itself. But Prof. Dewey persistently refuses to recognize the distinction between fine art and applied art 37 and he does so because of his instrumentalistic predilections.

§ 7. INSTRUMENTALISM & MATERIALISM:

We may conclude this chapter by noting down that the instrumentalist puts himself in the position of materialism. He starts by denying the epistemological problems of all other schools. He denies the distinction between the thinking subject and the object of thought—a distinction which is a precondition of many theory of truth. For instrumentalism, it is the process of life or experience which is important and all other values—truth, beauty and goodness—are only instrumental for an efficient and successful process. Truth and beauty and goodness are at best adjectives

37. See, Art as Experience. Chs. I and II.
of the process. Now, what is the nature of this process? Is it material, mental or spiritual or to which other special category does it belong? The instrumentalist may say that categorising the process in terms of the material or the mental etc., is an uncalled for distinction. Yet, when we try to characterise it, it is obvious that his position is behaviouristic which is at bottom blind. Dewey himself writes: "To use a term which is now more fashionable (and surely to some extent in consequence of pragmatism) than it was earlier, instrumentalism means a behaviourist theory of thinking and knowing. It means that knowing is literally something which we do; that analysis is ultimately physical and active."\(^{38}\) There is a process no doubt. But has it got any definite teleology, guided by an intelligent mind? And are truth and beauty expressions or conscious manifestations of this intelligence in the process? All these questions may appear unwanted for the instrumentalist. But if he is earnest in the activity of the philosophical contests, either he should answer his position or refute the critics. But as a matter of fact, though he claims much in the name of truth, beauty and goodness, metaphysically he is very poor. He either escapes the real metaphysical questions or explains them away and shields himself with positivism.

A science of values without a proper metaphysical foundation cannot give a satisfactory account of either truth, beauty or goodness.

\(^{38}\) Essays in Experimental Logic. p.331-32.