

## BOOK REVIEWS

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*Methods of Teaching Developed from a Functional Point of View.* By W. W. CHARTERS. Chicago: Row, Peterson & Co. Pp. 255. \$1.10.

To a considerable extent this book is a formulation of methods of teaching in terms of Dewey's theory of education. This is in striking contrast with the method books based on the Herbartian formula, namely the books of McMurray, DeGarmo, and various English writers. This tendency to adopt some unifying principle, which is lacking in such books as Thorndike's *Principles of Teaching*, is very helpful for some students, and to such Charters' book will appeal. To students of Dewey the following ideas which are prominent in the book will be familiar:

"The aim of education is to assist pupils to appreciate and control the values of life. Subject-matter arises in response to failure or breakdown in old ways of acting; it is invoked to satisfy needs or desires or to solve problems. The intrinsic function of subject-matter is its function in life without reference to its utility in the school. The attention of pupils for the major part of the time should be directed upon these intrinsic functions. Each unit of subject-matter should be definitely organized from the standpoint of its intrinsic function."

This fundamental discussion of subject-matter occupies one-third of the book. Over a third of this part is devoted to concrete examples from composition, literature, arithmetic, history, etc.

"The securing of motives, education's greatest problem," occupies about one-fifth of the book. The central thought is again the Dewey notion of getting the pupil into a situation where he is conscious of a lack or need which he formulates and attacks as a personal problem to be solved. Two-fifths of this discussion is an elaboration of examples from English, arithmetic, and history. The remaining chapters are, "Review of Past Experience," "Control of Values," "Forms of Instruction," "Methods of Development," "Psychological and Logical Organizations," "Methods of Securing Realness," "Drill and Application," "The Assignment," "The Lesson Plan."

The outline of main topics noted in the previous paragraph is admirable. It suggests vividly certain topics which are neglected or subordinated in the Herbartian formula, and it is better for the non-technical student than the psychological terminology used in some method books. But much of the good promise of the chapter-headings is not realized in the text. The Dewey material is spun out at great length with a superabundance of concrete examples and with elaborate analysis and subdivision which puzzle the student. On the other hand such important topics as "The Assignment" and "Drill" are given relatively brief treatment with few concrete examples. In a few cases definitions and distinctions are introduced which give the student unnecessary

difficulty, for example, the idea that a unit of subject-matter is a way of acting, and the discussion of explicit, versus implicit, elements in inductive and deductive reasoning.

In general the work represents a valuable departure in textbooks on method and is useful in connection with general-method courses for either elementary- or high-school teachers.

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