

Heuretic Science

1904 | Reason's Conscience: A Practical Treatise on the Theory of Discovery; Wherein logic is conceived as Semeiotic | NEM 4:191

Science of Discovery is that science which is pursued simply to find out the truth, regardless of what is to be done with that knowledge.

1906 | The Basis of Pragmaticism | EP 2:372

The word "science" has three principal acceptations, to wit:

Firstly, men educated in Jesuit and similar colleges often use the term in the sense of the Greek *ἐπιστήμη*, the Latin *scientia*; that is to say, to denote knowledge for certain. [—]

Secondly, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Coleridge so defined it in the opening dissertation to the *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana*, non-scientific people have generally understood "science" to mean systematized knowledge.

Thirdly, in the mouths of scientific men themselves "science" means the concrete body of their own proper activities, in seeking such truth as seems to them highly worthy of life-long devotion, and in pursuing it by the most critically chosen methods, including all the help both general and special that they can obtain from one another's information and reflection.

The present writer will call science in this third sense heuritic science...

1906 [c.] | On the System of Existential Graphs Considered as an Instrument for the Investigation of Logic | MS [R] 499

...I must explain in what sense I speak of a "science", - which is an abridged expression for a heuritic science, or science aiming at the discovery of new truth. Namely, I do not mean by science, as the ancients did, that doctrine which is beyond all doubt. Nor do I use the word in the sense in which Coleridge at the beginning of the XIXth century defined science as systematized or ordered truth. But I use science in the sense of a business, that is, of a total of real acts exerting reciprocal effects one upon another, and concerned with closely analogous purposes. When I speak of any given heuritic science, I mean the body of doings in Past and Future time, not too remote from the present, of the members of a certain social group. These persons constitute a social group in their acquaintance with, understanding of, and sympathy for one another's doings. And the peculiarity which make it a *scientific* group are, first, that the members are devoted to ascertaining truths of a given kind on account of their speculative interest in the matters, that they have each of them some special facilities or capacities for such research, that they employ approved methods, and that each seeks aid from the results of the others. From this point of view, the question whether a given class of investigations

ought to be regarded as belonging to this science or to that is not to be settled by mere logical analysis, but is a question of fact; namely, it is the question whether the men who in our day will undertake in a scientific way investigations of the class in question will naturally mingle with one group or with another group.

1906 [c.] | L [R] | MS [R] 601:24-25

These three great divisions, Idioscopy, Cenoscopy, and Mathematics, together constitute the aggregate of those sciences which are sometimes called Theoretical Sciences, but which I prefer to call the Heuristic Sciences, or the Sciences of Discovery, because, on the one hand, I am unable to attach any definite meaning to the word "theoretical" that is in truth applicable to these forms of activity and to no others, while, on the other hand, I do find that the more intimate my acquaintance with them becomes, the more emphatically they show themselves as severed from all other human doings by the almost absolute singlemindedness, proportionally to the success of the exertions, with which they are animated by one motive, the desire to learn what is not already known, this learning being the object of desire on its own account only.