Term: Pragmatism

Quote: [Pragmatism] says nothing directly as to the truth of things: but is merely a method professing to disclose the *meaning* of any and every abstract concept or general word, phrase, or conception, provided its meaning be of an intellectual nature. [—] I do not understand by pragmatism a method of ascertaining the meanings of all sorts of concepts, but only of “intellectual concepts,” or those upon which reasonings may turn. [—] Pragmatism looks upon a concept as a mental sign, or medium between the object to which it is moulded and the “meaning,” or effect which the object is enabled by the concept to produce; and in all general inquiries about signs nothing is of more lively importance than maintaining a clear and sharp distinction between the object, or professed cause of the sign, and the meaning, or intended effect of it.

References: MS [R] 320:5-7
Date of Quote: 1907 [c.]
URL: http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-pragmatism-88