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MIND TRAINING

Dynamic Psychology Supplanting Static in New Ideas on Australian Education.

IMPORTANCE OF INSTINCTS

By Mr. F. Barton, B.A.

Paper read before the Education Conference in Adelaide and summarised for "The News."

The difference between the new and the old ideas of education correspond with the difference between the new and old psychology. The old psychology confined itself to introspective analysis and description of conscious states, and the old education confined itself to these conscious states. Impulses and motives, the springs of human action, were ignored by psychologists, and with suspicion, if not with hostility, by teachers. The newer thought demands that the static, descriptive, purely analytic psychology must give place to the dynamic and functional.

Instincts as factors in behaviour are viewed differently. One school represented by McDougall speaks of a large number of separate instincts, each latent at birth, each having its own origin in the dim past of our race. There is the instinct of flight with the corresponding emotion of fear, the instinct of repulsion and the emotion of disgust, and the parental instinct and the tender emotion, the gregarious instinct, the constructive instinct, and so on. These instincts and emotions and the derived sentiments—love, hate, and respect—are studied and described separately and the life history of each is traced. All this is of no use to the teacher.

The work of McDougall is fundamentally important, of course, but I query whether his way of tackling the problem is the most fruitful for the teacher. We want something which while sacrificing some of his completeness will give us a more dramatic insight. We must come down from the top of the grandstand where we have sighted our objective, and we must get among the work, and thread our way through it, constantly diverted from the direct path, which is everlastingly shifting and changing as we move.

FREUD'S PSYCHOLOGY.

More fruitful for us is, I think, the concept of "libido" associated with names of Freud and Jung—a life force, an urge now manifesting itself in this way, now in that, but always progressing in a definite direction, and if diverted restoring to all kinds of tricks to achieve its end, and if hopelessly blocked and dammed, causing stagnation or disastrous flood. With this view we can still discuss all the "instincts" and emotions, and it is my intention to trace in broad outline the emotional development of the child up to adolescence.

I shall deal with the unconscious from the psycho-analytic standpoint. If anyone prefers the method of McDougall to that of the psycho-analyst what I say need not miss its mark. All I do is to suggest a definite sequence of manifestations of the libido.

The first manifestation of the libido is what I will call the nutritive instinct. It is connected with the commissariat department. But it is not long before a desire for power manifests itself. The new-found power of a baby to move its limbs is an obvious delight to it.

I only mention these instincts because it is necessary for even the secondary teacher to have some acquaintance with the psychology of the infant, as so many infantile manifestations of the libido remain over into adolescence and beyond. It is very necessary to be able to detect them. At any rate, one can see what the obstacle is which has to be overcome or circumvented, and that is the first step in the right direction.

Before going on to the next stage I must refer briefly to two main tendencies of mind, distinguishable through every stage of growth—extroversion and introversion. The extrovert tends to action—to be a worker, even a busybody or a criminal; the introvert to thought—to be a first-class passenger, an individualist. No one is completely extroverted or completely introverted. Normals have their extrovertive and introvertive tendencies well mixed. The ideal would seem to be a slight predominance of the extrovertive, with sufficient of the introvertive to allow of self criticism and to help us to see ourselves as others see us.

I shall speak as if such a balance were the usual conditions in which we find children. I believe that schools working on the theory I am propounding, supply an atmosphere in which this blend of introversion and extroversion is gradually produced.

The main object of both extrovert and introvert is "creation" in some form; that of the first "exterior," that of the introvert "interior."

AGE OF IMAGINATION.

The next stage in the child's growth is the age of imagination. Unable to satisfy the desire for power—a desire constantly increasing, he seeks satisfaction in imagination. This is the age of play par excellence, and fortunately there are few schools nowadays in this country where the importance of play and the imaginative instinct in little children is not recognised.

It is the age when children invent imaginary persons, whole families, kingdoms over which they can rule, giants which they can slay, and so on. The curriculum needed is clearly one which contains much imaginative material, with freedom of movement and every help to the development of independence. The desire for power is still dominant, and should be given every possible social satisfaction. Here our sensible mothers and their extension—the Montessori School, seems to fulfil most of our requirements.

Without a stage where the mind is stocked plentifully, with concrete and clear images, no age of reason can follow. But the time comes when Johnny comes down from the giant's castle, where he has done such great deeds. His constantly more acute observation of nature shows him that these giants have no real existence, and he begins to get little satisfaction from their destruction. He now enters the age of self-assertion, a stormy time. It is the age when his mother finds him getting beyond her control. He is dissatisfied with the imaginative satisfaction which has hitherto contented him. He is physically incapable at that age of having much power over real things—though what enormous satisfaction he does get from such physical feats as he can perform. The nearest real things for him to exercise power over are other persons, and particularly his mother. It is the function of the school to see that he is weaned from the desire of power over persons to the desire of power over things. But you cannot achieve this directly. The curriculum must give opportunities for such dominance over other children as is given by captaincy of a side. Manual work is of immense importance at this time. There must be opportunity for display, speech-making, acting as officials, etc. The average school only deliberately supplies one—outdoor games.

SELF-ASSERTION.

If during this self-assertive time he has had ample opportunity for satisfying this desire in other ways than naughtiness (to make mother or your teachers angry is a splendid evidence of power) he will step naturally into the next stage, which is one of co-operation, fellowship, loyalty. Instead of using society now as a background in which to display his superiority, he tends to sink his individuality in that of a crowd. It is the age when team play becomes possible; in the class, self-government in its more formal aspect becomes possible.

The discouragement of the natural desire of children of this age to work to-

gether in groups or pairs leads to much evil. A great deal of "cribbing" is at this stage quite a social act and proceeds from a perfectly innocent idea of "common possession." Most cribbing is a result of fear of punishment, though it sometimes comes from a desperate blind attempt to preserve the culprits own self-respect after a long succession of hopeless failures in tasks beyond his powers. The most serious result of the failure to allow boys to work together is atrophy of the power of co-operation by denying it exercise when it first appears.

With the approach of adolescence the libido takes a new and important direction. But I believe that if education has been in accordance with the demands of instincts—the unconscious—up to this stage there need be little anxiety as to the specifically sexual aspect of the problem. I think it is a useful generalisation for the teacher that every kind of misdemeanor and every kind of habitual misbehavior of a child up to this stage is due to a "left-over" manifestation of the libido. For instance, the cause of a good deal of habitual lying is due to repressed desires at the imaginative stage. So too, on the specifically sexual side there seems to be parallel development, thus:—Up to the end of the self-assertive age, when the child is entirely self-regarding, the sexual nature is auto-erotic. Narcis-

sism is the word used to describe the state—from Narcissus, who loved his own image. Its manifestation is interest and curiosity in his own body. During the age of self-assertion and loyalty, when he is first realising society in two opposite ways through the companionship of his own sex, the sexual nature is homo-sexual. During this stage there is probably an intense superficial contempt for the other sex, which is, of course, really the first sign of definitely sexual interest. It is the first reaction to the realisation of the other sex as such.

If through these stages there has been no repression or starvation of the instincts, there need be little anxiety lest with the synthesis of the reproductive instinct, which comes with puberty, the development should not continue healthily.

PARENTAL INSTINCT.

At the stage which we have reached in our enquiry, it seems that the parental instinct begins dimly to function. Gropingly the libido is reaching forward to the choosing of a mate and the preparation of a home.

There begins an age of longer sight—an age when abstract ideas become part of the child's mental equipment, an age when things in themselves uninteresting are made use of as a means to an end. But here the over-anxiety of the parent, infecting the teacher, may do enormous harm. At about the age of 11 or 12 there is a tendency to attempt to force the child's intellectual pace, through anxiety lest he should not be properly equipped for "the battle" of life.

The fire which is kindling is still a very little one, and is best left alone, and if it fails at once to blaze up strong and steadily, we must not be disappointed and try to remedy matters with the bellows.

Let us hope that the time will soon come when the Secondary School will find no "left over" manifestations to deal with. The childish manifestations which were innocent and harmless enough when the physical body was at the same age as the libido, become unpleasant and sometimes dangerously destructive when they remain housed in the physique of older years. And it is the function of the school to see first that each can find its satisfactory expression and means of sublimation at that age, and secondly there have been accidental or inevitable failures, that means are provided for the re-education, in the bringing up-to-date of left-over manifestations without dealing with them as crimes.

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BOOK FOR STUDENTS

We have received from Mr. G. G. Newman (author) a copy of "Leaving English Literature" which has been prepared for the use of students who intend taking Leaving English Literature at the Adelaide University in November, 1923, and February, 1924.

It contains an extensive collection of questions on Richard II., selections for essays, questions on short stories, Globe Poetry Book, and historical grammar.

There is a chapter on metaphor and simile.

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University Residential College Church of England.

ST. MARK'S COLLEGE

APPLICATIONS are invited until 3 p.m. October 5 for the position of SECRETARY to the above College at a commencing salary of £100 per annum. Applications, accompanied by testimonials, to be forwarded to the undersigned, from whom full particulars may be obtained.

H. W. HODGETTS, Jun.,
Hon. Treasurer,
Cowra Chambers.

Department, with necessary officials.. To the University ought to be attached a professor of forestry and lecturer, with provision for research, experiment, and general administration of the whole State. The main administration would perform the large scale work of forestry. The principal district officials ought to comprise an adequate knowledge of the science and practice of forestry, as well as the art and administration. Proper training of forest officers is essential. It is better to place a well trained and experienced man in charge of 20,000 acres of forest land without a tree on it, and let him develop a forest, than to put an untrained man in charge of a low wage, and suffer in years to come from consequent poor results. Effective silviculture demands a knowledge of the associated sciences—physics, chemistry, and geology. Indeed, the curriculum of the local School of Forestry, although satisfactory in itself, should be extended and improved. There is room for at least 400 graduates in forestry in Australia, and yet this School of Forestry in Adelaide is practically the only adequate institution of its kind in the Commonwealth. In the established forests the silviculture of each species has yet to be carefully worked out in detail; and the greater problem—that of the mixed woods—will engage the attention of skilled experimenters for many years. A few existing methods of treating our species are expensive and inefficient. The skeleton for the necessary administrative machinery has been created in South Australia—we have the nucleus of a great natural work—but reorganization on definite lines, allowing for expansion, is urgently needed. For example, the prevailing system of permitting the University to use the Kuitpo forest is good, but all the State forests should be available on similar lines. A chief State officer must always be employed, and he ought to be also Professor of Forestry, with necessary scientific staff. There is no need to elaborate details further, for such matters would be consequent upon the adoption of the essential foundation of the system of improvement suggested. The whole question ought to be considered independently of personal or party feeling. The one important outstanding fact is that we are menaced by a great economic danger, of incalculable moment in a commercial sense, but that, with the use of the proper methods, extensive, intensive, and well-managed forests could be established and maintained throughout the State as a highly and increasingly profitable undertaking. The time is trifling with this subject is past.

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PRESERVING CITRUS

MR. MARSTON'S PROCESS

Growers Secure Option

Mr. Gerald Mussen, on behalf of the Victorian Central Citrus Association, Pty. Limited, has secured an option of Marston process for preserving citrus fruits.

It was explained on Saturday by Mr. Mussen that in this matter the Victorian Central Citrus Association is associated with the Murray River Citrus Growers' Association, the New South Wales Central Citrus Association, and the newly-formed Western Australian Central Citrus Association.

Further experiments with the process will at once be started in South Australia and Victoria, and will be continued for some months.

It is proposed to process a number of cases each week from now to the end of the year, and the processed fruit will be kept under daily observation. If the results are satisfactory shipments treated by the Marston process will be made to England next season.