

The Vanishing of Instincts

BY CHARLES MAYES

Instincts are apparently vanishing. It was once that the myriads of tendencies in human nature could each be classified as a certain definite "instinct." Life then was to a great extent a bundle of instincts. Habits of course, had their places but often times it was implied that these were simply the establishment of these inherent forces in some certain direction. This "instinct psychology" dominated social and educational psychology. This was a dangerous system.

Since some theorist assumed that these instincts represented tendencies inherent in all human beings and because some one thought that the human race had a universal desire to fight, an "instinct" called pugnacity was included in the extended list. Then everybody must fight. Hence war would be inevitable and as everlasting as humanity. By choosing a list of instincts one could arrive at what ever social conclusions he desired.

Instinctive tendencies are important principles in our nature. But there are other contributions to human nature which cause the individual to move in certain directions. There are feelings which include emotions and desires. One might imagine an instinct for every trend in human conduct. But these instincts could never grow into individuals. Without feelings and emotions human nature would be adrift on the uncertain sea of mere conjecture. Instinctive tendencies whether one or one thousand in number, must be piloted.

"Instinct psychology is on the wane." Human nature can never be explained in any such abstractions as "instincts" or even "original tendencies." Desires and emotions are subject to laws of instinct and habit. Certain inherited tendencies pull in one or another direction and also drive toward specific emotional activities. In these respects individuals in their natures differ tremendously.

Under all circumstances these must be taken into account, nurtured and encouraged or suppressed, smoke-screened and inhibited. Education of desires and emotions, whether for better or for worse then, dare not be overlooked.

To so control the experiences of the individual, his desires, emotions and intel-

lectual attainments that his nature will be characterized by certain action tendencies is to set forth for him ideals. Ideals are predominately matters of training. Inherited capacities play only a minor part. An ideal is what the individual thinks and feels ought to be done or what is proper to do in any given situation. Once a worthy ideal is set up as a goal, education is launched in a particular direction.

Ideals are not always present as con- behind the curtain of consciousness. The body mechanism thru a period of time becomes adjusted to them, hence the habit or the behavior in a definite manner.

Admitting the presence of innumerable "instincts" or the presence of but one and that one—"activity," human nature, the finished product, results from other forces. Presence of ideals thus formed not only presupposes ideas but the acceptance of these ideas, relatively free from conflicting ones.

Education must therefore be based on more than the feeding and starving of the so-called instincts. It must be the directing of feelings and emotions, growing into ideals which in turn blossom into a conduct compatible with the ultimate aim of education.

How It Happened, Girls—

Delilah welched on Samson strong,
Did her best to do him wrong —
Cut his locks close to his ears
With a pair of rusty shears;
Then stood back to view her work
Like the servant of a Turk
Who surveys with great delight
Distressed maidens in their plight;
But her pleasure turned to wonder,
Good had come from out a blunder!
He, who had looked like a thug,
Really had a handsome mug.
Far from doing any harm
She'd revealed the creature's charm.
Then Delilah, wretched elf,
Turned the shears upon herself.
But there was heard no dull, dark thud
As despondent maiden kissed the mud,
Then Delilah, in delight,
Proved herself a genuine quite;
The result on Samson's dome
Made her turn and BOB HER OWN!

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THE LOST CHORD

(Apologies where necessary)

Seated one day at "Commons,"
I was weary and ill at ease,
As I dined on a strange concoction
Called "Chicken Croquets with Peas."

I knew not what I was eating,
And my courage began to sag,
When I struck a cord that tasted
Like the string of my laundry bag!

It clung to my left bicepsid,
With passionate force it clung;
It hampered articulation,
It got twisted about my tongue.

I tried to cry out for assistance,
In vain, since my tongue was tied,
The cord settled down on my windpipe,
And, gasping for breath, I died.

—Yale Record.

"You must understand thoroughly," explained the Economics Prof., "that a 'free good' is not a good for-nothing."

Co-ed—Why do they call it the weeping willow? It doesn't weep, does it?

Ed—No, it used to but one day the fir tree said to it "pine knot."

Clerk: Let me show you some pencils.
Youth: Alright.

Clerk: Sure, they're guaranteed to do that.

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