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SCHOOL; AN INTRODUCTION
TO THE STUDY OF EDUCATION**

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J. J. FINDLAY

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THE SCHOOL
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE
STUDY OF EDUCATION

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PREFACE

THE heart of this book is to be found in Chapter V. If the reader once accepts the standpoint there taken, the succeeding chapters fall into shape in systematic order, while Chapters I to IV are found to be in place as foundations for the whole plan.

The author's endeavour has been to present a variety of topics welded together in one scheme of thought. The reader will scarcely expect to find every burning question in Education debated within the limits of these covers, but some reference at least is made to most of the themes which are of general interest at the present time. If on many of these the discussion seems curtailed it will be borne in mind that for students the volume is offered as an introduction, while for the general reader it is important that the pages should be readable.

To Mr. Arthur Bartle, Mr. J. A. Dale, and Miss S. K. Findlay thanks should be expressed for a careful revision of the proofs.

December 8, 1911.

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UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

THE SCHOOL

CHAPTER I

ORIGINS

1. THERE is a curious contradiction in the attitude that we adopt towards education. No subject bores us more when we are in the mood for being bored; every one can talk about it, for children, like the poor, are always with us; but how seldom is anything new discovered, or even anything old propounded in a novel way.

But in other moods the theme is of engrossing interest and of supreme importance. The philosophers, who differ in everything else, agree in maintaining that the progress of mankind depends upon education; and the fond mother, looking at her baby's features in the cradle, agrees with the philosopher.

For, defined in the broadest terms, education is no more and no less than the provision that mankind has to make for the progress of the species to which he belongs, *i. e.* civilized man. There are many

more lofty conceptions of education, but they are liable to error if they neglect this lowly starting-point and fail to treat our species according to its rank with other animal species. The conditions under which the human breed has survived and made progress are, in fact, more patently in evidence with us than with other animals, for man finds himself able to adapt himself to new situations with extraordinary facility. He will take on a new habit, acquire fresh qualities, flit to a foreign climate, anticipate peril, discover wants, adapt himself to a novel environment,—or rather, as we shall see, compel environment to adapt itself to his demands,—and thus prove himself fit to meet, and to master, the pitiless circumstances under which creation lives and breeds and dies.

Now all the plans which man devises for these ends are, in the nature of things, devised for the young; it is they who *are* the species, who enable it to go on. The fundamental instinct in all organic beings is that of caring for succession, and the fundamental laws of life are those concerned with transmission to offspring. The brute, by instinct, trains his young to seize the prey, to flee from danger, to hunt for food; and the young of bird and beast, by instinct, will imitate,