

INSTINCT AND INTELLIGENCE

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Instinct and intelligence by N. C. Macnamara

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N. C. MACNAMARA

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PREFACE

THE meaning of the term Education is "to draw out what is in a child"; it therefore includes the training of his inherited instinctive disposition or character, as well as the "putting in" needful knowledge, or the "instruction" of his intellectual faculties. Educationists of the present time appear to exaggerate the importance of training the intellect, and are apt to overlook the fact that each individual possesses certain instinctive qualities which to a large extent determine his behaviour throughout life. These qualities, which no human power can eradicate, may, however, be favourably modified by appropriate training.

In the following pages we have endeavoured to give an outline of the evidence, and the reasons upon which we rely to prove that the instinctive behaviour of human beings depends

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on work performed by definite parts of the brain; consequently, education has not only to deal with the training of something immaterial which we call mind or consciousness, but has first and foremost to deal with the proper development of the nervous substance of that part of the brain the orderly working of which is essential for the occurrence of instinctive, and intellectual phenomena. In the majority of healthy children this purpose can be attained by means of the appropriate exercise of their eyes, ears, and other sensory organs; for, as we explain, energy derived from this source stimulates and develops the living substance of those parts of the brain directly concerned in the elaboration of an individual's instinctive and intellectual processes; we may thus hope to lay the foundation on which to build up a chaste, self-reliant character combined with a clear and strong intellectual capacity.

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