

# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

BY

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## PREFACE

IN Part I of this volume, I have attempted first to describe the typical attitudes which the child tends to assume toward the persons with whom he comes into contact in the ordinary situations of daily life, and to explain these attitudes in view of certain fundamental principles of mental development. To this end I have presented the results of observations of children's reactions under a variety of social conditions, the aim being to detect if possible the "natural" or impulsive tendencies in their responses. Then, in the second place, it has been my purpose to trace the changes in the child's adjustments to people which seem normally to occur in the process of development. This has required a mode of procedure in which the individual is followed from infancy to maturity along the several routes which lead to efficiency in social adaptation; and the ever-present question has been whether the child would on his own initiative follow these routes, or whether if left to himself he would stop on the way, or turn off in other directions. It has been my constant effort to note the actual tendencies of the child at different stages in his evolution, without regard to prevailing popular or theoretical conceptions of what he is or what he ought to be or to do.

I have undertaken in Part II certain phases of the difficult and interminable task of outlining a plan and method of education designed to make the individual socially efficient. My point of view might properly, I think, be said to be that of the naturalist rather than that of the logician or philosopher, or even the moralist or idealist. The problem before me constantly has been,—what *can* we do in social training, considering the nature of the individual and his social needs, rather than what *ought* we to do viewing the

matter from an ideal standpoint. What I have written is founded mainly upon data gained from experiments and methods which I have been able to study at first hand, or which have been furnished me by persons who have made observations for me, or who have given me an account of their experiences in the training of their own children. But while the purpose of this volume is for the most part to present the conclusions reached by one observer and adventurer in the training of children, still I have at most points compared the principles herein set forth with those advocated by the representative students of child-life and education from Plato down to our own times. In some cases I have called attention to the opinions of these writers without foot-note citations of book and page of their works, thinking it not necessary or desirable so to do. I have hoped that this volume might prove more or less tolerable to parents and teachers, as well as to students of mental development; and with this in mind I have avoided methods of treatment which would give it the appearance of being unduly technical or "learned." However, at the close of the book I have suggested a list of references for reading, which includes, I think, those books and articles which best present typical views since Plato's day of the social nature of the individual, and the most effective method of training him for social adjustment.

In its original form the volume contained a number of chapters treating of the relation between the social development of the individual and the evolution of social attitudes and institutions in the race. But these portions have finally been entirely eliminated; partly because with their inclusion the volume seemed to be too bulky, but mainly because upon reflection it has seemed best to omit from these pages all purely speculative and theoretical discussion. The author is very much interested in the general problem of recapitulation in human development, but he is bound to confess that at present it seems impossible to discuss the question in any

definite and positive manner, on account of the limitations of our knowledge in this field. It has seemed advisable, therefore, to confine the treatment to principles, the data for which could be observed at first hand and investigated experimentally.

With a view to clarifying the discussion throughout, and to economizing the time and energy of the general reader as well as the student, a marginal analysis and a detailed analytical index of the entire material have been made. Also the more important principles developed in the text have been summarized at the end of each chapter.

Special attention is called to the Exercises and Problems given in the last two chapters. These relate to the various subjects considered in the book; and they are designed to stimulate the student to test the principles developed, and to extend their application in every direction. They are intended further to suggest many phases of social development and education which have hardly been even touched upon in this volume. The lists given on each chapter have been chosen from a large number which have arisen in discussing the different topics with organizations of parents and teachers, and classes of university students. Only those exercises and problems have been selected which upon trial have proven to incite observation and effective reflection on the part of students, as well as those interested in the practical care and culture of childhood and youth. The author has found them to be of considerable service in arousing the interest of the reader, and in making real and vital the conclusions reached in the text.

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## **PART I**

### **THE GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENTAL COURSE OF TYPICAL SOCIAL ATTITUDES**



## CHAPTER I

### SOCIABILITY

STUDENTS of infancy have observed that during the first two months of life the child responds in only a vague, general, indefinite way to most of what exists and happens about him. He seems at this period <sup>Instinctive</sup> <sup>manifestations</sup> hardly to have become awakened from the unconsciousness of the pre-natal epoch, when there was no stimulating environment impinging upon him and exciting him to adjustment of some sort. For several weeks in the beginning of his career, he shows little if any appreciation of the meaning and values of things surrounding him, except such as are brought into direct contact with his skin or his tongue. The expression of his features during this early period indicates that he does not discriminate objects on the basis of their power for good or ill in his life; he manifests no inclination to possess himself of certain ones, and to rid himself of others. The world plays on him incessantly, but he does not react upon it except in a very few instinctive ways. The infant is in reality static with reference to much that in due course will incite him to constant activity, in the effort to use it in some way to advance his interests.

It will, perhaps, seem to the reader simple enough that the child should not be dynamic in situations with which he has not had vital experience; for why should he be active when he has not learned that his activity will yield pleasure of some kind, or save him from discomfort? But it is worth while to make the point stand out clearly, that there is a period in the life of the individual when the environing world is practically undifferentiated in respect to values. Now, if we could describe in detail the course of the child in evaluating his environments, social and physical; and if

we could discover his method of determining values, noting the grounds upon which he estimates them, and the attitudes he assumes toward objects when their worth is revealed, we should have a complete account of his mental development. Our present task is, however, much simpler than this; it is merely to attempt to state the more important of the child's processes and attitudes in his efforts to evaluate his social environments, and to become most effectively adjusted thereto.

It is probable that the infant's earliest appreciation of values concerns persons as contrasted with inanimate objects. One who observes a three-months-old child smiling in response to the greetings of its caretaker can hardly fail to conclude that it is pleased, in its naïve and largely instinctive way, with *personal* association. The mother is overjoyed when she detects the first smile,<sup>1</sup> faint and fleeting though it may be, for she feels that this is a token of her child's recognition of people as distinct from things, and his pleasure in social relations. As the poet and idealist see it, — "With the first dawning smile upon the infant's face, the instinct of love awakes."<sup>2</sup>

By the beginning of the third month, the babe seems to realize, in a very general and obscure manner, of course, that the mother is an object with which it may hold communion, which is not the case with the nursing bottle or

<sup>1</sup> "To laugh, if but for an instant only, has never been granted to man before the fortieth day from his birth, and then it is looked upon as a miracle of precocity."—Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, Book vii, chap. i, Holland's translation.

An observer reports the following, in illustration of the point in question: "A little girl three months old watches her father whenever he comes within her range of vision. If he speaks to her or pays any attention to her she smiles and manifests her pleasure by various contortions and wiggles. Her father has always played with her every day, so she ought to know him well, but until he speaks she does not smile. In fact, she has a wondering, curious look in her eyes, which has sometimes made us question if she were trying to locate him in her experience, and was unable to accomplish it until his voice or action helped her to do so."

<sup>2</sup> Harrison, *The Study of Child-Nature from the Kindergarten Standpoint*, p. 75.

the rattle; these latter are to be *used* merely, not communed with. The child of four months, making efforts at "cooing" in response to its mother's salutations, taken together with its accompanying demonstrations of a really remarkable character, such as holding and forcibly expelling the breath, the heightened activity of all the bodily members, the significant expressiveness of the features, — these suggest strongly its *awareness of personal presence*, which cannot be detected when it is reacting upon other situations. Thus early does the child, in just a dim, glimmering way it must be, distinguish between things to be tested, experimented with, put to some service, and persons to be enjoyed, to be depended upon for protection, to be appealed to in moments of distress. To a certain extent, doubtless, persons are differentiated from objects by the child as his days increase, because they can be used to so much greater advantage: they can aid him in attaining goods which he lacks strength and skill to secure; they can serve as colleagues or competitors in his games; they can guard him against harm and the like, of which much will be said presently. But when one sees an infant reciprocating the loving expressions of his mother, and later pleading with her to remain near by merely that he may enjoy her presence, it seems beyond question that he has brought with him the rudiments of genuine sociable feeling,<sup>1</sup> which causes him to ascribe a special value to persons, and to desire to have friendly intercourse with them. Whether this feeling remains pure and unadulterated, or becomes organized with other feelings of an egotistic character, is not in question; we will turn to this later. Nor does it matter in

<sup>1</sup> Cooley (*Human Nature and the Social Order*, p. 47) holds that the early manifestations of sociability indicate less fellow-feeling than the adult imagines. They are, according to this author, largely expressions of a pleasure which persons excite, chiefly because they offer such a variety of stimuli to sight, hearing, and touch. He says (p. 50), "I take it that the child has by heredity a generous capacity and need for social feeling. . . . It is not so much any particular personal emotion or sentiment as the undifferentiated material of many: perhaps sociability is as good a word for it as any."

this connection to say that the young child will appraise his dog and his kitten in the same way as he does his father and mother and nurse; to him they probably belong for a time to this class of objects which may be communed with, and which we have called persons. In due course, we shall see through what experiences they become differentiated so that they cannot be communed with in the same way as can persons, or to the same extent, or with reference to the same interests.

It is not too much to say that there is a kind of hunger for personal intercourse which the child experiences before he has completed even six months among us. As early as the fifth month, the mere proximity of mother or father will often give him peace, when otherwise he may be restless, discontented, unhappy. Sully,<sup>1</sup> touching upon this point, says that "children are instinctively attachable and sociable in so far as they show in the first weeks that they get used to and dependent on the human presence, and are miserable when this is taken from them. . . . In this instinct of companionship there is involved a vague inarticulate sympathy. Just as the attached dog may be said to have in a dim fashion a feeling of oneness with its master, so the child." Some children from the sixth month on cannot endure to be "left to themselves" at all during their waking hours. It is not merely fanciful to say that the child brings with him a kind of generalization of long ages of ancestral experience, to the effect that it is well for a person to be with people because of the advantages to be derived from social unity and coöperation. Kirkpatrick,<sup>2</sup> speaking from the evolutionary standpoint, declares that "desire for companionship is the natural inheritance of an ancestry that must have sought it in order to survive. . . . Most children manifest a desire for the presence of adults before they can walk." It is maintained

Passion  
for personal  
intercourse

<sup>1</sup> *Studies of Childhood*, pp. 242, 243.

<sup>2</sup> *Fundamentals of Child-Study*, p. 119.



by evolutionists generally that the passion for social intercourse, and even the institution of society itself, had their origin in service of a physical sort which men could render to one another.

But however this may be, service of the sort indicated is not the only nor the chief source of pleasure which the young child derives from personal relations. It is true that at the outset the parents, and most if not all the other persons about the child, minister to his physical needs in some way; but it is significant that his display of pure sociability does not occur principally when his physical wants are being attended to, but rather when the mother's beaming face is bending over his, and she is calling to him in gentle love-tones. After the first year, the child will show marked pleasure in responding to the father's salutations, even though the latter has not been of service to him physically. If we may infer anything respecting a child's conscious processes from his intonations, featural expressions, and the like, we are entitled to hold that he is pleasurably affected in the presence of his mother, say, because in his dawning consciousness he feels her to be a friend, in all that this implies of service and good-will and protection and confidence, — a feeling which has slowly developed through long periods of social experience. Possibly the evolution in phylogenesis of the attitude denoted by "friend" was dependent at every step upon coöperation and protection in the struggle for existence; but the child seems to come into possession of the attitude without having first to experience consciously the factors out of which it has developed.

It is not intended here to imply that the child's eagerness to be in the presence of persons, and to enter into active relations with them, is due wholly to the feeling of pure sociability, into which no "selfish" factor enters. As he develops and the range of his contact with the world increases, he often, no doubt, wishes to be with people so that he can

The feeling of dependence as one source of social expression