

CHAPTER VI

FIRST GLIMMERINGS OF MIND

We can now see what is the true goal of education for a child. It is the full and harmonious development of the four primary modes of consciousness, always with regard to the individual nature of the child.

The goal is not ideal. The aim is not mental consciousness. We want effectual human beings, not conscious ones. The final aim is not to know, but to be. There never was a more risky motto than that: Know thyself. You've got to know yourself as far as possible. But not just for the sake of knowing. You've got to know yourself so that you can at last be yourself. "Be yourself" is the last motto.

The whole field of dynamic and effectual consciousness is always pre-mental, non-mental. Not even the most knowing man that ever lived would know how he would be feeling next week; whether some new and utterly shattering impulse would have arisen in him and laid his nicely-conceived self in ruins. It is the impulse we have to live by, not the ideals or the idea. But we have to know ourselves pretty thoroughly before we can break the automatism of ideals and conventions. The savage in a state of nature is one of the most conventional of creatures. So is a child. Only through fine delicate

knowledge can we recognize and release our impulses. Now our whole aim has been to force each individual to a maximum of mental control, and mental consciousness. Our poor little plans of children are put into horrible forcing-beds, called schools, and the young idea is there forced to shoot. It shoots, poor thing, like a potato in a warm cellar. One mass of pallid sickly ideas and ideals. And no root, no life. The ideas shoot, hard enough, in our sad offspring, but they shoot at the expense of life itself. Never was such a mistake. Mental consciousness is a purely individual affair. Some men are born to be highly and delicately conscious. But for the vast majority, much mental consciousness is simply a catastrophe, a blight. It just stops their living.

Our business, at the present, is to prevent at all cost the young idea from shooting. The ideal mind, the brain, has become the vampire of modern life, sucking up the blood and the life. There is hardly an original thought or original utterance possible to us. All is sickly repetition of stale, stale ideas.

Let all schools be closed at once. Keep only a few technical training establishments, nothing more. Let humanity lie fallow, for two generations at least. Let no child learn to read, unless it learns by itself, out of its own individual persistent desire.

That is my serious admonition, gentle reader. But I am not so flighty as to imagine you will pay any heed. But if I thought you would, I

should feel my hope surge up. And if you don't pay any heed, calamity will at length shut your schools for you, sure enough.

The process of transfer from the primary consciousness to recognized mental consciousness is a mystery like every other transfer. Yet it follows its own laws. And here we begin to approach the confines of orthodox psychology, upon which we have no desire to trespass. But this we can say. The degree of transfer from primary to mental consciousness varies with every individual. But in most individuals the natural degree is very low.

The process of transfer from primary consciousness is called sublimation, the sublimating of the potential body of knowledge with the definite reality of the idea. And with this process we have identified all education. The very derivation of the Latin word education shows us. Of course it should mean the leading forth of each nature to its fullness. But with us, fools that we are, it is the leading forth of the primary consciousness, the potential or dynamic consciousness, into mental consciousness, which is finite and static. Now before we set out so gayly to lead our children en bloc out of the dynamic into the static way of consciousness, let us consider a moment what we are doing.

A child in the womb can have no idea of the mother. I think orthodox psychology will allow us so much. And yet the child in the womb must be dynamically conscious of the mother. Otherwise how could it

maintain a definite and progressively developing relation to her?

This consciousness, however, is utterly non-ideal, non-mental, purely dynamic, a matter of dynamic polarized intercourse of vital vibrations, as an exchange of wireless messages which are never translated from the pulse-rhythm into speech, because they have no need to be. It is a dynamic polarized intercourse between the great primary nuclei in the foetus and the corresponding nuclei in the dynamic maternal psyche.

This form of consciousness is established at conception, and continues long after birth. Nay, it continues all life long. But the particular interchange of dynamic consciousness between mother and child suffers no interruption at birth. It continues almost the same. The child has no conception whatsoever of the mother. It cannot see her, for its eye has no focus. It can hear her, because hearing needs no transmission into concept, but it has no oral notion of sounds. It knows her. But only by a form of vital dynamic correspondence, a sort of magnetic interchange. The idea does not intervene at all.

Gradually, however, the dark shadow of our object begins to loom in the formless mind of the infant. The idea of the mother is, as it were, gradually photographed on the cerebral plasm. It begins with the faintest shadow--but the figure is gradually developed through years of experience. It is never quite completed.

How does the figure of the mother gradually develop as a conception in the child mind? It develops as the result of the positive and negative reaction from the primary centers of consciousness. From the first great center of sympathy the child is drawn to a lovely oneing with the mother. From the first great center of will comes the independent self-assertion which locates the mother as something outside, something objective. And as a result of this twofold notion, a twofold increase in the child. First, the dynamic establishment of the individual consciousness in the infant: and then the first shadow of a mental conception of the mother, in the infant brain. The development of the original mind in every child and every man always and only follows from the dual fulfillment in the dynamic consciousness.

But mark further. Each time, after the fourfold interchange between two dynamic polarized lives, there results a development in the individuality and a sublimation into consciousness, both simultaneously in each party: and this dual development causes at once a diminution in the dynamic polarity between the two parties. That is, as its individuality and its mental concept of the mother develop in the child, there is a corresponding waning of the dynamic relation between the child and the mother. And this is the natural progression of all love. As we have said before, the accomplishment of individuality never finally exhausts the dynamic flow between parents and child. In the same way, a child can never have a finite conception of either of its parents. It can have a very much more finite,

finished conception of its aunts or its friends. The portrait of the parent can never be quite completed in the mind of the son or daughter. As long as time lasts it must be left unfinished.

Nevertheless, the inevitable photography of time upon the mental plasm does print at last a very substantial portrait of the parent, a very well-filled concept in the child mind. And the nearer a conception comes towards finality, the nearer does the dynamic relation, out of which this concept has arisen, draw to a close. To know, is to lose. When I have a finished mental concept of a beloved, or a friend, then the love and the friendship is dead. It falls to the level of an acquaintance. As soon as I have a finished mental conception, a full idea even of myself, then dynamically I am dead. To know is to die.

But knowledge and death are part of our natural development. Only, of course, most things can never be known by us in full. Which means we do never absolutely die, even to our parents. So that Jesus' question to His mother, "Woman, what have I to do with thee!"--while expressing a major truth, still has an exaggerated sound, which comes from its denial of the minor truth.

This progression from dynamic relationship towards a finished individuality and a finished mental concept is carried on from the four great primary centers through the correspondence medium of all the senses and sensibilities. First of all, the child knows the mother only through touch--perfect and immediate contact. And yet, from the

moment of conception, the egg-cell repudiated complete adhesion and even communication, and asserted its individual integrity. The child in the womb, perfect a contact though it may have with the mother, is all the time also dynamically polarized against this contact. From the first moment, this relation in touch has a dual polarity, and, no doubt, a dual mode. It is a fourfold interchange of consciousness, the moment the egg-cell has made its two spontaneous divisions.

As soon as the child is born, there is a real severance. The contact of touch is interrupted, it now becomes occasional only. True, the dynamic flow between mother and child is not severed when simple physical contact is missing. Though mother and child may not touch, still the dynamic flow continues between them. The mother knows her child, feels her bowels and her breast drawn to it, even if it be a hundred miles away. But if the severance continue long, the dynamic flow begins to die, both in mother and child. It wanes fairly quickly--and perhaps can never be fully revived. The dynamic relation between parent and child may fairly easily fall into quiescence, a static condition.

For a full dynamic relationship it is necessary that there be actual contact. The nerves run from the four primary dynamos, and end with live ends all over the body. And it is necessary to bring the live ends of the nerves of the child into contact with the live ends of corresponding nerves in the mother, so that a pure circuit is established. Wherever a pure circuit is established, there occurs a

pure development in the individual creation, and this is inevitably accompanied by sensation; and sensation is the first term of mental knowledge.

So, from the field of the breast and arms, the upper circuit, and from the field of the knees and feet and belly, the lower circuit.

And then, the moment a child is born, the face is alive. And the face communicates direct with both planes of primary consciousness. The moment a child is born, it begins to grope for the breast. And suddenly a new great circuit is established, the four poles all working at once, as the child sucks. There is the profound desirousness of the lower center of sympathy, and the superior avidity of the center of will, and at the same time, the cleaving yearning to the nipple, and the tiny curiosity of lips and gums. The nipple of the mother's breast is one of the great gates of the body, hence of the living psyche. In the nipple terminate vivid nerves which flash their very powerful vibrations through the mouth of the child and deep into its four great poles of being and knowing. Even the nipples of the man are gateways to the great dynamic flow: still gateways.

Touch, taste, and smell are now active in the baby. And these senses, so-called, are strictly sensations. They are the first term of the child's mental knowledge. And on these three cerebral reactions the foundation of the future mind is laid.

The moment there is a perfect polarized circuit between the first four poles of dynamic consciousness, at that moment does the mind, the terminal station, flash into cognition. The first cognition is merely sensation: sensation and the remembrance of sensation being the first element in all knowing and in all conception.

The circuit of touch, taste, and smell must be well established, before the eyes begin actually to see. All mental knowledge is built up of sensation and of memory. It is the continually recurring sensation of the touch of the mother which forms the basis of the first conception of the mother. After that, the gradually discriminated taste of the mother, and scent of the mother. Till gradually sight and hearing develop and largely usurp the first three senses, as medium of correspondence and of knowledge.

And while, of course, the sensational knowledge is being secreted in the brain, in some much more mysterious way the living individuality of the child is being developed in the four first nuclei, the four great nerve-centers of the primary field of consciousness and being.

As time goes on, the child learns to see the mother. At first he sees her face as a blur, and though he knows her, knows her by a direct glow of communication, as if her face were a warm glowing life-lamp which rejoiced him. But gradually, as the circuit of touch, taste, and smell become powerfully established; gradually, as the individual develops in the child, and so retreats towards isolation; gradually,

as the child stands more immune from the mother, the circuit of correspondence extends, and the eyes now communicate across space, the ears begin to discriminate sounds. Last of all develops discriminate hearing.

Now gradually the picture of the mother is transferred to the child's mind, and the sound of the first baby-words is imprinted. And as the child learns to discriminate visually, objectively, between the mother and the nurse, he learns to choose, and becomes individually free. And still, the dynamic correspondence is not finished. It only changes its circuit.

While the brain is registering sensations, the four dynamic centers are coming into perfect relation. Or rather, as we see, the reverse is the case. As the dynamic centers come into perfect relation, the mind registers and remembers sensations, and begins consciously to know. But the great field of activity is still and always the dynamic field. When a child learns to walk, it learns almost entirely from the solar plexus and the lumbar ganglion, the cardiac plexus and the thoracic ganglion balancing the upper body.

There is a perfected circuit of polarity. The two lower centers are the positive, the two upper the negative poles. And so the child strikes out with his feet for the earth, presses, and strikes away again from the earth, the two upper centers meanwhile corresponding implicitly in the balance of the upper body. It is a chain of

spontaneous activity in the four primary centers, establishing a circuit through the whole body. But the positive poles are the lower centers. And the brain has probably nothing at all to do with it. Even the desire to walk is not born in the brain, but in the primary nuclei.

The same with the use of the hands and arms. It means the establishment of a pure circuit between the four centers, the two upper poles now being the positive, the lower the negative poles, and the hands the live end of the wire. Again the brain is not concerned. Probably, even in the first deliberate grasping of an object, the brain is not concerned. Not until there is an element of recognition and sensation-memory.

All our primal activity originates and circulates purely in the four great nerve centers. All our active desire, our genuine impulse, our love, our hope, our yearning, everything originates mysteriously at these four great centers or well-heads of our existence: everything vital and dynamic. The mind can only register that which results from the emanation of the dynamic impulse and the collision or communion of this impulse with its object.

So now we see that we can never know ourselves. Knowledge is to consciousness what the signpost is to the traveler: just an indication of the way which has been traveled before. Knowledge is not even in direct proportion to being. There may be great knowledge of chemistry

in a man who is a rather poor being: and those who know, even in wisdom like Solomon, are often at the end of the matter of living, not at the beginning. As a matter of fact, David did the living, the dynamic achievement. To Solomon was left the consummation and the finish, and the dying down.

Yet we must know, if only in order to learn not to know. The supreme lesson of human consciousness is to learn how not to know. That is, how not to interfere. That is, how to live dynamically, from the great Source, and not statically, like machines driven by ideas and principles from the head, or automatically, from one fixed desire. At last, knowledge must be put into its true place in the living activity of man. And we must know deeply, in order even to do that.

So a new conception of the meaning of education.

Education means leading out the individual nature in each man and woman to its true fullness. You can't do that by stimulating the mind. To pump education into the mind is fatal. That which sublimates from the dynamic consciousness into the mental consciousness has alone any value. This, in most individuals, is very little indeed. So that most individuals, under a wise government, would be most carefully protected from all vicious attempts to inject extraneous ideas into them. Every extraneous idea, which has no inherent root in the dynamic consciousness, is as dangerous as a nail driven into a young tree. For the mass of people, knowledge must be symbolical, mythical, dynamic.

This means, you must have a higher, responsible, conscious class: and then in varying degrees the lower classes, varying in their degree of consciousness. Symbols must be true from top to bottom. But the interpretation of the symbols must rest, degree after degree, in the higher, responsible, conscious classes. To those who cannot divest themselves again of mental consciousness and definite ideas, mentality and ideas are death, nails through their hands and feet.