

look for the physical cause first, and remove it if possible. To attempt to discipline children with disregard of the physical causes underlying their conduct is to commit against them a grave injustice. Further, the discovery and the removal of the physical causes of unfavorable mental states and attitudes on the part of teachers and parents would result in distinct advantage to the children in their charge. In the past, too little emphasis has been placed on the close connection existing between the bodily conditions and the physical development of an individual and his moral tendencies and experiences.

The fact that morality rests upon a physical basis is strikingly demonstrated in the case of criminals or mental defectives. Criminals of the lowest type, those who seem devoid of the sense to discriminate between right and wrong, possess marked physical and mental defects. Their bodies are ill-formed, deficient in vitality, and often affected by inherited disease. Their features are usually irregular, coarse, and repulsive, and their nervous systems exhibit profound structural peculiarities and defects. Mentally they are sluggish, dull, irritable, and morbid. The criminal records of all countries show that crimes are usually committed by persons suffering from physical degeneracy in some form.

When moral deformity is due to temporary disturbances of the bodily organs or functions, or to remediable physical defects, appropriate physical treatment is the first step in bringing about moral improvement. The mere removal of a single physical defect often revolutionizes the life of a child. The removal of adenoids or diseased tonsils, for example, often restores dull, backward children to normal mentality. The causes of degenerate tendencies should be removed as early as possible, as the physically defective child tends to become morally perverse and criminal. Recent examinations of feeble-minded, backward, and mentally subnormal children have revealed the facts that the causes of mental, moral, and educational arrest are largely physical,