

experience to find a child manifesting especially peculiar or abnormal tendencies regarded either with indifference or more frequently as a source of amusement and everything done to encourage and to further cultivate those unhygienic habits and propensities. Here again the general impression so prevalent that nature will take care of herself, that the mind does not require guidance and training but should be encouraged and nurtured along the natural tendencies predominantly manifested, is a pernicious one. It would be just as reasonable to assume that one can become an expert mechanic, a polished artisan or a great scholar without the assistance and guidance of previous instruction and experience.

The mind of the child is fashioned and moulded by the influences of its environment upon its constitutional make-up. It learns by imitating the actions and conduct of those about it, and by the teaching and training of those who care for it. The reaction of the child to its environment, the outward manifestations of the psychological processes taking place, are more reflex in nature than in the adult, are more directly in response to the action of the environment upon its inherent natural tendencies and proclivities. If the mental life of all children manifesting abnormal tendencies could be more closely studied, it seems reasonable to assume that with a better recognition of the processes of abnormal psychology, means will be found whereby those processes can be more readily diverted from their unhealthy channels and guided into those more hygienic and healthy. Unfortunately with the majority of those who later in life become wards of the state,