

the general progress that is being made and that is in the realm of nervous and mental diseases. It is true, of course, that any measure which tends to improve and benefit the general physical health must more or less directly improve and benefit the state of health of the nervous system, particularly in regard to those diseases of the nervous system arising more or less directly as the result of bacterial and toxic conditions affecting the human physical organism. But this cannot be said of those nervous and mental conditions which are more or less directly due to or dependent upon a defective inheritance or a pernicious, improper rearing, education and training during that period of growth and development when the make-up of the organism is being moulded and fashioned in preparation for the struggle for existence, during that period of its life when it is the most impressionable and responsive to the conditions under which it lives and the influences that are brought to bear upon it. It is to these particular phases of preventive medicine that the scope of this paper will apply.

The importance of this phase of the question is indicated by the fact that according to the Report of the U. S. Bureau of Census in 1910, there were at that time in institutions for the insane 187,791 inmates, and in institutions for the feeble-minded 20,731 inmates, making a total of 208,522 under institutional care, a number which is said to exceed the combined enlisted strength of the U. S. Army, Navy and Marine Corps; and also to exceed the number of students enrolled in all the colleges and universities of the United States.