

At each stage of development a more efficient mode of reaction is normally adopted. But abnormally less efficient modes may become fixed and carried on. This produces maladjustment to environment and may be one of the factors causing a mental breakdown in adult years. For example, we find a spoiled child flying into a temper and crying for things he should be striving for; and we find the adult wasting his energies in useless fantasy and sensitive seclusion instead of actively and fearlessly forcing his environment to yield him the reward he desires.

It is the duty of parents and others to foster in children correct mental habits so that these developmental milestones may be successfully passed. The more youthful methods of adjustment must be discarded at the proper time for more efficient and mature. In this way the young man and the young woman may be prepared for the struggle of life with the proper mental equipment for adequate adjustment.

#### SPECIAL PROBLEMS

The developmental period is not without its special problems, with which all having the responsibility of children should be familiar. There is first the abnormal child, the neurotic or psychopathic child. He is often said to be "highly strung." He may be timid, sensitive and seclusive. He may be excitable, violent tempered, or subject to terrifying dreams. Such a child requires exceptional care and deep sympathy. It is essential that parents frankly admit abnormal tendencies. We so often try to conceal even from ourselves these tendencies in our own children. This attitude is an unfortunate attitude and only robs the child of much needed assistance. In such a case the objective interests must be developed and the physical rather than the intellectual activities emphasized. For him outdoor life, outdoor games and outdoor work are essential. These children are often extremely sensitive, especially to ridicule and censure, and tend to become morbidly seclusive. Intelligent sympathy and encouragement is necessary to counteract this dangerous tendency. With care not only can the danger of a subsequent mental breakdown be avoided, but frequently this type of child may be developed into the highest type of citizen.

Certain developmental periods require special care. They are the periods of infancy, of puberty and adolescence. The importance of laying good foundations in infancy has already been emphasized.

Puberty and early adolescence is a period of many dangerous reefs. During it various conflicts arise between the established ideals and the newly awakened sexual emotions. Both boys and girls require special guidance. The interest should be largely objective. Hard Study should be avoided, especially in girls who seem apt to become unduly ambitious