

capacity we have developed and the way we have developed that capacity depends on the kind of mind food we feed it.

The mind reflects what its environment feeds it just as surely as the body reflects the food you feed it.

Have you ever thought what kind of person you would be had you been reared in some foreign country instead of the United States? What kinds of foods would you prefer? Would your preferences for clothing be the same? What sort of entertainment would you like the most? What kind of work would you be doing? What would your religion be?

You can't, of course, be sure of the answers to these questions. But chances are you would be a materially different person had you grown up in a different country. Why? Because you would have been influenced by a different environment. As the saying goes, you are a product of your environment.

Mark it well. Environment shapes us, makes us think the way we do. Try to name just one habit or one mannerism you have that you did not pick up from other people. Relatively minor things, like the way we walk, cough, hold a cup; our preferences for music, literature, entertainment, clothing—all stem in very large part from environment.

More important, the size of your thinking, your goals, your attitudes, your very personality is formed by your environment.

Prolonged association with negative people makes us think negatively; close contact with petty individuals develops petty habits in us. On the bright side, companionship with people with big ideas raises the level of our thinking; close contact with ambitious people gives us ambition.

Experts agree that the person you are *today*, your personality, ambitions, present status in life, are largely the result of