

Man's Supreme Inheritance

Conscious Guidance and Control in Relation
to Human Evolution in Civilisation

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An Abridgement by Daniel McGowan

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION (LONDON 1910)

In this book, no mention will be made of royal roads, panaceas or grand specifics. I have looked into the sky and made a careful study of the horizon. It is true that I have seen an ideal and the promise of its fulfilment, but my deductions have been drawn with patient care from signs I have studied with diligence. If I am an optimist, it is because I see the promise of fair weather and not because I wish to delude the unwary.

I know I shall be regarded as a revolutionary and a heretic, because my theory and practice, although based on a principle as old as the life of man, are not in accord with, nor a development of the traditions which prevail at present.

Also, I do not stand alone. Though my theory may appear revolutionary and heretical, it is shared with men of attainment in science and medicine. On a small scale, I have made many converts and now wish to make an appeal to a wider circle. I am upheld by the knowledge that what I have to say can no longer be classed as an isolated opinion.

Not that I should have hesitated to come forward now, even if I had been without support. During the past thirteen years, I have built up a practice in London, which has reached the limits of my capacity. This is so, because the hypothesis I have put forward is an unwavering one. I have cases brought to me because of the failure of many kinds of treatment, such as rest cures, relaxation cures, hypnotism, faith cures, physical culture and the ordinary medical prescriptions. In these cases I have had abundant opportunity to prove, to my own satisfaction, that in its application to present needs, my theory has stood the test of practice in every circumstance and condition.

The present needs have forced a certain urgency on me to outline my subject at once, rather than wait for the time when I shall be ready to publish a larger work. In the present volume, I will confine myself to the primary argument and to indicating the direction in which we may find physical completeness. In the work which will follow, I will deal with the detailed evidence of my theory to life, of cases and cures and all the substance of experience.

And there are many reasons why I should hesitate no longer in making my preliminary appeal, chief among them being the appalling physical deterioration that can be seen by any intelligent observer who will walk the streets of London or New York, for example, and note the form and aspect of the average individuals who make up the crowd. So much for the surface signs. What can we learn from the statistics? To take three examples. What of the undeniable increase in the number of cases of cancer, appendicitis and insanity. Our efforts to combat these diseases, by increasing the emphasis on physical culture theories, relaxation exercises, rest cures and such, have been a complete failure.

Are these troubles, then, still to increase? Must we wait while the bacteriologist slowly investigates these diseases, until he isolates some germ and announces, at last, that he has found a cure? The science of bacteriology has its uses, but they are of research, rather than application. Bacteriology reveals a few of the agents active in disease, but says nothing about the conditions that permit these agents to become active. Therefore, I look to that wonderful instrument - the human body - for the true solution of our difficulty. An instrument so adaptable, so full of marvellous potentialities of resistance and recuperation, that it is able, when properly used, to overcome all the forces of disease which may be arrayed against it.

In this thing, I do not address myself to one class or section of the community. I have tried to avoid technical terminology and to speak to the entire intelligent public. I wish to do away with such teachers as I am myself. When our physical disabilities are finally eliminated, the specialised practitioner will have no place, no uses. This may be a dream of the future, but in its beginnings, it is now capable of realisation. Every man, woman and child holds the possibility of physical perfection and it rests with each and every one of us to attain it by personal understanding and effort.

INTRODUCTORY WORD - BY PROFESSOR JOHN DEWEY

Many persons have pointed out the strain which has come upon human nature in the change from a state of animal savagery to present civilisation. No one, it seems to me, has grasped the meaning, dangers and possibilities of this change more lucidly and completely than F.M Alexander. His account of the crises which have ensued upon this evolution is a contribution to a better understanding of every phase of contemporary life. His interpretation centres primarily about the crisis in the physical and moral health of the individual produced by the conflict between the functions of the brain and the nervous system on one side and the functions of digestion, circulation, respiration and the muscular system on the other; but there is no aspect of the maladjustments of modern life which does not receive illumination.

Frank acknowledgement of this internecine warfare in the very heart of our civilisation is not agreeable. For this reason, it is rarely faced in its entirety. We prefer to deal with its incidents and episodes as if they were isolated accidents and could be overcome in isolation.

Those who have seen the conflict have almost always proposed, as a remedy, either a return to nature, a relapse to the simple life, or else flight to some mystic security. Alexander exposes the fundamental error in the empirical and palliative methods. When the organs through which any structure, be it physiological, mental or social, are out of balance, when they are unco-ordinated, specific and limited, attempts at a cure only exercise the already disordered mechanism. In "improving" one organic structure, they produce a compensatory maladjustment usually more subtle and more difficult to deal with, somewhere else. The ingenuously inclined will have little difficulty in paralleling Mr Alexander's criticism of "physical, culture methods" within any field of our economic and political life.

In his criticism of return or relapse to the simpler conditions from which civilised man has departed, Mr. Alexander's philosophy appears in its essential features. All such solutions represent an attempt at solution through abdication of intelligence. They all argue in effect that since the varied evils have come through development of conscious intelligence, the remedy is to let intelligence sleep, while the pre-development forces, out of which it developed, do their work. The pitfalls into which references to the unconscious and subconscious usually fall have no existence in F.M Alexander's treatment. He gives these terms a definite and real meaning. They express reliance on the primitive mind of sense, of unreflection, as against reliance on "reflective" mind. F.M Alexander sees the remedy, not in a futile abdication of intelligence so that lower forces may work, but in carrying the power of intelligence further, in making its function one of positive and constructive control. As a layman, I am incompetent to pass judgement on the particular technique through which he would bring about a control of intelligence over the bodily organism, so as not merely to cure, but to prevent multitudinous maladies of adjustment. But he does not stop with a pious recommendation of such conscious control; he possesses and offers a definite method for its realisation, and even a layman can testify, as I am glad to do, to the efficacy of its working in concrete cases.

It did not remain for the author of these pages to eulogise self-mastery or self-control. But these eulogies have too frequently remained in the hortatory and moralistic state. F.M Alexander has developed a definite procedure, based upon a scientific knowledge of the organism. Popular fear of anything sounding like materialism has put a heavy burden on humanity. Men are afraid, without being aware of their fear, to recognise the most wonderful of all structures of the vast universe - the human body. They have been led to think that a serious notice and regard would somehow involve disloyalty to man's higher life. The discussions of F.M Alexander breathe reverence for this wonderful instrument of our life, life mental and moral, as well as that life we somewhat meaninglessly call bodily. When such a religious attitude towards the body becomes more general, we shall have an atmosphere favourable to securing the conscious control which is urged.

In the larger sense of education, this whole book is concerned with education. But the writer of these lines was naturally especially attracted to the passages in which Mr. Alexander touches on the problems of education in the narrower sense. The meaning of his principles comes out nowhere better than in his criticisms of repressive schools on one hand and schools of "free-expression" on the other. He is aware of the perversions and distortions that spring from that unnatural suppression of childhood which too frequently passes for school training. But he is equally aware that the remedy is not to be sought through a blind reaction in abolition of all control except such as the moment's whim or the accident of environment may provide. One gathers that in this country, Mr. Alexander has made the acquaintance of an extremely rare type of "self-expressive" school, but all interested in educational reform may well remember that freedom of physical action and free expression of emotion are means, not ends, and that as means they are justified only in so far as they are used as conditions for developing power of intelligence. The substitution of control by intelligence for control by external authority, not the negative principle of no control or the spasmodic principle of control by emotional gusts is the only basis on which reformed education can build. To come into the possession of intelligence is the sole human title to freedom. The spontaneity of childhood is a delightful and precious thing, but in its original naïve form it is bound to disappear. Emotions become sophisticated unless they become enlightened and manifestation of sophisticated emotion is in no sense genuine self-expression. True spontaneity is henceforth not a birthright but the last term, the consummated conquest of an art - the art of conscious control to the mastery of which Mr. Alexander's book so convincingly invites us.

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PART 1

MAN'S SUPREME INHERITANCE

CHAPTER 1

FROM PRIMITIVE CONDITIONS TO PRESENT NEEDS

The process of evolution still moves quietly to its unknown accomplishment. Struggle and starvation, the hard fight for existence working with fine impartiality, remorselessly eliminate the weak and defective. New variations are developed and old types, no longer adaptable, become extinct and thus life fighting for life improves towards a sublimation we cannot foresee. But at some period of the world's history an offshoot of a dominant type began to develop new powers that were destined to change the face of the world.

Through whatever instances these new powers in man came into being, I maintain that they held strange potentialities and, among others, that which now immediately concerns us, the potentiality to counteract the force of evolution itself.

This is, indeed, at once, the greatest triumph of our intellectual growth and also the self-constituted danger which threatens us from within. Man has risen above Nature; he has bent circumstances to his will and striven against the mighty forces of evolution. He has pried into the great workshop and interfered with the machinery, endeavouring to become master of its action and to control the workings of its component parts. But the machine has proved too intricate for his complete understanding and he can only control a small fraction of the whole.

The result of this contest with Nature is that man is no longer a natural animal. He has evolved curious powers of discrimination, of choice and of construction. He has changed his environment, food and whole manner of living. But evolution still holds him in chains, though he has loosened his bonds and may yet free himself entirely. Thus we come to man's danger.

Evolution - meaning the whole operation of natural selection - has two clearly defined functions; by one it develops, by the other it destroys. It has developed such wonders as the human hand or eye; it also allows any organ that has become useless to perish, such as the pineal eye or the vermiform appendix and, if we can estimate the future course, the teeth and hair.

Most modern people do not have to use the body to find food. It is bought conveniently in shops. Instead, many of us are employed in jobs where bodies are used in mechanical repetitions of the same act, far removed from those in primitive conditions. Man has changed his habitat and his habits. And he has now involved himself in a new danger; for although evolution may be cruel in its methods, it is the cruelty of a discipline without which our bodies become relaxed, our muscles atrophied and our functions put out of gear.

The antagonism of conscious, as opposed to natural selection, has now been in existence for thousands of years, but it is only within the last century or less that the effect upon man's constitution has become so marked that the danger of deterioration has been thrust upon scientists, as well as the average intelligent individual. The civilisation of the past hundred years has not been confined to any single nation or empire. It is world-wide. Civilisations, such as Egypt, Persia, Greece or Rome, have all perished from internal causes. Also, destructive wars and devastating plagues of the past swept the unfit aside and gave a fresh impetus to the survivors, who carried on with new energy and initiative.

Now conditions have altered. Science has eradicated many devastating diseases and a higher ethical ideal tends to make us realise that war is fratricidal, a battle of brother against brother.

Therefore, it must be emphasised that our ability to adapt has happened because of the slowness of change.

Because we have passed so slowly from the primitive state, we have not experienced difficulties or changes sufficiently marked to force themselves on our recognition. We were unaware of these changes and the habit of depending upon sensory appreciations - "feeling tones" or "sense of feeling" -, dominant by right in the primitive or subconsciously directed state, remained firmly established in the civilised experiences. Today, man walks, talks, sits, stands, performs, in fact, the innumerable mechanical acts of daily life, without giving a thought to the psychical and physical processes involved.

The results have proved unsatisfactory. The evils of a personal bad habit do not reveal themselves in a day, or even a year. The effects of racial habits have gone on unnoticed for untold centuries. But in the past few hundred years, the evils have become so marked that their effect has been forced upon our attention. The failure of subconscious guidance in modern civilisation is now widely admitted and the conclusion is that conscious guidance and control is the one method of adapting ourselves, not only to present conditions, but also to any possible conditions that may arise. We have passed beyond the animal stage in evolution and can never return to it.

All solutions which are reactionary must be rejected. In our history, the tendency has always been to advance. With the coming of our new powers of intellect we had to progress or perish. Atavism must be counteracted by the powers of the mind and reaction is a form of atavism. No return to earlier conditions can increase our knowledge of the secret springs of life, or aid our formulation of world laws by the understanding of which we may hope to control the future course of development.

The physical, mental and spiritual potentialities of the human being are greater than we have ever realised. The present world crisis shows us that the familiar processes we call civilisation and education are not, alone, sufficient to enable us to come into that supreme inheritance which is the complete control of our own potentialities. One of the most startling fallacies of human thought has been the attempts to introduce rapid and far reaching reforms in the religious, moral, social, political, educational and industrial spheres of human activity, while the individuals who are to carry out these reforms, still depend on subconscious guidance and control, with all that it connotes. People who made these attempts were almost completely ignorant of the one fundamental principle which would have raised the standard of evolution in themselves and others; i.e. conscious control.

In the mind of man lies the secret of his ability to resist, to conquer and finally to govern the circumstances of his life and to realise completely the perfect conditions of a sound mind in a sound body.

CHAPTER 2

PRIMITIVE REMEDIES AND THEIR DEFECTS

The danger of that mental, nervous and muscular debility, which is the outcome of the conditions resulting from the trend of our development, has been widely recognised and we must now consider certain treatments, such as "physical-culture", "relaxation" and "deep breathing".

"Physical-culture" refers to activities like weightlifting, or to the elaborate series of evolutions and physical jerks designed to counteract the effect of a particular malady. When I write "physical-culture" in inverted commas and with a hyphen, I mean "a series of mechanical exercises designed to strengthen a bodily function by the development of a certain set of muscles, or of the complete system of muscles"; but where I use the term physical culture, currently and without a hyphen, I mean a general system for the improvement of the entire physical economy, by a just co-ordination and control of all parts of the system, particularly excluding any method which tends to the hypertrophy of any one energy without regard to the balance of the whole.

"Physical-culture" is but another aspect of that reversion to nature, which we have stigmatised as a form of atavism. "Physical-culture" is the obvious uninspired method which naturally presents itself as a remedy from the ills arising from an artificial condition. The logic of it has the major premise that bodily defects arise from misuse of muscles and energies in an artificial civilisation. The same muscles and energies would be called upon to provide a livelihood in the natural state.

From this we can argue that, if we contrive an artificial mechanical means of exercising these muscles for two or three hours a day, they will assume their natural function. If the argument is carried to its logical conclusion, the fallacy is clear. For this method creates civil war in the body. There is no co-ordination. Let us consider a broadly typical case.

For example, John Doe works indoors 9 hours a day and this makes a big demand on his mental and nervous powers. By the time he is 25 to 35 years old, he is suffering from anaemia, indigestion, nervous debility, lassitude, insomnia, heart weakness and other troubles. Bodily functions are irregular, muscles partly atrophied, nerves irritated and general function "jumpy".

His mind is inoperative in many ways. He has a bad mental attitude towards the physical acts of everyday life. To him the body is a mechanism whose intricate workings he never examines, but he forces it to perform acts similar to those it has always performed within his experience. When this mechanism fails, it is forced on again by tonics or stimulants, or given a "rest."

At last, John Doe seeks a remedy and takes a course of physical culture, although his time is limited, so his exercises are limited to an hour or two, morning and evening. At first he feels a wonderful benefit and I admit that he may and I further admit that he may not fall back to his original state if he continues with the course. But it is clear that his cure has no permanence. It was merely a tinkering, or botching up, of the fabric of his body. We must see that John Doe attempted to develop 2 systems of life which could not work harmoniously together. On one hand, for 2 or 3 hours a day, he was mechanically developing his muscular system, with no thought to the manner in which he drove his machine, stimulating and accelerating the supply of blood, which increased oxygenation, or improved lung-power. This accelerated state is similar to that induced in the primitive man while searching for food for most of his waking life. On the other hand, for the other 12 hours of the day, he was engaged in sedentary occupation and his newly developed powers were being neglected. His body thus had two existences, one fiercely active, muscular and dynamic, the other static and nervous.

These two existences conflict; they do not support each other. The organs of John Doe's body are in a state of perpetual re-adjustment to opposing conditions.

Such a condition cannot lead, in the long run, to the improvement of humankind as a whole.

For, as I shall show later, in all cases like John Doe, the consciousness of the person is not changed in regard to the use of the muscular mechanism. He cannot change his muscular habits. He has been using his muscles to do work for which they were never intended. He is suffering from mental and physical delusions about the use of his body. For instance, when he throws his head forward or back, he will be unaware that his shoulders move unnecessarily at the same time. However, the unfortunate man continues to try to do something with these mechanisms, which he is unable to control, in the hope that he can restore his body to perfect health.

The benefits mentioned earlier, gained in the early stages of "physical-culture", but not maintained, will now be examined in more detail. The fact is that when the man recognised the seriousness of his poor condition, he was simply recognising a symptom and not a primary cause of his disorders. A proper psycho-physical examination would have revealed bad habits in his waking and sleeping states, which reduced his inter-thoracic capacity to a minimum, this affecting adversely the functioning of his vital organs.

Minimum intra-thoracic capacity means that the organs within the thorax are harmfully compressed and the heart and lungs do not have a chance to function properly. This, in turn, affects the functioning of the abdominal viscera and the blood is not adequately distributed through the body, affecting circulation and nutrition. There is also an undue intra-abdominal pressure, harmful flaccidity of the abdominal muscles, which means dropping of the viscera, leading to imperfect functioning of the liver, kidneys, bladder etc., stagnation in the bowels and irritation and extension of the colon etc. In short, shortening and narrowing of the torso adversely affects the vital organs, because they have less room in which to work. This leads to the manufacture of poisons, which clog the mental and physical organism.

To recap John Doe's situation. He had experienced some relief from his disorders when he first started his physical exercises, but slowly the effect diminished until he considered the treatment a comparative failure. Why? The interesting fact is that increased amounts of exercise give an exaggerated sense of relief, but it is often a deluded sense of real change in the right direction. John Doe is unaware that he has developed a debauched kinaesthetic system, which permits defective registration of different sensations and feeling tones. Therefore, it is difficult for him to arrive at a reliable estimate of his improvement because of his faulty senses. I contend that the benefits are not permanent and it is certain that, sooner or later, if he continued in this way, he would develop defects which would counterbalance and finally outweigh the early improvement.

The following are some of the many reasons which support these contentions. I shall deal with them more fully in a later chapter.

1. A defective kinaesthetic sense: - My experience has proved that the conditions present in him when he took up the exercises go hand in hand with a defective kinaesthetic system and the performance of such exercises does not restore a correct kinaesthetic sense in connection with the use of the organism in his acts of everyday life.
2. Wrong preconceived ideas: - It is impossible for me to list the myriad dangers due to wrong preconceived ideas about the use of himself during his practice of "physical-culture". A large book would be necessary to do even meagre justice to this subject.
3. Defective sense registrations and delusions: - This serious defect is linked up with wrong preconceptions, resulting in mental and physical delusions, which are far reaching and dangerous. For example, take a person who habitually puts the head back when he is asked to put the shoulders back. Ask this person to put the head

forward and keep the shoulders still and you will find that, as a rule, he cannot prevent movement of the shoulders also. Ask him to put the head forward, while the teacher holds his shoulders still and the pupil will put the head back instead of forward.

4. Defective mental and physical control: - The most common form of this defective control met in teaching work is when the teacher attempts to move the head or hand or arm or leg of the pupil for him, the pupil does not have the control necessary to gain this experience quickly.

The teacher asks the pupil to lift his arm. The pupil does so, but uses an undue amount of tension. To give the pupil the new kinaesthetic awareness of the correct amount of tension needed, the teacher asks if he can move the pupil's arm for him, but as a rule, he acts exactly as he did when he performed the act by himself.

5. Defective inhibition: - The practical teacher finds all pupils are more or less hampered by lack of inhibitory control, the possession of which would make re-education and co-ordination comparatively easy. Our ordinary mode of life and the generally accepted teaching methods do not include the development of inhibitory powers. On the contrary, our ability to inhibit tends to diminish and the signs of the serious results are everywhere to be seen.

6. Self-hypnosis: - This very serious common evil has not been attacked on a practical basis. People have spoken and written about it in a general theoretical way, much as they have done with relaxation, with no better results on the practical side, when applied to everyday life. I am referring to a specific self-hypnosis indulged at a particular time and which is cultivated knowingly by teachers and pupils during lessons and frequently by both in everyday life. People say they can think better by closing the eyes. This is a prevalent form of self-hypnosis and self-deception and produces a state of dreaming that is particularly serious, because it is a harmful condition assumed consciously. The ordinary dreamer falls into this condition unconsciously.

7. Cultivated apprehension: - This is probably the most serious condition which we cultivate and is dealt with later.

8. Prejudiced arguments and self-defence: - The real weakness and shallowness of human nature is shown in this connection in a way that is uncomplimentary to our intellectual pride. The saddest fact is that it is always intensified in the person who is generally counted above the average in intellectuality. Such a person will strain the statement of his facts in the direction he wants in order to win an argument. His reason is dominated so much by his emotions and sense appreciations - feeling-tones -, that an appeal to his reason is at first in vain. The majority of humankind has over-compensated in these directions and for this reason; that in the education and the development of the child of today and of the future, we must relinquish all educational methods which tend to cultivate guidance and control through the emotions and the sensory appreciations - feeling-tones.

Some perceptions of the evils briefly summarised here have been awakened in the minds of the more earnest thinkers during the past few years and as a result, there is a tendency towards more gentle exercise, rather than the violent muscle-tensing, strenuous physical acts which prevailed before: e.g. using dumbbells and weight-lifting.

My next instance, namely "relaxation", is even less efficient. The pupil is asked to relax and the result is usually collapse. True relaxation really means balanced tension of the parts of the muscle system intended by nature to be more or less tensed, together with a relaxation of the parts intended to be relaxed. This

condition is obtained in practice by adopting what I call the position of mechanical advantage - see Part 2. But apart from an incorrect understanding of the proper conditions natural to the various muscles, the theory of relaxation, or rest cure, makes a wrong assumption and there must inevitably follow a general lowering of vitality, which will be felt the moment regular activity is resumed and which will soon bring about the return of the old troubles in an exaggerated form.

The last remedy mentioned at the opening of this chapter was "deep-breathing", which is in effect, a step in the right direction. It does not do serious harm, perhaps even some good, but does not go to the roots of the matter, which is the eradication of defects; nor does it take account of the most important factor in the scheme of physical co-ordination. I shall explain that radical factor in detail in my next chapter, but first I will briefly review the chief point of the argument, as far as it has been unfolded.

In imagination, we have seen man through the darkness which covers his first appearance on the earth, the early Miocene man. He was a creature of simple needs and vigorous bodily habit; in all an animal, except for the spark of self-consciousness which burned deeply in his primitive, but increasingly differentiating brain. He developed powers of courage and cunning, adapting weapons to his use and so specialising the functions of his mind, through a long two million years, through Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods into the bronze age, where he became a reasoning designing creature, with powers of imagination and idealisation, powers still turned, however, to physical uses.

Then came the differentiation of man from man, class from class, which is the historic period of civilisation, the period of dwelling in cities and adapting to new and specialised habits that make little demand on the physical capacities of food procured without effort. This is the period when the slow process of evolution, which has resulted in the production of new and marvellous instruments of self-conscious, directive powers, was becoming gradually superseded by that which it had brought forth.

CHAPTER 3

SUBCONSCIOUSNESS AND INHIBITION

"You can have neither a greater nor a less dominion than that over yourself".

LEONARDO DA VINCI

Within the last 30 years, we have developed a new science, the science of psychology. A generation ago, psychology was subject-matter only for the philosopher, metaphysician, poet, or ecclesiastic. Now it is being tested in the laboratory by tests of sensibility, reaction-times and other responses to stimulation, too technical to be explained here; tests carried out by elaborate instruments designed to weigh the hidden springs of life in the balance. The phrase italicised is purposely vague, so I will adopt one which is familiar and within certain limits descriptive enough, namely the "subconscious-self".

It may seem strange to look at such a formally organised science as modern psychology for any elucidation of a question that has long been regarded as strictly within the domain of the priest. But, as Tyndall said, science is only another name for common sense and a little consideration will show that the postulate I have insisted upon, namely, the growth and progress of intellectual control, demands that the admirable quality of common sense, or reason, should be applied to the elucidation of this all important problem. Unhappily, psychology is yet in its infancy and the few attempts which have been made, such as those by the late Professor Munsterberg, to apply the theories of the laboratory and classroom to the practical work of the world, have not produced any results worth considering. In any case, I must transcend the present limits of academic psychology, in this consideration of the subconscious.

The concepts which have grown up around this term the, "subconscious-self", are, in many cases, curiously concrete in form. Much error has sprung from the book, "Human Personality and Its Survival After Bodily Death", by F.W.H Myers, who pictured an entity within an entity, the conception of a subject personality taking place within an objective, material shell. Myers had controlled his evidence to a definite preconceived end.

Myer's argument is intrinsically unsound and when put to the test of newer knowledge his hypothesis fails to explain the fact. But because Myer's conception was so graphic and credible, it had a strong influence on the public and in the eight years since the publication of "Human Personality", this influence has not weakened, despite the discovery of new knowledge. I have mentioned Myer's conception of the subconscious, because I wish to make it clear that I use the term, "subconscious-self", to denote an entirely different concept. Anyone who has followed my argument so far must have inferred the trend of my purpose, namely, that as the intellectual powers of man grow, we progress in the direction of conscious control. The gradual control of evolution by the child of its production has pointed always to this end and by this means and this alone, can the human race continue in the full enjoyment of its physical powers, without forfeiting a fraction of its intellectual ideal.

What do I mean by the "subconscious self"? I will answer the question to the best of my ability and put forward the following hypothesis. What follows must be taken as an inclusive statement, much of which I could prove conclusively in a larger work, while the unproved remainder must await confirmation from the researches of future investigators in the domains of psychology. In the first place, the subconscious self is not a possession peculiar to man. It is, in fact, more active and in many ways more finely developed in the animal world. In animals the consciousness of danger is so keen that we have attributed it to prescience. The fear of fire in the prairies, of flood, or of some natural danger threatening the life of the animal is shown far ahead of any signs perceptible by human senses. As we cannot attribute, except sentimentally, any powers of conscious reasoning to animals, it is evident that this

"fore-knowledge" is due to a delicate co-ordination of animal senses. Again, animals which have not had their senses dulled by many generations of domestication make the majority of their movements "instinctively". They can judge the length of a leap with astonishing accuracy, or take the one chance of escape out of the many possibilities open to them without an instant's hesitation and as these powers are shown in some cases within a few hours or minutes after birth, they are, admittedly, not the outcome of experience.

The argument for the evidence of the possession of a sub-conscious self by animals can be elaborated to any length and depends on facts of observation made over a long period of time. The few examples given here highlight the point of what we may call abnormal powers in animals, which seem to transcend those of human reason, so far as it has been developed. It is this appearance of transcendent qualities in the human subconsciousness which misled Myers, who did not hesitate to apply his allegory of the subconscious entity to the animal world. Such an application would have tended to prove that the "soul" of the animal was more highly developed than that of man.

In the second place, it is a fact that the subconscious can be "educated" below the plane of reason. Acts very frequently repeated can become so mechanical that they can be performed without any sense of conscious awareness by the operator. The pianist, after constant rehearsals, can perform the most intricate passage, while his attention is engaged with an entirely different subject. Again, it appears that, in some cases, a permanent impression may be made on the subconsciousness by casual suggestion often related to fear, even though such suggestions are, in some cases, the result of a single experience. A nervous hysterical subject, already far too willing to submit to the guidance of emotion and "instinct", may be so harmfully impressed in this way, as to develop the many forms of "phobia", which are forms of morbid terror. The important point here is the fact that the phase of being we are now in is a composite of animal instincts and habits acquired below the plane of reason, either by repetition or suggestion. I must emphasise the fact that, up to this point in time, we share the qualities of the subconscious mind with the animal kingdom. For in the lower organisms, no less than of that in humanity, this subconsciousness can be educated. Naturalists now confirm the young of certain birds are taught to fly by the parents, while anyone who has a dog will know how much a trick as "begging" for food can become so habitual as to appear instinctive.

So much for general definition; I come now to the point which marks the difference between man and animal and which is clearly shown in the use of the reasoning, intellectual powers of inhibition.

In the earlier stages of human development, the inhibition of the subconscious animal powers would be frequently a source of danger and death. Reason, not as yet sufficiently instructed and far-seeing was an insufficient guide that rendered imperfect control. Human development wavered between these two alternatives and by rejecting the guidance of instinct, humans were liable to suffer destruction. But the necessity for conscious control, through reason, grew as the conditions of life came to differ ever more from those of the wild state. This was due to many causes, but mainly to the limitations enforced by the social habit, which grew out of the need for co-operation.

This point must be briefly elaborated, for it marks the birth of inhibition in its application to everyday life and demonstrates the growth of the principle of conscious control, which, after thousands of years, we are beginning to appreciate and understand.

There is evidence of conscious inhibition in a pure state of Nature. The wildcat stalking its prey inhibits the desire to strike prematurely and controls to a deliberate end its eagerness for the instant gratification of a natural appetite. But these instinctive acts of inhibition have been developed through long ages of necessity. The domestic kitten of a few weeks old, which has never been dependent on its own efforts for a single meal, will demonstrate the same instinct. In animals,

the inherited power is there; in humankind also the power is there, but with what added possibilities due to the accumulated experiences gained from the conscious use of this wonderful force.

The first experience must have come to man very early in his development. As soon as any act was forbidden, and he was punished for performing it, then there must have been a conscious, deliberate inhibition of natural desires, which in its turn enforced a similar restraint of muscular physical functioning. This would be true also in the situation where a reward was consciously sought, even though its attainment necessitated personal realised danger. As the needs of society widened, this necessity for the daily, hourly inhibition of natural desires increased to a bewildering extent on the prohibitive side. At first "taboos" grew up, then the rough formulation of moral and social law; and on the other hand, a desire for larger powers, which encouraged qualities of emulation and ambition.

Among the infinite diversity of these influences, natural appetites and ways of gratifying them were ever more and more held in subjection and the subconscious-self, or instinct which initiated every action in the lower animal came under the subjection of conscious, dominating intellect or will. And in the process, we must not overlook one fact of supreme importance viz, humankind still progressed mentally and physically. Therefore, it is clear that the control acquired by the conscious mind broke no great law of nature, for if this new control had been in conflict with the great force of evolution, humankind would have become extinct, as did the early saurian types, which failed to fulfil the purpose of development and perished before man's first appearance on the earth.

Before we attempt, then, any exact definition of the subconscious self, we must first have clearer understanding of the terms, "will", "mind" and "matter", which may or may not be different aspects of one and the same force. More than 2000 years of philosophy have left the metaphysicians still vaguely speculating about the relationship of these 3 essentials and I am not very hopeful of a solution from this source. The young science of psychology is what I look to for the elucidation of many difficult problems of the future. Without touching on the ground of speculative philosophy, I will try to be as definite as I can with regard to my conception of the subconscious self.

In the first place, great prominence has been given to the conception of the subconscious self as an entity within an entity and it is claimed it has absolute control of the bodily functions. Hypnotism, auto-suggestion and faith-healing are claimed to be evidence of this. In hypnotism, the ordinary functions of the body may be controlled or superseded under the direction of the hypnotist. For example, a wound may be formed and bleed without mechanically breaking the skin. In auto-suggestion, which includes all forms of self-suggestion, there are examples of stigmatism, the appearance of the five sacred wounds. These and very similar phenomena have been explained on the hypothesis that the hidden entity, when commanded by the will, is able to exert an all-powerful force, either beneficent or malignant, the obscure means by which the command is enforced being variously described. Thus we see the conception of a hidden entity is the primitive explanation which first occurs to the puzzled mind. Similarly, there are many curious superstitions of the primitive person who turns every bird, beast, stone and tree into a totem and endows them with powers of good and evil and discovers a "hidden entity".

My own conception is of the unity rather than the diversity of life. To define the term, "Life", would be presumptuous, as the definition is beyond the scope of humankind's present ability. Life in this connection must be read in the widest application conceivable. And it appears to me that everything we know up to now of the evolution of life shows that it has progressed and will continue to progress in the direction of self-consciousness. The following is a quote from Herbert Spencer in Education, Chapter X1: -

"Humanity has progressed solely by self-instruction".

If we grant the unity of life and the tendency of its evolution, it follows that all the manifestations of what we call the "subconscious self" are functions of the vital essence, or life-force and that these functions are passing from automatic, or unconscious, to reasoning, or conscious control. This conception does not necessarily imply any distinction between the thing controlled and the control itself.

I am prepared to accept as facts, phenomena of the kind I have instanced, such as unusual cures effected by hypnotism and faith-healing, but I do most emphatically deny that either procedure is necessary to produce the same, or even more unusual phenomena. Also, hypnotism succeeds in only rare instances and is not universal in its applicability. In other words, I maintain that humankind may, in time, obtain complete conscious control of every function of the body without any paraphernalia of making repeated assertions or statements of belief.

Apart from my practical experience of the harm that so often results from hypnotism and suggestive treatment, I base my objection to these practices on a broad and incontrovertible basis. The objection is that the obtaining of trance is a prostitution and degradation of the objective mind, which ignores and debases the chief curative agent, the apprehension of the patient's conscious mind. Also, it is in direct contradiction to the governing principle of evolution, the great law of self-preservation, by which the instincts of animals have been developed to meet and overcome the imminent dangers of everyday existence. In humankind, this desire for life can be so therapeutic that it can bring a person back from the brink of death, even when given up for dead by the doctors. This desire for life is so strong that I cannot exaggerate its potentiality. There are many cases of dying people, abandoned for dead by doctors, who report having a flashing thought that they wanted to stay alive, for instance, to take care of their children, who would be left behind. This thought has been enough to revivify a body which no medical skill could have saved. This fact is recognised, yet how small is the attempt to use and control so potent a force! The same argument applies to rest cures, which seek to put the mind, the great regenerating force, out of action.

Returning to my definition of the subconscious self, I regard it as a manifestation of the partly-conscious vital essence, functioning at times very vividly, but on the whole incompletely and from this it follows that our endeavours should be directed to perfecting the self-consciousness of this vital essence. The perfect attainment of this object in every individual would imply a mental and physical ability and a complete immunity from disease that is still a dream of the future. But once the road is pointed, we must forsake the many bypaths, however fascinating, bypaths which lead to impasse and necessitate a retracing of our own footsteps. Instead, we must travel the indicated road, a road not straight and easy, but one that leads to an ideal of mental and physical completeness almost beyond our imagination.

CHAPTER 4

CONSCIOUS CONTROL

"Man, one harmonious soul of many a soul, whose nature is its own divine control".

SHELLEY

Within the last twenty years, there has been a popular movement known as "New Thought", a movement which seeks to teach the control of the mind. Certain of its precepts are found in Marcus Aurelius. Its object is to promote the habit of "right thinking" through control of the mind. Ideas such as fear, worry and anger are to be rigidly excluded from the mind and replaced with thoughts of courage, complacency, calm etc. I agree with certain tendencies expressed in the movement, but, as is usual with such movements, "New Thought" is losing sight of its principles and is becoming involved in a kind of dogma opposed to its primary object. Ralph Walder Trine, in his book, "In Tune With The Infinite", gave permanence to the central theme, but other writers have lost sight of the original thesis. In "New Thought", there is no proper consideration of cause and effect in treating the mental and physical in combination. These writings show the mental and physical as antitheses, which are opposed to each other and make war, whereas, I think, the two must be considered entirely interdependent and even more closely knit than is implied by such a phrase.

In all these writings, one word is dominant - "faith" - a word so prominent and misunderstood, it is essential that I give some explanation of it in the light of my own principles.

Faith in this connection needs to be allied with creed or religion. This is the form in which we are most familiar with it. It has a wide and general influence on the thoughts of humankind, in all stages of civilisation. But there is much evidence that in healing it is the patient's attitude of mind that is most important and that faith is just as effective if directed towards the person of the healer, or a drug, or the medicinal qualities suppose to be possessed by a glass of water, as when it is directed to a belief in some supernal agency. This fact is indisputable and it is only because religious faith is so widespread that it has effected a number of cures out of all proportion to those brought about by faith in some material object. Therefore, I speak of faith in the widest sense without any restriction of creed.

The effect of an act of faith on the mental processes takes 2 directions. The first is purely emotional. The patient, believing wholeheartedly that he will be cured of his disease by some agency, either supernal or material, experiences a sensation of great joy and relief; he believes that, without any effort on his part, he will be cured by an apparent miracle and this produces a strong, but short-lived, emotional happiness. In this we have an exact parallel between the patient whose cure is physical and material and the one whose cure is spiritual. Scientists and doctors agree that this condition of happiness is ideal for the sufferer and is the most helpful state of mind, because it actually produces chemical changes, which are the most beneficial in producing a vital condition of the blood and the organisms.

The second way this act of faith operates is in the breaking down of a whole set of mental habits and the substitution of new ones.. The new habits may, or may not, be beneficial apart from the effect of the new emotional state, but this is hardly ever maintained for a long period. Even so, the breaking down of the old habits does produce an effect which can influence the cells forming the tissues and dissipate a morbid condition such as cancer.

Thus we see that this act of faith is really purely mental in its action and we do not need to have recourse to it to produce the same and greater effects. Some objectors may ask why we seek to dismiss the act of faith, since it undoubtedly produces ideal conditions in some cases. The answer is obvious. Faith healing is dangerous in its practice and uncertain in its results. It is dangerous because its professors seek, in the first place, to alleviate pain. They may do this, leaving the

disease itself untouched, but, as I shall point out later, the disease will continue and eventually kill the patient, even though he may be able to successfully fight the pain. Faith-healing is, again, uncertain in its results, because it merely substitutes one uncontrolled habit of thought for another. At first, the new habit may bring about a change to a better condition, but if it remains, it will also become stereotyped and may lead to a condition just as morbid as the old habit produced. I earnestly wish to see all the present conceptions that surround this business of faith-healing thrown aside, so that we may arrive at a sane and reasoned process of mental therapeutics. The faith-healing movement emphasises the fact that we are dimly grasping at a truth, but paralysing our attempts to hold it by the premature assumption that we have it safe at last. I believe, however, that underlying the teaching of "New Thought" and "Faith-healing" is some understanding of an essential, an understanding that is liable to lose its grip because of the dogma and ritual that has grown up and tends to obscure the one fundamental.

All sects, societies, creeds etc. have a common inspiration, which is, that not one of the many developments from the common source is, in itself, complete and perfect. As soon as a new development becomes specialised, it is separated from its true source, becomes over-elaborated and so works its own downfall, the principle becoming absorbed and dominated by the bias of some individual mind. This is my analysis of the phenomenon. What we seek is the noumenon, the reality that underlines all these various manifestations.

Before I trace out this common principle, I wish to make 3 statements: -

(1) I do not profess to offer a finally perfected theory, because in doing so, I would lay myself open to the same arguments which I have advanced against other theories of the same nature. I say that we are only at the beginnings of understanding and I wish to keep my theory simple, to avoid any dogma.

(2) I wish to consider my own methods only in their application to physical defects, to eradication of disease, distortions, and lack of control and progressively to the science of race-culture and the improvement of the physique of generations to come.

(3) I wish to make it clear that this treatise is not finally definitive. I hope in the future to elaborate my general thesis and to state my experience of particular applications of peculiar cases, but I should not be true to my own principles if I were not willing to accept amendments, even to alter one or other of my premises, should new facts show that I have made a false assumption in any particular theory.

So, let us examine the first and greatest stumbling block to conscious self control, namely, "rigidity of mind". This rigidity results in fixed habits of thought, which leads to the subjection of functional and muscular habits to subconscious control

In defining "rigidity of mind", I mean rigidity in a physical connection, which does not involve interference with any non-spatial conceptions. In Mr. Trine's "In Tune With The Infinite", the important part, "In Tune", conveys to me the idea of sensitiveness to impressions and responsiveness to the touch, when "all the functions of life are becoming an intelligent harmony". In a word, "In Tune With The Infinite", means to be open-minded. If, in reading this, the individual deliberately opposes my point of view, he cannot possibly benefit. I hope that he or she will read, at least, with an open mind, form no conclusion until I have finished and will perhaps, more particularly, subdue the interference of that great, ruling predisposition which has, in the past, so long impeded the advance of science and with which I will deal in my next chapter.

Let us consider the application of rigidity of mind to physical functions. A person comes to me with a crippling defect, due to the improper use of some organ, or set of muscles. When I show the person how to use the organ, or muscles

properly, the reply is , "But I can't". I ask the reader, if you suffer from some defect, is your attitude the same? This reply shows directly that the control of the part is subconscious; if it were not, we should merely have to substitute the "I can" for the despondent "I can't", to remove the trouble. In hypnotism, faith-healing and "New Thought" the person's subconscious control is influenced, either by the mechanical means of trance and suggestion, or by reiterated commands of the objective mind. This leaves the conscious mind in exactly the original condition and merely changes, temporarily, the habit of subconscious control. These methods substitute one habit for another and frequently shut out the sensitiveness to pain from the cerebral centres and so leave the radical evil, no longer labelled by nature's warning, to work the person's destruction in secret. Briefly, all three methods seek to reach the subjective mind by deadening the objective, or conscious mind and the entire backbone of my theory and practice, upon which I feel I cannot insist too strongly, is that, The Conscious Mind Must Be Quickened.

My theory will be seen as a revolutionary one, because all other methods seek to put the flexible working of the true consciousness out of action in order to reach the subconsciousness. "New Thought" and faith-healing state clearly enough that the person must think rightly before he can be cured, but then try automatically, to carry out their teachings by prescribing "affirmations", or "autosuggestion", both of which are a form of self-hypnosis and, as such, are debasing to the primary functions of intelligence.

I will take a simple instance from my own experience to illustrate a case in point. Mr X came to me with a stammer arising from a congenital defect in the co-ordination of the face, tongue and throat muscles. Whenever he spoke, he drew down his upper lip. This was the outward sign of a series of vicious acts, connected with a train of muscular movements, a sign that the ideo-motor centres were conveying a wrong guiding influence to the specific parts concerned with the acts of speech. These influences would have the same effect on any other individual. To insist in such a case that Mr X should repeat, "I won't stutter", would be merely an effort to contact a supposed omniscient subconscious self which would counteract the defect by the exercise of some assumed, separate intelligence possessed by it. I undertook the case by appealing to Mr X's intelligence.

Strange as it may seem, however, Mr. X's objective intelligence is not so easily reached and influenced as might appear. (I will deal with this curious perversion in my next chapter). He has formed a muscular habit of pulling his lip down, independently of his conscious control and the line of suggestion, set up by the wish to speak, induces, at once, a reflex action of a complicated set of muscles. Mr X has learned to do this automatically and seems incapable of controlling his lip muscles when he wishes to speak.

My first objective is to teach him to keep in abeyance, by the power of inhibition, all the mental associations connected with the idea of speaking and to eradicate all erroneous preconceived ideas concerning the things Mr X thinks he can, or cannot do. I then attempt to give him a correct and conscious control of all the parts concerned with speaking. To obtain this control, Mr X must have a complete and accurate understanding of all the movements concerned. This understanding must precede any conception of "speaking" during the application of all the guiding directions involved. It may be necessary to substitute a new idea of drawing the lip up - instead of down - or opening the mouth, or some other act previously unfamiliar in speaking, to break up the old associations. This new activity replaces the one of speaking. Mr X is asked not to speak, but to draw his lip up, or open his mouth, or whatever. I have omitted much detail about the interdependence of the parts concerned, but I wish to convey the essentials of method, rather than physiological explanation. Nature works as a whole and not in parts and once the true cause of the defects is discovered and eradicated, all the affected mechanisms can soon be restored to their full capacity. Mr X was completely cured of his stammer, although his was a particularly obstinate case due to the confirmation of a wrong habit in early childhood.

This is a simple example to illustrate the prime essentials of my theory, but it is capable of an application so wide that it may be applied to the working, not only of the ordinary controlled muscles, but of the semi-automatic ones which actuate the vital organs. A few years ago an Indian Yogi was examined by Professor Max Miller, who confirmed that the Yogi could stop his heartbeat at will and suffer no harmful consequences.

However, I have no sympathy with these abnormal manifestations, which I regard as dangerous trickery practised on the body, an unadmirable trickery not to be sought after. The performances of the Yogis certainly do not command my admiration and their systems of breathing practice are not only wrong, but tend to exaggerate the very defects from which we suffer in this 20th century. I merely quote this case of the Yogi in support of my assertion that any part of the body can be brought under control of the conscious will.

I claim this is a fact, not a theory. Further, by the application of conscious control, there may, in time, be evolved a complete mastery over the body which will eliminate all physical defects. Certain aspects of this control and the reasons why it has not been acquired, I will treat under the next heading.

APPLIED CONSCIOUS CONTROL

A CONCEPTION OF THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED

The term "conscious control" means different things to different people. The usual meaning is one which indicates specific control, such as moving a muscle consciously and this is practised by athletes. Again, there is conscious control of a finger, toe, ear etc.

The phrase "conscious control", when used in this work, is intended to indicate the value and use of conscious guidance and control primarily as a universal and secondly as a specific. The specific control always depends upon universal control in practical procedure.

Furthermore, this conscious control is not meant to be applied in only one or two areas of life, but in universal application in all spheres of mental and physical activities.

Since the publication of my book, "Conscious Control", many readers have written concerning the practical applications of conscious control and my conception of the principles involved. "How am I to acquire it?", "How far-reaching is its application?", "If your experience has proved that such far-reaching beneficial effects result from conscious control, your concept must be much more comprehensive than that usually accepted".

Some people eat or drink more than is good for them and a small minority are able to master their unhealthy desires in these directions. Examination of the misguided majority would reveal the fact that they were badly co-ordinated and psycho-physical conditions were present which allowed a domination of conscious reasoned control by subconscious unreasoned desire.

Re-education, re-adjustment and co-ordination will rectify these conditions.

It is difficult for the average person to gain control of over-indulgence in food or alcohol, while he is still badly co-ordinated. Failure succeeds failure, until the person concludes that the habit is unbreakable.

He or she then drifts into the advanced stages of a condition which is as much a disease as neuritis, neurasthenia, indigestion or rheumatism. These mal-conditions may be the result of the over-indulgence mentioned.

Such people are practically without control of this condition and the general opinion is that they lack will-power. This is not true, in my opinion.

Suppose a man is a thief who is caught and punished. He tells his friends that he intends to reform. Does he really mean to do so? Does not the answer to this question depend upon this or that person's point of view? For example, Mr A is a thief, Mr. B is not. Mr B would never dream of stealing something from another person, but he is a business man and in setting up a deal with a less experienced friend, has no hesitation in taking advantage of his friend's lack of business acumen, to ensure that he will gain the maximum benefits from the transaction, although he knows that the benefits should be equal. He calls that business, not theft.

Mr. A, the thief, probably would not take advantage of a friend in this way. Who, then, is lacking in will-power?

Mr. A promised to reform, but steals again and again, so people say that he lacks the will-power. But I do not agree, as again, it depends on the point of view; to change the point of view is the royal road to reformation. However, experience of human idiosyncrasies has taught me that the most difficult thing to change is the point of view of subconsciously controlled human beings. Lack of power to reform is the result of the partial failure of the subconscious mental mechanisms in a sphere demanding reasoned judgements.

Mr A, the thief, actually possesses a great amount of will-power and energy in other ways. This applies to every human being. The thief simply exercises his energies in different directions. In stealing, his misdirected energies are concentrated into narrow channels through abnormal tendencies.

The thief considers that to take something from someone else is a legitimate way of living, as he has as much right to possess something as anyone else. I have heard a certain type of socialist express views which justify this type of reasoning. His viewpoint is similar to the thief's and he also needs help if he is to come into communication with his reason. People have been known to steal for years without detection and this proves they have exceptional will-power, energy, determination and initiative, which, if directed into other channels, would make them valuable members of society.

Remember that punishment for being detected is so severe that it acts as a deterrent to the ordinary person.

In the case of the thief, the problems to be solved concern the psycho-physical conditions which influence him in the direction of crime and also with the failure of punishment to change him and re-direct his excellent mental and physical gifts into honest and valuable spheres of expression.

A conservative is rarely converted to the liberal point of view or vice-versa in a day, a month, or even a year. Such mental changes in subconsciously controlled people should, with rare exceptions, be made gradually, because the demands in re-adjustment may bring about such disorganisation as may cause a serious crisis. During an experience of this kind, the person would be in greater danger than ever and the length of this period would vary in different people. The process of re-adjustment in all spheres means immediate interference with the forces of strength and weakness and in the case of the thief, the force of strength was associated with mental and physical peculiarities in him which had more or less controlled him: in fact, they constituted guidance and direction in his case. In all his physical and mental activities, which these peculiarities stimulated, he experienced his maximum of confidence and directive power.

Where his weaknesses were concerned, he had little to depend on. To attempt to reform demanded re-adjustment, which meant a period of loss of confidence and directive power. His new efforts needed to be directed into channels where he lacked confidence and where he suffered most from over-compensation experienced in the past. In reality, his supports were suddenly wrenched from him and replaced by those which his well-meaning friends considered infinitely superior and absolutely reliable. Their experience of life had proved this, but theirs' were not his experiences and this is where subconscious control fails and reasoned control is needed.

The reader will sympathise with this thief, who is being directed during a period of comparative helplessness, in a series of unfamiliar and complex experiences by a delusive subconsciousness. If reasoned control had been substituted and employed in re-education, the process of re-adjustment would have presented the minimum difficulty and danger.

We cannot expect to change the thief any more than the liberal or the conservative, because they are equally dependent on subconscious guidance.

Therefore, we must turn our attention again to that psycho-physical process we call habit, including those originating in consciousness as well as subconsciousness.

For example, a man is cursed with an abnormal subconscious craving to steal, this having developed in early life. He drifts into apparently harmless little ways through carelessness and lack of sound training and these ways develop very slowly and remain unseen by his relatives or himself.

People become drug addicts merely through wishing to experience the sensation. This is repeated and the innocent beginning quickly turns into a drug habit. This applies also to the alcoholic habit.

It is important to note that different people fall victim to drugs while they are in mastery of themselves where other seductive influences are concerned. People can overindulge in drugs, alcohol, tea etc. to the point where their health is in danger, but do not stop even if this brings suffering.

At this point, they are out of communication with their reason; a subconscious tendency. These difficulties could be overcome if subconscious behaviour was replaced by conscious control of the whole organism in the practical procedures of life. Conscious control allows one to communicate with reason and supplies the "means whereby" of successful re-adjustment.

Subconscious control - instinct - is the outcome of experience in those areas where the animal senses exercise the great controlling and directing influences in the early stages of humankind's evolution. Conscious control - reasoned experience - through re-education, co-ordination and re-adjustment is the result of the use of reasoning powers in life, which allow us to fight abnormal desires for harmful sensory experiences.

The fact that civilised human beings will take wine, sugar, or drugs knowing they are gradually undermining their health and character is positive proof of the domination of the physical over the mental self, as in the Stone Age.

For instance, with sugar people become victims of the taste. The sensations produced by their senses of taste govern their conduct. They develop vicious complexes in which perverted physical sensations must be satisfied, even at the cost of mental and physical injury.

This psycho-physical state does not indicate satisfactory progress on the evolutionary plane up to the present time and does not show promise of greater progress in the future under this same subconscious direction. Certain dominant perverted sensations are very often associated with comparatively superficial complexes.

For example, a person takes sugar in harmful quantities. He then abstains for a week and loses the seductive pleasure derived from sugar and often develops a positive dislike for it.

In most people, different senses, like taste, are unreliable, due to other abnormalities and it is absolutely necessary that normal conditions through conscious control be established in civilisation to eradicate and prevent abnormal desires and cravings.

Why is one person affected by a particular sensation, which he knows is causing him daily suffering, while another person is not, but succumbs to some other sensory influence?

It is a matter of the psycho-physical make-up of each individual, of different inherent tendencies and general life-experience in different environments. All people, whose kinaesthetic systems are faulty and delusive, develop some form of abnormality in sensation. The point of real importance is to eradicate this kinaesthetic condition in order to make such domination by sensation impossible in the human being.

Another point is that great suffering through overindulgence is not a deterrent. Such suffering could be prevented if people were in touch with their reason.

People seem also to get satisfaction, or pleasure, from such suffering, or they would not continue to repeat acts which are followed by pain and discomfort.

This suggestion is reasonable, because there is little doubt that ill health is just as natural in some people as good health is in others.

Normal people abhor pain and suffering and act reasonably to avoid both, while people affected with abnormal tendencies find a perverted form of pleasure in pain.

All this serves to support the theory that all training from the earliest years of childhood must be on a conscious plane of co-ordination, re-education and re-adjustment that will establish a normal kinaesthesia.

The abnormal condition mentioned is governed by the senses, through the subconscious, as seen in the animal kingdom, where the great controlling forces are mainly physical. It is the purely animal stage of evolution and we must advance gradually to the mental in order to progress beyond this stage.

This brings me to the crux of my contention regarding conscious guidance and control in its widest meaning; that is, as a universal.

The domination of subconscious - instinctive - control is proof that, in lowly evolved states of life, the physical is the great controlling force, which ensures we will not progress to higher planes of evolution, unless we adopt conscious reasoned control. We are unlikely to advance on the evolutionary plane of civilisation if we continue to rely on the original subconscious guidance.

CHAPTER 6

HABITS OF THOUGHT AND BODY

In the last chapter, regarding the case of stammering, I said that it was no easy task to influence Mr. X's conscious mind. The point is this: a person may do as he is asked, but cannot think as he is asked. Medical practitioners disregard this mental attitude in 99% of cases. The doctor prescribes medicine, diet etc. and if the patient does as the doctor asks, he is considered a good patient. The patient's attitude of mind is not noted, except possibly in a case of flagrant hypochondria.

I can prove that a higher percentage of people in mental institutions have been allowed to develop insanity because of this disregard of the mental attitude; they should never have been allowed into an asylum in the first place. Some lack mental control, but have minds of exceptional ability. Some have developed a deliberate attitude to subserve a private end, such as avoiding work, or overindulgence in some desire, the outcome being that the attitude first adopted deliberately becomes a fixed uncontrollable habit.

Therefore, when we attempt to teach a person conscious control, the consideration of mental attitude must precede the performance of the act prescribed. The act performed is of less importance than the manner of performance. It is a remarkable fact that although the pupil understands this, he often has enormous difficulty in changing some trifling habit of thought which stands between him and the benefit he clearly expects.

The simple explanation of this strange enigma is that most people fall into mechanical habits of thought, just as quickly as mechanical habits of body.

For example, in politics A is a convinced "free trader", but B supports "Protection". In a discussion on this, both try to catch the other out on some point of logic. Neither has any intention of altering his point of view, even if the other puts forward a sound argument. A part of their intelligence, normally open to new ideas, even if they are opposite to earlier conceptions, is in a state of anaesthesia, shut off, put out of action. Neither disputant has an open mind. Unfortunately, rigidity of mind is not confined to politicians, but is seen in all thoughts and acts of everyday life and is the cause of many defects.

Mr. William Archer states in the "Morning Leader" on 23rd December, 1910, after quoting the above paragraph from M.S.I., "Can we really accept the idea of an 'open mind'? Is not a certain stability of conviction absolutely necessary to the efficient conduct of everyday life? Is impressionability as bad as rigidity? The Scriptures warn against being 'blown about by every wind of doctrine'.

The amount of open-mindedness which reason demands varies according to the nature of the question at issue. On a question of absolute fact, it would be silly to allow prejudice to prevent us from seeing the truth. But on other matters disputes do arise. Theology is almost the only influence which causes people to close their minds against facts. But, in life, the most important questions are not questions of fact. They are different questions where evidence is so complex, or inaccessible that demonstration is not possible. It is futile to argue a question of taste, for instance, taste which is peculiar to each individual. Different people simply enjoy different things.

Returning to political questions, they are usually not questions of fact, but of speculation, or conjecture and are very complex. In discussing a particular question, why should A allow B to revolutionise his whole system of thoughts?

If such a conversion happens, are we to praise the convert's open mind? Should we not pity his shallow mind, in which the new conviction cannot be deeper rooted than the old? Political opinions should be a sort of mosaic, set in a cement of fundamental principles. Also, it sifts our arguments: in looking out for our opponents fallacies, we

frequently become aware of our own. Furthermore, a discussion forms part of a long course of thought, or feeling, which may bring about a valid conversion. Our opponent's reasoning may have a subconscious effect on us, which will manifest later. Without realising it, one or two cubes in our mental mosaic may be loosened. We should apply an open mind to such a thing as Tariff Reform and I must admit that Mr. Chamberlain's remarks about this made me realise the merely traditional and unreasoned character of my own Free Trade ideas and that I was truly prepared to find them fallacious. The fact that I have not done so may be due to insufficient and unintelligent study, but certainly not to any initial lack of openness of mind. Finally, there is another limitation to the idea of an open mind. If we kept our minds open on certain subjects, we would go mad. I argued with a friend who was a convert to astrology and was determined to read my horoscope. I had no objection, but I cannot pretend that my mind was open to his arguments. What about the Bacon-Shakespeare theory? Must we keep an open mind on that? I say no. An open mind on this question is a symptom of the exorbitant love of the marvellous and an imperfect hold on the reality of things. There are subjects on which no mind can remain open without, in some degree, losing its balance."

Alexander's reply: - "Mr Archer has misunderstood my point in his very interesting article. The question of the open mind is one that lies at the root of so many physical defects. Mr Archer's reasoning is apparently logical. I say 'apparently' because, although his syllogism is sound enough, it is based on a faulty premise, due to his misunderstanding of my statement.

In the first place, I admit that the whole question is relative, but the man 'blown about by every wind of doctrine' is an example of rigidity rather than plasticity, because he is a hysterical neurotic, almost entirely dependent on his subconscious processes. It is these very subconscious processes which restrict the use of the conscious reasoning centres. Subconscious processes form fixed habits of mind almost beyond the control of reason: in extreme cases they take over what was once the intelligence and manifest as obsession, the monomaniacal tendency.

Consider again the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy which Mr. Archer suggests is enough to upset our reasoning if we attempt to keep an open mind about it.

What he sees as an open mind here is one that tends to be converted by specious reasoning. The right attitude here should be, 'I have weighed the arguments in Bacon's favour, found them insufficient and until new evidence is produced, I will continue to hold my usual view'.

The rigid attitude, which I condemn here, is the one that says, 'You will never alter my point of view, whatever new evidence is produced'. In the first example, a conclusion is arrived at from the evidence; the conscious reason has been used and remains in command. It is when the attitude becomes subconscious and fixed that any danger arises. When that happens, the man in favour of Shakespeare would remain unconvinced if new evidence was produced to the contrary. The vast majority of opinions given out by the average person have become subconscious habits of thought.

My professional experience has shown me how great an obstacle to the recovery of physical soundness this impeding habit of thought has become. The whole purpose of my book, 'M.S.I', is to submit that the course of evolution is leading towards obtainment of conscious control and that this is the only way by which we can rise above the artificial restrictions, often physically poisonous, imposed by civilisation. I assure you that this idea of conscious control is unobtainable for anyone who is guided and restrained by subconscious habits of thought and who is, in consequence, quite unable to exercise the free use of his intelligence.

So, what I mean by an open mind, is the just use of conscious reason, a use which is the exception to a very delimiting rule." (End of reply).

Returning now to my own field of therapeutics; lately, there has been much consideration of mental attitude in relation to disease and although no clearly defined remedy has been advanced, the condition has been diagnosed and defined. The "fixed idea", hallucination, obsession are all terms denoting a morbid condition, but they apply more widely to small disregarded mental habits, as well as to the well-defined defects which marked their development.

The mental habit which says, "I can't drop my top lip before speaking", is similar to that of the persons discussing politics. The sum of these habits is so characteristic that we see how easily the fallacy arose of assuming an entity for the subconscious self, a self that is made up of these acquired habits. Some of these habits are labelled instincts, the predisposition to which is our birthright, inherited from that long chain of ancestors whose origins go back to the first dim emergence of active life. Fortunately there is not one of these habits of mind and body which cannot be altered by the inculcation of these principles concerning the true poise of the body. These principles I have called "mechanical advantage" - this will be explained in Part 2 - and when used in conjunction with an understanding of the inhibitory and volitional powers of the objective mind, these habits can be raised to conscious control. The false pose and carriage of the body, the incorrect and laboured habits of breathing that are the cause of so many troubles can be changed into correct and beneficial habits, if we can clear away that first impeding habit of thought which stands between us and conscious control. The ill-effects of the troubles just mentioned are, degeneration of the lungs, heart and muscular systems, the partial failure of many vital organs and morbid fatty conditions that destroy the semblance of men and women to human beings. Many more combine to cause debility, disease and death, due to incorrect habits of mind and body.

I am now open to an objector saying, "But you only want to change one habit for another. If habits of mind are bad, why encourage habits at all, even if they are correct and beneficial?"

This point is important. But, in the first place, it is essential to understand the difference between a habit that is recognised and understood and the one that is not. The first can be altered at will, the second cannot. For when real conscious control is established, a "habit" never becomes fixed. It is not really a habit at all, but a series of directions to the subordinate controls of the body. Such directions will be carried out until it may be necessary to change them.

It will be understood, therefore, that the word "habit", as generally understood, does not apply to the new discipline which I aim to establish in the ordinary subconscious regions of our minds. There are two reasons for this: -

- (1) The conscious, intelligently realised, guiding directions can be continued for all time, becoming more effective year by year, until they are established as the real and fundamental control necessary to that which we understand by the words growth and evolution.
- (2) The stimuli to apprehension, or excitement of the fear reflexes, are eliminated by a procedure which teaches the pupil to take no thought of whether what he calls practice is right or wrong.

This second statement requires further clarification and a lay description by a pupil of mine may put the case more clearly than a technical account.

"One great feature of Mr. Alexander's system in practical use is that the individual loses every suggestion of strain. He becomes perfectly 'lissom' in body; strains and tensions disappear and his body works like a well-oiled machine. Moreover, his system has a reflex result on the mind of the pupil: a general condition of buoyancy and freedom and, indeed, of gaiety of spirit, takes the place of the old jaded mental position. It is the pouring in of new wine, but the bottles must also be new or they will

burst. This is exactly what Mr. Alexander's treatment does; it creates the new bottles and the new wine can be poured in, freely and fully".

This quotation describes a result and the means to its attainment can only be achieved under certain conditions. In the first place, the pupil must realise that he is suffering from certain defects which need eradication. Secondly, the teacher must make a lucid diagnosis of these defects and decide how to deal with them. Thirdly, there must be satisfactory understanding between teacher and pupil of the conditions present and the means proposed to remedy them.

These three preparatory realisations indicate the real psycho-physical significance of the pupil's mental position. He begins by admitting that the subconscious factors by which his psycho-physical organism works are limited and unreliable, that he suffers from mental delusions about his physical acts and that this sensory appreciation is faulty and misleading. He must realise that his sense register of the amount of muscular tension required in a simple act of everyday life is wrong and harmful and his mental conception of relaxation and concentration are impossible in practical application.

There can be no doubt that, on the subconscious plane, humankind now relies too much on a faulty sense of feeling for the guidance of the psycho-physical mechanism and we are gradually becoming more and more overbalanced emotionally, with very harmful and far reaching results.

It must be presumed that the individual has tried to do the right thing and not the wrong thing. One does not go to catch a train relying on a faulty watch, or measure body temperature with a faulty thermometer. We must admit, not only is there failure to register accurately through the sensory appreciation, but also the fault is not noticed by the conscious mind. For this reason, the pupil must be given a new and correct guiding and controlling centre, before performing the simplest tasks in accordance with his own idea and judgment.

Some understanding of these slightly technical and practical details is needed to form a clear idea of the meaning of the word, "habit", which was the origin of this discussion. A fuller analysis will be given in Part 2. I stress that any disturbing habit - which requires eradication - is, in ordinary experience both permanent and unrecognised. It may have been incurred above the plane of reason, but this form of habit is invariably perpetuated in the subconsciousness. The mode of functioning which is substituted, but which is also a habit, is as subject to control as the routine of a well-organised office. Rules are established for conducting business, but the controller must be free to break or modify them at his discretion.

Here is an example from my own practice. A pupil comes to me with incorrect breathing habits, but is ready to assimilate new methods. After receiving the new guiding directions from me, he soon learns consciously to make proper use of the muscles which govern the movements of the breathing apparatus. Now, it would be absurd to suppose that from now on this person, in his waking moments, should be aware of each separate working of his lungs. He has acquired conscious control of that working, but once that control has been mastered, the actual movements of the breathing mechanism are given over to the "subconscious self", although always on the understanding that a counter order may, if necessary, be given at any moment. The working of the lungs is subconscious, but may be raised to the conscious level at any time.

The difference between new and old habits is that the old one was our master and ruled us, while the new is our servant ready to carry out our slightest wish, though always working quietly in accordance with our latest directions.

Briefly, subconsciousness in this respect is a synonym for that rigid routine we call habit, which is the stumbling block to rapid adaptability and assimilation of new ideas and originality. Conversely, conscious awareness is the synonym for mobility of mind, which the subconsciousness checks and impedes. This mobility will make possible a new and wider enjoyment of these powers all of us possess, but which are so often deliberately stunted or neglected.

Let's return to John Doe in the second chapter. If his mental attitude had been changed and had he learned to use his muscles consciously, if, instead of automatically performing a set of muscle-tensing exercises, he had devoted himself to understanding the control and co-ordination of his muscles, he could have applied this knowledge to every act of his life. In his sedentary occupation he could have been using and exercising his muscles without resorting to violent contortions, waving arms or kicking. He would have done better to do some natural exercises, such as walking etc. In other words, no matter how simple the act, he could be "thinking in activity" and using his mechanism in a co-ordinated way.

I pointed out earlier that John Doe was suffering from certain mental and physical delusions, which militated against his recovery of health. Now that the correct procedure has been given, I may use his case to give another example of this method. What he lacked was a proper recognition of the right uses of his muscular mechanisms. If they are used wrongly in physical exercises, their defects will increase. He merely copies someone else in these exercises and his consciousness of these acts remains unaltered. He should first find out what these defects are. When this has been done, he should inhibit the guiding sensations which make him use these mechanisms imperfectly. He must understand the position of mechanical advantage and then use the new conscious directions to bring about - with ease - the proper use of the mechanisms. If the mechanical principle employed is a correct one, every movement will be made with minimum effort and he will not be conscious of the slightest tension. In time, recognition will follow of the new and correct use of the mechanisms, which will then become provisionally established and employed in everyday acts.

We cannot eradicate any defect by direct means, because whenever there is a lack of poise in the body, as well as defects in the use of the muscular mechanisms, the resulting condition is one of "undue rigidity and/or flaccidity" in different parts. This undue rigidity always shows in the parts of the mechanism which are forced to perform duties other than those intended by nature and are consequently ill-adapted for their function.

Herbert Spencer: - "Each faculty acquires fitness for its function by performing its function; if its function is performed for it by a substitute agency, none of the required adjustments of nature takes place, but the nature becomes deformed to fit the artificial arrangements, instead of the natural arrangements".

In the great majority of people today, all conscious effort exerted in attempts at physical action, cause tension in the muscular system, which lead to exaggerated defects, rather than their eradication. Therefore, it is essential when beginning re-education, to bring about relaxation of the rigid parts to secure correct use of inadequately employed and wrongly co-ordinated parts.

Consider a man who habitually stiffens his neck muscles in walking, sitting, or whatever. This shows that he is trying to do with the neck muscles work that should be done by other muscles, notably those of the back. If he is asked to relax the neck muscles and he manages to do so, this mere act of relaxation deals only with an effect and does not immediately bring about an awareness of the correct mechanisms to be used in place of those relaxed. The desire to stiffen the neck muscles should be inhibited as a preliminary, which is not the same thing at all as a direct order to relax the muscles themselves. The true use of the mechanism must be studied; that is, the placing of the body in a position of mechanical advantage will transfer the work to those muscles intended to carry it out and the neck will relax unconsciously. In this case, the conscious directions given to the right muscles are preventive and the correct sequence of cause and effect is maintained.

One more point about John Doe; that is, the question of reserving energy and the registration of tension. A man is asked to lift an enormous set of weights made from paper-mache, but he does not know this. Thinking they are really made of steel, he exerts his full power to lift them and discovers he could have done so with ease.

To a lesser degree, the same unnecessary force is exerted by "physical culture" students and by many people in the ordinary duties of life. The kinaesthetic system has not been taught to register correctly, or gauge accurately, the correct amount of muscular tension required to perform certain acts. Usually too much effort is used and this shows the lack of harmony in the untutored organism. If a person lifts a chair, he approaches the task with a definite preconception of how much physical tension is needed. His mind is exclusively occupied with the question of his own muscular effort, instead of the purpose in front of him and the best means to undertake it. Before he has even approached the chair, he will brace the muscles of his arms, back, neck etc. and when about to lift it, he will adopt a position of mechanical disadvantage. These preparations are unnecessary and his whole attitude of mind towards the act is wrong. Any preconceptions as to the degree of tension required are out of place. If we wish to lift a heavy weight, we should approach it with muscles relaxed, so that the least amount of energy will be used. A position of mechanical advantage should be adopted and then muscular energy exerted gradually until sufficient power is attained to overcome the resistance.

To return to that biased state of mind that balks us at the beginning, we find that it takes many curious forms. Sometimes people say, "Well, I don't really believe in all this, but I may as well try it". One single unlooked for result is enough to change disbelief into credulity. This credulity, however, is a reaction which is little better than the original attitude of disbelief, because what is really required is not to have prejudice in either direction, but to have a calm clear open-eyed intelligence, a ready adaptive outlook, an outlook which does not mean indefiniteness of purpose, or uncertainty of initiative.

Another form of predisposition arises from lack of purpose and the mental habits that go with this condition are hard to eradicate, particularly when the original feebleness has led to hypochondria or nervous disease which had been treated with the usual disregard of the radical evil. In treating cases like this, any method which relieves the person still further of initiative - the rest cure for example - only increases the original defect. This lack of purpose is pandered to and cultivated and after some weeks of treatment, the patient returns to the normal duties of life in a worse state than before. No account is taken for the instinct of self-preservation, or the will to live. This is the very mainspring of human life, yet in the routine of our protected civilisation, even its power becomes relaxed and the machinery runs down. This lack of purpose is the immediate effect of our educational methods. It is, unhappily, very common in all kinds of people, but especially in those who have no occupation, or those whose employment is a mechanical routine, restricting the power of initiative. The curious thing is that some people do not want to be cured. They may be suffering from physical disabilities and actual pain: they may say that they wish to be free from these, but the objective wish is almost non-existent for all practical purposes. This attitude of submission is the outcome of a strong subjective habit. The trouble is endured at first, is a nuisance perhaps, but no steps are taken to get rid of it. It grows slowly until it is looked on as a necessity. When it increases enough to interrupt ordinary occupations, the sufferer seeks a remedy. But the habit of submission is too strong and as long as the trouble can be kept within tolerable limits, no effort is made to fight it. This is a very common experience in the healing profession. A patient is treated and appears to be improving and then a relapse follows. The first question put is, "Have you been following the treatment?" The answer usually is, "I forgot". Or for example, the patient stays indoors when fresh air activities are prescribed. This means that the habit of submission has grown so strong that the objective mind, weakened by the neglect of its guiding functions, is unable to conquer it. No treatment will work, unless the subjective habit can be brought under conscious control. Sometimes this lack of desire for health is due to an attachment to some dearly loved habit, which must be given up if the body is to resume proper functioning. It may be a habit of petty self-indulgence, or one that is imminently threatening the collapse of the vital processes, but the attachment is so strong that the weakened objective mind prefers to keep the habit and risk death sooner than make the effort to oppose it. Even if no harm can be traced directly to

some habit, the general habit of lassitude is so strong that any solution which may be prescribed is distasteful, because it involves exercising powers that have been allowed to fall into disuse.

My readers are advised to diagnose their own peculiar mental habits, this being the first step towards being rid of them. The vast majority of human beings live very narrow lives, doing the same thing and thinking the same thoughts every day and this makes it so necessary to acquire conscious control, or we will lose the versatility which is such an essential factor in developing mental and physical powers.

If the reader should attempt to analyse these habits, then I advise you to "Beware of so-called 'concentration'".

This advice requires elaboration. If a person is asked to concentrate his mind on a subject, he will probably knit his brow, tense his muscles, clench his hands and either close his eyes or stare at some point in the room. He is not really concentrating on the subject given, but is considering an unusual bodily condition he calls "concentration". This is also true of the attitude of attention required for children in schools; it dissociates the brain, instead of compacting it. I do not believe in any concentration that calls for effort. It is the wish, the conscious desire to do or think a thing which results in adequate performance. Could Spencer have written his First Principles, or Darwin his Descent of Man, if either had been forced to any rigid narrowing effort to keep his mind on the subject? I do not deny that some work can be done under conditions which necessitate such artificially arduous effort, but I do deny that it is ever the best work. Briefly, our application of the word, "concentration", denotes a conflict which is a morbid condition and a form of illness; singleness of purpose is quite another thing. If you try to straighten your arm and bend it at the same time, you may use considerable muscular effort, but will achieve no result. The analogy applies to the attempt to delimit the powers of the brain by concentration and at the same time to exercise them to the full extent. The conflict between, "I must", and, "I can't", continues indefinitely with a constant waste of misapplied effort. If you erase the mental habit of thinking this effort is necessary and understand the meaning of, "I wish", then the thing that was difficult becomes easy. Briefly, we must cultivate the deliberate habit of taking up every occupation with the whole mind with a living desire which necessitates bringing into play every faculty of attention. This power develops by using it and it soon becomes simple to alter a morbid lifelong habit, as it does to alter small recently acquired ones.

I had an interesting experience with a pupil who believed strongly in the value and power of concentration. My views had made no impression on her. But one day, she spoke of attitudes people had to the things in life they like or dislike to do. Her own method had been to develop a habit of keeping her mind on other more pleasant subjects, whenever she had been engaged in an unpleasant activity. She had succeeded so far with this habit that the disagreeable sensations of any unpleasant duty were no longer experienced by her. I then discovered that for years she had been unable "to concentrate" when reading and this difficulty was becoming more pronounced. Fortunately, this instance opened up those locked places of her intelligence I had been unable to reach by argument. I showed her how she had been cultivating a most harmful morbid condition that made concentration on those duties of life which pleased her appear to be a necessity. She had constructed a secret chamber in her mind as harmful to her general health as an undiagnosed tumour might have been to her physical welfare. She admitted the truth of my original position and has begun the effort to carry out the suggestion I offered to correct her bad habit.

In all efforts to understand and control all mental habits, the first and only real difficulty is to overcome the preliminary inertia of mind to combat the subjective habit. The brain becomes used to thinking in a certain way, in a groove, along a well-worn path; but once it is lifted out of the groove, it is astonishing how easily it may be directed. At first it will tend to return to its old manner of working, by means of one

mechanical, unintelligent act, but the groove soon fills and although we may use the old path, if we choose, we are no longer bound to it.

To conclude this brief note on mental habits, I wish to say something to the many people who say, "I am quite content as I am". To them, I say, firstly, if you are content to be the slave of habits, instead of master of your own mind and body, you can never have realised the wonderful inheritance, which is yours by right, of the fact that you were born a reasoning, intelligent man or woman. Secondly and more widely, I ask you, "What of the children?" Are you content to rob them of their inheritance, as perhaps you were robbed of yours by your parents? Are you willing to send them out into the world ill-equipped, dependent on precepts and incipient habits, unable to control their own desires and already on the way to physical degeneration? Happily, I believe the means of stirring the inert is being provided. The science of race culture is being debated by earnest men and women, as the whole problem of physical degeneration looms larger in the public mind. In my next chapter, I will deal with this problem in connection with the theory of progressive conscious control.

CHAPTER 7

RACE CULTURE AND THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN

"In what way to treat the body and mind, in what way to manage our affairs; in what way to bring up a family; in what way to behave as a citizen; in what way to utilise those sources of happiness which Nature supplied - how to use all our faculties to greatest advantage; how to live completely? And this, being the great thing needful for us to learn, is by consequence, the great thing which education has to teach. To prepare us for complete living is a function which education has to discharge".

HERBERT SPENCER, "Education".

Every child is born into the world with a predisposition to certain habits. Also, the child of today is not born with the same development of instinct that was the congenital heritage of its ancestors of 100 or even 50 years ago. Many modern children are born with recognisable physical disadvantages that are the direct result of the gradually deteriorating respiratory and vital functioning of their parents.

For many months the vital processes and movements are independent of any conscious control and the infant remains in this helpless dependent state much longer than any other animal. The habits which the child shows during this long period are those hereditary predispositions which are developed early by circumstances and environment, habits of muscular use, of vital functioning and adaptability. If we could analyse the tendencies of a 12 month old baby, we could soon master the science of heredity which is at present so tentative and uncertain in its deductions. However, the child's potentialities lie hidden in the mysterious groupings and arrangements of its cells and tissues, hidden beyond the reach of any analysis. The child is our material and within certain wide limits we may shape it. But all children are different at birth and our limits may be wide, but they are fixed. Within these limits, however, our capacity for good and evil is very great.

A child learns by 2 methods. The first, and in earlier years, the predominant one is imitation. The second is precept, or directly given instruction, positive or negative.

Taking the first method, parents will admit that children imitate those who are with them during those early plastic years. The child's first efforts to adapt itself to its surroundings are based almost exclusively on imitation. For, despite the age of civilisation, no child has yet been born with hereditary instincts which fit it for any particular society. Its language and manners are modelled on the speech and habit of those who are in charge of it.

This fact has been proved and accepted, yet how often do we try to make a practical application of this knowledge? Although the science of heredity is still tentative and indeterminate, no reasoning person can doubt that, in the vast majority of cases, the influence of heredity can be practically eradicated. From my own observations, I can see that when the characteristics, faults and virtues of the parents are analysed and understood, proper training of children will prevent the same faults and encourage the same virtues in their children.

We must remember that the first tastes, likes or dislikes of the infant begin to develop during the first two or three days after birth. Long before the child is a month old, fixed habits are developed. These can be good or bad. The sense of taste, which develops first, needs careful attention. Artificial feeding is a serious danger. For example, large quantities of sugar are added to milk. This is done to encourage the child to take food against its natural desire. The unthinking mother tempts the baby with sugar and all sorts of internal trouble may follow. The habit of taking sugar

becomes the master of the child and may rule it for life, the slave of the sense of taste.

Most children up to 6 or 7 years old are allowed to acquire very definite tastes for things that are harmful. Children are not taught to cultivate a taste for wholesome, nourishing foods.

My friend, Dr. Clubbe of Sydney is of the opinion that the primary cause of the derangement of a child's muscular mechanism and respiratory system is, "Toxic poisoning as a result of artificial feeding". This is sound logic when we consider the interdependence of every part of the system, because in this case the nerve centres connected with the sensory apparatus of digestive organs and the urea also control the respiratory processes. As a result, when these centres are dulled in their action through toxic poisoning, active respiration is lost. Mal-adjustments occur of the parts of the muscular systems concerned with breathing and the whole machine is thrown out of gear.

So, the mischief starts very early in life and is continued and exaggerated in every step of our development. Even in babyhood, precept and coercion come into play. Usually, when the child cries, little effort is made to find the cause. Often the baby is soothed by being carried up and down the room. It is wonderful how soon the child begins to associate some rudiments of cause and effect. The infant who is unduly pandered to will soon learn to cry whenever it desires to be rocked and dandled and thus the foundations of pandering to sensation are quickly laid.

But as the child comes to the observant age, its habits begin to grow more quickly. A child will imitate its parents or nurses, not only in tricks of manner and speech, but also in the carriage of the body, muscular acts and the very manner of breathing. This faculty for imitation and adaptation is a wonderful force which is at our command, if only we would use it in the right way. The vast majority of wrong habits acquired by children result from the imitation of imperfect models before them. Parents do not realise the harmful effects of bad example and are sublimely unconscious of their own defects.

Children accept their own parents' defects as normal and admirable. The boy of 12 accepts his middle-aged father's protruding stomach as normal and probably thinks he will arrive at the same condition. The time will come when such things as the father's protruding stomach will be considered a disgrace. Parents are often unfit and incapable of teaching their own children the primer of physical life. This also applies to the model of physical well-being set by teachers in all primary and secondary schools.

The crux of the whole question is that we are progressing towards conscious control and have not yet realised all that this progress connotes. Children - as civilisation becomes continually more the natural condition - show fewer of their original instincts. In early life, they are faced with two major problems if they develop on the subconscious plane. If they are trained in older methods of education, they become more and more dependent on their instructors: if on the newer methods of "free expression", - I will return to this later - they are left to the vagaries of the imperfect and inadequate directions of subconscious mechanisms that are the inheritance of a gradually deteriorated psycho-physical functioning of the whole organism.

In such conditions it is not possible for the child to command the kinaesthetic guidance and power essential to satisfactory free expression.

A child, once it has emerged from its first state of absolute helplessness, and before it has been coerced into certain mental and physical habits, is the most plastic and adaptable of living beings. At this stage, the complete potentiality of conscious control is present, but can only be developed by the eradication of certain hereditary tendencies or predispositions. Unfortunately, the usual procedure is to thrust certain habits upon the child, without consideration of cause and effect and to insist upon these habits until they have become subconscious and have passed from the region of intellectual guidance.

Consider the example of right and left handedness. Children who are born naturally left-handed are often forced to do things with their right hand all the time.

Parents do not encourage children to use both hands and as a result, there are very few ambidextrous people in the world.

This example is given because it shows the pliability of the physical mechanism in early life and the manner in which we thoughtlessly bind it to some method of working, without considering whether it is good in itself. We thrust a rigid rule of mental and physical outlook on the children. Often we know that in our own bodies the rule has not worked, but it was taught to us and we pass it on by precept, or by holding up our imperfections for imitation then wonder what is the cause of the prevailing physical degeneration!

What is intended by these methods of education is to inculcate the accumulated and inferentially correct lessons derived from past experience; i.e. sticking to old and trusted ways on the assumption that a baby born in the 16th century has the same potentialities, mental abilities and physical organism as one born in the 20th century. This assumption was reasonable 100 years ago, because changes evolved so slowly that the differences between a child born in 1700 and that in 1800 were hardly noticeable

However, that statement does not apply to the child of 1917. For many years, there has been unrest and dissatisfaction in the world of education. New methods have been tried, superimposed on top of the older ones and failed because the educationalists did not recognise that the child of the 20th century cannot be judged by the old standards.

For example, I remember how easily the children of my generation learned the use of common tools, but nowadays parents are greatly impressed if a child can use a hammer or a saw efficiently, so much so that they will boast about it to their relatives and friends.

Unhappily, the real difference between the child of today and one of a generation ago goes much deeper. The modern child's early attempts at walking, running, sitting, standing, etc. are below the standard of a generation ago. The standard of kinaesthetic potentiality has been lowered. Elements have intervened most amazingly in the last 30 years which have caused a marked change in the subconscious efficiency of the modern child.

Thus, even from birth, our problem is not just that of old educationalists, but also because this primary congenital difference between the children of two generations is exaggerated in the nurseries of England and America. All the responsibility and initiative are taken away from the child of wealthy parents. Nurses and governesses perform every possible act of service that will relieve the child of trouble. It is not even allowed to invent its own games. Toys are supplied in endless quantities - toys that need no imagination to transform them into reduced models of the motors, trains or animals they are manufactured to represent. An adult is always there to amuse the child and teach him how to play. I must underline the absurdity of the last sentence, because it means that the adult idea of play is substituted for the childish one. In my day, any old brick played the part of a train or horse and in the mental act required to see the reality under such an uncompromising guise exercised my imagination. Then I and the other children of my time grew dissatisfied with so poor a substitute and as we grew in experience, our stimulated imaginations invented and made better replicas of the realities of our childhood ourselves; not only how to play, but also how eventually to adapt our play to the great business of social life. But what equipment is given to the child who has never had an independent moment throughout its nursery life? How can such a child succeed in life should the fortune it hopes to inherit from its parents be suddenly lost or diverted?

This petrifying method of teaching is still practised, but the reaction against it has set in, both in England and America. But the reaction has been too violent and has gone to the other extreme of "Free Expression", a principle just as harmful as over-supervision. In fact, as far as the physical expression of a child is concerned, "Free Expression" is even more dangerous.

In England inexperienced parents are trying to adopt its principles and Mr. Shaw in his *Misalliance* puts the theory very clearly. His main assumption is:- "What is a child? An experiment. A fresh attempt to produce the first man made perfect; that is to make humanity divine. And you will vitiate the experiment if you make the slightest attempt to abort it into some fancy figure of your own....That is an idealistic attitude, which like-minded parents attempt to put into practice. The results, if the theory is persisted in, will be disastrous, because much mischief is being done at the age of 7, by which time faults and bad habits have become so far established that it is sometimes very hard to eradicate them.

In America the mischief is going further still. The theory and practice of the schools there are:-

- (1) to free the child, as far as possible, from outside interference and restraint.
- (2) to place him in the right environment and then to give him materials and allow him activities through which he may "freely express himself".

This presupposes, firstly, that the child has the powers of expressing himself adequately and freely and thereby educates himself. These suppositions are fallacies and I wish to put forward further evidence in objection to this new and dangerous method.

Consider the practical side of two of the channels of self-expression, dancing and drawing.

Music, when misused, becomes a potent artificial stimulus during dancing, so that people can become "drunk" with excitement, to the degree that the motions of the subconscious mind take control of the reasoning faculties. Alcohol produces the same result by partial paralysis of the peripheral cilia, music and dancing by over-exaltation of the whole kinaesthetic system. In the latter case, however, harmful effects can be produced in the first instance without the reasoning consent of the subject. Young children have not yet learned to withhold that consent.

Unrestrained, unguided efforts by the children to dance are likely to prove harmful. I have seen children attempt to dance according to the mood suggested by the teacher's interpretation of the music. The children responded with the more or less limited kinaesthetic powers at their command, but I could see that these little dancers were imperfectly co-ordinated, that the idea projected from the ideo-motor centre constantly missed its proper direction; that subconscious efforts were being made that caused little necks to take up the work that should have been done by little backs; that the larynx was being depressed harmfully in the efforts to breathe adequately, causing breath to be taken in through the mouth instead of through the nostrils and that the young spines were being gradually curved backwards, when the very opposite condition was essential.

When we realise that the dancing teachers are entirely unaware of the ideal physical conditions that are proper in the children, unaware of the dangerous defects being initiated by these efforts to dance, we must admit that this particular form of free expression is being encouraged at a cost that far outweighs any advantage.

Here is an example. A little 6 year old girl was brought to me for kinaesthetic examination and I found her to be in excellent physical condition. She then took up dancing at this "free-expression" school where the children were encouraged to make their own movements, undirected. She loved this form of dancing and after some time it was considered that she expressed herself more freely than the rest of the children. One of the essential principles of these schools is to allow a child to pursue an activity for as long as she wants.

However, her mother became dissatisfied with the child's general condition. Some alarming physical distortions were beginning to show, most noticeably a tendency to carry her head on one side, a tendency she was unable to correct. The child came back to me for re-examination.

One year ago, this child was an exceptionally fine example of correct physical co-ordination. Now she was in little better condition than a congenital degenerate. All her fluency had gone and she now had rigid tendons, stiffened muscles and worst of all faulty habits of guidance and control, among them a habit of governing the muscles of her body and legs by stiffening the unrelated neck muscles - the back is very often the indicator of inadequate and false controls. Another particular defect was due to a tensing and shortening of the upper thigh muscles, where they attach to the torso, which warped and shortened her stature. Lastly, the most significant change of all - a year ago she was outspoken and fearless and clear of speech - now she was timid and shy and mumbled her words.

I claim that anyone of real experience could have anticipated that this would be the inevitable result of sending the little girl to a free-expression school.

Let's consider another activity - drawing - which comes into another category, because mental rather than physical effects are concerned, although physical effects are involved, both in the harmful uncorrected poses adopted by the children when seated at the table and in the false directions of the ideo-motor centres, of which only a few reach the essential fingers that are grotesquely clutching the pencil. The child tries to move the pencil by movements of its tongue and this indicates endless subconscious troubles.

In "free-drawing", pencils, papers etc. are placed on tables in front of the children and then they make an attempt to draw.

Now, the act of drawing is, in the last analysis, a mechanical process that concerns the management of the fingers and the co-ordination of the muscles of the hand and the forearm, in response to certain physical images conceived in the brain and imaginatively projected on to the paper. And the standard of functioning of the human fingers depends entirely on the degree of kinaesthetic development of the arm, torso and joints: in fact on the standard of co-ordination of the whole organism. It is not surprising, therefore, that hardly one of these more or less defectively co-ordinated children should have any idea of how to hold a pencil in such a way as will command the freedom, power and control to do himself justice as a draughtsman.

One can see a distinct lack of co-ordination. The fingers are probably trying to perform the duties of the arm, the shoulders are humped and the head twisted on one side. In short, energies are being projected to parts of the mechanism which have little or no influence on the performance of the desired act of drawing and the mere waste of projection of such energies alone is almost sufficient to nullify the purpose in view.

No free expression can come by this means. The right impulse may be in the child's mind, but he does not have the physical ability to express it. Not one child in 10,000 is born with the gift to draw as we say, "by the light of Nature". And that one child will have his task made easier if he is wisely guided in his first attempts.

My main objection to this way of teaching drawing is the encouragement it gives to profitless dreaming. With the exception of a few great ones, artists usually have characteristics, such as eccentricity, lack of balance, power of self-hypnotism and general irrationality. Yet surely it cannot be emphasised too strongly that the artist succeeds in spite of these impediments to expression and not because of them. These characteristics are by-products of the artistic genius. They are developed through wrong conceptions and over-concentration on a particular creative activity and time and again in history they have ruined, incapacitated and disgraced men of real genius.

Nevertheless, in "free-expression", the child is encouraged to practise the eccentricity as a way to obtain the gift of drawing, which is like breeding horses with weak lungs, because certain very fast horses suffer from this deficiency. To encourage eccentricity is not to breed genius and genius itself is more free and creative when unhampered by eccentricity. Let us all, at least, have some appreciation of rational cause and effect.

My general criticism of "free-expression" does not end with dancing and drawing, for I have been shocked to witness the work going on in these schools. I

have seen children doing such things as dancing, drawing and carpentry, but I have hardly seen one example of a child using his mechanisms in a natural way. I insist on the word natural even when applied to such relatively artificial activities as drawing and carpentry. For there is a right and most effective way of holding a pencil or a tool. But the children commonly stood in positions of the worst mechanical advantage and the way they held their tools or pencils showed very clearly that they would produce the clumsiest results, unless their management of the instruments was corrected. Worse still, these children were forming physical habits, which would develop into physical ills. A child who tries to guide his pencil by futile movements of the head, tongue and shoulders may be preparing the way to ills which are so far-reaching that their origin is often lost sight of.

I had a case of a boy - three and a half years old - who suffered from fear reflexes. If he met a stranger, he would cry and cling to his mother and at the seaside he was afraid to go near the water. In many other ways, he showed unreasoning terrors which, according to the general diagnosis common in such cases, were presumed to be the cause of his general backwardness, a symptom particularly marked in his speech, because he was only able to articulate a few words very imperfectly.

I saw that he lacked control of his lips and tongue. He was also a bed-wetter. The lack of control in these areas was the direct cause of his psycho-physical condition. Working on a basis of conscious guidance and control, the child made rapid progress towards normality. The fear reflexes became less and less subject to excitement, his temper improved and his outbursts of crying became less frequent.

This example shows what strange psychic effects may spring from purely physical causes - though the complement of psycho-physical is so unified that it is impossible to separate the components and place them on one plane or the other. In this boy's case, the primary cause was probably congenital, but greater troubles may arise from much smaller original defects if the initial habit is confirmed and crystallised by faulty use - as I fear it will be - if the child is left to develop itself on the lines of the free-expression advocates. In this little boy's case, no amount of "free-expression" could have released him from his constrictions while the influence of his malco-ordinations still existed.

In this rapidly changing world of the 20th century, we need, more than ever before, a system that will guide and direct the child during his early years. This implies no contradiction of what I said earlier about the method of constant supervision. The necessary correction of mental and physical faults is a very different thing from the attempt to mould the child into one particular preconceived form. I would only insist that children of today, born as they are with feeble powers of instinctive control, require certain definite instructions by which to guide themselves before they can be left to free activity. These directions must be based on a principle that will help the child to employ his various mechanisms to the best advantage in his daily activities. These directions involve no interference with what the child wishes to express; they represent a cultivation and development of the means by which he may find adequate and satisfying release for his potentialities.

It is true that the foregoing principles must and will involve certain prohibitions, but if we select those essentials that deal with the root cause of the various defects - instead of with the defects - then it will be unnecessary to have the continual admonitions and "naggings" which are the vices of the old system, vices from which new education has been trying to free the child.

To sum up, I find the older educationalists, with their definite prohibitions and exact instructions, were less harmful than the extremes of the moderns, who based their schemes on a child's instinctive reactions. I admit that the older methods failed because they were carried too far and the prohibitions were based on tradition, prejudice and ignorance, instead of a scientific principle based on reason. The new methods fail because they are based on the wrong assumption that the child's instinctive reactions are a reliable guide for future development.

Give a child conscious control and you give him poise, the essential starting point for education. Without that poise he will soon be cramped and distorted by his environment. Give the child poise and the reasoned control of his physical being and you fit him for any mode of life: he will have wonderful powers of adapting himself to any and every environment that may surround him. And if he is an exceptional person with natural gifts, who is able to bend life to his own needs, be sure that, far from having suppressed his powers of free expression, you will have strengthened and perfected those abilities, which enable the genius to put forth all that is best and greatest in him.

My last criticism of the advocates of "free-expression" is that they themselves are not free. They show an unwarranted intolerance towards exponents of the old system. They are too constricted in their mental attitude to give play to their imagination. From one extreme, they have flown to the other and so have missed the way of the great middle course which is wide enough to accommodate all shades of opinion.

I am a strong advocate of free expression, rightly understood, but I am convinced that the untrained child does not have the adequate power to express her/himself freely. There are certain mechanical and other laws, deduced from untold centuries of human experience, laws that are, only in the rarest of cases, unconsciously followed by the natural child of today.

Over 20 years ago in Australia, I was teaching the true meaning of free expression. Pupils came to me for lessons in vocal and dramatic expression. These people had copied their teachers in facial expression, gesture and voice production, to the degree that it was apparent which teacher had trained them. They had also been taught to interpret each poem, scene or passage on the exact lines considered correct by their respective teachers.

My own method, regarded at that time, as very radical, and subversive, was to give my pupils certain lessons in re-education and co-ordination, on a basis of conscious guidance and control. In this way, I gave the reciter, actor or artist the means of employing, to the best advantage, the powers of vocal, facial and dramatic expression and gesture etc. He could then safely be permitted to develop his own characteristics. A few suggestions about interpretation may have been necessary, but the individual manner was his own. No pupil of mine could be pointed to as representing some narrow school of expression, although most of them could be recognised by the confidence and freedom of their performance.

In 1902, I tested my principles by organising performances of "Hamlet" and "The Merchant of Venice", for which I gave special training to young people who had never before performed in public. They showed no "stage-fright" on the first evening. I did not allow a prompter during the performance. I regard this as one of the most convincing public demonstrations I have yet made of the wonderful command and self-possession that may be attained by the inculcation of my principles.

These young people were capable of expressing their individualities in performance. If they had been boxed in by a series of "Don'ts" confining them to a rigid set of rules, they would have broken down in the first 2 minutes.

The above is one example of education in only one sphere of art, but it is an excellent indication of the essential needs of education, in general, where the child is concerned. We must give the child of today and of the future, as a fundamental of education, as full a command of the kinaesthetic system as possible, so that the highest possible standards of "free-expression" may be given in every sphere of life and human activity. We must build up, co-ordinate and re-adjust the human machine, so that it may be in tune, just as we call on the knowledge of the expert mechanic to tune up our cars. In tune means that satisfactory condition of the child's kinaesthetic systems which will enable him to express himself freely and adequately. It constitutes the "means whereby" of full and free expression and adaptability to the changing environment of civilised life and all that these two essentials connote.

In this note of race culture and training of children, I have dealt almost exclusively on the early years of childhood, but in future I will have much to say about

the education of children between 7 and 18 years old. No one who has earnestly considered my point of view will now be able to say that the question of education is outside my province, because the mental and the physical are so inextricably combined, that we cannot consider one without the other. At the risk of repeating myself, I will state my case as briefly as possible.

I wish to postulate: -

that conscious guidance and control, as a universal, must be the fundamental of future education:

that civilisation and education, up to now, have not compelled man to advance adequately from lower to higher planes of satisfactory evolution where animal instincts will not, under any circumstances, or in response to any stimuli, dominate his transcendent tendencies, or put him out of communication with his reason:

that humankind should progress by slow continuous processes from one stage of evolution to another, particularly in passing from the animal subconscious stage to the higher reasoned conscious stage. During this process, he will develop a new subconsciousness - cultivated, not inherited - under the guidance of consciousness, with an increasing control that holds animal proclivities in check:

that the evolutionary progress from childhood to adolescence and on through the vicissitudes of life which follow, is determined by the process adopted; the ratio of progress will be in accordance with the standard of efficacy of this process and this principle of evolution applies equally to a nation:

that subconsciously developed mechanisms - subconscious guidance and control - function satisfactorily during those stages of evolution that approximate the animal plane:

that the old moderate methods of education are not incompatible with the cultivation and development of the animal subconscious plane:

that "free-expression" principles cannot bring satisfactory results, while one's mechanisms are operated by inherited subconscious guidance and control:

that for this very reason, all aid to progressive development must conform to the principle of the projection of guiding orders and controls in the right directions, with simultaneous employment of positions of mechanical advantage, irrespective of the correctness, or otherwise, of the immediate result. The result may be unsatisfactory for a time, but if the position of mechanical advantage is employed - and the correct directions are held in mind and projected again and again - a new and correct complex sooner or later, supersedes the old vicious one and becomes permanently established:

that consciously directed mechanisms - conscious guidance and control - are essential to man's satisfactory development and progress to the higher stages of evolution; and to that continued adequate vital functioning of his physical or mental organism, necessary in these advanced stages, where more rapid adaptability to the swiftly ever-changing environment and the power to see and comprehend new ideas are the urgent demands of advancing civilisation:

that consciously controlled mechanisms are essential to successful inculcation of the principle of "free-expression" and all that it connotes in education.

Conscious guidance and control, as a fundamental in education, commands the fundamentals of "free-expression". The words "free", or "freedom", are used here in their true sense, not in the ordinary usage. Is there such a thing as real freedom?

We know we cannot have freedom without restraint, anymore than we can have psycho-physical harmony without antagonism.

People do not easily recognise the difference between freedom and licence. This is the danger that the new democracies of the world are facing now and the dangers will increase a thousand times in the near future, when they will have to pass through the crucial period of re-adjustment which must follow the present world-crisis.

In this matter of education, I am an iconoclast. I would break down the idols of tradition and set up new concepts. In no other area do we see more plainly the harmful effect of rigid convention than in this matter of teaching. The teacher can learn from the gardener who draws the young seeds out to the light and warmth, into conditions most helpful for their development.

And so, in teaching, the first essential should be to cultivate the uses of the mind and body and not to neglect the instrument of thought and reason by the inculcation of fixed rules which have never been examined. Again, where ideas which are patently wrong have already been formed in the child's mind, the teacher should take the trouble to understand these preconceptions and instead of overlaying them, he should help eradicate them, before teaching or submitting the new and correct idea.

"Submitting" expresses my meaning better, because I understand "teaching" to mean the placing of facts before the child in such a way as to appeal to his reasoning faculties and latent powers of originality. He should be allowed to think for himself and not be crammed with other people's ideas, or one side only of a controversial subject. Why should the child's intelligence be stunted by forcing him to accept the preconceived ideas and traditions which have been handed down from generation to generation, without examination, without reason, without enquiry as to their truth of origin? The human mind of today is suffering from partial paralysis by this method of forcing those unreasoned and antiquated principles on the young plastic intelligence.

The educational system itself is grievously inadequate and detrimental, as all thinking educationalists are aware, but the decision regarding the necessity for physical exercises and "deep-breathing" in schools has added another evil. The many systems of physical training generally used show an almost criminal neglect of rational method.

Some years ago, I wrote in the Pall Mall Gazette: -

"In the schools and in the army, humans are being developed into deformities by breathing and physical exercises. I have a book on breathing exercises used in the army and any reasonable person versed in physiology and psychology, knowing they are inseparable in practice, will understand why so much harm results from them. Both the officers and men have unduly protruded upper chests (development of emphysema), unduly hollowed backs (lordosis), stiff necks, rigid thorax and other physical eccentricities. It is for these reasons that heart troubles, varicose veins, emphysema and mouth breathing (in exercise) are so much in evidence. As this is a matter of national importance, I am prepared to give the time necessary to prove to the authorities (medical or official) in the army, the schools and the sanatoria that these 'deep-breathing' and physical exercises do more harm than good and will cause graver trouble in the future. All 'deep-breathing' exercises cause an exaggeration of the defective muscular co-ordination already present, so that even if one bad habit is eradicated, many harmful others are cultivated."

And again in my pamphlet, "Why We Breathe Incorrectly" Nov. 1909, I wrote: -

"The man who breathes incorrectly and inadequately does so as an immediate and inevitable consequence of abnormal and harmful conditions in certain parts of his body. To achieve correct and beneficial breathing, one has to re-adjust the parts of

the body by a new and correct use of the muscular mechanisms through conscious control. This change brings about a proper mechanical advantage of all parts concerned and causes much expansion and contraction of the thoracic cavity, so that atmospheric pressure gets its opportunity. So here we have (a) the directive agent of consciousness and (b) the use of the muscular mechanisms, this combination causing certain expansions and contractions and the result is what is known as breathing. The act of breathing is not a primary, or even secondary part of the process, which is really re-education of the kinaesthetic system, associated with correct bodily postures and respiration and will be referred to universally as such in the near future. Given the co-ordination of parts, as acquired by my system, breathing is a subordinate operation which will perform itself."

I stand by every word of this today. Hundreds of soldiers every year have to leave the army because of heart trouble brought about by the "drill-sergeant's chest" and its concomitant strains and rigidities. In Punch recently, a young boy was asked how he would salute a royal person: - "Same as the soldiers do; hold my hand up to my hat and look as if I was going to burst!"

Soldiers will start on a long route march with chest "well-set" and stiff. The strain of marching inevitably brings them later into easier slouching positions, which allows them to continue and at its worst is not as positively harmful as the tension produced by the other posture.

Sailors are much healthier, more free and loose than soldiers, strutting like pigeons for the honour of the regiment. Sailors are readier and more effective for hard work.

I also saw with dismay in a recent newspaper, a truly pathetic picture of a class of schoolboys with hollowed backs, looking like very ruffled pouter pigeons. And the teacher was commended for his zeal in producing such results by "deep breathing". (See photos)

Is the right position in which one should stand for health's sake one needing positive strain to maintain? This is preposterous and the application of such principles can only bring complete mental and physical chaos.

To return to my general theory of training, I must not particularise too definitely in some directions, but my example of right-handedness still applies. On one hand, we are willing to sacrifice reason for such a tradition and convention and on the other hand for an untried and possibly illogical idea. The defence for the latter sacrifice is generally based, either on the need of enthusiasm, or the necessity for proceeding by trial and error. No one is a greater enthusiast than me, but I will not allow my enthusiasm to dominate my reason. One day I will write an account of how I arrived at my practical elucidation of the principles of conscious control and will show how the greatest danger which I had to fight against was my enthusiasm. I would never have worked out my principles if I had allowed it to dominate my reason. Again, as to the argument for empiricism, I admit that my own methods have been - and still are - in some ways, experimental. But with regard to "free-expression", I claim that the mistake in practice has been sufficiently demonstrated and further, I must insist that we are not justified in experimenting on children. Could any fault lay heavier on a human conscience than that by which, however unwittingly, another human life had been distorted?

Pleading on behalf of my most important client, the child of this younger generation, I demand that we shall not proceed to the dangerous extremes that threaten his physical and mental well-being. On one hand, we must avoid thrusting on him fixed ideas that may narrow his mind, because if you limit him and deliberately impart your own mental habits, the effects go far beyond what we are pleased to call "formation of character". On the other hand, we are not justified in leaving him entirely to himself. He has the right of choice within certain limits, but does not have the ability to choose in his earlier years. We need not compel him to choose this or that, but we must educate him in such a way to give him the power of choice. In Mr. Allen Upwards delightful work, "The New Word ", he says, "Give the child leave to grow.

Give the child leave to live. Give the child leave to hope and hope truly. He is the plaintiff in this case. I say he is mankind and his birthright is the truth." And I would add, "Give the child leave to learn. Give him opportunity to profit by all the knowledge we can give him out of our experience. His birthright indeed is the truth, but we must aid him in making the discovery."

It is time to give earnest thought to this matter, to proper food, clothing physical training, and many other things. The kinaesthetic systems concerned with correct and healthy body movements and postures have become demoralised in school by habits and restraints enforced at a time when natural activity should have been encouraged and scientifically directed. Such a habit is the one used in the crouching position caused by irrational desk work.

I am often asked what furniture is the correct type to use to avoid these habits and I reply that the problem is being tackled from the wrong standpoint.

Suppose there was an ideal chair that would magically rectify every fault in a child's body, one in which he finds great ease. How could he suffer the torture of everything uncomfortable? He would have to carry it around with him! Also, the number of these chairs would be incredible, as each one would have to fit every different child and changed each year until adulthood.

Obviously, we must educate the children, not the furniture. Give a child the ability to adapt to any environment within reasonable limits and he will not suffer discomfort, nor develop bad physical habits.

This problem in education also requires solution in social, political, industrial, economic, ethical, aesthetic and other areas of progressive human activity. In every sphere of life we have given "effects" the significance of "causes" and have made worthy attempts to put matters right on this unsound basis.

For 50 years social services have been giving food, money and clothes to the poor, but nowadays the object is to give the poor the "means" of general advancement and of obtaining these things by their own efforts.

The same principle applies to children. Up to now, the educationalists have given them what they thought they needed, but in future we must give them the "means" by which they may satisfy their own needs and command their own advancement. The adoption of new methods is a procedure which always demands the proper consideration of the thing, person or persons to which they are to be applied. Such consideration would have shown the real cause of the difficulties to be faced in child education today, which is that civilised life has gradually changed the child's psycho-physical condition at birth. In this process, much has been gained and lost. From the educator's point of view, the losses have been stupendous compared with the gains, because the all-important kinaesthetic systems have deteriorated due to humankind's attempts to pass from the lower to the higher stages of evolution, while depending on a subconsciously controlled organism.

This problem of education is growing more urgent every day. Up to now, all we have done is impose one rule or another on the children, as an experiment, rules which have been rigid and unscientific in their conception.

In place of these rules, I see an ideal method of training our children, which will make them masters of their own bodies. I look for a time when the co-ordinated child will be able to handle any circumstance and adapt to any environment, living its life in the enjoyment of perfect health. For man has progressed to the higher and more complex stages of civilisation. He has continued to change his habits of life and - being still far from the highest state attainable - he will continue to change. The further he moves from the primitive uncivilised stages, the less opportunity he has in daily life so to exercise the physical machinery that it will be prevented from working imperfectly by the controls of instinct. "Conscious control" will enable humankind to adapt more readily to the changing conditions of life. These changes tend to become more rapid and more radical than ever before in the history of the world's progress.

It is best to seek the highest and be content with no less, but we should consider the practical detail of our journey. What follows in parts 2 and 3 may seem

trivial in comparison with the high endeavour I have outlined, but it is the triviality of the essential detail.

I wish to show the way still more clearly and show how every man and woman may learn to walk on it.

CHAPTER 8

EVOLUTIONARY STANDARDS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE CRISIS OF 1914

In the previous chapter I have dealt briefly with the fundamentals on which our whole structure of education and civilisation is based and have pointed to the different tendencies developed by the individual in the struggle to progress on this basis. At the same time, I have indicated that which I am confident is the only true fundamental on which humankind, in a state of civilisation, may progress and evolve to a condition commanding freedom for all time from those limiting narrowing and debasing qualities which belong to the animal sphere of existence.

The present world crisis indicates that this is the psychological moment to make a wide application of my principles.

I have dealt with the fundamentals employed in the development of the child and adult and postulated that the evolutionary progress from childhood to adolescence and on through the vicissitudes of life is determined by the process adopted, the ratio of progress being in accordance with the standard of efficacy of this process and that this principle of evolution applies equally to a nation.

Consider the different processes adopted by different nations, their different stages of evolution and their possibilities of growth and development towards real individual and national progress.

After centuries of attempting to progress on approved educational, religious, economic, political, industrial, ethical and aesthetic principles and after a century of unprecedented progress in Arts and Sciences, we are faced with the spectacle, in a supposedly civilised nation, of a debauched kinaesthesia which has manifested itself in such a display of savage instincts as will present us in the eyes of a more highly evolved universe as plunged in the depths of barbarism.

In the past 3 years the people of the world have been shocked and stirred by events which, even 4 years ago, were considered impossible in the stage of civilisation then reached. In consequence, a special and earnest endeavour is being made to solve problems of vital importance which have a bearing on the future development and cultivation of the potentialities of humankind.

It is, therefore, essential to recognise that we have reached a point in civilisation which will be recorded as one of the most critical and vital in the history of the world.

The great nations of Europe are engaged in the most terrific conflict of force ever recorded, while in America, a land of peace, there is being witnessed what is probably the most bitterly contested conflict of opinion ever experienced regarding the conduct, policy and duty of the American nation where the old world is concerned. (This was penned prior to American intervention in the war)

The happenings of the past 3 years must influence our present and future opinion of the value of our educational, political, moral, social, industrial, religious and other principles where the progress of mankind is concerned, as he passes from the animal plane of his evolution to those higher planes for which he is undoubtedly destined.

The conclusions thus reached will so influence the future welfare of humankind that the facts from which they are deduced demand the most serious

attention and study of every human being. We must make an earnest effort to discover fundamentals.

This recrudescence of barbarity signifies a tremendous clash of opposing forces, a desperate conflict between the lowly-evolved peoples, as against the more highly evolved: the struggle of an open-minded, mobile idealism for the supremacy of the individual against a narrow-minded, rigid, material automatism which entails the suppression of the individual and the obliteration of his reason in the supposed interests of the State.

Let's take a comparative view of primitive and civilised nations. In this America stands apart and will be considered later.

In Primitive Nations: - The compelling forces were chiefly physical and subconscious. The essentials of life depended almost entirely on brute force. Daily experiences gave a keen edge to savage instincts and unbridled passions, to an automatic development which opposed the cultivation of the faculty of adaptability to new environment.

In Civilised Nations: - The compelling forces have become less physical and less subconscious, but the advance from the physical to the mental, subconscious to conscious, has not been sufficiently comprehensive to establish the mental and conscious principles as the chief compelling forces in the progress of the nation and the individual. The essentials of life do not depend on brute force and daily experience becomes less associated with factors which develop savage instincts, unbridled passions or automatic development. But experience has proved that civilised nations have failed to come through the ordeal of adaptation to the ever-changing environment with satisfactory results. As a result of progress not being comprehensive, the majority of the activities of the nation have been limited and in those few activities where the widening influence held sway, freedom became licence and led to overcompensation. This condition was sufficiently harmful as long as it applied to individual effort, the individual being more or less held in check by collective opinion: but when applied to national effort, that nation which ignored the opinion of other nations developed unchecked and the national decision to stifle the individual constituted the most powerful force in the prevention of progress on the evolutionary plane.

This national decision was the result of an erroneous national conception, the outcome of what I call, "manufactured premises", which are the forerunners of unsound and delusive deductions - a stultification of reason. They demand the cultivation of a form of self-hypnosis fatal to national or individual progress

This dangerous habit showed in the early literature of the German nation and was cultivated in all spheres of activity in recent years. This explains the failure of German judgement in all matters of national and international importance, of the impossibility of the people to see anything from any other point of view but their own, of their crass stupidity in gauging the psychology of other nations.

In the foregoing, we have fundamentals worthy of consideration. They must occupy the attention of all thinking people who wish to contribute to the uplifting of humankind and the establishment of a standard of reasoned guidance and control which should make another barbarous conflict unthinkable and impossible.

Every nation will give humane reasons for its madness. Self-protection, an altruistic regard for the rights of smaller nations, a high sense of duty towards mankind at large; all these pleas have been urged as explaining the single principle which has drawn this or that nation into the whirlpool. Every nation must surely have pleaded liberty as their excuse at some time or another, liberty being used to mean almost anything.

We have been busy with numerous theories of the primary causes of the war: race hatred, business rivalry, commercial and political intrigues etc. put forward as the sole reason for the present welter of blood and fury. No single one of them can afford us an adequate explanation.

Further, if we admit that a part of all these reasons and excuses has entered into the conditions producing such awful results, we must still explain the preceding state that made these conditions possible. We must shift our view-point and cease our muddled examination of the details in front of us and see our problem in the broad terms of one who can stand back and see life moving through the centuries.

With all people, in all spheres of life, we know that certain mental and physical manifestations give an absolute clue to their character, aims in life, ideals and stage they have reached in evolution.

Education does not necessarily mean progress on the evolutionary plane any more than ability as a linguist denotes a high standard of mentality.

This applies also to the arts, particularly music and dancing. The lower the stage of evolution, within certain limits, the greater is the appeal of music and dancing.

In the history and general progress of humanity instincts and traits of the animal - the brute force principle - predominated at certain stages. If we go back far enough, we find a stage when it always predominated.

Therefore, a test as to the ratio of progress of nations, on the evolutionary plane, is found in their desire to advance beyond that stage where the mental and physical forces, which should only belong, as inherited instincts, to the brute animals and savages, hold sway: and with this in view, a survey of the history, ideals, habits of life, mental outlook and general tendencies of the German nation will show that these self-hypnotised people approximated too closely to the lower animals and savages in their mode and chief aims in life.

For many years prior to the crisis of 1914, we listened to the blatant outburst of German professors and other educational authorities concerning that nation's superiority to other nations. We were asked to believe that certain German individuals had reached the stage of the superman.

After listening to these claims and examining the evidence, thinking men and women concluded they were unjustified. The stupendous failure of these supermen in the present war proves the correctness of these conclusions.

It seems inconceivable that supermen could so have guided the whole national energy of Germany that it became more and more narrowed, - like the German mind - until it concentrated almost solely on the stupid conception of German domination of the world.

To this end, the national energy was diverted into 2 channels: -

COMMERCIAL INDUSTRY AND MILITARISM

One of the great features connected with the former was the extraordinary development of machinery, which demanded for its successful pursuit that the individual be subjected to the most harmful systems of automatic training.

The standardised parts of the machine made demands which tended to stereotype the human machine. The limitations of human activity, mental and physical, reached the maximum. The power to continue to work under such conditions depended on a process of deterioration in the individual. He was slowly but surely being robbed of the possibility of development. The very soul of man was crushed to foster an industrial process which was to provide the sinews of the war machine, to support that curse called militarism. The demoralisation of Germany came through its conceptions of militarism, which stands for the worst manifestation of those savage instincts and unbridled passions associated with the lowest stages of primitive race development.

Germany is convinced that her plan, system, or philosophy is so undeniably right as to constitute an absolute. She is just as badly co-ordinated, as unable to follow the true mandate of reason, as any individual who is dominated by a fixed idea.

The original "idea" formulated in the conscious mind has sunk so deep into the subconscious that it cannot be changed except under the influence of some stronger outside power.

Returning now to my single reason for the cause of the present war, I feel that the explanation has already been given. Granted a nation educated and trained as Germany has been, some explosion was inevitable sooner or later. If we have among us an individual suffering from a fixed idea, he must in time become intolerable to us. Never in the history of the world have thought and the tendency to organisation been more fluid than they were in the first years of the 20th century. Yet one great and powerful nation interfered with us at every turn, impeding the flow of liberal thought by her obsession with the ideas of her own greatness and the omnipotence of her military machine. Nevertheless, the other nations of Europe adapted themselves, within limits, to the demands of this rigid mechanism in their midst. And it may be that these very powers of endurance and adaptability hastened the crisis. They were regarded by the monomaniacs of Germany as signs of weakness and just as their own philosopher Nietzsche went mad by concentration on his own invariable theme, so Germany crossed the bounds of sanity, imbued with a crazy belief in her own omnipotence. We must treat her as mad, but she is nevertheless to be pitied.

Earlier, I separated America from the rest of the world. I have immense confidence in the future of the United States. For her the possibilities of control by reason are illimitable. But I must issue a warning. For I have seen the imitation of certain habits of thought which, if they are persisted in, will sink deep into the national subconsciousness and prove a source of danger to the body politic.

My wish for America is that she should preserve, as far as possible, an open mind. She has entered the Great War for reasons that every right-minded man and woman must applaud and respect. I trust she will come out of it with the same balance and power of choice, so that when she turns again to her own affairs, she will be sane enough and strong enough to control the great national body.

No finer ambition is possible than this. The old ambition of dominance, commercial or military, defeats itself by its very exaggeration.

Such power of co-ordination in a race, as a unit, could be compared with the balance of a wise and healthy man. Such a nation would be free, with a greater liberty than history can record and to such a nation little would be impossible. She would become the teacher of the world by the force of reason and example. She would inaugurate the coming of a wiser, greater humanity.

END OF PART ONE

Part 2

Conscious Guidance and Control

EDUCATION

"It is because the body is a machine that education is possible. Education is the formation of habits, a super-inducing of an artificial organisation on the natural organisation of the body; so that acts, which first require conscious effort, eventually become unconscious and mechanical".

HUXLEY

RE-EDUCATION

"It is because the body is a machine that (re)-education is possible. (Re) -education is the formation of (NEW AND CORRECT) habits, a (RE-INSTATING OF THE CORRECT) artificial organisation on the natural organisation of the body; so that acts, which at first require conscious effort, eventually become unconscious and mechanical".

INTRODUCTION TO PART 2

In the first part of this book, I tried to explain the general principle which underlies my work. I will now attempt to make things clearer by dealing with it in relation to its practical application in the everyday acts of life.

I hope that I can convince thinking people that conscious control is essential to humankind's satisfactory progress in civilisation and the properly directed use of this control will enable the individual to stand, sit, walk, breathe, digest and in fact, live with the least possible expenditure of vital energy. This will ensure the highest standard of resistance to disease.

With my casebooks for over 20 years before me, I feel it right to set down my convictions in terms free of doubt and uncertainty. My conclusions about the urgent question of physical decadence have not been formulated in haste. They are deductions from a long series of striking results and observed facts. I consider them so important that I cannot hesitate to deliver my message in a tone that may appear to some to savour of over-confidence.

SO BE IT!

CHAPTER 1

SYNOPSIS OF CLAIM

(1) My first claim is that psycho-physical guidance by conscious control, when applied as a universal principle to "living", constitutes an unfailing preventive for diseases, mental or physical, malformations and loss of general efficiency.

Intelligent recognition of the principles essential to guidance by conscious control is necessary to the full mental and physical development of humankind. These principles alone will bring men and women to the highest state of well-being, enabling them to cope effectively with the problems of the day in the world of thought and action and slowly widening the gap between civilised humankind and the animal kingdom.

There is no sphere of human activity, feeling or philosophy where the adoption of conscious control would not bring valuable benefits.

Man is still imprisoned by many subconscious instincts, as in the animal kingdom and primitive man. For example, if, for the first time, a primitive person saw an express train racing along, he could be scared to such an extent that his normal instinctive guidance would be suspended momentarily. In most of his daily activities where he is not startled, his instinct guides him perfectly; but when faced with the unusual, he is unable to cope with his new environment. He needs conscious guidance which will bring him into touch with his reason.

Many people of today cannot meet satisfactorily the great demands made on them by their present environment and are incapable of doing their best in a new environment. Instinct is miserably insufficient to meet the conditions of the modern world with its ever-changing environment, yet we continue to rely on it, to the detriment of our mental and physical attainments.

(2) My next claim is that diseases such as cancer, appendicitis, bronchitis, tuberculosis etc. too often are not eradicated and remain frequently undetected, because of our failure to recognise that the real cause of the development of such diseases is found in the wrong preconceived ideas which affect the organism in the manner described in Part 1 of this book.

The only experience that the average person has in the use of the human organism is through the subconsciousness, which results in bad experiences and wrong preconceived ideas mentioned before.

Even a simple action when subconsciously directed is dangerous, because it detrimentally affects other parts of the organism which have nothing to do with the particular act concerned. For example, if a person attempts to lengthen the neck, the eyes are usually moved up or down. This wrong use of the eyes, or some other similar movement, leads to an established habit that causes eye-strain and seriously impairs their efficiency and in the ordinary way of life leads to the specific treatment of these organs, instead of the eradication of the wrong habits and preconceived ideas. Misdirected energies are not confined to one part of the organism. They affect hands, knees, shoulders, legs, thorax, hips and ankles and other parts, causing strain and interference with the functioning of the different organs and finally seriously injuring them. To support this claim, I put forward the following: -

(a) Up to now, little or no attention, on a practical psycho-physical basis, has been given to the harmful influence of faulty subconscious direction and of the wrong preconceived ideas and faulty postures associated with it. Under such influence, a person will cultivate wrong mental attitudes to life in general and to the art of evolving satisfactorily, especially in relation to the primary cause of the defects present, or later developed, and in regard to the essential laws connected with the eradication of these defects.

(b) Anyone who is unaware that he is subconsciously guided suffers from certain delusions about the physical acts he performs. Consider the man who believes himself to be merely overcoming inertia when attempting to move, but is really fighting the resistance of undue antagonistic muscular effort exerted by himself, a resistance that he is not consciously aware of. There is a constant conflict between 2 great forces, one subconscious, which held power in the early evolutionary stages, the other conscious, which is to supersede this limited direction and will finally prove to be the reliable guide in the higher and higher stages of evolution. In the present stage of our mental and physical progress, we are influenced by both subconscious, intuitive behaviour and our slowly awakening conscious guidance. Man has no true realisation of this conflict, although he feels it in a dim, mysterious way.

Very often, he does what he feels, instead of what seems to be the right thing and frequently what he feels is the right thing. This is not surprising, since subconscious instinct is much more developed than the conscious faculty. But granting the subconsciousness its full merit, we must recognise its limitations in modern civilisation, with its ever-changing environment and demands. We must have a guiding principle without these limitations, to enable us to adapt to these new situations.

We are in need of reasoned conscious guidance. Up to now, man has not made any serious attempt to analyse these 2 great forces, because he is only dimly aware of their workings. The fundamental principle we call evolution demands that every human being be enabled to make this analysis, so that he may distinguish between the impulses sprung from the subconsciousness and the conceptions created in his conscious mind.

A person will thus cultivate the habit of distinguishing between the two and will tend to prevent mental and physical delusions in all directions, especially in relation to the physical acts in old or new environments.

(c) While our delusions remain about such acts, we will believe that we are performing them correctly. Because of this, many malformations and inefficiencies become established and may lead to definite disease. The popular misconception about our responsibility in this matter leads us to being commonly pitied for unavoidable defects, when it is of the first importance to realise the responsibility is entirely our own. These defects are the result of our own ignorance, our wilful neglect.

Once this new mental attitude is established, there is hope for the afflicted person and he will have the satisfaction of knowing that he is working out his own salvation on common-sense, practical lines, devoid of pernicious sympathy. He will be facing real facts and will be stimulated by a principle which cannot fail to secure the very best efforts in the right direction of which any ordinary person is capable.

(d) It is essential by re-education in conscious control that the "means" rather than the "end" be held in mind. If the "end" rather than the "means" is given attention, then any other act will be done in the old habitual way. When each stage of the "means" is fully understood consciously, old habits are broken up and every muscular action can be directed until the new and correct guiding sensations have established the new and proper habits. These new habits, in turn, become subconscious, but on a more highly evolved plane. They give life to and maintain in a high state of

efficiency, every organ of the body, the ultimate functions being affected by the consciously controlled energies. By my system of obtaining a position of mechanical advantage, a perfect system of natural internal massage occurs and this is extraordinarily beneficial in breaking up toxic accumulation.

(Note: - An example of "mechanical advantage". A pupil sits in the chair and is asked by the teacher to give directions such as, "not stiffening the neck", "head forward and up", "back to lengthen and widen". As the pupil does so, the teacher helps to achieve this by the skilful use of his hands. Then, holding one or two books against the back of the chair, the teacher moves the pupil gradually until the back rests against the books and the weight is taken by the back of the chair. The pupil is expected to maintain his directions throughout the movement. The final position is one of a number I employ and for want of a better name, I call it a position of "mechanical advantage".)

The position of mechanical advantage, which may or may not be a normal position, is that which gives the teacher the chance to bring about quickly, with his hands, a co-ordinated condition in the pupil. This gives the pupil an experience of the correct use of different parts of the body. It is by repetition of such experiences of the proper use of the organism that the pupil is able to reproduce the sensations and use the same guiding principles in everyday life. Placing the pupil in what would normally be considered an abnormal position, - of mechanical advantage - gives the teacher an opportunity to establish, in the pupil, mental and physical guiding principles which then allow the pupil to repeat the co-ordinations, with the same perfection, in a normal position.

Any case of incipient appendicitis may be treated by these methods. Also, a rigid thorax may regain mobility, no matter the age of the pupil, with full expansion and contraction and maintained with minimum effort. As this thoracic improvement occurs, the body of the pupil is re-adjusted and mental principles inculcated which enable him to maintain the improved conditions in posture and co-ordination. This will also secure the normal, necessary abdominal pressure, thus allowing a natural form of massage of the digestive organs, which is maintained during the ordinary actions of everyday life.

(3) I am able to re-adjust and teach others to re-adjust the human machine with the hands; to mould the body into its proper shape. With an open-minded pupil, it is possible to remove many defects in a few minutes; for example to change the quality and power of a voice.

(4) In prescribing the principles of conscious control, we are not dealing with an epidemic of physical or mental degeneracy, but with a stage in the progress of the human race from the subconscious and instinctive to the conscious and reasoned command of the whole human mechanism. In other words, we have reached a stage in civilisation where we are unable to meet its demands satisfactorily and serious results can be seen everywhere.

Adoption of conscious control as a universal principle will allow us to move slowly, but ever quicker, to higher psycho-physical spheres that will separate the animal and human kingdoms by a deep gulf. Humankind will then enjoy the blessings that are the natural result of fully developed capacities.

CHAPTER 2

THE ARGUMENT

The marked tendency towards physical degeneracy among the men and women of all civilised races has been the constant theme of physiologists, therapists and other specialists: endless explanations have been put forward to account for it and countless remedies suggested to counteract it. The general way of thinking in this matter is always towards treatment of epidemic symptoms, towards vague generalisation in the diagnosis and treatment of individual symptoms. The word "individual" usually refers to a specific sufferer or a correlated type of disease, or consideration of effects rather than causes.

Reaction against this method of dealing with individual symptoms on a general basis has produced a great variety of "mind-healers" whose "a priori" methods and lack of any clearly conceived systems have brought disrepute. Such were the conditions of 20 years ago which I sought to understand, believing - as I still do - that the human race was at some great psycho-physical turning point in its history. I believe that if the true nature of this evolutionary stage could be understood, it should be possible to direct humankind's mental and physical progress and so combat and, in time, eliminate a thousand evils that seem to have no counterpart in the lower animals, except in a few cases.

I realised from the start that I was not dealing with a world-wide epidemic, but with a stage of progress and it was essential to discard all theories that advocated a return to similar conditions. Evolution shows no such return to extinction. The species must go forward to a triumphant perfection, or give way to a more dominant, more complete, self-controlled type.

Man is an animal differing little in atomic structure from other primates. He is, however, different physically due to susceptibility to disease and bodily degeneration which animals do not suffer from, except in rare cases. We must find the prime causes of this difference. The solution of the problem which is commonly put forward and which has found support in England and the U.S by the "Eugenists", I cannot accept as universal. Their theory is that the human struggle for existence has ceased to have effect; that the unfit are permitted to produce offspring with the fit and that natural selection imposed by circumstances fatal to the weak must be replaced by an arbitrary selection to maintain the higher efficiency of the natural type. I reject this theory as a universal one. It is inconsistent with the great and inspiring ideal of the progress of the human race towards mental and physical perfection. I believe in a purpose running through life, unfolding itself to each new generation and expressing itself in human experience. It is impossible, therefore, to accept a theory that assumes the lack of adaptability in man's physical body to thrive in the conditions around him, or to enter into its true and natural kingdom of perfect soundness. If, say, a third of civilised humans are unfit to continue the race, we can only conclude that man's physical evolution is a failure and the race doomed to extinction. And in the last analysis, it is inconceivable that the prime instinct and desire for reproduction can be overruled by any small body of men, or even such a method - if possible - could produce any highly desirable results.

I stand firmly on the ground that civilised man is not only capable of continuing the struggle, but of rising to a higher potentiality. To return to the difference between humankind and the lower animals, we must seek the cause of this physical degeneration, not in the pressure of new circumstances of life, but in the progress of one state of being to the next. I maintain that to solve this double problem of universal disease and universal remedy, we must look to the enormous growth of reasoning power and the conscious realisation of the means by which the desired effect can be obtained. The lower animals and primitive races of humankind do not perform physical acts by the process of reason. They are the servants of that strange directing law which governs the flower in its curiously ingenious devices to ensure cross-fertilisation, no less than the higher mammals in the rules of their gregarious societies, the law for which we have found no better name than Instinct. It is this "instinct" which guides all the nervous and muscular mechanisms of the animal's anatomical structure and is traceable as the motive in all its functional processes. But in man this instinct is constantly at war with, and is ever being controlled and superseded by, conscious directive reason.

The number of humankind's instinctive actions becomes more limited (1) as the result of a complete change of habit and (2) more noticeably as the outcome of a mental evolution which prompts him continually to seek a cause for every action, to analyse and understand the secret springs of his being. Moreover, civilisation - with its multitudinous problems of life and its perpetual interplay of personalities - demands, even in the smallest of physical actions, a constant reasoning, deliberate and rapid adaptation to surroundings which instinct is quite unable to provide. Man's whole body is ruled by two great forces whose dictates are not consistent with each other and one is usually disobeyed at the expense of the other. This fact, when considered, is obvious, but we have to determine the possible outcome. There are three alternatives. One - a return to instinctive guidance - is unthinkable. Two - the continuance of this dual government is the very condition that has led to the defects we wish to remedy. Three - humankind's evolution points to control. It was this last conclusion which, over 20 years ago, led me to investigate and to practise the means by which this conscious guidance and control could be obtained, so as to apply it to the eradication and prevention of human ills and to the maintenance of the body in a high degree of physical perfection.

CHAPTER 3

THE PROCESSES OF CONSCIOUS GUIDANCE AND CONTROL

The method of conscious control arises in practice from a close study of the imperfect use of the mechanism. Conscious control is practised, to some extent, by every civilised man and woman; therefore it is essential that its principles should be thoroughly understood. The method is based firstly on the understanding of the co-ordinated use of the muscular mechanisms and secondly on the acceptance of the hypothesis that each movement can be consciously directed.

In re-education of the pupil, the first effort is directed to education of the conscious mind. "Re-education" has a special meaning. In the normal process of education in the use of the body a person usually acts subconsciously, certain instincts commanding certain functions, while other functions are conducted deliberately. The teacher should establish in the pupil's mind the connection between cause and effect in every function of the body.

In the performance of any consciously guided muscular action there are four essential stages.

- (1) Conception of the movement required
- (2) Inhibition of wrong preconceived ideas that subconsciously suggest the way in which the movement should be performed.
- (3) New and conscious mental directions that will set in motion the muscular mechanisms essential to the correct performance of the action.
- (4) Movements - contractions and expansions - of the muscles that carry out the mental directions.

Let's take an example. A well-built muscular man in the prime of his life has a sedentary job and does violent exercise in his leisure time. He becomes a chronic sufferer from indigestion and complains that his exercises no longer do him any good and if he could give up his office job he might recover.

Ask him to stand upright and take a "deep breath". He will make movements that retard the proper action of the respiratory process. He will stiffen the neck muscles, throw the head back, hollow the back, protrude the stomach and take breath by audibly sucking air into the lungs. The thoracic muscles will be tensed, causing rigidity at the very moment when maximum mobility is needed. This all happens because the pupil has only his own mistaken guidance to rely on. Such a response is so common, so universal, that the truth of it can be tested on almost anybody. If this pupil is examined, many physical defects will be found that explain the digestive trouble he has and many parts of his organism will require re-adjustment. The spine must be lengthened, the thoracic capacity increased and the habit of sucking air in must be broken. It is essential at this point to inform the pupil that no amount of physical exercise will change his condition, because all

exercises will be carried out under a primary misconception of the proper use of the mechanism

Let's take the pupil through the four stages in the inculcation of conscious control. Firstly, he must have a clear understanding of the faults to be remedied. No tacit compliance on his part to a treatment he does not understand will be of the slightest value. He must accept the principle completely. Secondly, he must be taught to realise his wrong conceptions which result in wrong movements, whether the conceptions are conscious or unconscious. He must also be taught to inhibit and finally to eradicate these preconceived ideas and the mental directions that follow from them. Only then can he give the correct directions described next.

Thirdly, he must learn to give the correct mental directions to the mechanisms involved and there must be a clear difference in his mind between giving mental directions and the actual performance of the act carried out by the muscles. The principles of inhibition and volition are implicit in the recognition of this difference. As an example, therefore, the teacher asks the pupil to direct the neck to be free and the spine to lengthen. If the pupil does not frame and hold these wishes in his mind only, but tries to do them physically, he will invariably stiffen his neck and shorten his spine, because the movements habitually associated in his mind will shorten his muscles in accordance with the old associations. It must be stressed to the pupil that it is the means and not the end which must be considered. When the end is held in mind instinct or long habit will always try to attain the end by habitual methods. The correct means will bring subconscious actions up to the conscious level.

Fourthly, when the correct mental directions have been practised, through the combination of the pupil's attention and instruction by the teacher, the muscles involved will come into play in different combinations under conscious guidance and a reasoned act will take the place of the habitual ones which have caused deformation in the body. Keep in mind that the whole series of old, habitual movements has been correlated and compacted into one indivisible, rigid sequence which has invariably followed the mental response to the request, "Stand up straight".

Let's consider the general principles involved: firstly, the teaching method.

There are only a comparatively few successes in teaching "methods" used in breathing, speaking, singing, physical culture, sport etc. The few successes are usually attributed to natural aptitude and the teacher likes to explain cases flattering to himself and prefers not to look too closely at the failures. The truth is that these methods fail because the pupil is guided by subconscious direction and forced to rely too much on natural aptitude.

My own analysis of these teaching "methods" is that they are wrong because of a fundamental misconception and inaccurate analysis, leading to a false premise. The pupil's defects are dealt with through their effects and not their causes. It is not recognised that every defective action is a result of wrong preconception in the doer, whether subconsciously or consciously directed. A pupil cannot progress until these wrong preconceptions are eliminated. He must learn to stop doing what he did in the past. "Don't do this, but that", says the teacher, dealing with effects. In other words, it is assumed that the pupil's defective actions can be put right by "doing something else". This machinery works imperfectly and he is guided by the same wrong conceptions. To know whether practice is right or wrong demands judgement. Judgement is the result of experience. Correct experience means good judgement. Faulty experience means faulty judgement.

The very fact that the pupil was beset with defects shows that his kinaesthetic experiences were incorrect and harmful and as his judgement on this kinaesthetic basis was built on faulty experience, his judgement will be misleading and unsound

Therefore, we must dispense, for the time being, with this kinaesthetic sense of feeling as a guide in its old sphere of associations. We cannot learn new ways

based on our old procedures. Even if we did manage to eradicate some specific defect, we will probably cultivate many others, as bad as the first.

Such so-called practice is rarely directed by reasoned analysis on a reasoned plan. Nor does the teacher instruct with accuracy. He demands merely imitative acts from the pupil, not reasoned ones. This makes practice futile and teaching inadequate. The imitative method of teaching seems to me to be pure charlatany.

I will now outline the teaching method that should be adopted if we are to pass from subconscious to conscious behaviour, to develop and establish correct guiding centres and senses.

The conscious guidance and control advocated here is on a wide, general basis and not a specific one. Conscious control applied in a specific way is unthinkable, except as a result of the principle being applied as a universal. For instance, the consciously controlled movements of a muscle or a limb, as practised by athletes, are of little value in the science of living. The specific control of a finger, a leg, or a neck should primarily be the result of control of the mechanism of the torso, particularly the antagonistic muscular actions that bring about the movements.

For example, a person has too much tension on one side of the neck which pulls the head to one side. In the usual way, the teacher tells him to relax the neck and they both devote themselves to this end on a specific basis. This procedure is incorrect, putting the "end" before the "means".

The correct point of view is: - This person's psycho-physical mechanism is being used wrongly and it can be proved that his defects are caused entirely by his own ideas and acts.

The pupil should be taught, therefore to prevent his doing of the wrong thing and as a secondary procedure to learn the right way to use the mechanism.

Muscular tension in the neck is almost certain to be due to defective co-ordination in the muscles of the spine, back and torso generally.

This principle applies to the attempted eradication of all defects in all acts of daily life, including sports, games and playing a musical instrument.

We must remember that mental conceptions are the stimuli to the ideo-motor centre, which passes on the subconscious or conscious directions to the mechanism. In dealing with human defects, we must consider the inherited subconscious conceptions associated with the mechanisms involved. We must also be aware of the new conceptions which must come before the ideo-motor guiding directions connected with the new and correct use of the different mechanisms.

To establish successfully the new, correct conception, we must inhibit the old habitual one. The ideo-motor centre will then project the new correct directions to the complex muscular system and regularly eliminate the wrong directions by steadily building up those which are correct and reliable.

If we eliminate habitual, established conceptions, we are really eliminating our inherited subconsciousness, as well as all the defective uses of the psycho-physical mechanisms connected with it.

In attempting to change, we are confronted from the start with the problem of mental rigidity. Preconceptions and habits of thought are the first stumbling blocks to the teaching and learning of conscious control. Many preconceptions are the legacy of instinct: others are caused by habits started by a faulty understanding of the use of the mechanism: others by imitation of faults in other people. These preconceptions, therefore, must be broken down by performing muscular acts for the pupil vicariously: i.e. the teacher must move the parts in question while the pupil inhibits all muscular movements. It is impossible to describe this procedure in detail, as no two people are the same, but the teacher has to use considerable ingenuity and patience in helping the pupil to change and correct his faults and substitute the new, correct directions for the old, general directions which start off the chain of habitual movements. The mental habit must be tackled first. It usually lies below the conscious level, but may be reached by introspection and analysis and by performing habitual acts by non-habitual methods. Physical acts are then performed

consciously, as an effect of conscious conception and conscious direction of the mind.

In general, the pupil is unable to analyse his own actions. The imperfectly poised person does not have a correct understanding of what he is really doing and when in performing some act, like swinging a golf club, he is told he is making unnecessary movements of parts of his body, he will feel you are mistaken. In 90% of people there is harmful rigidity in the carriage of the body and when this is pointed out they almost invariably deny it indignantly.

If I ask a pupil to lengthen his spine he shortens it even more. Ask him to put his head forward and he will put it back. His sense of feeling is inaccurate and he cannot direct his actions. In teaching him, therefore, I do not ask him to lengthen his spine by performing an explicit action, but I get him to rehearse the new directions and after placing him in a position of mechanical advantage, I bring about - by manipulation - directly or indirectly, the desired flexibility and extension.

This process is repeated until the pupil gains a new kinaesthetic sense and the new and correct use of the parts of his body become established. It will no longer be easy for him to cause his physical machinery to work as it did before his defects were eradicated.

I frequently have to treat cases of congenital, or acquired, distortion and crippling. I protest against the mental attitude that looks on such ailments as incurable and beyond the control of the patient - the attitude of the person who says, "Poor fellow", to the sufferer and induces him to repeat and be dominated by this paralysing formula. As a matter of fact, the condition is perpetuated by the pupil's wrong ideas concerning "cause" and "effect" and the wrong working of his own mechanism. My method is to seek out, with the pupil, the real cause of the trouble and to discover what minimum control is left and from there to develop a healthy condition of the whole organism. I put much stress on the mental attitude of the pupil and explain to him that his own will - not mine or some higher will - is to be used to effect the required change, but it must first be directed in a rational way, to bring about a physical manifestation and must be aided by a simple mechanical principle and a proper manipulation. In this way, a reasoned and permanent confidence is built up in the pupil. I do not, for example, allow my pupil's to close the eyes during their work, in spite of constant pleas that they can "think better", or "concentrate better" with their eyes shut, because I find that this causes an attempt at self-hypnosis. I make them endeavour to exercise their conscious minds all the time. As I have said, the majority of physical defects come about by the action of the person's own will operating through wrong preconceived ideas, conscious or subconscious: these conditions can be changed by that same will directed by right conceptions implanted by the teacher.

An example. An actor injured his arm severely in a fall and was unable to lift it more than a few inches from his side without intense pain. After 6 weeks, doctors had been unable to relieve the condition and he came to see me.

I diagnosed that this was a subjectively, subconsciously willed disablement. Of course, I do not mean "affected" in the usual way; the actor was not that type of character.

I asked him to lift his arm. "I can't". "Please try". He did so and I could see that his use of the muscular mechanisms of the arm and neck was such that he placed a severe strain on the injured muscle, so severe that it would have affected a normal arm. He was exerting enough force to lift a sack of flour. He stiffened muscles that should have been relaxed and acted in the way someone using subconscious guidance does in unusual circumstances. In terms of my thesis, he acted in accordance with the subconscious guiding influence which had lost the standard of accuracy of instinct possessed by his early ancestors, while nothing had been cultivated by him in his civilised state to compensate for the loss.

I then proceeded to teach him conscious control through inhibitive direction and within ten minutes he lifted the arm with very little pain and resumed his work without relapse. Note that I did not ask him to "relax", because when someone

attempts to "relax", they do so without true conscious awareness of the processes of doing so. Note also that my method can be applied to similar accidents, as well as general self-development and control and no hypnotic "suggestion" was used regarding feeling no pain. Pain is nature's way of telling us something is wrong and these danger signals must be heeded to deal with the danger.

Quote from "The Psychic Treatment of Disease" - Berthold Kern : -

"Experimental observation has proved that hypnotic suggestion is by far surpassed in the duration of its effects by suggestion in the waking state and this again by regular teaching and practice. This is physiologically explicable. Hypnotic suggestion obtains its results solely through the intensity of the isolated stimulus and through the brain-track it leaves behind, which has an abnormally slight connection with the whole associated mechanism of the brain. Contrary to this, regular instruction is based on the strong associative implanting of the stimulus and the brain-track it leaves behind with the normal activity of the brain, i.e. on the many sidedness of the nervous connections and their reproductive effect, whilst in the first case, the trace is easily effaced. In the second, the accompanying reproductive, sympathetic stimulus increases and preserves the result obtained, as well as affecting the other bodily functions depending on it".

Another example, a stutterer. He had a habit of moving his arm up and down in speaking. I asked him why he did this and he said he felt it assisted him in speaking. I explained this was a delusion and the movement was a hindrance. He saw that a great deal of valuable energy, needed in speaking, was being diverted to his arm, an arm which, if amputated, would leave his mental and mechanical processes of speaking unaffected. He became convinced on these points and I helped him to establish a working conscious control and improve his general co-ordination.

I made the following request, "Give directions to these newly developed co-ordinators. You will then prevent employing your arms in speaking and in your general attempts at conscious guidance in private. In public, adopt the following procedure. Whenever someone makes conversation, you must, as a primary principle, refuse to answer by mentally saying 'No'. (This will hold in check the old subconscious habit of moving your arm. It constitutes the inhibition of the old errors before attempting to speak)".

"Then, give the new and correct directions to your general co-ordinators and command the means of controlled speaking".

"Make this a principle of life".

In realising the energy being used in moving his arm was misdirected, and could be used more efficiently for speaking, he was able to achieve satisfactory breath and speech control in a few weeks.

The observant person must have noted the singularly small range of physical control exercised by the average adult outside the narrow sphere of his daily routine actions. In sport, for instance, the golfer continually hits bad shots because he cannot register consciously what is happening during his swing. To vary is to be human, but there should not be such an alarming gulf between our best and our worst. It is very serious from the mental point of view. It shakes our confidence in ourselves to the very roots of our mental and physical foundations. Such experiences have a bad effect on the emotions generally and the person concerned develops irritation and other undesirable traits at a time of recreation and pleasure when these harmful conditions should be absent.

It will be readily conceded that during games and sports the performer's mental condition should be in keeping with the pleasurable and health-giving form of outdoor exercise.

The coach should first discover if his pupil is reasonably co-ordinated in those muscular acts which are essential to the proper carrying out of his instructions in the performance of definite acts demanding co-ordination.

If these tests are not made, the beginner will waste valuable time and energy and become unduly apprehensive in his attempts to play golf, or whatever, at any moderate standard.

If we employ, as the fundamental in teaching, conscious guidance and control on a basis of re-education and general co-ordination, the following advantages should accrue: -

- (1) The pupil will be made aware of his specific defects in physical performance.
- (2) These defects can be inhibited and the teacher can assist him to experience the correct use of the mechanism. Sooner or later, the pupil will not need the teacher and will perform physical acts accurately and precisely.

I know someone who, by using conscious control, mounted and rode a bike without mishap at the first attempt. The next day he rode 60 miles. He also fenced passably on first taking the foil. In each case, the principles involved were explained and he carefully watched an exhibition of them, first analysing the actions and then reproducing them on a clearly apprehended plan. This should be a normal human accomplishment. Just as a cat uses sheer instinct to gauge her powers in jumping, so with more reason and greater ease, the human being - by using conscious control in place of instinct - should be able to direct his powers to a definite end with less physical strain and less frequent repetition, i.e. "Practice".

I am often asked the difference between instinct and intuition. Instinct is the result of the accumulated subconscious, psycho-physical experiences of man at all stages of development that continue with us, until singly or collectively, we reach the stage of conscious control. Intuition is the result of "conscious reasoned" psycho-physical experiences during the process of evolution.

The word "subconsciousness" is but a formula for our habits of life. I hold strongly that when we reach the state of conscious control in civilisation and establish new and correct habits, a new and correct subconsciousness will become established.

I wish to re-emphasise my view regarding the supreme importance of conscious control.

Conscious control is imperative because, in our advancing civilisation, instinct fails to meet the needs of our complex environment. Without conscious control, we may know we have defects, may know further what these defects are, may know what explicit improvement is required and yet may be entirely unable, by means of imitation, or orthodox, traditional teaching methods, to effect the desired end. On the other hand, using conscious control, true development (unfolding), education (drawing out), and evolution are possible along intellectual lines by means of reasoned processes, analysed, understood and explicitly directed. Conscious control enables us to recognise a fault and readily apply the remedial process.

It is my belief, confirmed by research and practice of 20 years, that man's supreme inheritance of conscious guidance and control is within the grasp of anyone who will take the trouble to cultivate it. It is no esoteric doctrine or mystical cult, but a synthesis of entirely reasonable propositions that can be demonstrated in pure theory and substantiated in common practice.

I will now consider, in detail, a case for the elucidation of these various points of theory and practice.

A 14 year old youth was sent to me by a throat specialist. He had removed two nodules from the boy's vocal chords and given him special treatment in a nursing home for a month, but with no improvement. The boy's attempts to speak resulted in a hoarse whisper, accompanied by spasmodic twitching of various parts of the body, and facial contortions, all brought about by misconceptions left untouched by the

specialist as to the effort required to speak. He had been taught to try to form simple words and sounds without any analysis of the wrong means he used to this end. His efforts to carry out the specialist's directions were made in the old habitual way.

The boy had opened his mouth imperfectly and was asked to open it wider, but did not recognise that he had not opened his mouth sufficiently; neither had the specialist noticed this failure, nor the concomitant contortions and automatic reactions. You may as well say to someone, "You've been speaking improperly, now speak properly", and call that a lesson. Indeed in the early Victorian era, instruction was similar to, "Open your mouth wide, speak up and don't make nervous movements."

It is not the "end", but the "means", the teacher and pupil must work for. This discovery of the "means" varies in different subjects and cannot be stated in a general formula. It can only be the result of trained observation and patient, careful investigation and experience. In practice, the anxiety of this particular pupil to speak along the lines of his old preconceived ideas had made his many lessons from the specialist fruitless and had set in motion the old, habitual train of irrelevant and hampering actions.

My own method is: Observe, analyse and bring about a proper working of the whole mechanism: then to point out the directions to be brought into play by the pupil, namely, the inhibiting of the muscular tension in the jaw. The pupil must realise that this involves no action whatsoever on his part. Inhibition will lead to the freeing of the jaw, which allows me to move it for him. This gives him the correct kinaesthetic sense for the first time and he sees that the desired movement of the jaw is easily possible. The subconscious contortions are pointed out one by one and are inhibited by the pupil until gradually the whole faulty mechanism is remedied. Then the right actions are built up, such as the free, controlled opening of the mouth, leading to the even, "pneumatic" breath, the upright, balanced poise, clear enunciation and correct vocalisation.

The brains of pupil and teacher are at work the whole time. No "hypnotism", no autosuggestion, but confident, skilful, patient and explicit directions of the teacher remove vagueness and waste of mental and physical effort.

The analysis of even the simplest processes is apt to appear unduly complex. This case can be stated briefly on the practical side. It took 20 lessons to break down bad habits, another 12 to effect a complete, permanent cure.

Regarding the "simple" act of opening the mouth, three factors should be emphasised: firstly, wrong preconceived ideas: secondly, the pupil's delusions in thought and action: thirdly pernicious dependence on sensation based solely on experience of defective action.

Few people, when opening the mouth, will not throw the head back with the idea of lifting the upper jaw away from the lower. They do not see that inhibition of the subconscious directions that keep the mouth closed will result in relaxing the tension so that the jaw will drop.

When I ask a pupil to let me move his lower jaw away from the upper, he usually increases the tension that keeps the lower jaw shut. There is an enormous waste of energy in these constant, irrational tensions.

The matter becomes seriously harmful in singing and speaking, when too much force is used to open and close the mouth. The neck is stiffened, head thrown back, larynx depressed and good vocalisation is impossible. Tensions like these bring about common forms of throat and ear trouble that so frequently defy both ordinary and specialised medical treatment. By inducing correct conception in the pupil, I can teach him to command, for himself, a free condition in which the larynx is slightly raised and relaxed instead of tightened and depressed. Greater mobility of facial muscles, lips and tongue will follow and produce clear enunciation and vocalisation. This, in the briefest summary, is the method of teaching conscious control of the muscular mechanisms.

Let's consider briefly, the effects of this method. Generally, the first effects are a general stimulation and increased efficiency of the whole mechanism. This is

easy to understand, because in civilised people little demand is made on any but the commonly exercised muscles, which are usually called on for very little effort and a general sluggishness supervenes, with consequent stagnation leading to auto-intoxication. In breaking up the old, motor habits, the muscular mechanisms are brought into full play, toxins are broken up and increased vitality, power and enormously improved efficiency, follow as a matter of course. The power to resist infectious disease is also increased and - possibly the greatest effect, since it guarantees the lasting qualities of the change which is brought about - an ability to check the formation of any bad, incipient muscular or mental habit.

This last effect is of the first importance, because it shows the power of the individual - once these principles of conscious control are mastered - to be lord of his own body.

I cannot speak at length of the specific effects produced by the inculcation of my methods, but I have a list of cases, some in which I have been astonished at the results. These include cases, diagnosed by physicians in England, Australia and the U.S.A, as paralysis, varicosity, T.B, asthma, adhesions of the lungs, haemorrhage, congenital and other malfunctions, effects of infantile paralysis, many varieties of ear, nose and throat trouble, hay fever, chronic constipation, incipient appendicitis and colitis. In no case have I discovered any relapse that was not curable by a few further instructions in the principles outlined. Looking to the future and the development and elaboration of this method, I foresee a race educated on the lines of conscious guidance and control, eminently well-fitted to meet any circumstances which civilisations of the future may impose. Minds and bodies will be adaptable to any occupation that may be their lot. To those who have been educated in these principles, no severe physical exercise is necessary, since there are no stagnant eddies in the system where toxins can accumulate and to them will belong a complete command of their physical organisms. That this practical - and by no means visionary or untried - psycho-therapy will, in time, supersede the tentative and restricted methods of somato-therapy, I am confident and sincerely hope that its great benefits will not be confined to any one race, or people. The wonderful improvements in health - often deemed "miraculous" by the uninitiated - which have been effected in adults, adumbrate the potentialities for efficiency that may be developed by children of the new race.

It is essential that the peoples of civilisation should understand the value of their inheritance, that outcome of the long processes of evolution, which will enable them to govern the uses of their own psycho-physical mechanisms. By and through consciousness and the application of a reasoning intelligence, humankind may rise above the powers of all disease and physical disabilities. This triumph is not to be won in sleep, trance, submission, paralysis or anaesthesia, but in clear, open-eyed, reasoning, deliberate consciousness and apprehension of the wonderful potentialities possessed by humankind, the transcendent inheritance of a conscious mind.

CHAPTER 4

CONSCIOUS GUIDANCE AND CONTROL IN PRACTICE

While under the guidance of the subconscious mind humankind cannot readily adapt to rapid changes in civilisation. A proper standard of mental and physical perfection implies an adaptability to turn from one occupation, in which certain sets of muscles are used, to another where different muscles are employed.

Example: - A man who does clerical work is suddenly called upon to work as a ploughman. As he is subconsciously guided, he will tackle the problem through his sense of feeling - kinaesthesia - and strive directly for the desired "end", with no thought of the "means". He will not consider the particular demands that will be made on different parts of his organism. His mind is fixed on achieving the act of ploughing.

So he grips the plough handles and has great difficulty in keeping a straight furrow. He will tense certain muscles unnecessarily and relax others that should be doing the most work. The arm muscles will be tensed too much and his general use will destroy his equilibrium. In his efforts to plough successfully, he begins to cultivate new, harmful habits. However, if reasoned conscious control is adopted from the start, the man leading a sedentary life could take up ploughing without fear of cultivating harmful habits and do so in one tenth of the time taken by a subconsciously controlled person.

Footnote: - In the past 2 years English hospitals have been crowded with men who had sedentary jobs and have "broken down" during army training.

Let's look at how he could tackle this new job using conscious control. Firstly, he will consider the "means". Secondly, he will take time to consider the factors to be overcome.

The manipulation of the plough requires skill and equilibrium under difficult conditions. He will realise that his body must remain steady and support the arms and legs and the "give and take" required to keep the plough straight will be provided by the joints of the arms and legs, this freedom meeting the different movements of the handles. His highly trained guiding sensations will not permit him to make more physical tension with any part of the muscular system than is absolutely necessary and only the particular muscles best adapted for keeping his equilibrium will be used.

It will be clear from this example that in the consciously controlled stages of psycho-physical development, men and women will be able, without fear of mental or physical harm, to adapt themselves at once to any unusual circumstances. They will act, when faced with the unaccustomed or unsuspected, at the direction of their conscious, reasoning minds, before any promptings from the subconscious can take possession of them. They will also meet sudden surprise by conscious reasoning and accurate judgement. Instinctive, unreasoning reactions to sudden alarming

situations must be replaced by control and reason, the main factors. This point cannot be emphasised enough. On all sides we see the destruction, waste, loss of lives and energy that are the results of a civilisation based on subconscious action.

It is our duty now to superimpose a new civilisation founded on reason rather than feeling-tones and debauched emotion; on conscious control rather than instinct. Primitive man was terror-struck when an eclipse of the sun occurred. Civilised people today carry out the everyday tasks of living guided by the same imperfect forces. Modern man has learned many things which were inscrutable to primitive man, but display the same lack of control when faced with the unknown. Suddenly-angered men will make a retort that later appears foolish or inadequate. Calm reflection makes us think of "things we might have said or done". This shows that in the heat of the moment emotions held sway, while reason and control were in abeyance. Subconsciously- controlled people panic when faced with an emergency that brings danger.

In such circumstances many become self-hypnotised and out of touch with their reason. For example, in a house-fire, people will try to save valuable articles by throwing them out of a window, only to be smashed on the ground.

Here are a few more examples. My friend, a man of considerable learning, spent a night in the same hotel as me. During the night, the hotel caught fire and I woke up to see smoke and flames coming through the walls of my room. I rushed to my friend's room, told him of the danger and alerted the other guests. On taking a head-count in the street, my friend was not accounted for. I went to his room and found him fully dressed and totally unaware of the danger to his life. He had even shaved.

Thousands of such examples could be listed, such as Carlyle failure to "keep in communication with his reason", when he heard that Henry Taylor was ill and rushed off to see him with a bottle of medicine, without knowing what was wrong with him.

A pupil of mine, a managing director of a large international company was very interested in the psychological tendencies and characteristics of young men trying to make their way in the business world. I knew such a man and the M.D said he would give him a job. The young man later told me about his interview. The M.D had insulted him by making him wait until he finished a letter and then suddenly jumped up and shouted, "What the devil do you know about business!?" The young man was so unnerved he could not answer further questions and was not offered the job. I told him that the M.D had been testing him to see how he handled the unexpected and he should not have allowed himself to be insulted. He failed because the M.D wanted men capable of dealing with unexpected events.

In the animal stage of evolution instinctive reaction in unusual circumstances is remarkable and allows the animal to make exactly the one right move in a dangerous situation. On the other hand, instinct can be limited in civilised man, where subconscious control is the guiding principle. This fact perhaps accounts more than any other for the rise and fall of nations, for no community has yet cultivated a national consciousness in communication with reason. The psychology of nations is too big a subject to deal with here, but logically, if the principles of conscious control, as applied to the individual, were further adopted by a nation, it is unthinkable that it should suffer deterioration.

It would act in all crises in accordance with reason and, guided by judgement born of tested experience, it would be supreme.

CHAPTER 5

CONSCIOUS GUIDANCE AND CONTROL

APPREHENSION AND RE-EDUCATION

The average person may show complete nerve control and balance in accustomed experiences, but when confronted by sudden unexpected situations may be reduced to the level of the terrified animal. This shows that we have not evolved enough to use our reasoning faculties to meet any emergency with calmness and control and do the right thing at the psychological moment. The clever barrister takes advantage of this human weakness to unbalance a witness, during cross-examination, by an unexpected attack on a new line.

This can, however, work both ways. In one case, a barrister said to a witness, "Now, Mr X, may I suggest?", and was told, "No, you may not suggest, but you can question". This unnerved the barrister, and instead of regaining his usual control, he tried to get even with the witness. He missed many important points for his case, allowing his feelings to dominate his judgements and consequently lost the case.

Another example: - A famous trophy being stolen at a racehorse meeting. It was guarded by several policemen, who allowed themselves to be distracted by a cleverly staged mock disturbance by some men, which allowed their accomplice to remove the trophy while the policemen's attention was diverted. The thief counted on the psychological fact that the policemen would not use their reason by continuing to guard the trophy during the disturbance. The thief who planned the robbery was a highly developed psychologist.

It must be obvious that this wonderful power of reasoning is generally wasted and this narrows our sphere of usefulness. To progress, therefore, in future, subconscious guidance must be superseded by conscious reasoning, which can safeguard us in unusual circumstances and critical moments. With real progress on a firm basis, we must expect a great increase in "critical moments" and "unusual circumstances", and we must develop to meet them with calmness and common-sense that will allow us to do the right thing. This failing in reasoned action is as common in the educated as the uneducated and is a serious indictment of our educational system. Education, as it is at present, does not offer a real solution of the problem for people of the future.

Consider a common human weakness - worry. Millions of people have a "worry habit", which is the outcome of lack of reasoning. People worry to exactly the same degree about something even when the cause has been removed. In my next book, I will deal with this habit of worry in more detail.

Worry is one of the most difficult mental habits a teacher can be called on to eradicate, because it builds delusion and undue fear with no relation to common-sense or fact. In doing some simple task in their first lessons, many pupils show a

degree of apprehension out of all proportion to the point at issue, making progress almost impossible and causing considerable distress.

I will give some simple examples of difficulties that seriously retard the progress of well-meaning, highly educated people in undergoing any training.

Naturally, a teacher has to point out at the beginning that this or that is wrong; and often the pupil immediately shows unnecessary apprehension, the most retarding feature in any teaching work. For years I have devoted special attention to it and always try from the beginning to put the pupil into "communication with his reason". There are many ways of doing this in the early stages of teaching, but in general, I point out that although these things are wrong, the pupil need not worry, as this is to be expected. Wrong things can be corrected. I draw attention to the fact that the pupil comes to the teacher because something is wrong, so why worry when defects are pointed out! This should evoke pleasure, rather than worry. In other words, the pupil will realise that the teacher can detect defects and diagnose their causes. When this is done, the pupil's mind will be at ease and a changed mental attitude will follow. But people are so out of communication with their reason, that it needs days of re-education to establish a satisfactory working basis.

To bring about the correct performance of any act, using my principles, it is not necessary at the beginning to ask the pupil to make any specific physical effort. This fact should immediately remove any causes for apprehension, but in many cases it does not. When this is the case, the teacher must explain that the reason the pupil is unable to perform the act correctly is that he believes there is something for him to do physically, but the very opposite is necessary. He is doing what is wrong. Obviously, he should start by ceasing to do the wrong thing, not by trying blindly to do what is right. The process is this: - Apprehensively, he tries to do what he thinks the teacher wants. The old, subconscious directions follow in their usual channels and, before he knows it, he is performing the act in his old, habitual manner. He must learn, therefore, to inhibit these incorrect, subconscious directions that result in undue tension and the imperfect use of his muscles. But instead of using inhibition, he adds to the difficulties by renewing his efforts on the old basis to put right what he is told is wrong and actually uses more force according to his own estimate of the amount needed to perform the act. And why so? Mainly because the ordinary person has lost the habit of inhibition and also because he is guided here by his sense of feeling, which is the most unreliable guide.

When it is explained to the pupil; that inhibition is the first step in his re-education, that his fear that he may be doing wrong, plus his intense desire to do right, are the secrets of his failure, he will invariably try to prevent himself from doing anything by exerting force in the opposite direction. And so he creates a second harmful force, which in conjunction with the first, serves only to increase the undue physical tension and to intensify an already exaggerated, apprehensive condition. The fundamental principle in the re-education of such a pupil is a prevention of this unnecessary apprehension. He must not attempt to remedy any defects by "doing something" physically in accordance with his sensory appreciation, which is the outcome of his erroneous, preconceived ideas and incorrect psycho-physical experience. His reasoning power is dominated by his sense of feeling, so that he cannot carry out any physical act except the one he feels to be right, despite the fact that by his reasoning faculties and practical proof, he knows that his sense of feeling is misleading. He must therefore, understand that frequently in re-education, the correct way to perform an act feels the impossible way. There is only one way out of this difficulty. He must recognise that feeling is dangerously faulty, that he must regain his lost power of inhibition and develop conscious control. The teacher must, with his hands, move the pupil's body for him and give him the correct kinaesthetic experience of the performance of the act.

To the uninitiated, this may seem a simple matter, but if my reader puts it to the test, I can convince him that it is quite otherwise in the majority of cases. This is not surprising when it is realised that as soon as the teacher places his hands on the pupil and attempts to move him, the pupil is at once in contact with his faulty,

deceptive, dominant sense of feeling. The pupil will act in precisely the same way if I try to do the act for him, as he would if I asked him to do it without my assistance. He is just as fearful of the result of one request as of the other and this makes it impossible to re-educate him. He conjures up all kinds of fears that he will do this or that incorrectly. If you mention that he did a certain thing when you placed your hands on him, he will try physically to prevent it next time. This is one of the worst errors a pupil can make. It is usually attended by more tension and fear than when he performed the act which you pointed out was incorrect. Re-education work really begins here and it can take months to bring the pupil into "communication with his reason." We must create new and correct habits and eradicate needless apprehension from the souls of human beings. We must break the chains which have for so long held us to that directive mental plane that belongs to the early stages of evolution. The adoption of conscious guidance and control - man's supreme inheritance - must follow and the outcome will be a race of men and women who will outstrip their ancestors in every known sphere: they will enter new spheres undreamt of by the great majority of the civilised people of our time. The world will then make, in one century, greater progress in evolution towards a real civilisation than it has made in three.

CHAPTER 6

INDIVIDUAL ERRORS AND DELUSIONS

Frequent reference has already been made to individual delusions, errors and misconceptions and I wish now to draw special attention to those of a more personal nature, which have not been fully recognised despite being forerunners of unusually harmful and persistent bad habits. These misconceptions are indicated in the following cases. They are the results of laudable attempts to accomplish something considered necessary to welfare and success in life.

- (1) The attempt to change the shape or use of part of the organism and to conceal some supposed or real psycho-physical peculiarity or weakness.
- (2) Clinging to wrong reasoning, despite undoubted evidence that shows the errors in such reasoning regarding the procedure adopted to prevent or cure attacks of illness and painful experience.
- (3) The decision that a certain condition is present and the conclusion as to its degree of harmfulness, or the extent of its general effect on the organism, or its influence on the daily conduct of life.
- (4) The attempt to remedy what the pupil thinks is a lack of concentration.
- (5) The attempt to benefit from relaxation after recognising undue tension of muscles, not only in physical acts, but also during attempts to rest in a chair or bed etc.
- (6) The detection by the pupil of symptoms considered serious and calling for immediate eradication and future prevention. The original conception is influenced by warped, subconscious experiences and a narrow and perverted view is taken of the conditions present.
- (7) The "one-brain-track" method is in operation and the modus operandi adopted by the person is deduced from false premises. Symptoms are considered causes and the main aim is the desired "end", not the proper, considered analysis of the "means" to that "end".

The following cases will emphasise the little-recognised, all-important fact that man's attempts at self-help on a subconscious basis cause him to live in a self-created danger zone that grows larger by each new experience in those psycho-physical experiences in preventive and curative spheres.

The foregoing applies to a wide range of bad habits in the whole organism, such as: -

- (1) The cultivation of harmful habits through misdirected energy and mental delusions that cause disorders of eyes, ears, nose and throat etc.
- (2) The development of the dangerous habit of not hearing any instructions, opinions, advice or argument, which in practical procedures would contradict the subconscious habit associated with some defect or other abnormal condition
- (3) The development of overcompensation in some direction: "running an idea to death ", as we say.
- (4) The harmful domination of a "fixed idea", by which the person struggles to gain an "end", without adequate consideration of the correct "means".

CASE 1: - AN ATTEMPT TO HIDE A THIN NECK.

This man's wife told him that his thin neck made him look much older than he was. He concluded that the only way to hide this unsatisfactory, unsightly part of his anatomy was by wearing a high collar. This was not enough and he deliberately cultivated the habit of shortening his neck until the jaw and the back of the head rested on the collar.

In standing, sitting, walking etc., this misuse of the neck muscles became a firmly established habit associated with shortening the neck and spine and interfering with the co-ordination of the whole organism. This had caused: -

- (1) Exaggerated rolling of his body when walking.
- (2) Pressure on the jaw and the back of the head from the collar.
- (3) Marked curvature of the spine with the usual shortening of stature and protruding abdominal wall. Harmful flaccidity of the abdominal muscles and general stagnation of the abdominal viscera.
- (4) Fallen arches of the feet - one foot caused great pain in walking.
- (5) Discolouring of the skin and a condition of the eyes which showed serious internal disorders.
- (6) The upper part of the chest was held unusually high and the thorax was harmfully rigid.
- (7) Apprehensive mental condition in personal and practical affairs of life.

His doctors were unanimous that he was suffering from nervous and digestive troubles and had made no improvement in many years of treatment. In his own words, he "had gone from bad to worse", until he was too nervous to even cross the street. He had attacks of giddiness, complained of painful distension after meals and suffered from insomnia.

CASE 2: - AN ATTEMPT TO CONCEAL HIS HEIGHT WHEN BEING INTERVIEWED BY ACTOR-MANAGERS OF SHORTER STATURE.

It is well known in the theatre that actor-managers like to be taller than support - actors. This support-actor had lost many lucrative engagements because he was usually taller than the actor-managers who interviewed him. He was of fine physique

and in good health. He decided to use his mechanism in such a way that he would appear shorter than he was during interviews, a "one-idea" solution. He did this for 4 or 5 years and came to me because he had suffered for a long time from loss of voice, general exhaustion, and a nervous and digestive disorder. He finally had a nervous breakdown. He suffered from: -

- (1) Harmful curvature of the lumbar spine with corresponding intra-abdominal pressure.
- (2) Harmful depression of the larynx and its accessories.
- (3) Exaggerated "gasping" in breathing during dramatic and vocal efforts.
- (4) Rigidity of the thorax and minimum intra-thoracic capacity.
- (5) Lack of mental control in any attempts at psycho-physical re-education and co-ordination.
- (6) Pessimistic mental outlook with recurring fits of depression.
- (7) In standing and walking, the hips were held too far forward, knee joints pressed too far back and the angle of the torso from the hips was harmfully inclined backwards, with the tendency to narrow the back.

CASE 3: - A FIXED IDEA REGARDING A DEFINITE PROCEDURE ADOPTED AFTER A WEEK'S ILLNESS IN BED.

This lady developed certain symptoms for the first time. She then decided on a practical, common-sense method of dealing with them, which would undoubtedly have worked in the long run. She decided on mental and physical activities to fight the symptoms, but realised that her remedy had made matters worse and she was very ill indeed. This condition became a fixed idea.

She considered the problem and told me she had decided that the best remedy must be to go to bed immediately to prevent "the possibilities of increasing the severity of the attack". She was absolutely convinced that she must not make any mental or physical effort to resist the disorder when it attacked her. Once the conscience seized on the excuse for what the mental and physical "make-up" really craved, she was doomed and her conclusions were really influenced by this subconscious tendency. It is not surprising that despite medical help, after 6 months the attacks became more frequent and she stayed in bed for longer and longer periods. But the worst feature in her case was the increasing inability to make a real effort in the direction of health. She was developing a tendency to allow things to take their course, cultivating the serious habit of being guided by what she felt rather than by reason. At this point, her relatives sent her to see me.

I suspected at the start that she had an incorrect mental outlook and after a few lessons she admitted this. A review of this mental conception shows that the whole procedure she had used constituted a prostitution of those mental, physical and spiritual forces that are essential to good health. She suffered from stagnation of the vital organs responsible for good digestion and elimination. This was proved by the results accrued from my method of psycho-physical treatment that restored adequate functioning after eradication of her fixed mental conception. The position was as follows: -

Certain symptoms were recognised which were the result of stagnation of organs that needed increased activity. In fact, they would have yielded to a steady walk of a mile or two each day. Lying in bed was only a palliative measure. As a consequence of her first impressions - through her debauched sense of feeling - when she adopted active measures as a remedy, she made a decision against using

them in future. One idea of going to bed when an attack came was rigidly held in mind. The idea became an obsession. She became less and less in communication with her reason and the fact that her condition became more serious did not cause her to drop the bad treatment.

It is possible to give hundreds of such cases and attention is specially drawn to the one-idea principle in meeting life's difficulties. Such a fixed approach deals solely with the "end" instead of the "means".

If the reader's interest is aroused, important benefits will be gained in life and its more difficult problems will be sensibly considered without fear of the disastrous results which are now so common.

CHAPTER 7

NOTES AND INSTANCES

Many people have written to me since this book was published. Three questions occur again and again. I am forced to infer that these points are of peculiar interest and that no satisfactory explanation has been given in the application of the broad principles I have laid down. In the American edition, therefore, I will treat these questions and other matters which arise from them for the benefit of future readers.

The three main questions are: -

- (1) What is the correct standing position and what is the position of mechanical advantage?
- (2) How is the reader to apply the principles of conscious control to specific bad habits, such as overindulgence, whether in tobacco, alcohol, particular foods etc., or to the cure of diseases such as asthma, T.B, spinal curvature, appendicitis etc.?
- (3) What are the outward signs of improvement and are there scientific reasons for these results?

I will take the questions separately.

- (1) What is the correct standing position and what is the position of mechanical advantage?

The average person does not know that he cannot adopt a stable equilibrium and a position that ensures perfect mobility, unless his feet are placed to give a stable pose and a ready pivot and fulcrum. The best base is obtained by placing the feet at an angle of about 45 degrees to each other. In all other erect positions - defects becoming more exaggerated as this angle increases - there is a tendency to hollow and shorten the back and protrude the stomach: if any effort is made to avoid these serious faults in posture, a stiffened, uneasy and unstable attitude will result, unless the feet are moved to the correct position. It is not possible to set out in written language the correct pose of the feet and legs in the ideal standing position and I subjoin 4 photographs, not only of the correct position of the feet - the fundamental problem - but also how the whole body is thrown into gear.

But when this ideal position is understood, the task of obtaining it has still to be undertaken. With reference to this, I quote my pamphlet of July, 1908, "WHY 'DEEP BREATHING' AND PHYSICAL CULTURE EXERCISES DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD".

This pamphlet shows that the ideal position varies slightly, according to the idiosyncrasies of the person concerned. The particular passage is as follows: -

"In the first place, to allow someone to assume, by himself, a certain standing position, means that his own perceptions and sensations are given the sole responsibility of bringing about the co-ordination on which a standing position depends. He is unable to carry this responsibility.

In beginners, perception and sensations are unreliable. The teacher has the responsibility for certain detailed guidance, the literal carrying out of which will ensure for the pupil, the correct standing position for him. I emphasise this because no one stereotyped position can be correct for every pupil. When someone employs different parts of his body harmfully in standing and walking, the physical machinery must be corrected gradually, changing the position from time to time to avoid serious harm. In trying to adopt a 'correct standing position', the pupil puts severe strain on the throat and paves the way for throat, ear and eye disorders."

For example, a boy who stoops very much and combines sinking above and below the clavicles with abnormal protrusion of the shoulder blades. If asked to stand up straight, he will use undue physical effort and the shoulders will be thrown backward and upward, the shoulder blades further protruded and the front upper part of the chest elevated and expanded. There will be narrowing, sinking and flabbiness of the lower dorsal and posterior thoracic region, fixed protrusion and rigidity of the front chest, arching of the lumbar spine, shortening of the body and harmful stiffening of the neck and arms; all this instead of fullness, broadness and firmness of the back, free mobility of the chest walls, normal curvature of the lumbar region and lengthening of the spine. With the arms hanging vertically, the relative position of that part of the thorax where the lungs are situated will be in front of the arms - as it should be - instead of behind. In such a position, the boy feels helpless and tires rapidly, due to imperfect co-ordination and any attempt to accustom him to this erect posture will result in deterioration.

Arching and narrowing of the back is exactly the opposite to what is required by nature, i.e. widening of the back and a more normal extended position of the spine. Also, if these conditions of the back are first secured, the neck and arms will no longer be stiffened.

To eradicate these harmful conditions, the teacher must place the pupil in a position of mechanical advantage from which the pupil, by giving mental directions dictated by the teacher, can ensure the posture specifically correct for himself, although he is not yet conscious of what that posture is.

I elaborated on this point in my pamphlet, "Why We Breathe Incorrectly", November, 1909, and I quote: -

"There is no such thing as a 'correct standing position' for every individual, but a correct co-ordination. Also, if someone is co-ordinated, he can re-adjust his body to almost any position with adequate and correct movements of the respiratory mechanism and perfect vocal control. Continual re-adjustment of the body without physical tension is very beneficial and is proved by the high standard of health and long life in acrobats. It is a significant fact that the opposite is the case with athletes, showing that undue muscle-tension does not conduce to health and longevity".

It will now be evident that the primary principle involved in correct standing is placing of the feet in that position which will ensure their greatest effect at base, pivot and fulcrum and thereby throw the limbs and trunk into that pose where they will be correctly aided by gravity. Note - diagram AA - the weight of the body is mainly on the rear foot, hips back as far as possible, without unbalancing and without deliberately throwing the body forward. This movement backwards starts at the ankles and mainly affects the hip and ankle joints. When inclining the body forward, there must be no bending of the spine or neck: from the hips upwards the relative positions of all parts of the torso must remain unchanged. When the position is assumed, each person must allow proper lengthening of the spine and widening of the back. This needs appropriate psycho-physical training.

This standing position explained above is physiologically correct as a primary factor in the act of walking. The weight is thrown largely on the rear foot, allowing the other knee to bend and the forward foot to be lifted: At the same time the ankle of the rear foot should be bent so that the whole body is inclined slightly forward, thus allowing the propelling force of gravity to come into play. It simply means allowing the body to incline forward from the ankle supporting the weight and preventing oneself from falling by allowing it to be taken in turn by the advanced foot. The mechanical disadvantage shown in the "rolling gait" is impossible when the instructions given here are followed. The effect on the whole mechanism, when co-ordinating principles are used, is that there is a constant tendency for the spine to lengthen.

Most people I see use too much tension and effort in walking by shortening the spine and legs, pressing down into the floor, instead of lightening that pressure by throwing the weight forward to move freely. Civilised people are becoming more and more flatfooted. Lightness and freedom of movement will restore the natural arch of the flat foot.

Faults given in this instance are seen in the carriage of many people today and this fact is important to medical men. Patients are constantly advised to take walking exercise, although in many cases it does more harm than good. Fresh air and gentle exercise are nullified if the patient does so by exaggerating and perpetuating the defects which led to the prescription.

The same rules apply to sitting and standing. Very few people have the correct mental conception of the "means" in performing these acts. Most people use too much tension in the body and lower limbs. In many cases, the arms are actually used. The most striking actions, however, are the throwing back of the head and stiffening and shortening the neck. I will now describe the correct method, but it is essential to keep in mind that it is useless to give "directions" to the mechanism until the original habit and the mental conception of the action have been eradicated. If, before "directing", the pupil has already fixed in his mind that he is going to sit down, as he knows sitting down, the suggestion will at once bring into play all the old vicious co-ordinations and the new "directions" will never influence the mechanism. Firstly, rid the mind of the idea of sitting down and consider each move independently of the final consequence, the "means", not the "end". Secondly, stand in the position already described, backs of legs almost touching the chair. Thirdly, direct the neck to be free and the head forward and up. Note that to direct the neck to be free does not mean allowing the head to fall forward on to the chest. The "direction" suggested is merely a preventive to the wrong preconceived idea. Fourthly, keep clearly in mind the general idea of the body lengthening, a direct consequence of the third series of "directions". Fifthly, direct the knees and hips to bend and during this act, direct the back to widen. The pupil will now find himself in the chair, but not upright, as the body will be inclined forward. Sixthly, then, and this is of great importance, pause for an instant in the position in which you will fall into the chair and then - after directing the neck to be free, the head forward and up. the spine to lengthen and the back to widen - come back into the chair to an upright position, using the hips as a hinge and without shortening the back, stiffening the neck, or throwing up the head.

Rising is merely the reversal of sitting. Draw the feet back, one slightly under the chair, allow the body to incline forward from the hips, keeping in mind the freedom of the neck and the lengthening of the spine. Let the body come forward until the centre of gravity falls over the feet, that is to say, until the poise is such that if the chair was removed, you would be left balanced in the position of someone doing the "frog-dance: then, using the muscles of the legs and back, straighten the legs until the erect position is attained.

(2) How are the principles of conscious control to be applied in the case of specific bad habits, or specific diseases?

The following letter is typical of many: -

Dear Sir, "I have read your book and wish to point out a difficulty. How is conscious control to be used in a specific bad habit - say smoking - or in functional disorders such as constipation? Other popular books, like 'New Thought' seem to give clear instructions about what to practise, but I am unable to gather how to attain your principles".

This reader is a typical case of someone who expects a miracle. In my introduction, I said, "There will be no mention of royal roads, panaceas, or grand specifics". I have not set down clear and precise rules, because the subject cannot be dealt with in a general way, as no two people are the same. What is good for one may not suit another.

Nevertheless, since I see further explanation is required, I will give the general principles which embrace the rule of application, however diverse the method may be in practice.

In the first place, all specific bad habits such as over-indulgence in food, drink, tobacco etc. show a lack of "control" in a certain direction and the greater numbers of specific disorders such as asthma, T.B, cancer, nervous complaints etc. indicate interference with the normal conditions of the body, lack of control and imperfect working of the human mechanisms, with displacement of its different parts, loss of vitality and its inevitable concomitant - lower activity of functioning of all vital organs. When someone has arrived at this condition, harmful habits become established and the standard of resistance to disease is seriously lowered.

To regain normal health re-education is imperative. Re-education begins with instruction in the primary factors connected with the eradication of wrong preconceived ideas connected with bad habits and the simplest correct mental and physical co-ordination. Displaced parts of the body must be restored to their proper positions by re-education in the correct and controlled use of the muscular mechanisms. In this process, the blood is purified, circulation improved and all the injurious accumulations are removed by the internal massage which is part and parcel of the increased vital activity. Thus the first stage in the eradication of bad habits and disorders is reached when improved conditions of health are established. Also, a great object lesson is given to the mind. In breaking up established maleficent co-ordinations, a new influence is given to certain intellectual functions which have been thrown out of place. The reflex action which is setting up morbid conditions can only be controlled and altered by a realisation of the guiding processes to be substituted. These new impulses to the conscious mind have analogically very much the same effect that is produced on the body by the internal massage referred to above. The old accumulations of subconscious thought are dispersed and room is made for new conceptions and realisations.

When the first stage is passed, it is just as easy at almost any time of life to establish "good" habits as bad ones. Bad habits mean the person concerned has often, through ignorance, pandered to and wilfully indulged certain sensations, probably with no thought to what evil results may accrue from his concessions to the dominance of small pleasures. This careless relaxation of reason makes it doubly difficult to assert command when the indulgence has become a habit. Sensation has usurped the throne so feebly defended by reason: and sensation - once it has obtained power - is the most pitiless of autocrats. If we are to maintain the succession that is our supreme inheritance, we must break the power of the usurper and re-establish our sovereign, no longer dull and indifferent to the welfare of his kingdom, but conversely active, vigilant and open-eyed to the evils that result from his old policy of *laissez-faire*.

So many people regard conscious control as kind of magic which may be worked by a suitable incantation. They think we may obtain control, say, of the secretive glands and give an order to produce more or less bile, or gastric juice, by a command of the objective mind. This would be signing one's own death warrant. You cannot expect the conscious mind directly to order and superintend every

function of the body. On the other hand, there is great danger in underrating the power of conscious control which, if it must not be prematurely forced and made to intrude on automatic functions, must in no way be undervalued or delimited.

For instance, although it may not be possible to control directly each separate part of the abdominal viscera, we can control directly the muscles of the abdominal wall and in reducing a protruding abdomen, we can control many other muscles, notably those of the back, by widening and altering the shape of the back to make room for the protruding abdomen. This will also restore the natural functioning of the viscera. Although conscious control does not affect the lower automatic functions by a process of direct command, there is danger in assuming such functions are beyond the reach of my methods.

This danger was brought to my attention in the B. M. J., Dec. 1909, in an article about my teaching by Dr S, a pupil of mine. He wrote, "Man's education does not always demand conscious instruction: in the absence of unfavourable circumstances, he can learn by unconscious imitation of good models".

This is true, but extremely misleading and not very valuable to anyone.

Firstly, keep in mind that Dr. S admits that "normal" is the rarest of states. Medical experts find that the most common error in diagnosis comes from assuming normal conditions in patients. Yet if the expert physiologist fails to notice the distortions upsetting the whole body economy, what supreme authority shall select the "good models" for unconscious imitation?

Secondly, consider the psychological function which shows that in unconscious imitation, the faults - not the virtues - of the other person are copied. I have re-educated many people in the theatre and have ample proof that the understudy invariably reproduces the leading actor's most prominent failings. The subtle inflexions of voice, the finer details of gesture are missed and the mannerisms are reproduced. Again, in the case of stuttering, many young people develop it by imitating some other person. Boys do not usually imitate someone who speaks well.

Imitation of faulty speech is subconscious and will not always right itself naturally. Consider a man in charge of an intricate machine. If he pulls a lever here, pushes a button there, the machine will do certain things. He uses these simple manoeuvres to control the machine easily and with certainty. But the machine goes wrong and he presses buttons and pulls levers to rectify the fault. He knows nothing about the working of the machine except for these simple movements. He may make these movements again and again, but the machine still stutters and he must allow it to continue to work badly, if at all.

So it is with the young stutterer who copies someone else. He knows the ordinary uses of his vocal machine, but not enough to repair it if it goes wrong. If he were taught conscious control, he could find the fault and correct it, as he could with any other part of the body, even if that fault originated below the level of consciousness.

These are sound examples of unconscious imitation in physiology. The perfectly co-ordinated person is not imitated as much as the one with an obvious defect. The unconscious imitative powers of the child seize hold far more readily on the marked defects that it contacts during the greater part of its waking life. In a perfect world, unconscious imitation would not be able to exert such a perverting influence. Such a perfect world can only be obtained by conscious reasoning.

Finally, there is still a serious danger to be reckoned with - during the advance of civilisation we have lost the power of instinct. The one great defect in our mental, physical and educational training has been the failure to recognise that civilisation is the death-bed of instinct. At critical moments, when suddenly called on to decide an important question, or when faced with terrifying physical danger, we "lose our heads" and fail. People re-educated in conscious control would react to crises in the same reasonable manner as they would in the ordinary affairs of life.

Before leaving question 2, let us consider 2 prevailing maladies of our time; spinal curvature and appendicitis.

(1) Spinal Curvature:- A perfect spine is an all-important factor in preserving those conditions and uses of the human mechanism that work together for perfect health. Our attitude to this serious mark of physical degeneration is tragic and in this connection, I quote from my letter in the Pall Mall Gazette, 14th March, 1908.

"In schools and in the army humans are being developed into deformities by breathing and physical exercises. I have a book of breathing exercises used in the army and anyone trained in physiology and psychology will understand why so much harm results from them. Protruded upper chests (development of emphysema), hollowed backs (lordosis), stiff necks, rigid thorax and other physical eccentricities have been cultivated. It is for these reasons that heart trouble, varicose veins, emphysema and mouth-breathing (in exercise) are so much in evidence in the army.

As this is of national importance, I am prepared to give the time necessary to prove to the authorities - medical or official - connected with the army, schools or sanatoria that these 'deep-breathing' and physical exercises do more harm than good and will lead to grave harm in future. All 'deep-breathing' exercises cause an exaggeration of the defective co-ordinations already present, so if that one bad habit is eradicated many more harmful others are cultivated.

'Deep-breathing' and physical exercises cause ear and throat disorders, due to harmful depression of the larynx with every expiration and inspiration and this tends to increase in people who have asthma, bronchitis and hay fever. The removal of the factors causing such conditions means great relief and gradual progress towards their eradication: but, of course, all organic troubles should be removed in such cases".

Further, I have not yet seen any method of physical culture or respiration that does not cause some form of directly harmful spinal curvature. Neither have I examined a case of "alleged" cure of spinal curvature, in which the front of the chest has not been harmfully altered and seriously deformed. The original idea in diagnosis of spinal curvature, which has led to the methods producing these results, is "that the activity of the muscles is necessary to the retention of the spine in an erect position, in consequence of which, the primary cause of the scoliosis must be sought in abnormal functioning of the muscles". This is the myopathic theory of Eulenburg, an authority whose dicta have had an important influence on medical practice.

The error of advocating physical exercises - as generally understood - to treat spinal curvature is even greater than in the case of John Doe given earlier in this book. Correct recognition is essential, as it is more marked in spinal curvature than in the John Doe illustration, where no special deformity existed.

The important factors in spinal curvature are: -

- (a) The bent or curved and therefore shortened spine
- (b) The decreased internal capacity of the internal thoracic cavity.

Plainly, attention must first be given to straightening and lengthening the shortened spine. This can be done by an expert manipulator able to diagnose the wrong preconceived ideas of the pupil and cause the pupil to inhibit them, while employing the position of mechanical advantage, all this done without having to perform any physical act. Moreover, if the correct directions are given to the pupil by the teacher and the pupil makes no attempt to hold himself in the lengthened position, such use of the muscles will be brought about as will ensure that the torso is held in the correct position. Formerly, the pupil's thinking has been wrong regarding the correct action and the muscular mechanisms have been used to pull the body down. The old morbid conditions have put the muscles out of action, but re-education brings these muscles back into play, not physical exercises.

Consider factor (b). Any alteration of the spine will affect the position and working of the ribs. Ribs are held apart by muscles. Bending of the spine will not buckle the ribs unless great force is applied, but there must be some play in the ribs to adjust to the new position. This is achieved by the coming together of the "false" and "flying" ribs, the lower ones not attached to the sternum. This flattening of the curve of the ribs and the approach of their free ends towards each other reduces the thoracic capacity. If we increase the thoracic capacity, however, and the distance between the ends of the lower ribs, we apply a mechanical principle which - by a reverse action - straightens the spine.

These 2 actions, the re-education of the "Kinaesthetic Systems" and the increase of the thoracic capacity which applies mechanical power to straightening of the spine, are both aspects of the one central idea and are not separate acts.

(2) Appendicitis: - The prevalence of appendicitis is one of the most striking proofs of the inefficiency of modern methods in regard to health. It is well known that the operation is frequently performed even when conditions do not justify such extreme measures. Fortunately, a section of the medical profession does object to the removal of the appendix, except in extreme cases. The evidence now available shows that this exaggerated condition can be completely cured by natural means and is also doing much to limit the sphere of the champions of the knife.

There is no doubt that if the body is properly co-ordinated and controlled it is a practical impossibility to get appendicitis. The cause is due to the imperfect adjustment of the body, which forces the abdominal viscera to become displaced and to fall. This causes a change of pressure and loss of internal massage, leading - among other symptoms - to constipation and permits the gradual accumulation of toxins.

Even when the trouble shows itself, it is not too late to apply my methods. The new co-ordinations, which may be brought about very quickly, immediately relieve the pressure and allow a natural re-adjustment of the viscera and the rapid return to health is greatly accelerated by the internal massage.

Pupils have asked if I use internal massage in re-education. In my brochure, Theory and Practice of Respiratory Re-education in Part 3, I use the description for want of a sufficiently comprehensive term, but the principle itself is of first importance.

When a pupil is placed in the position of mechanical advantage, manipulation can secure maximum movement of the abdominal viscera in strict accordance with the laws of nature and the maximum function of all the internal organs. In this way, foreign accumulations are dissipated, constipation is relieved and the collapsed viscera - the cause of all the trouble - are restored to their proper places and resume their natural functions.

All these things are essential in the cure and prevention of appendicitis and in many cases, where an operation has been advised, the application of my principles has demonstrated their value to the individual and to the race.

Appendicitis, like influenza, is probably impossible in the natural state: it is one of the results of civilisation and subconsciously controlled mechanisms, possible only through the conditions we have developed. These ailments will continue to do their destructive work until a general recognition is made of the necessity to substitute conscious control for the partly superseded forces which, in a wild state, render these ailments impossible.

(3) "What are the outward signs of improvement during treatment?"

These are many and vary according to the nature of the original defect, but here are some general ones.

Firstly, characteristic defects, whether displacements of parts of the muscular mechanisms - even of the bones - or postural defects which throw some unusual strain on a group of muscles, all have correlated defects that the instructed can see as peculiarities and abnormalities. Note that these outward signs are correlated with

inner defects. Neither outer sign nor inner defect is from one point of view, the result, one of the other. The original cause is some imperfect co-ordination or conception of function: the inner defect and outer sign are equally a consequence as they are an index.

Naturally, the chief signs are found in the face, a valuable document on which is written many curious, intricate and sometimes alarming, confessions. The expression of the eyes, set of the lips, drawing of the forehead and the more pronounced dragging of the face muscles, are all marks that may be read by the expert. One of the first signs of improvement is the relaxation of the forced, unnatural expression. I cannot set out in detail the symptomatic distortions which accompany various internal defects, but here is one example.

This case was one of dilation of the heart brought to me by a medical friend. This is an alarming symptom springing from deep-seated causes. The spine was arched inwards, legs abnormally stiffened when standing and the upper part of the chest held too high - this last symptom producing what was a tertiary effect and the most threatening one - dilation of the heart. The pupil carried many curious marks in his face: first, a general expression of strain in the eyes and cheek muscles and 4 very marked indents in the forehead. As the pupil recovered the proper use of himself, these strains disappeared and the indents filled up. His friends commented on this change.

The face is not the only sign. Many defects lead, by way of stiffened neck and throat muscles, to change in the quality and power of the voice. There too, the mode of movement and the failure to express purpose in muscular action, the fumbling attempt to perform a simple act, are all aids to diagnosis.

As the pupil progresses, the eyes and skin clear, improvements that happen due to better circulation and quality of the blood, factors which allow the organism to purge itself through the bowels, kidneys and skin.

Lastly, we may note a general improvement in physique - the carriage of the body, the whole appearance of co-ordinated, reasoned control.

Another curious and interesting test of the co-ordinated person who is attaining conscious control is the position of the hands as they hang naturally by the sides. Three main stages can be seen, although not always progressive. Firstly, many primitive peoples stand with the body thrown back from the hips, stomach protruded - with the palms of the hands forwards - elbows bent into the sides, thumbs sticking out away from the body. Secondly, the average civilised person stands with palms towards the body, elbows back and thumbs forward. Thirdly, the properly co-ordinated person stands backs of hands forward, thumbs inward, elbows slightly bent outwards. This little-known test is an index to imperfect muscular co-ordination.

I think I have now answered, in sufficient detail, these three main questions, but there is one further point to be raised. This is the question as to why the great majority of people breathe from the stomach or upper chest and so allow - among other defects - the costal arch to be narrowed and the flying ribs to become constricted and stiffened. A primary cause is one of wrapping a child in tight clothing from birth and keeping him fettered in infancy. This early artificial habit of restricted breathing is maintained throughout life and results in defects later in life.

Another cause is incorrect training in the use of the mechanism, as taught through physical education in schools and through unconscious imitation.

I conclude the chapter here. No argument I could put forward in favour of my principles could be as powerful as the examination of the physique of children and adults. We are indeed suffering from the failure to recognise that man is no longer a natural animal whose life-habits were dependent on instinct and all physical cultures - and how diverse they are! - must fail unless they take into account that first and last essential, the free use of consciousness of the reasoning, controlling mind.

PART 3

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF A NEW METHOD
OF RESPIRATORY RE-EDUCATION.

First published 1907

"Whoever hesitates to utter that which he thinks the highest truth, lest it should be too much in advance of the time, may re-assure himself by looking at his acts from an impersonal point of view..... It is not for nothing that he has in him these sympathies with some principles and repugnance to others. He, with all the capacities, aspirations and beliefs, is not an accident, but a product of the time. He must remember that while he is a descendent of the past, he is a parent of the future and his thoughts are as his children born to him, which he may not carelessly let die".

HERBERT SPENCER.

INTRODUCTION

The method I have founded is the result of a practical and unique experience, because my knowledge was gained: - (1) while vainly attempting to eradicate personal, vocal and respiratory defects by recognised methods: (2) while afterwards putting into practice certain original principles that enabled me to eradicate these defects: (3) while giving personal demonstrations of the application of these principles, from respiratory, vocal and health-giving points of view.

I first imparted the method to pupils recommended by medical men over 10 years prior to June, 1904. At that date, I introduced it to London medical men, who - after investigation - decided that the method was, as one doctor put it, "the most efficient known to him".

The method makes for: - In Education: - (1) Prevention of certain defects referred to later. (2) Adequate, correct use of muscular mechanisms used in respiration.

In Re-education: - (1) Eradication of certain defects, referred to later. (2) Co-ordination in the use of muscular mechanisms used in respiration.

The aim of the "original principles" in (2) is not only to make the function of the muscular mechanisms efficient, but also to ensure normal activity and natural massage of the internal organs, so necessary to the adequate performance of the vital functions and the preservation of a proper condition of health.

F. MATTHIAS ALEXANDER.

CHAPTER 1

THE THEORY OF RESPIRATORY RE-EDUCATION

The artificial conditions of modern, civilised life - among which is the lack of free exercise in the open air - are conducive to the inadequate use of breathing power. Indulgence in harmful habits of eating and posture have caused these same habits, through heredity and unconscious imitation, to become "second nature" in adults and children even at an early age.

The healthy action of the respiratory mechanism is greatly interfered with, nervous relaxation occurs and a feeble flabby action becomes permanent.

Certain leading muscles of the thorax become inert, while others - never intended to monopolise the act of breathing - but only to serve as a relief, are used solely for breathing. Hence, the posture, symmetry and graceful, normal curves of the body suffer alteration.

Capacity and mobility of the thorax are decreased, its shape changed in a harmful way and the abdominal viscera displaced. Heart, lungs and other vital organs drop below their natural position. These are great factors in retarding breathing. Under these circumstances, the natural chemical changes in the organism cannot be adequate.

These defects produce distinct deterioration in the different body organs, whose powers of resistance to disease depend on the adequacy of its functioning power, which in turn depends on adequate activity.

In 2000 B.C, Chinese physicians used breathing exercises in treatment of certain diseases, proof that they had reached: -

- (1) A stage in their evolution corresponding to that of our time, that is, demanding re-education.
- (2) A stage of observation of cause and effect similar to that of today, which led them to see the need for re-education essential to the restoration of natural conditions present in every born child, though deteriorating gradually under modern life conditions.

In recent years, the following medical men have urged the inestimable value of the development of the respiratory mechanism through re-education, combined with proper medical treatment.

Mr. W.Arthurnot, surgeon, Guy's hospital: - "Reduction in respiratory capacity is a great factor in lowering the activity of the vital processes of the body".

Dr. Hugh A. McCallum: - "Over 90% of females suffering from neurasthenia - exhaustion of nerve force - are victims of visceroptosis, with bad standing posture, poor use of the lower thorax, lack of tone in the abdominal muscles leading to

defective intra-abdominal pressure. The origin of this disease begins in a faulty position and use of the thorax".

Passage from the Lancet, 1904: - "An increasing number of town-dwellers suffer from constipation and colonic atony: purgative enemata and massage are powerless to prevent their progress from constipation to coprostatitis".

In treating convalescents, excerpt from the Lancet, Feb. 18, 1905:- "Respiratory insufficiency was one of the causes of general debility after acute illness, recognised by a lack of movement in the thorax, and diaphragmatic immobility, or recession of the abdomen during inspiration - conditions found in pseudo-pleurisy of the base of the lungs. Respiratory re-education is the specific treatment for respiratory insufficiency in convalescents, because it produces expansion of the thorax, diuresis and weight increase. It had a marked effect on recuperation of the vital functions and the general health of the patient. It ought to be combined with other forms of treatment, as it enhances their action".

The above will allow the reader to understand that the following is necessary: -

- (1) In Prevention. The inculcation of a proper mental attitude to breathing in children, with detailed instructions of correct respiratory exercises to maintain adequate and proper use of the breathing organs.
- (2) In Restoration. Conscious control of the breathing mechanism is necessary to regain efficient use of it, because it is habitually subconsciously controlled. Afterwards, when perfected, proper subconscious control - as it originally was before respiratory and physical deterioration - will supervene.

CHAPTER 2

ERRORS TO BE AVOIDED AND FACTS TO BE REMEMBERED IN THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF RESPIRATORY RE- EDUCATION

"Each faculty acquires fitness for its function by performing its function and if its function is performed for it by a substitute agency, none of the required adjustments of nature take place, but the nature becomes deformed to fit the artificial arrangements".

HERBERT SPENCER

A good thing may become harmful through improper use. I will detail some of the harmful effects of taking "deep breaths" in recognised breathing systems.

Respiratory re-education will be ineffective if the pupil's mind is not thoroughly imbued with the true principles which apply to atmospheric pressure, equilibrium of the body, centre of gravity and position of mechanical advantage, where the alternate contractions and expansions of the thorax are concerned. In other words, proper knowledge and practical employment of the true primary movement in each and every act is essential.

(1) Sniffing or Gasping. If the deep breath is taken through the nose, there will be a loud sniffing sound and collapse of the alae nasi and if taken through the mouth a loud gasping sound will be heard. If the thorax is expanded correctly, the lungs will at once be filled with air by atmospheric pressure, exactly like bellows when the handles are pulled apart.

Many teachers of breathing and physical exercises tell pupils that to get an increased air supply they must sniff.

Worse than this, medical men, in giving practical demonstrations to patients, throw back the head, collapse the alae nasi, interfere with the centre of gravity and sniff loudly.

When asked to take a deep breath most people suck air into the lungs to expand the chest: whereas the proper expansion of the chest, as a primary movement, causes the alae nasi to be dilated and the lungs to be instantly filled with air by atmospheric pressure, without harmful lowering of pressure.

(2) During harmful sniffing, it will be seen that: -

a) The larynx and diaphragm are unduly depressed.

The strain caused by this unnatural crowding down of the larynx is the greatest factor in causing throat troubles. I have successfully treated many actors and singers in the last 12 years.

- b) The upper chest and shoulders are unduly raised.
- c) The lumbar back is unduly hollowed.
- d) The abdomen is protruded and there is an abnormally deranged intra-abdominal pressure.
- e) The head is thrown too far back and the neck tensed and shortened at a time when it should be perfectly free from strain.
- f) Parts of the chest are unduly expanded, while others which should share in the expansion are contracted, particularly the lumbar back region.
- g) During expiration the chest falls unduly, which harmfully increases the intra-thoracic pressure and so dams back the blood in the thin-walled veins and auricles and hampers the heart's action.
- h) Depression of the larynx prevents the proper placing and natural movement of the tongue and correct opening of the mouth necessary to the vocalisation of a true "Ah"
- i) The head is thrown back to open the mouth.

This is a common fault even with professional singers. The jaw should move downwards without effort and it is not necessary to move the head backwards to open the mouth.

The striking feature in those who have practised customary breathing exercises is an undue lateral expansion of the lower ribs, when several or all of the above defects are present. This excessive expansion gives an undue width to the lower part of the chest. Breathing exercises imparted by some singing teachers in particular produce this harmful condition.

Most people - teachers or pupils - while practising breathing exercises, have the fixed idea of great expansion of the chest, whereas its proper and adequate contraction is equally important.. Sometimes expiration calls for more attention than inspiration.

People who sniff or gasp always have trouble in speech and song and this is due to the imperfect use of the thoracic mechanism and loss of mechanical advantage at the end of an inspiration.

Natural air-controlling power is, therefore, absent and this causes undue approximation of the vocal reeds and ventricular bands in the attempt to prevent the escape of air.

In vocal use, there is considerable lack of breath control, the upper chest being rapidly and forcefully depressed.

This is not surprising, because if mechanical advantage is essential to proper expansion of the thorax for inspiration, it is equally essential for expiration: and if, during expiration the upper chest is falling, it clearly proves that the advantage indicated is not present.

CHAPTER 3

THE PRACTICE OF RESPIRATORY RE-EDUCATION.

HABIT IN RELATION TO PECULIARITIES AND DEFECTS.

"If we contemplate the method of Nature, we see that everywhere vast results are brought about by accumulating minute actions".

HERBERT SPENCER

The mental and physical peculiarities of people are results of heredity and acquired habits and one can see the similarities in standing, sitting, walking, talking, position of shoulder blades and use of arms that run in families.

Such peculiarities are unconsciously acquired by the children, often becoming more pronounced in the second generation.

Let's consider the harmful tendencies, as an understanding of habit is essential to the teaching of my principles of respiratory-physical re-education.

Broadly, the main defects are:-

- (1) An incorrect mental attitude to respiratory acts.
- (2) Lack of control and improper use of the component parts of the body mechanisms, limbs and nervous system.
- (3) Incorrect use of the body and chest poise and consequent defects in standing and sitting postures: interference with the normal position and shape of the spine, as well as ribs, costal arch, vital organs and abdominal viscera.

Re-education means eradication of existing bad habits and the following indicates the chief principles: -

That where the human organism is concerned, Nature does not work in parts, but treats everything as a whole.

That a proper mental attitude towards respiration is at once inculcated, so that each and every respiratory act in the practice of the exercises is the direct result of volition, the primary, secondary and other movements - necessary to the proper performance of the act - having first been explained to the pupil.

W. Marcet, M.D, F.R.S and Harry Campbell, M.D, B.S have the opinion that volition makes a direct demand on the breathing powers without physical effort, its advantages being that it does not increase the production of waste products, nor cause thoracic rigidity which would retard chest movements.

Dr. Marcet quotes an instance of a man who raised a 4-pound weight 203 times, rested, performed forced breathing movements and then raised the same weight 700 times. The doctor feels that this shows that a man's power to sustain such muscular action depends upon the endurance of the brain-centres causing the volition rather than upon muscular power.

Regarding muscular development and chest expansion, Dr. Harry Campbell has, in his book, taken the case of Eugene Sandow. Sandow claimed to be able to increase the size of his chest from 48 to 62 inches. The doctor feels that this increase is almost entirely due to expansion of the large chest muscles and the increase in his body chest is no more than 2 or 3 inches, seeing that his "vital capacity" is only 275 cubic inches.

(For 10 years, I have drawn the attention of medical men to the deception of ordinary chest measurements and dangers of physical training and the "stand-at-attention" attitude in the army and in drill routines in schools, where the unfortunate children are made to assume postures exactly like soldiers, whose striking characteristics are the hollowing of the lumbar spine and the numerous defects inseparable from this unnatural posture).

There is such immediate improvement in the pose of the body and poise of the chest whatever the conditions - except organised structural defects - that valuable mechanical advantage is secured in respiration and this is gradually improved by practice until the habit becomes established and the law of gravity in relation to the human body is obeyed.

The mechanical advantage is of particular value because it prevents harmful falling of the upper chest at the end of expiration, which is always present in those who practise customary breathing exercises. Expansion and contraction of the thorax then increases.

These expansions are primary movements that increase the capacity of the chest necessary to allow the normal oscillations of atmospheric pressure, without unduly lowering that pressure. The contractions overcome the air pressure and force air out of the lungs, and at the same time control the speed and length of the expiration.

Excessive harmful lowering of the air pressure during respiration and the consequent collapse of the alae nasi is prevented by regulating the respiratory speed that the lungs are filled by atmospheric pressure.

The "sniffing" type of breathing causes collapse of the alae nasi and congestion of the mucous membrane of the respiratory tract of the sucker system, setting up catarrh, throat disorders, loss of voice, bronchitis, asthma and other pulmonary troubles.

From the first lesson, the effect upon the splanchnic area is such that the blood is drawn away from it to the lungs and then evenly distributed to the other parts of the body. The intra-abdominal pressure is raised and a gradual improvement towards normal conditions.

Improvement in abdominal conditions - the improved position of the abdominal viscera and the development of the abdominal muscles - is proportionate to that in the respiratory movements because both are interdependent.

Faulty distension of the splanchnic area means the diaphragm is too low in breathing, as well as interference with the centre of gravity (forward) and arching of the lumbar spine.

Improvement in respiration increases aeration of the lungs, supply of oxygen and elimination of CO₂.

The quantity of residual air in the lungs is greatly increased, and if the expired air is always converted into a controlled whispered vowel during practice of breathing exercises, very great benefits accrue, notably those derived from the prolonged duration of air in the lungs and the proper intra-thoracic pressure necessary to force the adequate supply of oxygen into the blood and eliminate the due quantity of CO₂.

The employment of these whispered tones means the proper use of the vocal organs in a form of vocalisation little associated with ordinary bad habits, and perfect

co-ordination of the parts concerned, which is inseparable from adequately controlled whispered vocalisation.

There is rapid clearing of the skin, the white face becomes a natural colour and a reduction of fat in the obese by its being burned off with the extra oxygen supply.

This reduction in weight is often quite remarkable, and so is the development of the flaccid muscles of the abdominal wall and consequent improvement in the activity of the parts concerned.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The foregoing will serve to draw attention to the far reaching and beneficial effects of what I refer to as respiratory re-education.

It restores and maintains those physical conditions possessed by every normal child at birth, ensures a proper standard of health, resistance to disease and a reserve of power to be utilised if a serious illness should occur.

The insurance of such a condition for one generation would regenerate the human race as constituted today.

I do not hesitate to state that the results secured in the past 20 years and particularly during 13 years in London, in co-operation with medical men, justify my assertion that practical application of the principles of this new method in education and re-education will overcome the disadvantages and bad habits of our artificial civilised life, and they will prove to be the great factor in successfully checking the physical degeneration of humankind.