

1944

## Questions and Answers

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Harold S. Hulbert, M.D., (Guest Editor)

*Question 1: What are the most effective methods used with military prisoners to refit them for duty?*

*Answer:*

As a preliminary, three fundamental factors are involved here:

(1) Most prisoners never got full basic or boot training. This, for several reasons. (a) their course was shortened due to need for men, especially in the air forces, or as replacements in the navy; (b) their high scores on aptitude tests led to premature transferral; (c) they were sick from "shots" and could not grasp and learn what the instructors tried to teach them and truly did teach others who became model soldiers and sailors, and (d) they came from homes and environments which had not fitted them to adapt well and happily to military life, and

(2) Enforced indolence for security reasons causes dry rot in prisoners.

(3) A sense of shame frustrates the growth or regrowth of self-respect which is the prime basis of rehabilitation—

For these reasons it has been found helpful while in prison (a) to go through basic or boot training slowly again, (b) to promote physical building up by the "total push" method of never an idle moment but by keeping everlastingly engaged in study—work—drills and athletics every moment while awake, (c) to emphasize the fact that there are many forms of duty, and that many duties are hard and unwelcome and may come to those unprepared for them; that the two hardest duties in the Army or Navy or Marine Corps are (a) those that belong to the top command, and (b), being a good and improving prisoner: They need training in work habits.

Prisoners must not be made ashamed of themselves by their guards and others in authority over them but must be encouraged and helped to engage in "projects" or short tasks of their own selection, the completion of which will create a sense of adequacy, of worthwhileness, of self-respect, of loyalty to their own best interests and to the best interests of their organization, and a sense of team work and devotion and to duty.

Those fit for further military duty may be punished and rehabilitated at the same time, and then reclassified as are the sick and wounded, and assigned to duties they can perform.

Those unfit for further military duty and whose unfitness stems from their pre-war civil life are better dishonorably discharged to civil life than kept in the Services and punished for a long time; e.g., the career criminal, the chronic thief, the indolent, the non-respecting, the psychopath, the inadequate, the immature and the borderline feeble-minded with personality disorder or limitations.

*Question 2: How long must a drug addict be surely off the drug so that there is a good chance that he will not resume the habit?*

*Answer:*

Three years net; not a three year sentence minus time off for good conduct. But if the prisoner sweats daily from hard work as in a chain gang at hard sweaty labor one year net is enough. However federal prisoners are gently and "non-sweatily" handled. Drug addicts are used in office jobs and sewing rooms and not in stoking furnaces or working in bakery oven-rooms. Too often addicts are frail by nature or the drug has made

them frail. Drug addiction is more a physical disease than is anti-social conduct. Because drug peddling and drug addiction are intertwined and many minor peddlers are themselves addicts, the U. S. District Attorneys and U. S. District Judges have been authorized to be the doctors in prescribing the duration of sentence. Their failure to have controlled the drug traffic now reaps the whirlwind, to the detriment of our Army and its absentees. The U. S. Attorneys and Judges should be sternly scientific and not legalistically merciful. Three years net. Courts martials should not invite relapse and extension of the habit by a six months or other brief indeterminate sentence.

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*Question 3: What can possibly be done to keep military officers who are in debt from wrecking themselves and their careers and thus hurting the Army by gambling to get out of debt?*

*Answer:*

Gambling or "gambling fever" has been described as a morbid fascination allied to dementia praecox. It is a deteriorative monomania. Like all fascinations it cannot be thrown off by its victim but can be abruptly broken by rude outside interference.

The causes of debt are many. The appeals of purposeful and heavy gambling are numerous. The combination is rare but most serious.

Gambling is not a private matter, to be regarded by others in regretful silence. The tears of wives and the prayers of chaplains and the admonitions of fellow officers are not rude, abrupt, jolting nor authoritative enough to break the fascination. Under the general police authority of commanding officers the following impersonal order may be issued without explanation or equivocation or justification such as the phrase "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman" calls for: "Officers who are in debt must see the Post Finance Officer and must not gamble."

The Post Finance Officer need not mention gambling but he can help the indebted officer to arrange his financial affairs, budgets. He may arrange to refinance many debts by one long term debt protected by insurance. Then he should follow it up. Appropriate orders and a removal of the cause may remove the "fever."

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*Question 4: Will the rifleman or bayonettier or grenadier who personally killed an enemy in military combat be sadistic or callous if and when he returns to civil life?*

*Answer:*

No. A soldier matures in warfare when he has killed an enemy who has tried to kill him personally, or when he has been under fire and factually learned that he is capable even under fire of doing his assigned duties fully whatever they may be. His killing then becomes impersonal and in line of duty. He may maim his own personality permanently, however, if he is fool enough to roll over his enemy's corpse with his boot to study the face of the enemy he had to kill, or if he personally had to bury his slain enemy. (That is why combat soldiers are not put on burial squads, except in great emergencies). The effect of examining or burying his slain opponents is a recurring neurosis characterized by battle dreams and haunting echoes of them daytimes; emotional instability; episodes of restlessness and of flight and perhaps of alcoholism. The more earned ribbons and decorations a man wears the deeper he has been in the war, and unless he is a career soldier the more of our silent sympathy he deserves. He

will not be cruel to any but avowed enemies or those hostile to his own or to his group's best interests. He will not enjoy being cruel, i.e., he will not be sadistic to any who do not peril his life, and then there will be only a sense of relief rather than the tingle or thrill of sadism. He will have heightened tenderness for the weak, especially those he can identify himself with, rather than indifference or callousness.

*Question 5: What about periodic alcoholism, especially in the Army?*

*Answer:*

Periodic alcoholism, like periodic "sick headaches" called migraine, is a condition related to periodic epilepsy. They are all characterized by periodicity of recurrence. So it may safely be predicted that a soldier who was periodically alcoholic in civil life will continue to be so. This does not refer to the soldier who is an opportunist alcoholic nor to the chronic alcoholic (by definition one who drinks before breakfast) nor the 4 P. M. drinker, nor the escapist drinker. It does not refer to the soldier who drinks after battle or after a campaign, nor to the soldier on furlough who is not permitted by his "friends" (sic) to buy and drink what he wants or may need, but is victimized by those who stand him treat. It does not refer to the social drinker who gets extra festive on social occasions and who can not say "no." Perhaps every 10 or 11 or so weeks the periodically alcoholic soldier goes on a week's spree: three days of increasing drunkenness and four days of sobering up and convalescence. He plumbs the depth of acquired stupor. Such periodic alcoholics rarely are guilty of assault or disorderly conduct involving others. So if the soldier is not a fighter when drunk, a wise sergeant will recommend to a smart company commander that "Corp. Joe Blank be given a week's furlough beginning yesterday afternoon" about every 10 or 11 weeks or so according to the man's symptoms or restlessness or when he has started another drinking bout. He will assign a couple of men who will do no drinking to loosely supervise the corporal but will not interfere with his drinking. "Sit up with him as you would sit up with a buddy who has measles to keep him from getting pneumonia from exposure while delirious." Thus his inevitable periodic alcoholism is *not* complicated by AWOL, court martial and brief sentence and a smirched record. Such men make miserable prisoners when the periods come, for then they are half crazy. Imprisonment does not cure symptoms! Restated, men should not be imprisoned because of symptoms even though those symptoms prevent continuous regimentation!

Periodic alcoholics, when free of symptoms, make the best of soldiers in and between combat and in and between wars. They are wonderful fighters and shirk no hardship; they are accustomed to the filth of the gutter. Better grant leaves to them than complicate matters by otherwise inevitable AWOL, provided that when they are drunk they are not assaultive nor a menace to others.

*Question 6: What might or could courts martial do about the type of offenders variously known as the immature and the irresponsibles?*

*Answer:*

Discipline and punishment seem wholly ineffective. They appear to be of potential military value but they do not live up to appearances.

There is some over-lapping of terms. The immature are all irresponsible, i.e., do not assume self-responsibility. When they are not under constant supervision they do poorly. As in a factory where each immature needs one sub-foreman, so in the Army each immature needs one corporal. There are many who *are* mature and not immature who are irresponsibles.

The immatures classify into two categories: immature from deprivation of opportunity, e.g. the backwoods ignorance of the educable which is quickly correctible in the Army by its schools, by Chaplains and associates. Secondly there is constitutional immaturity.

Constitutional immaturity has physical signs: either immature genitalia or undifferentiated body development such as soft and heavy thighs and some breast development as in a young maiden. In the first type endocrine gland preparations are recommended, such as gonadotropic preparations (like ovarian extracts for the female who has not yet come to menstruate at all or adequately by the age of 18 or 19). Androgenic preparations are recommended for males. These may be metadren linguettes placed under the tongue four times a day and there allowed to melt and absorb (specifically, to enhance compliance, one under the left side of the tongue after breakfast, one under the right side of the tongue after lunch, one between the lower teeth and the lower lip near the front on the left side after supper, and before retiring one similarly placed on the right side). Genital maturity occurs and is followed by mental-social maturity and then by self-responsibility to a satisfactory degree.

In the other type, due to islands of persisting thymus tissue, three or four x-rays of the thymus region of the chest front and back, one x-ray treatment per week of about 90 Rs, permit the personality to mature from arrested puberty to and through satisfactory adolescence into young manhood with adequate self-responsibility. In both types, a month or two of treatment will make a man out of a boy of 20.

As to the matures who are physically normal but who have not in home and civil life had to make decisions for themselves! In the Army and Navy they have routine drills and noncoms make decisions for them to develop the habit of decisiveness. When they are either offered their choice of two safe decisions, or are put on their own to make their own decisions and to abide by the good or bad results, they develop self-responsibility. The military services, although they must have regimentation, esteem decisiveness. This is a paradox. The irresponsibles can be trained by allowing them to make their own decisions of growing importance until in camp and in town they decide wisely and advantageously. Obviously this can not be done if and while imprisoned.

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*Question 7: Are borderline feeble-minded soldiers of military value?*

*Answer:*

Yes, in labor battalions. England has come to it in this war. The borderliners clear up blitzed buildings and do similar simple engineering work and agricultural work. The USA and USN have not reached that practical level. They may reach it when they have great numbers of partially recovered but limited sick and wounded fit for restricted duties. They will thus prove that mentally limited soldiers can do non-combat useful work that is of military value.

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*Question 8: Can any useful military work be found for cases of Constitutional Psychopathic Personality?*

*Answer:*

Yes. Many make fine cooks and chefs.

*Question 9: How may combat and fevers affect personality and conduct, and are such disorders modifiable by discipline?*

*Answer:*

See brief editorial on "Moth-Eaten" Personalities from War-Worn "Moth-Eaten" Brains, in the last number of this *Journal* at page 75.

*Question 10: What is most needed for a constructive program of rehabilitation and planning a future program for a prisoner?*

*Answer:*

Dealing with a prisoner *per se* and reaching a conclusion from a personal interview is only impressionistic. Psychometric and psychiatric examinations are of great help. Correct information relative to the crime and antecedent affairs is important. Family history and background are essential. The social record of the individual—his successes and his failures, his opportunities and his deprivations of opportunity, the influences which modified him and his reactions to them—such data on his own past are most essential and helpful. Without them all, especially the last, the prisoner may not be adequately understood and managed, and he may not receive maximum benefit of rehabilitative efforts and expense; with them he may be led to derive maximum benefit and be instilled with a sincere desire to accept normal social standards and responsibility.

*Question 11: There is a division of opinion as to the military liability of cases of psychoneuroses. One view is that a large percent of these men, following a few weeks of psychotherapy or psychoanalytic technique are capable of adjusting to the Army routine, regardless of whether they are criminals or not or have any criminalistic pattern of behavior. The other point of view is that if in a criminal a diagnosis of psychoneurosis has been made, it can be said that the soldier-patient is of no military value. Which is practically right, and why?*

*Answer:*

If the psychoneurosis is of military origin and the man was formerly sound constitutionally and has not and does not show any criminalistic pattern of behavior except characteristics which have survival (not betterment) value, he may be retained for treatment and for a second chance to be of military value. This is with the proviso that the psychoneurosis is not very severe nor of long duration. However if he is a criminal and has a psychoneurosis—independently or irrespective of what condition contributed to the other—then he is of no further military value and should be discharged from the Army. Retained, those cases who have been tried in every department of the Army produce the same malign effects. Unless mollycoddled and permitted to do as they please, invariably they are useless, and have a bad influence on the rest of the enlisted men, and are also a serious handicap to other criminals who are trying to make an adjustment.

*Question 12: Is severe punishment a good answer to the problem of homosexuality? Should young homosexuals be imprisoned further because they have there become homosexual?*

*Answer:*

Because homosexuality in the confined quarters aboard ship is most destructive to morale and is a battle-inefficiency as well as a pre-mutiny factor, the Navy's attitude and punishments are most severe whether the homosexuality appears afloat or ashore, on ship or in camp or in prison. In prisons many neuters become homosexuals for the first time, hence it is a growing problem in prisons as the prisons get older and larger.

The Navy naturally enrolls smaller and younger boys than the Army does. A ship is a combination machine shop and fort. Soldiers, on the other hand, have to march and transport guns and ammunition and their food and shelter. Consequently the Navy gets more neuters. Many run away from home, and then are imprisoned; still neuter, still adolcescing. The Navy should never have taken them so immature. Organizations, like individuals, pay the penalty for their mistakes. "Some of these boys are just about to take a few faltering steps into the realm of altrigenderism, reach out and touch some 'gal' and say 'Nice' when they are thrown into masses of males. Thus their latency period is extended and homosexuality buds. The conversations among the boys is informative but not elevating. If truant and returned they are associated in prison with still more unwholesome groups. Homosexuality and overt genital actions occur." Being immature and not adroit they are punished and punished severely.

What can be done about it *en masse* is first that the Navy correct its own mistakes and promptly disenroll those immatures whom it should never have enrolled. Drop them for inaptitude. Second, it should place those "guilty of protracted adolescence" in the hands of doctors rather than in the hands of the disciplinarians. Only those who are old chronic perverters should be disciplined, and not in general prisons to contaminate the immatures. Their discipline should be more labor than confinement, and the labor should be of military value such as four hours of moving coal during every 12 hours day and night.

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