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## CHANGING THE PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR

### OUTLINE OF A THERAPY FOR CRIMINAL REFORM

KENNETH J. MACONOCHIE

The author is a great-grandson of Captain Alexander Maconochie (1787-1860), pioneer in Penology, who was Superintendent of Convicts at Norfolk Island, (1840-1844), first Governor of Birmingham Borough Prison (1849-1851), author of *Crime and Punishment* (1846), and the inventor of the Mark System of penal discipline.

In this article, which is based upon his researches and his study of the Alexander Technique, the author has set down the reasons for his conviction that a successful therapy of criminal reform is a practical possibility *now*.—EDITOR.

This paper will describe two remarkable techniques which, in combination, approach nearer than any known single system known to being a therapy of criminal reform. One is the Mark System, invented over a hundred years ago by one of the founding fathers of modern penology, Captain Maconochie, RN.; the other is the Alexander Technique, so called after its founder, F. Matthias Alexander, originally of Australia, but for many years a resident of Great Britain.

Although only the Mark System is designed specifically for penal reform, both techniques have a central aim in common, which is: to enable an individual to gain control over the habits which rule his life. In contrast, however, with the Mark System which seeks to reform a criminal by the substitution of good habits for bad, the Alexander Technique goes further and deeper. It teaches an experimentally verified procedure whereby the individual becomes aware of the mechanism of habits, both of behaviour and use, which normally lies outside the range of his consciousness. This is the first step towards control over behaviour.

In most individuals there is a degree of unawareness which makes it impossible for them to perceive unaided where voluntary activity ends and habit takes over. Equally are they unaware of the habitual physical misuse of themselves which accompanies this loss of awareness, leading to a deterioration in health and overall efficiency.

Through the Alexander Technique, these physical deteriorations are halted, and even reversed. Physical and mental efficiency improves. A greater awareness enables the individual to exercise a greatly increased control over himself, in relation to his environment and vice versa. Inasmuch as he develops the ability to inhibit his responses, and thereby control his reactions, he ceases to respond according to unconscious inner compulsions.

For thirty-five years and upwards, the Alexander Technique has been publicly acknowledged by an increasing number of scientists—doctors, psychologists, neuro-pathologists, and biologists—who have studied its results, or experienced them at first hand. Distinguished writers, sociologists, and educationists have testified as to the revolutionary possibilities which its application foreshadows in any and every field involving human activity. But it has not so far been considered as a practicable therapy for criminal reform.

One reason for this neglect may well be that its extraordinary achievements as a therapeutic and rehabilitative agency in the fields of physical and psychological medicine, have tended to overshadow its potentialities for re-educating and reforming the mind. There is, however, another and more practical reason. The Alexander Technique must be studied *voluntarily*, and with the aid of a teacher, until such a time as the pupil has acquired the necessary ability and confidence to 'live' it in practice. But the desire to do so can only spring from inside the individual; it cannot be imposed upon him by regulation from above. What is needed is its amalgamation with some other system which can offer the necessary inducement for obtaining the prisoner's active co-operation. In that way the fundamental obstacle to its introduction into the field of penology would be overcome.

The Mark System, a non-compulsive, self-regulating system of prison discipline, lends itself in every way to such a purpose. The prototype of all modern systems of reform by progressive stages, it was first put into practice as a Government experiment, though under most limiting restrictions, in the British penal settlement on Norfolk Island, where it ran for four years, from 1840 until 1844 when it was discontinued.<sup>1</sup> Its inventor was a retired naval officer, Captain Alexander Maconochie, RN., KH., to whom must be given the credit for having been the first to envisage the reformation of criminals in terms of a rational therapy which, both in theory and practice, was nearly a century in advance of his time.

Before going on to describe either system in detail, let us consider for a moment the perennial question of crime and its causes, but in a different light: in terms of behaviour—for crime is either synonymous with, or the effect of, criminal behaviour.

Behaviour which Society has stated in advance it will not tolerate, we term criminal behaviour; for all that, it still remains behaviour, the manifestation of an individual's response to a stimulus. But the manifesting agency is also the controlling agency. Reactions are either allowed to proceed and manifest, without check; in which case, certain acts are committed. Or they are inhibited at some stage, and do not manifest. In short, the simple and inescapable conclusion must be that crime is caused by the criminal's failure, for whatever reason, to inhibit his responses or to control his reactions.

This is not to imply that criminals are of a lower order of being, mentally or morally, from the rest of the community. They are, in general, quite ordinary people; their lack of self-control and other neurotic weaknesses are no more pronounced than average. What in fact distinguishes them from the crowd is that, in their case, the reactions they fail to control are criminal. But the true cause of their criminality is something that they and most of the crowd possess in common.

There is a popular fallacy, sincerely believed by some people, to the effect that they are in conscious, voluntary control of themselves and their actions from the time they are properly awake until they fall asleep. Yet when the mechanism of our behaviour is scientifically investigated, this assumption is found to be quite unwarrantable.

<sup>1</sup> On grounds which are irrelevant to the theme of this article, Captain Maconochie's recall was the culmination of a bitter personal campaign waged against him by a ruling clique of Tasmanian colonial officials, anxious for his removal from the scene of their profitable labours.—K. M.

Conscious voluntary control over ourselves and our actions demands self-conscious awareness, if not from moment to moment, then at least to a degree which for most people is incompatible with the terms of everyday life. The repetitive nature of our daily work means that for the greater part of our lives we are encountering the same stimuli over and over again, with little or no choice but to respond in a manner which eventually becomes habitual. Mechanical behaviour such as this is a form of reflex activity, for which conscious awareness is not a prerequisite. People say, of certain routine tasks, that they could perform them in their sleep. This is an unconscious admission of the fact that once the stimulus has been received, the response is a purely involuntary and automatic reaction. Such reflex activity becomes increasingly the substitute for conscious control of behaviour by the higher centres of the brain.

On the other hand, a new or comparatively unfamiliar stimulus always registers with the higher centres, and thus unavoidably impinges on our consciousness. When conscious awareness is aroused in this manner, we can choose what our response will be, though obviously these occasions will be few and far between.

Turning from behaviour to use—from what we do, to how we do it—we find within ourselves a tendency for similar neuro-muscular patterns to respond in association to the same stimulus. This means that in the performance of one action, certain muscles developed for different ends are being extraneously and inappropriately employed; as, for example, the back and shoulder muscles becoming involved in a movement requiring only the use of the forearm and wrist muscles.

Our main safeguard against such functional misuse of the musculature lies in the sensory apparatus which is able to register as 'wrong', in our cerebral cortex, those behavioural sensations which differ from what are normally experienced, and which the sensory apparatus accepts as right. But as behaviour becomes increasingly mechanical, the safeguard loses its integrity; the sensory apparatus becomes conditioned to accept as 'right' what it previously rejected as 'wrong', and functional misuses become accepted as part of the behavioural pattern. But, paradoxically, any voluntary attempt which an individual may make to reverse this conditioning, to alter a habit or to correct a misuse when at last the mind becomes intellectually aware of it, is now opposed just as strongly as ever by a conditioned and distorted sensory apparatus. Unawares, we change; when aware, we cannot.

This, then, is Science's correction of Man's picture of himself. Instead of conscious voluntary control existing in civilised man as a fact, it exists almost exclusively in imagination; and his imagination has run away with him, in more senses than one. Society has conditioned him to accept the realisation of certain aims, which can only be achieved by a few, as his sole criterion of success in life. This makes him abnormally preoccupied with the future, with ends rather than means, at the expense of the present. Thus he has let awareness of the present, and with it control over the only means he possesses of shaping the future, slip imperceptibly away from him.

The result, unfortunately, has been sheerest loss. For freedom of choice and action have been substituted the involuntary responses of fixed behavioural patterns, operating through imprecisely co-ordinated neuro-muscular reactions. Of this his conscious mind remains completely unaware—unaware even that it ever once pos-

sessed the controlling awareness it now cannot sense it has lost—until its attention is sharply drawn to some inadequacy of response, some failure to achieve a desired end. Then, a conscious effort is made to correct the inadequacy; only then is it realised how impotent is will, when confronted and opposed by habit.

A golfer, for example, is told that to improve his play he must learn not to slice his drives. By dint first of observing, and then attempting to imitate his mentor, he may think, after a fair number of successes, that he now knows how to avoid slicing. This may look like success but, for all that, he has not eradicated his tendency. In the first place, he has no direct sensory awareness of the muscular misuse which is leading him to slice; only a second-hand intellectual awareness, based on inference. In the second place, his increased concentration on ends is achieved only by a further sacrifice of his conscious awareness of means; that is to say, his determination not to slice is absorbing much of the attention which should be concentrated on observing what modifications he is making in his use. Thirdly, by thus imitating his coach, he is experimenting with muscular counter-tensions which are different from his ordinary use; and it must be remembered that every modification he makes will be adjudged as 'wrong' by his sensory apparatus, even when it both achieves the aim, and happens also to be an improved functional combination of muscles. So that in order to repeat the successful combination at will, he would need have the ability to select and repeat the right 'wrong' use each time! And, in the fourth place, it is a physical impossibility to incorporate within a reflex activity—in this case, the golfer's swing—some additional modifications, which the sensory apparatus cannot accept so long as an existing pattern is there to pre-determine what it accepts as 'right'.

What, however, are the implications in all this when it is a question of criminal behaviour and criminal reform? First, that there is more in the conception of self-control than is generally reckoned. Secondly, that an individual's persistence in bad habits, or his professed inability to alter them, is not a proof of his determined refusal to abandon such ways. Thirdly, it demonstrates that the physiological mechanism which would enable habits of use and behaviour to be modified by will simply does not exist. This is a limitation imposed upon us by the nature of our organism. Therefore, to assume that the failure of the individual to change his habits is a proof of weakness of will is to misconceive the problem altogether. It *is* possible to alter habits—*at* will, but not *by* will; the difference is to work *with* Nature, and not *against* her.

Earlier, it was argued that a criminal act depended in the last resort on the individual's consent, whether to act or not. The subsequent analysis of our mental apparatus showed how tenuous and weak is the degree of conscious control we normally exercise over our actions, and how easily, once conscious awareness deteriorates, the sensory apparatus can be conditioned to accept as normal the abnormal use and functioning of different parts of the body. Yet the only connection between the outer world of events and situations, and man's inner world of impressions and decisions, is through this same sensory apparatus, distorted or otherwise.

The prerequisite for control over behaviour is control over the voluntary use of the organism, but there proves to be literally nothing in an individual's previous use of himself to which this new technique of control can be grafted. Nothing in his psycho-

physical make-up now affords him a *point d'appui*. Every aspect of himself turns out to be unreliable; his will is a broken reed, his conscious awareness almost non-existent, his sense-perceptions distorted, his behaviour mere reflex activity, his physical movements a series of mal-coordinated approximations.

All this is true, and more besides. But this extensive dysfunctioning merely illustrates the unitary nature of the psycho-physical organism. What has happened in the first place is that, somewhere, something—some fundamental control—has failed or broken down under stress, with consequences affecting the organism at all levels. Once that something is found and put right, however, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the functional consequences arising from its original failure will be reversed. That, at any rate, is the hypothesis, the truth of which the Alexander Technique so successfully demonstrates in its re-educative procedures.

Their realisation, however, depends on the individual's establishing in the first instance what Alexander has termed the "primary control"; and this, since it involves changes in posture of a nature which cannot adequately be judged by the subject alone, requires the assistance and supervision of a specialist teacher.

The intimate correlation between posture and equilibrium in vertebrates, and changes in the spatial positioning of the head viz-a-viz the trunk, is now well established. Alexander, though, was the first scientific observer to note and make use of the fact that, in human beings, interference by the neck muscles with the free carriage of the head imposed a primary conditioning on the whole psycho-physical organism which thwarted all attempts at re-educating local misuses. On the other hand, this conditioning process ceased to operate against the re-educating procedures once a certain head-neck relationship was established which left the head free from constraint. For teaching purposes, Alexander describes the establishment and maintenance of this permissive head-neck relationship as 'the establishment of the primary control', and the factors involved are as follows.

The mechanism which sustains posture in vertebrates is an exceedingly subtle and complex arrangement, in which muscles play a multifarious role. As part of the postural reflex system, the skeletal muscles maintain the overall bodily pattern in accordance with correcting impulses from the central nervous system, based on data to which they also largely contribute. But muscles have another function in addition to affecting voluntary and involuntary movements; they are the connecting tissue which relates parts of the organism to other parts, and consequently the working of partial patterns to other partial patterns. The body, in fact, from a neuro-physiological view, is a most complicated hierarchical system of partial patterns within an overall pattern, controlled by the central nervous system which is itself organised and differentiated into various levels of control.

It has been found that changes in the spatial positioning of the head, in vertebrates, stimulate the special organs of equilibrium and the sensory organs in the muscles, particularly the neck-muscles. Impulses from these sources trigger off the postural reflexes into realigning the trunk with the head. This is the active principle underlying all postural patterns, as enunciated by Magnus: the head leads, and the body follows.

Animals appear unable to interfere with this instinctive mechanism. A runaway

horse, for instance, cannot continue on an unbroken gallop in a straight line if his head is pulled sharply over to the left or right. He cannot in fact run away—or, at all events, not far—if a martingale or bearing rein restricts the freedom of his head; nor can he rise from the ground if his head is kept down.

Human beings on the other hand can, and do, interfere with the working of these inherited reflexes, and once the integrity of the head-neck relationship is lost, the integrity of the overall bodily pattern goes likewise, and with it the hierarchical subordination of the partial patterns to direction from the head. This is the state of affairs that prevails when primary control has been lost. There no longer exists in the organism that once instinctive ability to evoke, on receipt of a stimulus, the postural pattern identical with the position of optimum mechanical advantage. That is only the beginning of a process of overall functional deterioration, which extends further and further as the stresses and strains consequent to misuse are transmitted through the neuro-muscular system to remoter parts of the body.

Re-education through the Alexander Technique starts with the re-establishing of the primary control. The teacher has to assist his pupil, by associated manual and verbal directions, to find and sustain a new equilibrium in which the carriage of the head is free *viz-a-viz* the trunk. Any interference now by the neck-muscles will alter this correlation; conversely, any change of posture, such as sitting down, involves the overall bodily pattern and immediately stimulates the neck-muscles to react and tense, as before. Until the pupil learns to inhibit their intrusion, he will go on performing the familiar actions of sitting down and getting up according to his old unconscious manner of use. The first stage of re-education will have been achieved when he can: by repetition to himself of his teacher's verbal instructions, re-direct the neuro-muscular processes under which the free head-neck relationship can manifest; inhibit any impulsive response to a stimulus; and maintain the free head-neck relationship as he moves from one position to another. In this manner, the dominance of the head pattern, together with the primary control, will have been re-established.

All this is far from easy for the pupil; particularly at the beginning, if he inclined to the view that there were nothing more to the eradication of habits than the local correction, where desirable, of their manifestations of misuse. Habitual misuses arise, as we have seen, with the shrinking of the frontiers of conscious awareness and control; or more graphically, in Miguel de Unamuno's phrase, 'to fall into a habit, is to begin to cease to be.' The prospect facing the pupil, whether he knows it or not, is of having to put that process into reverse.

At the start he is without reliable means of perception as to his movements; only the teacher's hands are there to guide him. But, in a self-compensating, self-regulating machine such as the human organism, where losses or gains are quickly distributed according to the principle of equilibration, even the smallest degree of progress is manifested throughout; awareness, control, posture, sensory perception,—all are positively activated.

Ultimately, though, re-education depends not on the teacher, but on the pupil. His progress rests on his ability both to maintain the free head-neck relationship, the primary control, and to inhibit spontaneous responses to stimuli, which, if allowed freely to proceed, would do so through the old familiar patterns of muscular

misuse. His rate of progress depends, not on how often he sees the teacher, but on how consistently he uses these two principles in his everyday activity.

The significance of such a discipline hardly needs stressing in relation to individuals whose criminal intentions are probably just as unstable as their good intentions undoubtedly are, but whose mechanical response to stimuli is the prime cause of their recidivism.

#### THE MARK SYSTEM

This, then, is a bare outline of the Alexander Technique. To master it demands in the first place, not will power but, conscious directed attention which in time informs instability of purpose, and thus strengthens a weak or easily distracted will. At first sight it seems a far cry from correction of posture and use to criminal reform, but, by steps which are perfectly logical, as well as having been proved in practice, the Alexander Technique demonstrates how unconscious habitual behaviour can be undermined and brought under control at source.

Yet, as was said earlier, this Technique cannot be imposed on an individual against his inclination. The only practicable way of making it part of a penal system is by amalgamating it with some other system operated by inducements and rewards such as Captain Maconochie's Mark System. Then this initial difficulty disappears.

At first glance, the Mark System and the Alexander Technique would seem altogether opposed, both in methods and aims. Were this so in fact, little could ultimately be gained out of marrying the two systems. But, on closer examination, most of the differences prove to be little more in substance than differences in nomenclature and stress.

Fundamentally, the two systems are at one, in that both are directed at effecting changes in human behaviour, and both take full note of the human predilection for habit which avoids the necessity for decision. In Captain Maconochie's view, also, the cause of criminal behaviour was the criminal himself, or what he termed his weakness of will. But there were two predisposing factors to be taken into account: heredity and environment. Children brought up to bad habits, under bad influences or in the absence of good, reached maturity without any clear knowledge as to the distinction between right and wrong, between social and anti-social behaviour. Others, though, he considered to be victims of an inherited weakness of will; aware of the differences between right and wrong, but unable to break the habits, or resist the inclinations which led them into wrongful courses. And there was a third category, of those whose inability to reason clearly was due either to environment, the result of some accident, or to some inherited defect in their mental processes.

But whatever the reasons that had led them into crime, it was Captain Maconochie's entire conviction that the overwhelming majority of criminals under sentence could be reformed by treating them as men in misfortune—of their own making, doubtless, but, because of it, needing at that moment encouragement even more than good advice. Long before psychiatry had been invented, he was interviewing, questioning, probing; showing them the habits and weaknesses which had brought them to their present plight. He would next try to shame them out of these tendencies by every means he could think of, by showing how they clashed with their better

interests, particularly with their self-respect and their earlier memories of themselves in association with those who had once loved or still loved them, and whom they loved or still remembered with love and respect. He would argue that all that lay between themselves as they then were and the realisation of themselves as they once had been and again could be, was a simple lack of will-power, and that the will could be strengthened just as a weak muscle can be—by exercise.

As a one-time Naval officer, Maconochie well understood the purposes of discipline. He also understood its implications; that where behaviour consisted in mechanically obeying orders, in following the customary dictates of habit, or in simply taking the line of least resistance, alone or in company with others, the will atrophied. But when the individual was allowed to see not one course of action open before him, but two, and where the consequences of both were known, then a choice had to be made. And the act of choosing demanded a conscious effort on the part of the will.

Captain Maconochie seems instinctively to have realised what Alexander discovered in his experiments: namely, that wrong habits are not to be overcome by direct assault. Instead, they must be outflanked, and their mechanism undermined. Maconochie's remedy for bad habits was to inculcate their opposites; industry for idleness, self-denial for self-indulgence—all aspects of self-control. The Mark System was devised as a means of giving practical recognition to the exercise of these classic virtues by the award of marks, and the inducement to earn them was the strongest of all possible stimuli: freedom, in exchange for a certain number. They could be earned in a number of different ways, not only for the actual amount of work performed but also according to the manner of execution, and the spirit in which the prisoner faced what was required of him. This, of course, cut both ways; thus, he could either earn—or lose—marks on account of his general demeanour, cleanliness, tidiness, punctuality, attention, obedience, willingness and usefulness in assisting others. In the light of this, the problem of getting prisoners to co-operate in the Alexander Technique becomes no problem at all.

But marks were more than a disciplinary measure. They were the prisoner's sole currency, and everything had to be paid for out of this currency of freedom. Not even his food was free, with the exception of bread and water. Thus every occasion for spending, and every opportunity of earning or saving a few extra marks, was a matter of moment, involving a choice and a conscious voluntary decision.

In this way Captain Maconochie believed that prisoners learned the need for self-control. Compulsion was useless, and taught nothing, since its influence on a time-expired prisoner ended at the prison-gates. Just as he had no belief in compulsion as an instrument of reform, so he put no faith in the prospect of self-control developing very far in the absence of all temptation. It was vain to imagine that compulsory deprivation of alcohol while in prison turned a man into a teetotaler. If he must have his gin, against all reason—let him, was Maconochie's argument; only, let him pay dearly—very dearly—for it, in marks. The more he drinks, the more he proves his unfitness to be anywhere but in prison, and there, in consequence, for lack of marks, the longer he will stay. No injustice is thereby inflicted on the prisoner. Society, on the other hand, is getting the protection to which it is entitled, but which no existing penal system offers it on the present basis of time-sentences.

In all this, there are certain striking resemblances to the Alexander Technique, particularly in the earlier stages. The prisoner is perpetually being confronted by a choice between actions A or B. A costs him marks; B earns or saves him some. Due to the fact that marks are involved, he cannot fail to observe that two courses are open to him, whereas before, in all probability, he would have noticed only one. But now he must pause and consider. By pausing, he inhibits the first unthinking impulse which would have been his habitual response to the stimulus. Now, even if he chooses unwisely in the light of the system, he will still have done so in full awareness of having taken a decision, knowingly. If, on the other hand, he makes the choice that the Mark System is encouraging him to make, he will have consciously exercised his will in the right direction. He will have voluntarily selected the only means whereby he may approach his goal—his ultimate goal, which, in his eyes, is freedom; in Maconochie's, reformation.

Another eminently sane realisation of Captain Maconochie's was, that it was much harder for a man to reform in isolation than in company. So, when prisoners had amassed a certain number of marks, they ceased to be on their own and were allowed to form voluntary associations—working parties composed of five or six members, each mutually acceptable to his fellows. From this stage onwards, all marks were pooled; the group earned collectively and bore a collective responsibility for its individual members.

The group system was a brilliant conception. In the first place, every man knew it was the final gateway to freedom; thus it was a reminder to the 'lone-wolf', the bully, the sneak-thief, the 'lead-swinging', the informer, and other plausible rogues, that all their efforts to 'get by' could be frustrated at the last moment by the refusal of a group to admit them. Rejection was also a very clear warning to the Prison Governor, in the case of a 'model' prisoner otherwise, that something was seriously wrong somewhere, and needed investigating. Then, again, it was a method for getting one and all to understand that 'no man is an island unto himself; he is a part of the main.' All had to learn the lesson of 'good-neighbourliness', by having it driven home to them that the failure of one member of the group, which could easily occur at any time, from impulse or discouragement, was the responsibility of all, and would be borne by all.

Meanwhile, for the Prison Governor, the marks which prisoners earned had an entirely different significance; for him, they were the data of reform. The rate of accumulation and expenditure, and the objects of expenditure—all such items, each a record of some actual moment of choice—were the pieces of mosaic forming a character-picture of the prisoner that gave a truer and more objective assessment of his personality, in its strength and weaknesses, than the unaided judgment of the closest observer could hope to be.

Nor was this all. For it was in the variations of the pattern that something more could be discerned; in the changing rates of accumulation and expenditure, in the deviations from the prisoner's customary responses to his environment, that the Mark System recorded the weakening and breaking down of old habits and tendencies and the birth of something new.

At this point it may be asked: Does not the Mark System already possess all the necessary ingredients for success on its own?

In terms of 1840, the answer is that it does. But a hundred years has since supervened, and the criminal of today is no more the same being that Captain Maconochie had to deal with, than we are identical with our great-grandparents. The increasing demands that our technocratic civilisation makes on us have not been accompanied by any noticeable increase in our ability to resist conditioning. On the contrary: postural defects, which are a sure sign—when not the direct result of accident or inheritance—that conscious awareness and control have been lost, are present in between 70% and 80% of adolescents, and stand at an increasingly higher figure among the older age groups. This disturbing information is cited by a leading authority on the Alexander Technique in Britain, who goes on to describe how, in an observation made in 1946 on 316 male and 45 female subjects in the Army (Med. Pr.: 215, 60: W. Barlow, B. M., B. Ch.) he found that in 97.5% there was interference with the head-neck relationship during certain voluntary movements—an interference of which, for reasons that have already been discussed, the subjects were quite unaware.

This is no picture of that community in the 1840s, from which Captain Maconochie's prisoners were drawn. It is a picture of a quite different age, a frightening and frightened, irascible and irrational age—a cross-section of the 1940s, the decade in which mounting convictions and recidivism were threatening to swamp our antiquated British penal system.

A century ago, the stimuli, including those which drove men to crime—unemployment, grinding poverty, cheap alcohol—were fewer, but understandably more urgent. Today, their numbers are multiplied a thousandfold, and the continuous bombardment they inflict on our visual and aural senses becomes felt at an increasingly earlier age. The natural defences against conditioning are now being undermined in adolescence, before they have had time to develop.

For this age, something more than the Mark System alone is needed; something less leisurely; something more specifically designed to tackle this newer problem at the source whence it springs—deep in the individual's unconscious, in the subcortical areas of his brain. Otherwise, what can prison give these prisoners but a new form of conditioning; overlaying them, but leaving them essentially untouched and unreformed?

But with the Alexander Technique and the Mark System in combination, the whole future outlook for penal reform could be changed and revitalised. It is not for lack of good intent that present day reformatory schemes show so dismally high a percentage of recidivists, but for lack of an operative technique, in dealing with such prisoners, for breaking down the protective shell which encases what personality—what warped and distorted personality—they possess.

Under the Alexander Technique, however, the break-down is inevitable. They cannot co-operate and remain their old, conditioned selves; and while they refuse to co-operate, they fail to secure the marks on which, under the Mark System, their freedom depends. From the horns of this particular dilemma there is no escape, nor can subterfuge avail. Progress in the Technique, or its reverse, are equally self-evident. Not only can a teacher tell at once what progress his pupil is making from the way he reacts to manual guidance, but by means of photographs taken against a grid background, an entirely objective record can be built up over a period of time.

Postural defects start to disappear as soon as the head-neck relationship comes under control, but from the photographic record the genuineness of this development can be tested. It becomes easy to detect whether the pupil is attempting to equilibrate the tensions causing the postural defects by calling the antagonist muscles into play, or whether he has gained sufficient controlling awareness to uncondition them at source, and inhibit their return. Only the latter is evidence of reform.

All great innovations reflect not the findings of their own age, but of the future; in some curious way, their instigators anticipate the greater knowledge and more enlightened understanding of times to come. Thus, what were, a hundred years ago, the 'fantastic notions' of Captain Maconochie, are today among the normal procedures of psychiatrists and psychotherapists. In those ways the Mark System may have nothing further to teach us, or to contribute to penology; yet its greatest contribution of all may still belong to the future.

For the Mark System can make it possible for the Alexander Technique to function as a penal system. And while the most fundamental and penetrating system of re-education continues to lie untested in this direction, for lack of a practicable medium or agency, just so long will penology be deprived of the services of the two systems which, in conjunction, approach nearest to the outline of a complete and self-contained therapy of criminal reform.

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