

Pelmanism

Lesson 1

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I've made some changes to bring this series of documents up to date. I'm sharing it with you because it helped me bring together a lifetime of experience dealing with the assorted problems in creating order out of chaos.

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PELMANISM

The First Principles

Lesson No. I

The Pelman System of Mind and Memory Training

FOREWORD

Editor's Note: This is basically the original course but I've made some minor changes in an attempt to bring it into the 21st century but essentially kept the same language.

To the Student:

You are about to begin the study and practice of Pelmanism. Begin it in the right spirit. Just as simple gymnastic exercises, faithfully practiced, develop bodily health and strength, so will our mental exercises increase the efficiency of your mind. The training itself is a joint work. You do your part and we do ours. We work together. You are not left to your own devices.

There is no mystery about the course. Follow the instructions and you will get the same benefit that thousands of others have already received and acknowledged. Having begun, resolve to go through to

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the very end. If your time is limited, Pelmanize a little, every day, however little, in order to keep up the continuity.

Realize that every distinctive achievement like a prosperous business, a remunerative invention, a fine poem, a beautiful picture, had its first origin in the mind. Develop the mind and the higher results are inevitable. To aim at mental efficiency is not a selfish thing. You owe it to yourself, to your family, and to the nation.

Few people realize that a thoroughly trained and efficient mind is the only universal asset in the world. Even money cannot compete with it, and is powerless without it. Every country, every trade, every profession is eager to welcome and employ it. It is the open sesame to the best society; it is the key to success in life.

Unless you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth, your brain is the only weapon with which you can hope to fight the battles of life, and the higher the state of efficiency to which you can bring it, the surer your success. Judged from a physical standpoint, as compared with the rest of the animal creation, man is the most defenseless animal on the face of the earth and would have been exterminated ages ago. Yet by the development of his brain alone he has been able

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to subjugate the whole animal world, until today he is no longer forced to contend with the brute creation for his place. He no longer has to hunt for his daily food, or set traps for his clothing, or gather materials for his dwelling in the same fields as the wolf and the wildcat.

His great competitor now is man himself, but the same old weapon is still the only one he has: his brain. The competition among men, the struggle for wealth, and power, and fame, is just as fierce today as the struggle for food, and clothing, and life, between primeval man and the brute creation, thousands of years ago. The victory must still be won by the same old weapon. It is no longer a question of the swiftest arrow or the longest spear, but only and always of the more efficient brain.

The savage with the greatest acumen in studying the conditions of his environment, and the habits of the beasts about him; with the greatest skill in devising means to outwit his enemies, was the leader among his fellows, the king of his tribe. Today it is the business man with the greater acumen in studying the conditions of the market, the abilities and resources of his competitors; the man who can devise

means to take swift advantage of his opportunities and the mistakes of others, to whom the world gives its prizes.

The efficient brain that made the savage a king, makes the captain of industry today. We all have the same weapon. The only difference between success and failure in its use is a question of efficiency.

Pelmanism is your opportunity.

I. WHAT THE COURSE COVERS

1. Pelmanism is a full course of instruction in the science and art of self-realization. It is designed to meet every requirement of thought and life, the whole being balanced and arranged in a uniform manner by Pelman psychologists, who have had thirty years' experience in dealing with the intellectual needs of every class of society.

The course is composed of a series of twelve lessons, which are based, not on book knowledge, but on research into individual psychology and on a practical acquaintance with the requirements of the age. The real value and application of every statement made in the course has been demonstrated again and again with unvarying success. No essential

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requirement has been omitted, and nothing unnecessary has been included. Within the compass of the twelve lessons, you will be shown:

- How to observe.
- How to train the senses, especially sight and hearing.
- How to develop energy, enterprise, and self-confidence.
- How to understand and utilize the principles of association.
- How to practice analysis and synthesis, the reduction of a statement or problem to its simplest form, and the combination of old ideas to develop new ones.
- How to concentrate the attention and to strengthen the will.
- How to use the forces of suggestion and self-suggestion.
- How to arrange for any subject a scheme of study suited to your own conditions.
- How to keep the mind and brain in good health.

2. In order that the course may be understood without difficulty by students of every class, the use of technical and scientific terms has been rigidly excluded, except where a simple explanation has been added; but students who are acquainted with the science of

psychology will readily be able to supply the technical expressions for themselves.

II. TWO PRIMARIES: CONFIDENCE AND WORK

3. To obtain the results which we offer you, two conditions must be fulfilled. These are embraced in the words “confidence,” and “work.” Few things are so fatal to achievement as doubt and self-distrust. You may climb safely to any height on a steeple-jack's ladder so long as you retain absolute CONFIDENCE of your own power, but the moment you begin to feel nervous of yourself, giddiness may supervene and you will be in danger of falling.

Therefore, we say, start upon this course of training with boldness, trusting us and trusting yourself. Your mental abilities are probably better than you think they are. You may imagine that you have a hopelessly bad memory. As matter of fact, your memory may be quite normal, and a normal memory is capable of great possibilities. The defect of which you complain is not in your memory but arises out of your training and use of it. Feel certain in yourself that however unlikely it may appear to you at the moment, you have the material,

and we have the means of showing you how to employ it to your utmost advantage.

Progress by Effort

4. For success in our course, there is one other qualification even more important than confidence and that is WORK; work in the sense of effort. Continued effort is the price we have to pay for progress. Make up your mind to master Pelmanism; to use a popular phrase, resolve by repeated acts of will “to see it through.” It is not dull, or disagreeable, or exacting work; it is not work which will occupy your exclusive attention for long periods of time, but it is work. The payment of a fee, the possession of certain printed words and phrases and paragraphs, even the mere reading of our instructions, will not suffice to produce a state of mental efficiency.

The directions with which we shall furnish you, and the exercises we shall set you, will occupy but little of your time, and you will find them of genuine and increasing interest; but if you do not follow the directions and work through the exercises, you cannot reasonably complain if at the end of Lesson XII, you have not made the progress you anticipated.

5. Pelmanism is not a speculation in which you can invest your fee and then after a lapse of time and with no effort whatsoever on your part, simply pick up a big percentage on your outlay. It is more like a business. You invest your money in it to the amount of the fee for the course, then you interest yourself in the work, and at the end you find yourself with a permanent source of income returning a regular profit of several thousand times your expenditure. Is it not worth doing? If you have even for a moment the shadow of a doubt as to the answer to such a question, it can only be because you have not fully realized the value of mental efficiency.

The Value of Mental Efficiency

6. In the world of scholarship, to the literary man, the student, the scientist, the teacher, the value of mental efficiency is self-evident. Its paramount importance is less obvious, though not less real for those engaged in commercial pursuits, or occupations more apparently connected with physical activity. For the student, mental efficiency means not only more perfect apprehension and recollection but also an immense saving of time which is set free for further work.

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To the business man the benefits are no less great, since a power to grasp details, to hold them in the mind, to compare them; to remember prices, contracts, the names, addresses, and peculiarities of clients; the extent of stock on hand at the moment, and to foresee the probable future movements of markets, must inevitably give a man an inestimable advantage over competitors. Every achievement is first of all an idea; each visible successful act is primarily an invisible thought. Consequently, right thinking—in the broad sense—means right action; and it is for this reason that mental efficiency is the foundation of every other kind of efficiency.

Organize Your Time

7. You know how much leisure you have – much or little. If it be little, there is all the more need to work according to a time table. Draw up a weekly plan, to which that given may be taken as a guide:

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TIME TABLE

Evening

	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

8. Let us suppose that you have evenings only from 6 P. M. You need your evening meal and some form of recreation. You need also to map out your time, in relation to Pelmanism and other subjects. No one can decide those matters for you, but if you can begin with Pelmanism at 8 and go on to 8.30, 9, or 9.30, then take a brisk walk before turning in for the night, you are dividing your hours wisely between work and play. On Tuesday you may be out all evening at a social function, but if it causes you to travel by train or subway, your time-table will

contain a note to that effect and the necessary book will be put into your pocket.

9. In this way throughout the week you know what you have to do and the time for doing it is set apart. Interruptions will sometimes occur, and you will have to cancel part of your program but in the long run systematic work will bring its own reward. A wise teacher has said, "We all know men who would be transformed if they only knew what to do with themselves when not at work." *Aristotle on Education*, by John Burnet.

III. CAUSES OF MENTAL INEFFICIENCY

10. Whatever handicap a man may suffer on account of a parentage which might have been better than it was, he may be certain of this: that the success of his future is largely in his own hands. No doubt it is good to be "well-born" in the sense of coming from a healthy stock, but scores of men have overcome the handicap of a poor heredity; so if the reader is afraid that his parental inheritance is responsible for his mind-wandering, defective memory, changeability of disposition and lack of interest, he can at once disabuse himself of the notion, for in the majority of cases it is fallacious.

Defective School Methods

11. One of the chief factors in developing mental inefficiencies is the School. Wrong methods of teaching, wrong ideals of education, haste to attain results, bad policy as seen in crowding the young mind with useless knowledge – these have a direct effect in the atrophy of the reasoning powers, especially as to the relation between cause and effect. What is popularly known as the sense of the “why and wherefore” has no chance of development in the rush for acquiring information and the effort to remember it for examination purposes. Mental powers of every kind frequently suffer injury on account of faulty school curricula, and in no way is the injury more evident than in the stunting of the creative powers. A large number of our students attribute their mind-wandering, their defective memories, and their lack of originality, to the bad mental habits fostered by modern school methods.

Subsidiary Causes

12. Again, lack of discipline between the years of 14 and 25 often gives rise to mental inefficiency. Whatever advantage school routine has offered, in the way of attention to prescribed lessons at certain

hours, is frequently lost. There is no master to supervise effort outside the round of daily duties; reading is an indulgence of curiosity rather than a fixed plan for the training of intelligence. Thus at 25, or later, men and women find themselves unable to concentrate, because they have not continued the mental discipline which in their cases the school may have begun. They have developed certain bad habits, intellectually; and consequently they need a course of training by way of corrective.

13. Illness, particularly of a nervous kind, is another source of mental inefficiency—concentration and memory being the functions that suffer most. In such cases, physical and mental remedies should be used together cautiously, slowly and hopefully. Any kind of negative suggestion, such as “I don't think my memory will ever recover,” is prejudicial to success, and any kind of physical neglect will exert a mischievous influence on the powers of the mind. There should be, first, a strong determination to become physically fit. ; next, a re-training of the defective functions on scientific lines, care being taken not to press the exercises too keenly, as any overexertion would defeat the end in view.

IV. AGE IN RELATION TO MENTAL EFFICIENCY

14. "Am I too old'?" This is a serious question, which many an after-forty reader addresses to himself and to us: occasionally we receive the question from a man of 35.

The answer a man generally gives to himself is, "Yes, I am too old."

The answer we give is neither "Yes," nor "No,"

First, the age limit for mental efficiency depends on the individual. If a man has allowed his mind to "run to seed," it will naturally take him longer to remedy the defects from which he suffers; but he can, at least, stop the mental drift that has set in; he may, indeed, recover a good deal of what he had lost—a result which he ought, as matter of conscience, to secure. If, on the other hand, the man of 50 has kept his intelligence active, he is justified in believing that he can increase his mental acumen. The results of inquiry into this matter show that many of the world's great men have done their best work after the age of 50.

15. A lady once remarked to Professor Emile Boutroux, the famous French Philosopher, "I do not believe in age." Boutroux, in writing to

the Pelman Institute about it, said that there is no doubt we take age too seriously, and expect decreased powers at 55, 60, 65, 70, or some later age. But experience shows that with proper care age has not as much "say" in the matter as we had been led to imagine.

V. THE COURSE IS PERSONAL

16. Some students have asked the question: "Do I not need a course special to myself?" The question is natural, for it would appear to be impossible by means of one course to supply the needs of men as different as say, a lawyer, a butcher and a bricklayer. But if these three men were suffering from the same bodily disease, they would usually get the same kind of medicine, simply because all human bodies function in the same way. There is an analogy in the world of mind. A memory weakness in these three men calls for treatment on identical lines, because every mind works according to mental laws. The fact that a lawyer's cases form very different material from the butcher's prices, or the bricklayer's duties, does not affect the issue. In each case it is the same species of mental activity—that of recollection.

In these lessons and exercises you will find all that is necessary for your personal efficiency.

VI. THE MECHANISM OF MIND

17. We now propose to deal with two very closely connected issues, namely, (1) a description of the mental machine in some of its most important aspects, and (2) an analysis of the chief constituents of mental ability. It is just as if we proposed to give an outline of some of the most important functions of the body, then essayed to show where your own physical strength lies. Transfer the idea into the world of mind and you will see our intention clearly— Physiology deals with the operations of the body; psychology concerns the operations of the mind—not your mind, not John Smith's, but all minds. To describe some of these properties common to every human intelligence is our first aim.

18. Next we want to say something about individual differences. Here again, the physical analogy helps us; for however clearly Foster or Huxley may expound the truths of physiology, they say nothing about individuals. You may have a Roman nose, a hammer toe, beautiful eye-lashes, or a double finger-joint, but Huxley is silent about these

things, because he is concerned only with bodies in general. Likewise Professor Sully and Professor Hoffding describe at great length and with much skill, the laws that govern mental operations, but they make no reference to the fact that you may have a good memory for faces, or that when you sit down to read a book you may begin to think about golf.

These are individual matters, and, although a psychologist cannot possibly deal with individuals when writing a text-book, it is of the utmost importance to you personally, that somebody should deal with them. Now we propose to render you such a service in this course; that is, we shall in a sense combine two functions—first, that of the psychologist who explains the laws of mind; and next, that of the doctor who prescribes for the ills from which you suffer.

Unity of Mental, Function

19. What do we know about Mind? Amid much that is extremely mysterious, there are a number of truths about which we are reasonably certain. For instance:

We know that the Mind is a Unity.

Take an illustration from the learning of languages.

- (a) Here is a youth who is very anxious to learn the Russian language for commercial: purposes. What word best describes his state of mind? The word *Feeling* undoubtedly. He has a strong desire, a deep longing to master Russian, because of certain advantages that will accrue.

- (b) We will now suppose that he has got together the money to employ a tutor, and that he is hard at work endeavoring to memorize the grammar and vocabularies. He finds many difficulties and is obliged to concentrate closely. What word best describes this state of mind? *Thinking*. He must understand what the text book says; he must remember the rules; and where comparisons with English are made he must trace the analogies.

- (c) Now Russian is not an easy language, and as the difficulties increase, our student may become discouraged. What then? After a struggle he resolves to persevere and to obtain complete mastery; in other words, he exerts his Will.

20. Now Feeling, Thought and Will are the three chief forms in which the human mind manifests itself. You cannot use your mind in a manner that could not be classified under one of these three headings. Every mental product is, in the main, either a Feeling, a Thought or an act of Will. But there is only one Mind. Note that very carefully. There are not three distinct and separate compartments of the mind.

Three Functions Interact

21. What is it then that enables us to know these three so-called divisions of the Mind? It is the knowledge of that element which at the moment, or for a period, preponderates. If you approach a man in the street and deliberately knock his straw hat into the mud, you know that that man's mind will be supercharged with Feeling--a feeling of anger and indignation preponderates. But Thought is not absent. He is thinking about you, very rapidly, of course; and it is just possible that in a second or two Will may assert itself, and you will be called upon to defend your person against a counter attack. In that event Will is preponderant, but Thought is not absent. It is decidedly present, and is seen in the skilful tactics adopted by the enemy to fight you into a corner and have you at his mercy. When it is all over, and you sit down at home to reflect, thinking is preponderant, and you realize that

the excuse you made, i.e., “He has no right to wear a straw hat in April” is unjustifiable. But even so, Will is present, guiding your Thoughts, and Feeling is also expressed in the desire to review the whole matter.

Psycho-Synthesis: Its Meaning

22. “But,” argues a critic, “is this matter so important after all? What has it to do with my mental training?” Its importance lies in this fact that it has a direct bearing on your mental development. For instance, memory is not a single “faculty.” If I ask you to recall the events of yesterday you cannot comply without using your powers of concentration and reproductive imagination; and you cannot use these powers without the control of Will. Besides, Feeling in the form of desire to recall is also clearly manifest all these intimate connections will be expounded in later lessons.

Meanwhile, they show the importance of a proper realization of the mind's unity, not only in matters intellectual but moral; for departures from honesty--even carelessness in work—point to preponderance of desire along with inefficiencies of Will. The man who stands in the dock charged with embezzlement owes his position, primarily, to some

faulty relationship between .Feeling, Intellect and Will. The relationship may be faulty owing to a had inheritance, or to a wrong environment, but it is there. It is the function of Psycho-synthesis, (the method of training originated by the Pelman Institute and contained in this course) to correct these disharmonies of the mental and moral nature.

Feeling is Fundamental

We know that Feeling is the most fundamental of our psychical function.

23. First, what is meant by Feeling or Emotion--for we shall use both words as if they meant the same thing. When we study the stars we have a Feeling of the immensity of space and of vast worlds unnumbered; when we read the narrative of any atrocities that are featured in our news stories we have the Feeling of an indignation that is beyond expression; when we look upon an exquisite painting or listen to a finely rendered song or pianoforte sonata we feel aesthetic emotion; and when we stand by the graveside of one who lived strenuously and died nobly for his country, we feel the futility of our knowledge—we wonder about a future life—we think of that bourne from which no traveler returns—and for a season we are desolate.

24. Take another aspect of the subject as seen in Desire. You see a beautiful house on a hillside in the country, and you long to have one like it; you see a man at the top of his profession, and as he was at school with you, (but always near the bottom of the class) you see no reason why you should not equal him; (especially as you were always head of the class.) Feeling in the form of desire is always urging us forward to action, and Thought sits in judgment, deciding for or against every scheme for which a plea is made.

25. Now this deep, varied, and complex life of Feeling is older and more profound than the life of Thought. You do not think so at first, but it is. It would take us too long to trace the “natural history of the Intellect,” to use R. W. Emerson's phrase, but the position just assigned to Feeling is not only true; it is important in its relation to mental training.

Darwin on Himself

26. It follows, therefore, that anyone who neglects this element of his mentality, his Feelings, is certain to suffer loss. Darwin, for instance, permitted himself a lamentation in the following words:

“Up to the age of thirty, or beyond it, poetry “of many kinds, such as the works of Milton, “Gray, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge and “Shelley, gave me great pleasure. I have also “said that formerly pictures gave we consider-“able, and music very great delight. But now “for many years I cannot endure or read a line “of poetry. I have also almost lost my taste for “pictures and music.”

27. Darwin's candor and modesty are always refreshing, and after reading this confession, we know at once that he sacrificed a part of his mind in the service of the highest knowledge, thereby justifying a great principle. But it is clear that the atrophied senses were to him a keen personal loss, and, although he possessed scientific imagination, it may be that a more systematic training in literature and in art would have given him even greater efficiency for the invention of theories to account for the facts of Nature.

Feeling and Culture

28. We imagine we hear a reader saying, “But I am taking this course of training in order to help me to increase my income. What has music or poetry or painting to do with it?” A great deal. What a sorry affair it often is when your money-hunting person is called upon to address a

gathering on any subject other than business! He can hardly string three sentences together, and even then they have no really intelligible connection with the subject in hand. The result is that he loses prestige, where a well-informed man would gain it. Both are keen enough in concluding bargains but the one has a margin for things that have no immediate cash value, and he scores in consequence.

29. Success in business is due to a large extent to a scientific use of the imagination. That is a statement which in these days needs no proof. Is it likely, therefore, that your neglect of the imagination in matters of art, music, poetry, painting, will give you additional imaginative powers in business? Will the cultivation of any power outside business but useful in business, increase that power for business purposes? Undoubtedly. Remember the aim of Pelmanism: a synthetic working of all functions in the individual in relation to the environment in which he may be placed, or which he aspires to reach.

Memory and Mind

We know that without Memory there can be no Intelligence.

30. Suppose you should lose your memory, not in the relative sense but in the full sense — what would be your mental condition? You could have no intelligence, because permanent experience would be impossible. For instance, you would be taught how to dress yourself one morning, but the next morning when your clothes were brought to you they would have no meaning; you would stare at them blankly, for you would not remember having seen them before.

31. "But," urges an objector, "is it not true that a man may lose his memory and yet lead an intelligent life under the impression that he is somebody else?" Yes, it is. But those cases we read about in the press are cases of men who have not lost memory-power in the complete sense, but only relatively. They are men who are suddenly deprived of their consciousness as John J. Smith and William P. Brown, and who take on a new consciousness as Oliver H. Hood, and Daniel T. Clay with memory power to match. Sometimes this change lasts for a month or two; then the old consciousness with its individual memory returns; John J. Smith and William P. Brown are once more restored to their friends. There can be no true mental life without memory, and in the lessons on that subject we shall show how its defects can be

remedied, and how the power of recollection may be developed, on psychological lines.

Importance of Sense Training

We know that since most of our knowledge comes through Sight and Hearing, the full activity of these senses is an important element in mental growth.

32. Is there any need to prove that most of our knowledge comes through the senses of sight and hearing? You can easily prove it for yourself. Imagine the loss of sight and hearing, and think what a closed-in existence you would live. You could see nothing and hear nothing. All you could do would be to feel your way about with your hands and feet; yours would be a world that was sightless and soundless, dreary and gloomy to the last degree.

The logic of the situation is this: If most of our knowledge comes through sight and hearing, then the better trained those senses are, the wider and the more discriminating will be the range of our experience. The untrained sense means little knowledge and of poor quality: the trained sense means wider knowledge of the best type. Therefore, we must train the eye to see and the ear to hear.

Exercises for this purpose will be given.

Cause and Consequence

We know that in the mental sphere, as in the physical, we reap what we have sown.

33. To put it another way, we should affirm that all mental history is continuous — like physical history. If a trader has had several attacks of a tropical fever, certain effects have been left behind which he carries in his constitution. Another aspect of this truth is seen in the case of a sufferer from small-pox, as the pitted marks on his skin will go on reproducing themselves according to the laws of physiology. But the law of cause and effect works for good as well as for evil. Thus the attention we give to gymnastics and recreation during the years from 14 to 20 renders us valuable service when we have a strenuous period in the thirties. We bear in our bodies the benefits of a previous devotion to physical culture.

Mental Sowing and Mental Reaping

34. Psychology has the same story to tell. The kind of mental life we are living now will decide the kind of mental life we shall live in the

years to come. The process is continuous throughout. Of course, there are happenings for which we are not solely responsible. A nervous breakdown may follow an effort to save a declining business; a poignant bereavement may reduce one's }brain to a state of inertia; or an accident to the body may rob the mind of its pristine vigor, butt unfortunate as these things may be, the laws is inexorable. There is, therefore, all the more reason why we should put as much care into the training and preservation of the mental powers as we do into the training and preservation of the physical powers.

This is not preaching; it is science. What you are to-day is due to what you were, and what you did, or neglected to do, in years gone by.

What you will gain from Pelmanism will likewise be carried on into the future: if you are 30 now, the effect will not be lost at 50, or even later than that—for a developed power continues its efficiency if kept alive by practice. Your investment in Pelmanism is one which brings you efficiency now, and a mental annuity for your later years.

Character and Intellect

Finally, we know that to achieve any kind of permanent success there must be a balance between character and intellect.

35. Did you ever read *The War of the Worlds* by H. G. Wells ? If so, you will remember that the Martians, who invaded this planet, were an extraordinarily clever people; their implements of warfare were so overpowering that even one Martian was almost a match for an entire naval squadron. But these Martians appear to have had no moral conceptions; their growth had been such that they had “run to brains,” and the finer feelings of humanity were completely lost to them. Mr. Wells showed them as possessed of superlative intellects but without heart, consequently their warfare was ruthless to an extreme degree: they were supermen and super-devils at the same moment. Probably there are no Martians at all outside Wells' imagination, but his picture of highly developed intelligence minus scruples, is one we should not have liked to miss. It helps us to form a regulative measure; it emphasizes the need of balance between mental ability and moral principle.

Wickedness and Its Alleged Prosperity

36. The “prosperity” of the wicked is an old story. The Jews noticed the fact, and lamented it, thousands of years ago; and the language of their psalm-writer is echoed in our midst to-day. But why rail against it? Is it not patent that in a world like this a supremely clever, but

rather tricky, individual can amass money more quickly than a righteous man with a somewhat dull intelligence? There are all sorts of dishonesties for which there is no legal redress, and the crafty man takes good care to keep out of the clutches of the law. True, he is sometimes caught and his doom is sealed; and even when he escapes conviction he suffers in reputation. The chances of making dishonest money are still plentiful, but it is pleasant to be able to think that there are thousands of men who refuse these chances, preferring to earn a smaller income with a feeling of honor and self-respect.

37. The superior ability which mental training and experience have given such men is not prostituted in the service of illegal gains, because they have the balance between intellect and character. Most of the great tragedies of commercial and professional life come from the lack of such a balance. The desire for great fortune consumes a man, or the ambition to create a family name of national and international distinction overpowers him: the sense of all finer considerations is lost—there is a tremendous plunge, scruples are thrown to the winds, and the result is disaster.

VII. WHAT IS MENTAL ABILITY?

38. We now turn from Mind in general to your mind in particular.

Suppose we were to ask you the question “What is Mental Ability?”

Could you answer it satisfactorily to yourself and to others? If so, well and good; if not, we will help you. Such a definition is needed, especially as the development of ability is one of the aims of this course.

39. Mental ability is defined by Pelmanism as “that emotional response to stimuli, which, joined to the powers of -understanding, memory and work, enables a person to achieve results of 'unusual merit.'”

There are three factors here: (a) energy, due to interest, which, in its turn is due to internal or external stimulus; (b) intelligence, i. e. brain power pure and simple; and (c) action, or will-power. Let us analyze these three. Energy occupies the primary place: other words sometimes used are inward urge, zeal, and enthusiasm. In measuring your mental ability, or any man's or woman's, you have to decide, first of all, what is the depth and power of feeling or emotion as evidenced by a purpose, an ambition—an inward urge toward some aim which is to be achieved. It may be that the urge is to expand in business, to

paint pictures, to relieve the lot of the oppressed, or to get into politics; or it may be simply to do well, or better, the work you are doing now. The chief point is: that mental ability is primarily emotional. All the other powers—those we call purely intellectual—may be said to form the machinery of mind; the inward urge is the steam that sets it going.

Questions to be Answered

40. But how are we to decide whether we possess urge, zeal, or stimulus? By a little self-analysis. For instance, have you had, from the earliest years, a definite tendency toward some line of thought or action! Did you desire to follow your present calling? What is it you want to be or to do more than anything else in the world? Answers to these questions may be infinite in variety, but if you can say positively that you take a deep and lasting interest in some sphere of thinking, or of practical work, your ability will be in that direction.

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The Mind's Essential Power

41. Now the second element in mental ability is usually regarded as containing the whole of what we mean by the possession of "brains." The power to create a vast business, or to solve a profound problem in mathematics, or to discover a great law like that of gravitation, is said to be the offspring of thought, but every success in thinking has two accompaniments: the inward urge, and hard work. We have known men who for sheer brains were difficult to match; but they had no enthusiasm for anything in particular, and they were born lazy. To get the success you want, all your functions must work together in complete harmony.

Work-Ability

42. We have called the third element work, or action. It simply means the effort you make to carry out the ideas you have arrived at as the result of the enthusiasm which moves you. To feel and to think are

two-thirds of the process: to will is the final component. Action completes desire.

Looking at the three constituents in their unity, we see that in spite of some complexity they are simple as to fundamentals. In popular phrase, mental ability has three constituents: (a) driving power, (b) a good engine, and (c) hard work and perseverance. We can see now why some clever men seem to be failures. They have splendid engines (i. e., brains) but no force, no perseverance, no power for hard work. Other men have less ability but with plenty of “pep,” and a will to conquer, they leave their cleverer colleagues far behind.

VIII. THE PLACE OF MEMORY IN MENTAL EFFICIENCY

Impression, Retention, Recollection

43. The faculty of memory comprises three stages — impression, retention and recollection, and if any one of these three factors is impaired, the memory is in a corresponding degree defective. You are earnestly requested to pay very close attention to this portion of your First Lesson, since it forms a groundwork upon which much of your future success will be built. -

44. Impressions are of two kinds; those coming to the mind from outside; and those arising within the mind itself, as in the case of thought and of imagination. (Of course, even an internal impression may have its real origin in a previous external impression, but that does not concern us here.) Ease of recollection depends more upon the strength and vividness of the first impression than upon any other factor. When an idea originates within the mind, it is good exercise to trace the train of thought that led up to it. Ask yourself: "Why did that idea occur to me? How did it come?" Do not hurry away from it. Turn it over in consideration. Ask yourself what bearing it has upon the department of life, or study, or business with which it may be concerned. If it is an idea likely to prove of value, revive it in the mind after a brief interval.

45. Later on in the course, we shall describe various methods of association by which you will inevitably be able to recall an idea after any lapse of time. But there are other things which you must learn first, and for the present you must treat impressions with the means already at your disposal. We aim at developing your natural memory, not at giving you an artificial one. If we provide special aids too early

in the course, you will be tempted to trust too much to them, and too little to your own inherent powers.

External Impressions

46. Although there is a certain class of impression which originates within the mind itself, there is another and very large class which comes from outside. These impressions reach the brain through the senses. Sometimes impressions are conveyed to the brain by two or more senses simultaneously. Thus, when you meet a stranger who begins at once to talk to you your brain will receive impressions of his appearance and of his speech, and these impressions arrive together. Individuals vary much in their susceptibility to impressions through the different senses, some receiving their most intense impressions by sight and others by hearing.

If you want a perfect memory, you must train not only your brain but also your senses. Take a sheet of paper and try to draw upon it the Roman figures exactly as they appear on the face of a clock, and then compare carefully the figure you have placed at “four o'clock” with the figure as represented on the dial of a watch or clock. A large percentage of persons will not succeed, and to fail is indicative of

faulty observation. On which side are the buttons on a man's coat and on a woman's jacket? Many such details as these have come constantly before your eyes, but have you seen them?

To train your sense of hearing, try to recognize your friends by their footsteps when they are within hearing, but out of sight. Notice rapidity, regularity and weight.

Retention

47. The second stage in the process of memory is retention. This is physiological, and, if taken by itself, beyond the control of the student. Whenever a vivid impression is made, permanent retention is practically assured. Of course, if no impression has been made upon the brain, no impression can be retained. When people say they have “forgotten,” they frequently suppose that their retentive power has broken down. The failure, however, is not in the retentive power, but in the third stage, which is the power of recollection.

A majority of small details or occurrences would ordinarily be described as “forgotten,” but what has been lacking in normal conditions has been, not retention, but a sufficient stimulus for recall. If the stimulus be of the right character, it need not be of great

intensity, and often a mere passing odor of violets will instantly bring back to us the picture of the peaceful country of our early days, even though we may never have had a thought of our native heath for months, perhaps years.

Recollection

48: Recollection is the name given to the revival of an impression made upon the brain and retained by it. Frequently recollection is spoken of as if it were synonymous with "memory," but in reality recollection is only the third and final stage of the complete process. Facility in recollection depends primarily upon the intensity of the first impression. Secondly, it depends upon certain principles of association which will be explained in a later lesson.

49. Recollection may be brought about in various ways. Sometimes it is stimulated by a recurrence of the conditions which originated the first impression. Thus if you "forget" an idea you will often find yourself able to "remember" it if you return to the exact spot where the idea first occurred to you. Sometimes a single circumstance will recall a whole group of ideas, as when the name of a novelist brings instantly to your recollection the incidents in various books of which he

is the author. Sometimes an idea is recalled when its exact opposite is presented to the mind. From the scientific point of view, it is thought probable that particular ideas become connected with particular cells in the brain, and any excitement of a particular area in the brain is therefore likely to bring all the ideas located in that area within the range of ready recollection.

Concluding Remarks

50. At the conclusion of Lesson I, as a new student you will be inclined to say: "What do I think of it?" We agree the question is not only natural but proper, indeed we desire to cultivate the reader's critical abilities—but gradually. Growth in intellectual power is mainly an unconscious process.

Lesson I is a map of the whole course—an introduction to the science and art of mental training as understood and practiced by the Pelman Institute. Judge it from that point of view and you will see that a rational system must first begin with the simple and proceed to the complex; and that to form a final opinion as to the merits of a course, after studying one book, is about as intelligent as to value the ability of a pianist after hearing him play a few scales. Depend upon it, the

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particular aims you have in view, memory, concentration, willpower — will be dealt with fully in due time; so do not expect complete training at once. This is a course, which extends to twelve lessons and each lesson contributes its quota to your development. You may not see at once how the exercises which follow are going to help you, but we can see it, and we shall, in later pages, make it plain to you. But do not begin the reading of Lesson II until you have finished the first worksheet. This enables you to keep some work in hand.

Your Unsuspected Self

51. PELMANISM follows the line of all modern systems of education in its endeavor to develop the personal powers of each member of the community, recognizing that any level or uniformity, however excellent, would be as bad for the individual as for the race. Only by a realization of YOURSELF can you attain to the foremost rank of success.

It is safe to assert that never since the beginning of the world have any two men or women possessed identically the same characteristics. You are unique, and in that very fact lies most of your value to society. In the world of business, in the world of science, in the world of art, in

the world of thought, in the world of pleasure, every day and on every hand, one great cry of need goes forth, the cry for originality. If only you would hear it right, it is the cry of the world for YOU. Unsuspected perhaps as yet by yourself, there is in you some power, some combination of qualities which no one but yourself possesses, and the world wants you to use that power, those' qualities, for its benefit. Because you alone can fill this need the world will pay you, and pay you generously, to do so; but it will have little use and still less pay for you if you permit your originality to remain unawakened.

The earth is not yet overcrowded, nor does it appear likely to be, for several centuries at least; but it contains many sleepers for whom it can find little room. Wake up! Fit yourself to fill that position which even now is waiting for you, and, having fitted yourself, go forth to seek it, calm in the assurance that you will not fail to find it

Exercise 1

It will be remembered that on a previous page we dealt with the need of vivid impressions as a source of sound knowledge and reliable memory. It follows from this that the first scientific step in mental training is to educate the powers through which most of our

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information comes, namely, sight and hearing. Take a sheet of paper and write down the list of the names of three of your friends — both sexes. Opposite each name write (a) the color of the eyes, (b) the nature of the complexion, (c) the manner of wearing the hair, and (d) in the case of men, the absence or presence of beard and moustache. (e) Add also a note as to any particular article of clothing worn on the last occasion you saw the person concerned.

Some people find an exercise of this kind very easy; they are naturally acute observers; others find it rather difficult; their powers need training. It is the object of this exercise to discover the extent to which you observe people and things — nothing more.

Practice it occasionally throughout the course in order to see how you are developing in observational power.

Exercise 2

Take up a position inside the house or outside, anywhere indeed, where sense appeals are possible, and write down what you see, hear, or otherwise experience.

Specimen of Report. You would write something like this: “I heard a train whistle, a motor car honked in the distance. Saw a swallow fly past the window. Heard a strange sound several times, but could not identify it. Smelt frying bacon from next door and wondered on what food the pigs had been fed. Counted the shades of green in the foliage. There were five.”

Exercise 3

Take a set of dominoes, shuffle them face down, and then pick up one of them. Turn it up and remember the number of pips on it. Suppose this is the 5-4, equalling 9. Turn it face down and pick up another with it. Turn both face up and see how quickly you can name the total of the two dominoes without actually counting them. Some people find it rather difficult at first, and feel they must count. Later, however, the counting becomes almost automatic and instantaneous. Your report on the work sheet should tell us how many efforts you made and how many times you were right – how many wrong.

For variety, deal out four playing cards, face downward, side by side.

Turn up the first and note what it is, replacing it face downward.

Repeat the process with the three other cards, then after a few

minutes, try to recall the four in order. When you can do this correctly, experiment with five cards, gradually increasing the number.

It is possible to recall a very large number if you continue to repeat mentally the cards you use from the first.

After a few weeks of this sight training, you can amuse yourself and your friends by asking them to place about a dozen articles upon a table; matchboxes, spoons, paper-weights, pen-knives, eyeglasses, anything; each object being slightly separated from the others. Let them be covered with a cloth or with a small tray while you are out of the room. No matter how quickly they lift the cover and replace it again, you should be able to name a majority out of a dozen or more articles.

Work on one or two of these simple exercises occasionally, until you feel you are acquiring greater speed and accuracy in them, but do not hold up your work with other parts of the course Press on.

Exercise 4

It is interesting and useful to know at what distance removed from you the ticking of a watch can be heard. Deafness is a matter of degree,

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and often of inattention. Sometimes minor defects in hearing, quite remediable in their early stages, are allowed to develop unnoticed.

We advise all students to have their sight and hearing tested by authorized practitioners. Acuteness of hearing can be cultivated; and it is worth the trouble to increase by inches the distance between you and the watch, so as to determine the ratio of improvement. Thus, if on a first attempt you can hear a watch ticking on a table five yards off, stand a foot farther away, then another foot, and so on until you fail to hear the sound. Use the same watch always, and in the same place if possible.

These exercises in Perception are not intended to discourage the student by showing him wherein he is deficient; all we aim at is to develop efficient sense-power in each case, because such a development means a real intellectual advance. Many a smart man does not know how many buttons he has on his waistcoat; but the still smarter man who does know, having noticed the number unconsciously, is possessed of a higher degree of serviceable ability.

Exercise 5

Whenever there is a connection between two ideas, or between the words representing two ideas, the connection is based on certain methods grouped under the general heading of association. A special lesson on these methods will be given later on in the course, and the mastery of it will enable you to write down 1,000 or more words, and on reading them over once to repeat the whole list from beginning to end or from the end to the beginning.

At present we shall do no more than illustrate the fact that such a connection does exist. Here, for instance, is a list of six words. By way of exercise read them through once, noting the connections, then repeat them, or as many of them as you can.

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| 1. White | 4. America |
| 2. Black | 5. Canada |
| 3. Can | 6. Tin. |

Here is a second list, this time eighteen words. Endeavor to remember them so as to repeat them after a single reading.

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Observe the association connections between the words; do it thoroughly, then try to repeat the list.

- | | |
|-----------|----------------|
| 1. Rose | 10. Bottle |
| 2. Flower | 11. Glass |
| 3. Show | 12. Lens |
| 4. Prizes | 13. Photograph |
| 5. Money | 14. Landscape |
| 6. Bill | 15. Artist |
| 7. Paper | 16. Sculptor |
| 8. Pen | 17. Marble |
| 9. Ink | 18. Palace. |

SPECIAL EXERCISES FOR THE MIND

TRAINING AND HEALTH

With the PELMAN course, there is a complete system of Physical Exercises, combining the needs of both mind and body, that will suit the requirements of most people.

FIRST LESSON

Right physical exercises are very important for various general reasons. Here are a few of them:--

1. Regularity of Habit. William James insisted that it was a good thing to go through something regularly, especially if it was not very pleasing, so as to prove one's own power over oneself. The regular performance and repetition of certain physical movements reacts on the will-power, and reinforces it, so that by degrees one finds it easier and easier to turn one's attention and one's energies in any given direction at will.

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With regard to exercises of the right sort, this regular practice is all the more useful because – as distinct from most of the drudgery we go through – It brings health and fitness.

2. The right exercises also tend to self-respect. A good instance is the training of the left hand. Most people have very clumsy left hands, and they can. not have proper self-respect while they carry about with them constantly so inefficient a member. Besides this, the training of the left hand influences a certain part of the right side of the brain. Let people train their left hands – not necessarily to equal their right hands in skill, but to approach that standard – and they will have more respect for their body in general.

3. Health and fitness in general come from the right exercises, done in the right way. I shall enlarge on this point in future Lessons.

4. Imagination and memory can be trained by certain methods and exercises, and I shall illustrate this in the course of the present Lesson.

Most of these Lessons will be divided into two parts--exercises that you can do in bed, and exercises that you can do when out of bed.

As to exercises in bed, a most famous example of their very good effects is Sanford Bennett, who made himself young at the age of 70, simply by bed exercises. I do not recommend his system exactly as it is, but the idea of doing exercises before you get up is a very good one.

I.--In Bed

Lying in bed, flat on your back, and with the bedclothes off, stretch out your right foot and leg. Stretch them down as far as they will go, with the toes as far away from you as possible, and the knee well braced back. Hold the leg and foot in this position for a moment or two, then stretch a little further still, even if it begins to produce a feeling almost of pain. Do not over-strain. Then, still keeping the leg stiff and the knee back, send the heel down as far away from you as it will go, and keep it there for a moment or two; then the toes down again; then the heel down again.

Next, rest and relax with this leg and foot, and go through the exercise with the other leg and foot instead.

Then go through it with both legs and feet together.

This exercise has many advantages, one of which is that it serves as a means of curing and preventing cold feet. It also can cure certain kinds of headache, by removing the blood-pressure from the brain. And it improves the circulation generally, and many other capital effects.

Breathing Exercise

Now, still lying in bed, put your two hands over your abdomen, one higher up than the other. Close your mouth, and, as you inhale through your nostrils, send your abdomen up and out. Hold it up and out when you have finished inhaling. A second or two will be quite enough at first. Then exhale quietly, and empty your lungs well, while you draw your abdomen in; and, at the end of the drawing in, press downwards with your hands.

This is one form of diaphragmatic breathing, and it is the kind usually taught in schools, as the first Breathing exercise. It has many advantages, including its good effects on the nerves and on the endurance.

Repeat the exercise once or twice, but be sure not to strain. If it makes you at all giddy, don't repeat it at once.

II.--Out of Bed

Now, getting out of bed, practice skin drill, not necessarily in the elaborate way suggested by some instructors, but, if you like, with some underclothing on. Rub your skin all over with the palms of your hands, or, if you prefer, with a loofah, or a skin-brush, or skin-glove, or perhaps sometimes in one way, sometimes in another.

This will improve your circulation, and of course will clean your skin of its dead particles, and will be good exercise in itself. You could go through the skin drill either before you have a bath, or afterwards, or, to some extent, during the bath.

Having gone through the skin drill, close your eyes for a moment, and, keeping your hands and arms still, try to recall the movements and sensations of the skin drill—that is to say, go through the skin drill, not in reality, but in imagination. Be sure to do this immediately after the skin drill.

It is generally agreed that the most effective way of remembering many kinds of things is to recall them directly afterwards, before they have faded from the mind.

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On the first. day, do not give up too much time and energy to this skin drill. A minute may be quite enough. You could, if you like, . keep on some of your clothing while you are massaging some parts of your body. Then cover these whilst you are massaging the other parts.

It need not always be the mere rubbing of the skin; it could sometimes be slapping and pinching, etc.

In the second lesson there will be some leg and arm stretching, a second breathing exercise, and Id some gentle hopping and skipping with a rope.

PELMAN LESSON II

Success in any kind of Enterprise – commercial, scholastic, social or political – requires energy and a definite purpose. This subject is dealt with in Lesson II, where we show how interest power develops mental ability and formulates character.

DON'TS

1. Don't regard your difficulties as insuperable. Be hopeful.
2. Don't rave against your memory; that is the way to make it worse.

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3. Don't say to-day, "I can't concentrate." If you do, you will be less able to concentrate tomorrow.

4. Don't admit you are too old. Mental age is a matter of training.

5. Don't expect to become mentally efficient by means of one lesson.

There are twelve lessons and some work ahead of you.

6. Don't skip. Master every sentence. We teach the science and art of mental efficiency in the least possible number of printed pages.

DO THIS

1. Work patiently. There is no magic in Pelmanism, but if you will stick to it the results will be so surprising as to take on the appearance of magic.

2. Begin to exercise your Will-power now. Resolve to master this lesson in spite of every difficulty.

3. Psycho-synthesis, simply expressed, means the training of the whole mind; so begin at once to follow out our instructions in this, and every other lesson.

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4. You may not see immediately how each lesson can be psycho-synthetic, but you will realize it later. Go through Lesson I, for instance, and try to discover any mental power that has been neglected by you.

5. Emphasize the personal element. Tell yourself that the Pelman course has a message for you; also a discipline, an illumination, and a deliverance from error.

6. "I have a future with promise in it." Turn that phrase over in your mind. It is true enough, for most people at any rate, but we want you to feel it.

Thank you for reading...check out <http://chaoscure.com/pelmanism/>
for the rest of the series.